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# [***Before She Was C.E.O., She Cleaned Toilets. ‘How Wonderful Is That?’; corner office***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62SY-6BC1-DXY4-X4J8-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1605 words

**Byline:** David Gelles

**Highlight:** Beth Ford has spent much of her career working on supply chain issues, which has served her well as the leader of Land O’ Lakes.

**Body**

When Land O’ Lakes redesigned its packaging last year to [*remove a decades-old illustration*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/17/business/land-o-lakes-butter.html) of a Native American woman, it seemed like just another dust-up in the culture wars. Liberal activists and politicians praised the company for abandoning stereotypical imagery. The conservative National Review ran a story titled “Land O’Lakes Cancels Its Century-Old Native American ‘Butter Maiden.’” Some customers boycotted the company for its “virtue signaling.”

But according to the Land O’ Lakes chief executive, Beth Ford, the decision had nothing to do with any of that. Rather, the decision to replace the “butter maiden” with images of fields, lakes and farmers was an attempt to play up the company’s distinguishing feature: that Land O’ Lakes is a cooperative, owned not by public market shareholders but by the farmers who make its butter, animal feed and more.

It’s a rare model in today’s economy, but it is working for the company and its members. Last year, sales were nearly $14 billion and net earnings about $266 million, most of which flowed back to real farmers on real farms.

Ms. Ford, who grew up in the Midwest, worked at a variety of companies, often looking after supply chains, before joining Land O’ Lakes. That experience paid off when the pandemic hit, and Land O’ Lakes, like most companies around the globe, was forced to reset. After the initial disruptions — not enough milk for supermarket shoppers, too much for commercial customers that abruptly shut down — the company stabilized, and went on to have one of its best years.

This interview was condensed and edited for clarity.

What was it like for you growing up in Iowa?

I’m the fifth of a family of eight children. My dad was a truck driver growing up, and my mom was a nurse, and then she went back and got her master’s and became a psychologist. We were Catholic, and we went to Catholic school, Catholic high school, and we were a ***working-class*** family. You had to work for what you got. If you wanted to go to college, you have to figure out a way to pay your way.

My first job was detasseling corn. I didn’t come from a farm, but I came from farm country. And then in college, I had to work my way through college, so I had a number of jobs, including as a janitor. I cleaned toilets. I painted houses. I was a cashier at a convenience store. When you’re in that, you don’t think, “Oh, this is great.” But now I reflect back on that and say: “What a blessing. How wonderful is that?”

You spent much of your career working on supply chain issues. Between the pandemic and the Suez Canal, it seems like the whole world has been thinking about the supply chain more than ever before. What has the last year taught us?

There was a time where you were like: “Oh, we can get some leverage. There’s labor cost differential and lower cost dynamics if we globalize.” But that can be disrupted. It’s very difficult right now to get products in from Asia, and to export. We’ve got a shortage of containers, and then there are philosophical, political and strategic issues in different countries. So I think that there’s going to be more reshoring.

The “just in time” supply chain means you have this tight value chain that makes sense when everything makes sense. And then when there’s a disruption, there’s not a lot of wiggle room to address that.

How did the early days of the pandemic play out for the company?

Initially our members — the farmers — were uncertain. Food service is shutting down, so you had 30 or 40 percent of milk supply — where does it go now? On the one hand, folks at retail were trying to buy two gallons of milk, and there were restrictions. On the other hand, they were [*dumping at the farm level*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/11/business/coronavirus-destroying-food.html?searchResultPosition=1), because that milk supply and the manufacturing processing capacity are meant for food service.

There was quite a bit of money that was put into the farm economy over the last two to three years because of trade disruption and then Covid disruption, so I think the farmers overall had an OK outcome. But it was very, very disruptive.

How does running a co-op, rather than a traditional public company, change the way you make decisions about strategy, resource allocation, and optimizing short-term and long-term goals?

The incentives can be different. We can definitively hold profit or hold benefit at the farm level to try to offset at the corporate level, so that we are trying to make sure that the farmer — the member, the shareholder — remains robust in this dynamic. And I may make decisions that definitively try to advantage the farmer, over taking that profit at the corporate level or the enterprise level and cooperative.

There’s an intimacy to this model. I know the families. I’m out on their farms. I’m with them constantly. I see the pressure. I see their stress at the same time. I see their communities that are challenged.

Are there things that public companies could learn from the cooperative model?

I’m also on the [*Business Roundtable*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/19/business/business-roundtable-ceos-corporations.html?searchResultPosition=2) board. And its focus on the new purpose of the corporation — that was an easy signature for me. Why? Because it is to me very directly on target for what the cooperative does, which cares about the community, the shareholders and the employees. So what is the lesson? Whether it’s a cooperative or not, it is about understanding the impact more broadly than the company.

And I see a lot of companies that work to do this. I see a lot of C.E.O.s put a premium on their employees. What is different and unique about the cooperative model is the intimacy of it, the understanding of those families, of knowing these communities. I don’t know that a business can be successful if employees are worried about their kids’ school or that their mom can’t go to the doctor. More of that understanding will help everybody.

Americans are drinking less milk. Is that having an effect on how your farmers produce?

People say, “Look at this amazing growth in plant-based!” That’s terrific. It’s off a small base. Because you know what else is also growing? Animal agriculture and dairy. So do I see a change in consumption? I do. I see more willingness to innovate, and I see more of a willingness to try other things. I hope and I believe that the consumer should do those things.

What was behind the decision to change the logo last year?

I think people have a misunderstanding. Was I being pressured? Are we being P.C.? What is the message? When I stepped in as C.E.O., I started hearing really loudly that our best asset was that we were a cooperative, and farmer owned. People were like, “If I had known that, I’d have more of your products.” So we did the research, and what we said is we want to promote the farmer first.

My responsibility is to say what is most relevant to consumers. And I tell you, we added eight million new households to our butter franchise, and they were right in the target of what I think is important — millennials, new consumers, consumers who are unfamiliar with Land O’Lakes. So it wasn’t pressure. It was a forward-looking marketing move tied to what we thought were our best advantaged positions. And that is the farmer and the cooperative model.

Was there also a sense that the previous imagery was outdated or inappropriate or even racist?

We didn’t talk about it like that. What we saw in the consumer research is it was confusing to customers — just the Indian maiden and no cows? I mean, what is that? It was a message that was unclear to a consumer.

Given the company’s headquarters are near Minneapolis, how have you responded to the killing of George Floyd and the aftermath?

First of all, it was unbelievably tragic. We spent time with our with our employees, listening. Because this is just painful. And what came of that was that there was a feeling of connection, a feeling of “I don’t have the lived experience of an African American, but I do want to understand that pain, that fear when somebody tells me they can’t have their 12-year-old son go out and ride his bike.” Or you hear stories of Black executives of major companies being stopped on their way to work. I mean, this is just unacceptable.

When you hire, you hire the whole person, and then you hire their family, too. You can say, “You’re safe here at work,” and we’re doing the right things. And I’m like: “Look at the diversity! We’ve got women and minorities.” But when employees leave the building, they’re in the community. They have to feel safe. Their family has to feel part of the community.

We have to invest broadly within communities, and then we have to be listening to our Black employees and understand what their challenges are. It’s a journey. It’s imperfect. And sometimes I feel like my words are inadequate.

Prices are rising everywhere. What is the outlook just for your farmers and your sales going forward?

This is the strongest price for corn and beans that we’ve had since 2013 or 2014. Stocks of available inventory are low. Export demand is dramatically strong. So what’s the outlook? Well, the outlook is strong, and you see that coupled with a reopening of the economy. There’s a question of whether this is the start of a new super cycle, where commodities strengthen for a period of time because inventory levels are low, and there’s a big demand because the economies are reopening. If so, we’re very well positioned. We have a unique platform starting at the farm level, going all the way to retail. We have animal agriculture, we have agricultural growers, producers, and we have retail businesses. We’re well positioned with our innovation and with our tools and our technology to take advantage of the opportunity.

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[***Short Stories; The Shortlist***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:608J-P891-DXY4-X2CY-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1052 words

**Byline:** Benjamin Nugent

**Highlight:** New books by Kathleen Founds, Kim Addonizio, David Gordon and Julia Elliott.

**Body**

WHEN MYSTICAL CREATURES ATTACK!

By Kathleen Founds

University of Iowa, paper, $16.

In this dark, rich little novel in stories, full of leaps across time, Laura Freedman’s mother hangs herself in the garage when Laura is 4. Two decades later, Laura suffers a breakdown while teaching high school in South Texas, and lands in a mental hospital ruled by a proponent of “the capitalist model of cognitive behavioral therapy,” who adds and subtracts “Wellness Points™” from his inmates’ “Psychiatric Credit Score™” according to how slavishly they adhere to a program of industriousness and cheer. Two of her more troubled students write her letters and scheme to save her from her demons. When Founds takes us inside the neoliberal asylum, she shows herself a talented moralist, of nearly Russian ferocity. But she is also gifted at writing in a more ethereal, ambiguous mode; she gives Laura’s visions of her mother, some half-remembered, some wholly imagined, an incantatory rhythm: “My mother lying on her back on the sidewalk, glassy-eyed, muttering to herself, while I paced around the lemon tree, doing spells with a stick. . . . My mother, the bright-plumaged bird who came to my window, who said to me: Leave here, before you are destroyed.” Does “Leave here” mean “Leave the hospital,” or “Follow me into isolation and death”? The book suffers in places from jokiness, most grievously in its title, but this flaw is dwarfed by Founds’s virtues: her respect for the wisdom of the insane; her talent for making confessional monologues double as parables; and her fresh, childlike gaze, which lets her see a “wedding supply store displaying gray-skinned mannequins swathed in gauze.”

THE PALACE OF ILLUSIONS

Stories

By Kim Addonizio

Soft Skull/Counterpoint, $25.

The only time NPR has ever made me swerve into an illegal parking space and weep was when, on “Writer’s Almanac,” Garrison Keillor recited Addonizio’s poem “Eating Together,” about lunch with a friend: “She eats / as though starving . . . / and what’s killing her / eats, too.” No surprise, then, that the champ of this lovely story collection is “Cancer Poems,” in which a late-middle-aged, middle-middle-class woman in Stage 4 takes a poetry class at a community center. The comic misery of the workshop lets Addonizio get away with a story about the importance poetry assumes in the shadow of death; the perfect ending alternates banal conversation with fragments of ­Keats. Addonizio can make her points too bluntly; in “Beautiful Lady of the Snow,” a child forced to perform sexual dances for her grand­father imagines snow “making everything it touches white, and pure again.” She’s most frightening when she leaves the meaning of a story wide open. In the last paragraph of “Blown,” a hung-over young woman who has just fellated a stranger thinks, “He has big beautiful teeth, perfectly even and white, like tablets you could write your autobiography on, if you could write small enough, and just like that, the next seven months of your life go down the drain.”

WHITE TIGER ON SNOW MOUNTAIN

By David Gordon

New Harvest/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, $25.

Several of the 13 stories in this novelist’s first collection are narrated by well-read, middle-aged men who pursue young women, usually with some success and always with questionable motive. In the title story, a connoisseur of Craigslist’s sex offerings sodomizes a lonely submissive with a carrot and applauds himself for his altruism. The unemployed 38-year-old narrator of “Man-Boob Summer” moves in with his parents and seduces a lifeguard at the pool in their apartment complex, only to find he can’t take pleasure in his callipygian prize. “We Happy Few” opens with a washed-up writer, involved with one of his students, accidentally sending an intimate email to her entire class. The best stories in the book — like “I, Gentile,” in which a Jew wins a rabbi’s daughter by making her believe he’s a goy — show us a hideous man’s reductive view of a woman while also granting a slant glimpse of that woman’s desires. The worst seem to revel in their narrators’ misogyny. Gordon has a bad habit of writing characters as types. A Jersey gangster says “youse guys” and “Whaddaya laughing at?” A New Age writing coach says, “I keep my sacred channel free and let my goddess flow.” A Hollywood hack has “bumped up from models to supermodels.” But Gordon’s metaphors are sad and true. A ***working-class*** neighborhood has “decompressed” into a ghetto; a subway cashier “goes down at dawn like a miner”; Leigh Bowery, seated naked on a tuffet and painted from behind by Lucian Freud, is “a meat mountain fissured at the base.”

THE WILDS

Stories

By Julia Elliott

Tin House, paper, $15.95.

George Saunders had to stop imitating Raymond Carver to write his brilliant first story collection, “CivilWarLand in Bad Decline.” Now it’s a rite of passage for story writers to get hooked on, and eventually kick, SaundersProse, characterized by first-person, present-tense narration, business-speak neologisms, B-movie monsters and for-profit simulations of primal experiences. In “Caveman Diet,” Elliott takes us to Pleisto-Scene Island, a “fitness adventure tourism” resort that aims to provide a sanitized Stone Age for its guests and inadvertently gives them something more authentic; Saunders’s influence is clear. But in “Rapture,” where adolescent girls sleep over at the house of a marginalized backwoods classmate, Elliott finds her voice: “In dim lighting she looked almost pretty, like some big-eyed elfin princess who lived in a cave. . . . Hyped up from too much sweet tea, we whispered of supernatural mysteries, hoping to spook ourselves into an exalted state of fright.” In “Regeneration at Mukti,” set at a spa where clients inflame and shed their skin, Elliott shows she can write of the flesh: “I itch so much that I want to scrub my body with steel wool. I want to roll upon a giant cheese grater.” In “Jaws,” which builds to an ingenious climax set in a Universal Studios ride, she fashions angular phrases from scientific jargon: “cyborg arthropods,” “American proxemics customs.” At such moments, Elliott makes us hear contemporary English in a new way.

Benjamin Nugent's short stories have appeared in The Paris Review, Tin House, Vice and the 2014 edition of "The Best American Short Stories."

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***The Case for Accepting Defeat on Roe***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:610C-1NB1-DXY4-X0SG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 4, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1188 words

**Byline:** By Joan C. Williams

**Body**

Maybe it is time to face the fact that abortion access will be fought for in legislatures, not courts.

In ''Unpregnant,'' the HBO bildungsroman released this month, the plot revolves around a 17-year-old heroine who travels from Missouri to Albuquerque -- a road trip of 1,000 miles -- because that's the nearest place she can get an abortion without parental consent. Watching it made me recall a conversation with a feminist friend, who shocked the hell out of me last year by saying that progressives were too focused on protecting Roe v. Wade.

Why? The argument is that we currently have the worst of both worlds. We've basically lost the abortion fight: If Roe is overturned, access to abortion will depend on where you live -- but access to abortion already depends on where you live. At the same time, we have people voting for Donald Trump because he'll appoint justices who will overturn Roe. Maybe it is time to face the fact that abortion access will be fought for in legislatures, not courts.

I was shocked, but I could see the logic. It's true that abortion access is already abysmal. The stressful road trip in ''Unpregnant'' is actually in some ways a best-case scenario; many women seeking abortions aren't suburban teenagers without economic pressures or family responsibilities. Nearly 60 percent have already had one child and nearly half live below the poverty level; some fear they'll be fired if they take time off, particularly if they need to make two trips, as they must in the 26 states with mandatory waiting periods.

The argument that the left has already lost the abortion fight reflects the fact that there's no abortion clinic in 90 percent of American counties. This is the result of the highly successful death-by-a-thousand-cuts anti-abortion strategy, which has piled on restriction after restriction to make abortion inaccessible to as many American women as possible.

Chief Justice John Roberts's concurring opinion this summer in June Medical Services v. Russo -- the one that mattered -- was hailed as a surprise victory for abortion rights, but not by me. Justice Roberts refused to uphold Louisiana restrictions virtually identical to those the court struck down as unconstitutional just four years earlier, but clearly stated that his reluctance was because of his respect for precedent. Anyone with their eyes open could see the justice signaling to abortion opponents to continue the process of eroding Roe v. Wade's nigh-absolute protection of access to abortion during the first trimester by inventing new types of restrictions, which they have been remarkably creative in doing.

If Judge Amy Coney Barrett becomes the next Supreme Court justice, Justice Roberts's vote will be irrelevant, anyway. And if things already looked pretty grim, now they look much worse: Up to 21 states have passed laws banning or limiting abortions in ways that are currently unconstitutional. Many will go into effect immediately if Roe is fully overturned.

So what should we do now? Often forgotten is that R.B.G. herself had decided that Roe was a mistake. In 1992, she gave a lecture musing that the country might be better off if the Supreme Court had written a narrower decision and opened up a ''dialogue'' with state legislatures, which were trending ''toward liberalization of abortion statutes'' (to quote the Roe court). Roe ''halted a political process that was moving in a reform direction and thereby, I believe, prolonged divisiveness and deferred stable settlement of the issue,'' Justice Ginsburg argued. In the process, ''a well-organized and vocal right-to-life movement rallied and succeeded, for a considerable time, in turning the legislative tide in the opposite direction.''

What Ginsburg called Roe's ''divisiveness'' was instrumental in the rise of the American right, which was flailing until Phyllis Schlafly discovered the galvanizing force of opposition to abortion and the Equal Rights Amendment. Schlafly wrote the culture wars playbook that created the odd coupling of the country-club business elite with evangelicals and blue-collar whites. In exchange for business-friendly policies like tax cuts and deregulation, Republicans now allow these groups to control their agenda on religion and abortion. It's hard to remember now but this was not inevitable: abortion was not always seen as the partisan issue it is today, nor did evangelicals uniformly oppose abortion.

Whether or not R.B.G.'s assessment of Roe was correct, the best tribute we can pay to her is to do what she suggests: open up the kind of dialogue that occurred in Ireland, where young people knocked on grannies' doors and persuaded them to vote to legalize abortion, which -- much to the distress of the Catholic Church -- they did. (At the same time, activists galvanized to ensure that, in the absence of a referendum, women throughout the country would have access to and knowledge about medication abortions.)

I don't want Roe to be overturned, but if that happens, it could bring political opportunity. The emotional heat that surrounds abortion as an issue manages to obscure that the attitudes driving opposition to abortion actually reveal some surprising common ground with progressives on economic issues.

Non-elites often see elites' obsession with abortion rights as evidence that they are slaves to ambition who don't see that ''family comes first.'' But look closer and one can find embedded in this ideology a powerful critique of capitalism: ''I think we've accepted abortion because we're a very materialistic society and there is less time for caring,'' as one woman told the anthropologist Faye Ginsburg. The feminist historian Linda Gordon agreed: Those against abortion ''fear a completely individualized society with all services based on cash nexus relationships, without the influence of nurturing women counteracting the completely egoistic principles of the economy.''

I'm still reluctant to embrace the ''overrule and move on'' strategy, but moving on may be our only choice. And if abortion stops playing such a role in presidential elections, then Democrats may fare better with the 19 percent of Trump voters who have bipartisan voting habits and warm feelings toward minorities; we know 83 percent of them think the economy is rigged in favor of the rich and 68 percent favor raising taxes on the rich.

Once their presidential vote is not driven by Supreme Court appointments, how many might decide to vote on economic issues? And what greater tribute could there be to R.B.G. than both a legislative restoration of abortion rights, and a new Democratic Party that can win -- not just by a hair but by a landslide?

Joan C. Williams is a professor of law at the University of California Hastings College of the Law and the author of ''White ***Working Class***.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2020

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[***Why Do the Rich Have So Much Power?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6089-B911-JBG3-653K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 2, 2020 Thursday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; Editorial Desk

**Length:** 1099 words

**Byline:** By Paul Krugman

**Body**

Americans may be equal, but some are more equal than others.

America is, in principle, a democracy, in which every vote counts the same. It's also a nation in which income inequality has soared, a development that hurts many more people than it helps. So if you didn't know better, you might have expected to see a political backlash: demands for higher taxes on the rich, more spending on the ***working class*** and higher wages.

In reality, however, policy has mostly gone the other way. Tax rates on corporations and high incomes have gone down, unions have been crushed, the minimum wage, adjusted for inflation, is lower than it was in the 1960s. How is that possible?

The answer is that huge disparities in income and wealth translate into comparable disparities in political influence. To see how this works, let's look at a fairly recent example: the budgetary Grand Bargain that almost happened in 2011.

At the time, Washington was firmly in the grip of deficit fever. Even though the federal government was able to borrow at historically low interest rates, everyone who mattered seemed to be saying that the budget deficit was the most important issue facing America and that it was essential to rein in spending on Social Security and Medicare.

So the Obama administration offered congressional Republicans a deal: cuts in Social Security and Medicare in return for slightly higher taxes on the wealthy. The deal foundered only because the party refused to accept even a small tax increase.

The question is, who wanted such a deal? Not the American public.

Voters in general weren't all that worried about budget deficits. While most Americans believed that the deficit should be reduced -- they always do -- a CBS poll in early 2011 found only 6 percent of the public named the deficit as the most important issue, compared with 51 percent citing the economy and jobs.

Both the Obama administration and Republicans were staking out positions that flew in the face of public desires. A large majority has consistently wanted to see Social Security benefits expanded, not cut. A comparably large majority has consistently said that upper-income Americans pay too little, not too much, in taxes.

So whose interests were actually reflected in the 2011 budget fight? The wealthy.

A groundbreaking study of rich Americans' policy preferences in 2011 found that the wealthy, unlike voters in general, did prioritize deficit reduction over everything else. They also, in stark contrast with the general public, favored cuts in Social Security and health spending.

And while a few high-profile billionaires like Warren Buffett have called for higher taxes on people like themselves, the reality is that most billionaires are obsessed with cutting taxes, like the estate tax, that only the rich pay.

In other words, in 2011 a Democratic administration went all-in on behalf of a policy concern that only the rich gave priority and failed to reach a deal only because Republicans didn't want the rich to bear any burden at all.

Why do the wealthy have so much influence over politics?

Campaign contributions, historically dominated by the wealthy, are part of the story. A 2015 Times report found that at that point fewer than 400 families accounted for almost half the money raised in the 2016 presidential campaign. This matters both directly -- politicians who propose big tax increases on the rich can't expect to see much of their money -- and indirectly: Wealthy donors have access to politicians in a way ordinary Americans don't and play a disproportionate role in shaping policymakers' worldview.

However, the influence of money on politics goes far beyond campaign contributions. Outright bribery probably isn't much of a factor, but there are nonetheless major personal financial rewards for political figures who support the interests of the wealthy. Pro-plutocrat politicians who stumble, like Eric Cantor, the former House whip -- who famously celebrated Labor Day by honoring business owners -- quickly find lucrative positions in the private sector, jobs in right-wing media or well-paid sinecures at conservative think tanks. Do you think there's a comparable safety net in place for the likes of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez or Ilhan Omar?

And even the issues that the news media discuss often reflect a rich person's agenda. Advertising dollars explain some of this bias, but a lot of it probably reflects subtler factors, like the (often false) belief that people who've made a lot of money have special insight into how the nation as a whole can achieve prosperity.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the fixation on cutting benefits in the early 2010s was the extent to which it was treated not as a controversial position but as the undeniably right thing to do. As Ezra Klein pointed out in The Washington Post at the time: ''For reasons I've never quite understood, the rules of reportorial neutrality don't apply when it comes to the deficit. On this one issue, reporters are permitted to openly cheer a particular set of highly controversial policy solutions.''

In a variety of ways, then, America's wealthy exert huge political influence. Our ideals say that all men are created equal, but in practice a small minority is far more equal than the rest of us.

You don't want to be too cynical about this. No, America isn't simply an oligarchy in which the rich always get what they want. In the end, President Barack Obama presided over both the Affordable Care Act, the biggest expansion in government benefits since the 1960s, and a substantial increase in federal taxes on the top 1 percent, to 34 percent from 28 percent.

And no, the parties aren't equally in the wealthiest Americans' pocket. Democrats have become increasingly progressive, while the rich dominate the Republican agenda. Donald Trump may have run as a populist, but once in office he reversed much of that Obama tax hike, while trying (but failing, so far) to take away health insurance from as many as 23 million Americans.

But while you shouldn't be too much of a cynic, it remains true that America is less of a democracy and more of an oligarchy than we like to think. And to tackle inequality, we'll have to confront unequal political power as well as unequal income and wealth.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Woody Harrington FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 2, 2020

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[***Bernie Sanders Is Going for Broke***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC0-MSJ1-DXY4-X2XN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 5, 2020 Thursday 20:33 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 937 words

**Byline:** Paul Krugman

**Highlight:** Is maximalism the best political strategy?

**Body**

Is maximalism the best political strategy?

Few political movements have experienced as quick and dramatic a fall from grace as what happened to the Sanders campaign between the Nevada caucuses and Super Tuesday. Over the course of 10 days [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) went from the presumptive Democratic nominee to a very long shot.

In fact, things have gotten so bad that Sanders is running an ad that attempts to portray him as best buddies with former President Barack Obama.

Fact checkers have pointed out that the ad is [*deeply misleading*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html). It jumbles together things Obama said over the course of a decade and leaves out important context.

But a frame-by-frame analysis actually understates how disingenuous it is for Sanders to try to tie himself to Obama. For Sandersism, as a philosophy, is all about rejecting Obamaism. That is, it’s about refusing to accept incremental, half-a-loaf-is-better-than-none politics and demanding go-for-broke maximalism instead.

The thing is, there is a case for the Sanders critique of Obama. But Sanders should own that critique, not pretend that he never made it.

So what is this debate about? It’s not about values, although Sanders and those around him have a bad habit of suggesting that anyone who questions their political strategy is a corrupt tool of the oligarchy. Obama was, and Joe Biden is, clearly in favor of progressive goals such as universal health coverage and reduced income inequality.

But Obama pursued those goals via incremental changes. Obamacare was designed to expand health coverage while doing as little as possible to disrupt the lives of people who already had health insurance. Obama raised taxes on the wealthy more than most people realize — by 2016 the [*average federal tax rate on the 1 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) was almost as high as it was pre-Reagan — but he did so quietly, without much populist rhetoric.

In the Sanders view, this incremental, low-key approach reflected a failure of nerve (or perhaps corruption by the “establishment”). Obama should have gone the whole way and (somehow) enacted Medicare for All. He should have made a frontal assault on inequality, with much bigger tax hikes for “millionaires and billionaires.”

And to be fair, I actually agree that Obama was much too cautious on some fronts. Back in 2009 I was very publicly [*tearing my hair out*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) over the obvious inadequacy of Obama’s economic stimulus, which I predicted (correctly) would be a   [*political disaster*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html), because the failure to achieve dramatic results would play into Republican hands. And I believe that Obama could have gotten much more if he had been willing to use reconciliation to bypass the filibuster, the way Republicans did in ramming through the 2017 tax cut.

I was also very unhappy, in real time, when Obama began [*echoing Republican arguments*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) for fiscal austerity despite continuing high unemployment.

And I still believe that Obama could and should have taken a couple of big banks into [*temporary receivership*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) as the price of being bailed out. Obama definitely showed too much respect for the bankers who got us into the financial crisis in the first place.

But Sanders isn’t making a selective case, arguing that Obama should have been more aggressive on some fronts. He’s arguing for a maximalist agenda on all fronts: complete elimination of private health insurance and a vast expansion of government programs that would require major tax increases on the middle class as well as the wealthy.

The political theory behind this maximalism is an assertion that a bold populist program would transform the electoral landscape, winning over white ***working-class*** voters and bringing a surge of new voters, all of this on a scale sufficient both to win a smashing victory in November and to intimidate centrist members of Congress into accepting radical proposals.

There is, unfortunately, [*no evidence*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) to support this political theory; in particular, the promised surge in young voters failed to materialize on Super Tuesday. So Sandersism is looking more than a bit like Green Lanternism — a belief that political miracles can be achieved by sheer force of will.

Of course, many Sanders supporters will claim that I’m only saying this because I’m in the pay of billionaires, or something.

In any case, we need to be clear about the nature of the argument in what remains of the Democratic primary contest. Again, it’s not about values: Democrats as a group have become far more progressive than they were, and even a “centrist” like Biden is advocating policies, like a [*major expansion*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) of Obamacare, that would have been considered pretty far left not long ago.

That said, I do worry that if Biden becomes president he will compromise too easily; progressives will have to hold his feet to the fire, and make sure that incrementalism doesn’t turn into pre-emptive surrender.

Sanders, however, despite his last-minute attempts to link himself to Obama, is committed to a strategy of maximalism, without compromise. I understand that strategy’s emotional appeal, especially to his young supporters. But everything we know suggests that a progressive who insists on going for broke will end up, well, broke.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.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/bernie-sanders.html). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html).

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PHOTO: President Obama and Bernie Sanders at the White House in June 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Zach Gibson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

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[***Mr. Chavarria Will See You Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63JN-XY21-DXY4-X257-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 8, 2021 Wednesday 09:04 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 2016 words

**Byline:** Guy Trebay

**Highlight:** With a creative director’s job at Calvin Klein and his own label, Willy Chavarria is a force for change in an industry that desperately needs it.

**Body**

Late one evening 55 years ago, in the winter of 1966, an Irish-American teenager named Gwen Taylor climbed through the window of her family’s house in Coalinga, a small town in California’s San Joaquin Valley, and, flipping up the kickstand on a bicycle parked outside, pedaled by moonlight through the vineyards of this farming region, and across Interstate 5 to a town called Huron.

No more than 15 miles separated two places that were, in crucial ways, universes apart. As late as the 1960s, the inhabitants of Coalinga, a onetime railway coaling station, were primarily Caucasian, whereas Huron was populated largely by Mexican Americans or Mexican migrants who regularly risked the illegal border crossing in search of seasonal work harvesting the world’s tomatoes, melons, sugar beets, grapes and asparagus.

“My mother hates when I tell this story,” the designer Willy Chavarria said over a glass of chilled white wine on a recent rainy evening, referring to his origins as the son of a white girl from a “sundown town,” where it was once thought unsafe for those with brown skin to be seen after nightfall, and of William Robles Chavarria, a migrant worker himself and an activist whose mother on occasion fed Cesar Chavez, the legendary civil rights activist and co-founder of the National Farm Workers Association, at her kitchen table.

“My parents met in high school, which began to be integrated only after the civil rights movement,” Mr. Chavarria, 54, said. “She used to sneak out of the house and ride to Huron through the crop fields to see my father.” And then unexpectedly, in July 1967, “little Willy came along.”

In order to understand Willy Chavarria and his decades-long rise through the ranks of fashion, first as a journeyman designer for mass-market labels like Joe Boxer, Ralph Lauren and American Eagle to the founding in 2015 of a critically lauded indie label and his surprise hire early this year as a senior vice president at Calvin Klein, it helps to understand his origins.

A queer man of mixed race, a son of ***working-class*** folk, Mr. Chavarria may be the most highly placed Latino currently at work on the creative end of the American fashion industry. Though not yet a household name, he soon should be, say industry experts familiar with Mr. Chavarria’s outsize gifts and unusual career.

“He’s obviously a huge talent,” Karla Martinez de Salas, the editor of Vogue Mexico, said recently. “But it’s in terms of representation that his appointment is an even a bigger deal.”

Mexican American herself, Ms. Martinez related a story of growing up in El Paso, where she passed a large part of her childhood trying to “fit into” an Anglo-dominated culture, one that expected people like her to alter themselves to conform to Eurocentric beauty ideals. “Growing up a slightly dark-skinned kid, a Latina, in the U.S., there was nothing speaking to us,” she said.

“And before Oscar, Narciso and Carolina came along, there was nothing at all,” Ms. Martinez added, referring to Oscar de la Renta, Narciso Rodriguez and Carolina Herrera — Americans of, respectively, Dominican, Cuban and Venezuelan ancestry. And before Mr. Chavarria, there wasn’t anything at the commercial or street level to speak to the complexities of a Latino population that Census Bureau figures put at over 60 million, a group that defies any attempt to reduce or define it according to monolithic stereotypes.

“The potential effect of having someone who understands all of our dualities at a label as influential as Calvin is just incredible,” Ms. Martinez said.

Jess Lomax, the creative director for global design at Calvin Klein, was a senior creative director at Nike before she was named in late 2020 to help right a listing corporate behemoth. “Willy was an obvious hire, one of the very first additions I made,” Ms. Lomax said.

“I’d followed him for some time,” she added, citing among his many strengths Mr. Chavarria’s solid formalism, adventurous play with proportion, rootedness in his own culture and lifelong embrace of diversity in all its dispersions.

As much as anything, it was his democratic vision of fashion that attracted her to Mr. Chavarria, said Ms. Lomax, who is seeking to radically recast the corporate vision of a premier American label, one that somehow [*lost its way under the direction of the Belgian designer Raf Simons*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/21/fashion/raf-simons-out-at-calvin-klein.html).

“Beauty, cultural relevance, how a product connects to a customer — all of that is so, so important,” Ms. Lomax said. “Willy brings all of that.”

Case in point: Mr. Chavarria’s quiet role in devising Kanye West’s Yeezy Gap collaboration, created over a two-year period during which, despite the travel restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 virus, Mr. Chavarria commuted regularly from Copenhagen, where he lives with his husband, David Ramirez, a vice-president at the Danish Pandora jewelry company, to Mr. West’s ranch in Cody, Wyo., and his compound in Calabasas, Calif.

Though Mr. Chavarria is tight-lipped about what part he played in forming the collection, referring to himself modestly as a “consultant,” anyone familiar with his work can detect his hand in designs like the collarless $200 “round jacket” puffer Mr. West teased on Instagram in June and that sold out so quickly that examples are now being offered for as much as [*$1,500 on Grailed*](https://www.grailed.com/listings/22514923-gap-x-kanye-west-yeezy-x-gap-round-jacket) and other websites.

“One of the genius gifts Kanye has is that he is constantly scouring the world for talent,” said Mr. Chavarria, whom Mr. West contacted in 2018 after spotting a review of a Chavarria show at New York Fashion Week: Men’s that the designer had staged in the beer-scented hallways and back rooms of the venerable gay leather bar, the Eagle, which opened for business in 1970.

As in prior shows that overtly explored themes of immigration, gender dysphoria, ableism and other hot-button issues, Mr. Chavarria fused dimensions of his own cultural experience growing up in California to those of fragile, if historically disfavored, subcultures like gay practitioners of BDSM.

Taking aspects of “lowrider style,” like crisp oversize shirts, their shoulders dropped and ornamented with ruching; or skirt-wide khakis he termed “cholo pants” and then cinched with karate obis; or tracksuits with satin inlays shown under studded biker jackets and accessorized with gnarly studded belts or leather Muir caps no self-respecting leather daddy would be seen without, he produced results that were as starkly beautiful as they were original and unexpected.

“I wanted to use from my past the beautiful things that emerged when I was growing up around Chicano culture,” Mr. Chavarria said then. He seamlessly married those tropes to stylistic elements of a scene he may never have participated in but had long admired from afar.

Mr. Chavarria cast that show, titled “Cruising,” as he has each successive one since he incorporated, with an array of models drawn both from inside the industry and far outside its customary reach. Take a casting for his next show, “Cut Deep,” which was inspired by delivery men, he said, and is set to take place on Sept. 8 at a storied barbershop on [*Astor Place*](https://www.nytimes.com/1996/07/28/nyregion/l-astor-place-stylists-weren-t-forced-out-865583.html).

For this show he instructed his casting director, Brent Chua, to send out a call for young guys with, yes, agency representation, but also ordinary types with the sort of everyday beauty few bother to notice because, as Mr. Chavarria said, “nobody bothers to look up at the DoorDash guy.”

“I’d been in the business so long before I went out on my own that the point became not so much seeing how much volume you could sell, but how much beauty you could create,” said Mr. Chavarria, whose Joe Boxer days were governed by sales goals rather far more than design. “It was how many banana print boxers do we need to sell.”

That he intends, at his own label and at Calvin Klein, to build something culturally reparative could be sensed from the responses of the hopefuls that turned up for the casting: construction workers and musicians and street-scouted newcomers, few of whom had considered themselves beautiful, let alone marketable to the restrictive sphere of fashion, as it turned out.

They were men like Elias Priddie, 24, a soulful-looking day-laborer and sometime bare-knuckle boxer from the Bronx, who “never even thought I could be good-looking,” as he explained. They were men like Chachi Martinez, 28, one of Mr. Chavarria’s designated muses, “a total sweetheart, though he does look kind of scary,” as the designer said, owing to Mr. Martinez’s abundant SoCal gang-style tattoos.

Or they were lanky types like Antonio Macek, 20, a longhaired former amateur hurdler of Black and Czech ancestry who had grown up being termed either too pretty or plain ugly or told he was weird. “I was looked at as different because I didn’t look like a normal person,” Mr. Macek said.

“There are so many ways in this world in which we are kept, or we keep ourselves, from being beautiful,” said Mr. Chavarria, who has held onto a SoHo apartment, as much as anything for its easy access to Tompkins Square Park in the East Village, one of the last bastions, in a fast-homogenizing city, of racial and gender diversity.

“There’s this really damaging loss of psychic and even physical territory if the culture never gives you any confirmation of your type of beauty,” Mr. Chavarria said.

Imagine, said Corey Stokes, the fashion director of Highsnobiety, that one’s daily experience resembled that of Mr. Macek, the ex-athlete told all his life he looked strange. “I get chills when I think about being in the most impressionable years of your life and not being represented,” Mr. Stokes said. “Not thinking of yourself as anyone’s idea of beauty: think how that shapes the way you see yourself and your entire future.”

Steven Kolb, the chief executive of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, recalls that when he was introduced to Mr. Chavarria, he was first struck by his experience with other commercial brands, an important element in a field that tends to attract creative people with no business experience. It was only after Mr. Kolb invited the designer to show under the CFDA’s big tent in 2015, soon after Mr. Chavarria went into business for himself, that he understood his true mettle.

Mr. Kolb’s decision was to prove controversial, as he soon found, when the designer mounted shows featuring models of all genders or none in particular, well before such castings had become routine industry practice; showed his work on models in cages built to symbolize the plight of border detainees; and cast undocumented immigrants to walk the runway in his shows.

“What struck me, though, was that Willy’s commitment to culture and cause or purpose was equally or if not of greater importance to him than commercial success,” Mr. Kolb said. “His purpose is standing for something beside the clothes. Sometimes when you hear that from designers, it doesn’t feel authentic. It feels like marketing. But that is not the case with him.”

This above all is why having someone like Mr. Chavarria step into “such a huge role” at one of the most widely distributed and potentially influential labels in the world is so significant, Highsnobiety’s Mr. Stokes explained.

“It is a giant step in the direction of making sure that people are seen. That is a huge thing, though keep in mind it’s not the only thing. Consumers don’t only want to be ‘seen’ in some marketing sense. They want to feel as if they are actually being considered.”

The ability to deliver on that notion is what Mr. Chavarria found most “magical” about being offered a top job at Calvin Klein. “When you think about how Calvin Klein succeeded, what was it?” he said. “Sure, he made sales, but his real genius was understanding image and how to include people in something that took them beyond themselves.”

PHOTOS: Top, Willy Chavarria, center, and his crew, from left, Elias Priddie, Marco Castro, Chachi Martinez, Macus Correa, Elias Zepeda, Veskananda Naratama and Noe Zepeda. Above, left and below, looks from his 2018 and 2019 collections. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ISAK TINER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JOHN TAGGART FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; VINCENT TULLO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 13, 2021

**End of Document**



[***They're Not Feeling The 'Summer of Joy'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6330-K641-JBG3-600H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 6, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Science Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1773 words

**Byline:** By Andrew Jacobs

**Body**

A largely unmasked nation will celebrate the nation's return to near-normalcy this weekend with a ticker-tape parade in New York City, a dazzling fireworks display over the Washington Monument and countless Independence Day gatherings in cities and towns across the country.

''A summer of freedom. A summer of joy,'' is how the White House tried to promote a new national mood in a letter encouraging local officials to hold public events during the July 4th holiday.

And in most parts of the country, Americans have reason to cheer, with more than half of those over 12 fully vaccinated, state after state lifting all emergency restrictions and caseloads decreasing by double-digits week over week. Families are traveling again, diners are flocking to restaurants and baseball is back as America's seasonal pastime.

But the summer is turning out to be fairly joyless in places like CoxHealth Medical Center in Springfield, Mo., where nurses, doctors and respiratory therapists have been grappling with a resurgence in coronavirus cases that forced the hospital to reopen the 80-bed Covid unit it had shuttered in May.

Dr. Terrence Coulter, a critical care specialist at CoxHealth, said he and his colleagues were stunned to find themselves back in the trenches after the briefest of respites. ''With everyone masked, you learn to read the emotions in your co-workers' eyes,'' he said. ''They're weary and they're also disappointed that the country has started the end zone dance before we cross the goal line. The truth is we're fumbling the ball before we even get there.''

America's health care workers are in crisis, even in places that have had sharp declines in coronavirus infections and deaths. Battered and burned out, they feel unappreciated by a nation that lionized them as Covid heroes but often scoffed at mask mandates and refused to follow social distancing guidelines. Many of those same Americans are now ignoring their pleas to get vaccinated.

Doctors and nurses are also overworked, thanks to chronic staffing shortages made worse by a pandemic that drove thousands from the field. Many are struggling with depression and post-traumatic stress; others are mourning at least 3,600 colleagues who won't be around for the celebrations.

''People don't realize what it was like to be on the front lines and risking your own safety without adequate protective gear while dealing with so much death,'' said Mary Turner, a registered nurse in Minneapolis who was unable to comfort her own father as he lay dying alone of Covid in a nursing home in the early days of the pandemic. A few months later, she found herself sobbing uncontrollably in a hospital room as she held up a phone so a man could say goodbye to his father. ''A lot of us are still dealing with PTSD,'' she said.

In recent weeks, a familiar sense of dread has returned to emergency rooms across the South and Mountain West as the more transmissible Delta variant gained traction among the unvaccinated, fueling a jump in hospitalizations. In Missouri alone, caseloads increased more than 40 percent from two weeks earlier; at CoxHealth where Dr. Coulter works, the Delta variant comprised 93 percent of all cases last week, he said.

Dr. Clay Smith, an emergency room doctor who travels between two distant hospitals in South Dakota and Wyoming, said he worried about his children, who are both too young to get inoculated. ''It's really disconcerting to work in a community where people are doing so little to protect themselves and others from the virus,'' Dr. Smith said.

With fewer than a third of adults in the counties served by the hospitals fully vaccinated, he has been treating a small but steady stream of Covid patients, some of whom insist the coronavirus is a hoax even as they struggle to breathe. ''People think they are exercising their rights by refusing to get vaccinated, but in reality they're exposing themselves and others to risk,'' Dr. Smith said.

Some health care workers are also refusing to get jabbed. Last month, 153 employees at the Houston Methodist hospital system resigned or were terminated after they refused to abide by a policy requiring all staff to be vaccinated against Covid. Similar standoffs over vaccine mandates will most likely multiply as hospitals across the country embrace similar policies.

In interviews, nearly two dozen health care providers expressed a range of conflicting emotions: Elation over how quickly the vaccines were created and relief that the pandemic's darkest days are in the past, but fear that the large number of unvaccinated Americans could lead to localized outbreaks that persist for the foreseeable future.

Few are in a celebratory mood.

Deborah Burger, co-president of National Nurses United, a union that represents 170,000 registered nurses, said the revelries planned for the Fourth of July weekend felt ill-conceived and tone deaf, and not just because the pandemic continues to claim hundreds of lives a day.

Nurses, she said, face a welter of indignities at work. Dire staff shortages are preventing many from taking much-needed vacations, and some hospitals are still requiring employees to reuse disposable N95 masks even though supply chain bottlenecks have eased. Then there is the open hostility from patients who have spent months steeped in right-wing commentary and conspiracy theories that have turned health workers into adversaries.

''I've been in the field for 45 years and I've never seen things this bad,'' said Ms. Burger, who is a registered nurse. ''It's really frustrating and dispiriting that the pandemic has been turned into a political event, rather than a public health crisis, and it's health care workers who are left to deal with the aftermath.''

The pandemic continues to vex hospitals and their employees, often in unexpected ways. Dr. Mara Windsor, an emergency room doctor in Phoenix, rarely sees Covid patients these days, but she said an alarming shortage of nurses had gummed up the admissions process, forcing patients to wait upward of eight hours before they can be seen by a doctor. The problem is shared by hospitals across the city.

Infuriated patients, she said, often scream at her; others will storm out before they can be treated. ''It's very anxiety provoking to have 30 patients in the lobby and not being able to take them because we have no nurses,'' said Dr. Windsor, who has been forced to scale back her hours and take a pay cut because of the drop off in admissions. ''What if someone has a heart attack? The whole environment has become really challenging.''

The conflict over vaccines has complicated, and sometimes curdled, the relationship between patients and health care providers. As a woman of color well aware of the systemic racism in American health care, Dr. Mati Hlatshwayo Davis, an infectious disease doctor in St. Louis, said she was sympathetic to the vaccine-hesitant but that she sometimes struggled to contain her frustration, especially given that her sisters in South Africa had little hope of getting the shots any time soon.

''There are moments of overwhelming joy when seeing patients I know who survived Covid, but then I'll treat multiple members of a family with Covid or we will have to intubate someone and you can't help but think this was preventable,'' she said. ''It's heartbreaking, but we're also really, really tired.''

Dr. Teena Chopra, the medical director of infection prevention and hospital epidemiology at the Detroit Medical Center, takes a no-nonsense approach with the Covid patients she treats, most of them increasingly young. Although caseloads across the state have dropped significantly since a calamitous third surge ended in April, only 51 percent of adults in Michigan have received one vaccine dose. In Detroit, that figure is 40 percent.

The interactions she has with Covid patients, many of them African American, often leave her shaken. She recalled a recent exchange with a woman in her 40s who was struggling to breathe. When Dr. Chopra asked whether she had been vaccinated, the woman shook her head defiantly between gasps, insisting that the vaccines were more harmful than the virus. The patient later died.

''It leaves me angry, frustrated and sad,'' Dr. Chopra said. ''These nonbelievers will never accept our viewpoint, and the result is that they are putting others at risk and overwhelming the health care system.''

The emotional fallout of the last 16 months takes many forms, including a spate of early retirements and suicides among health care providers. Dr. Mark Rosenberg, an emergency room doctor at St. Joseph's University Medical Center in Paterson, N.J., a predominantly ***working class***, immigrant community that was hit hard by the pandemic, sees the toll all around him.

He recently found himself comforting a fellow doctor who blamed himself for infecting his in-laws. They died four days apart. ''He just can't get past the guilt,'' Dr. Rosenberg said.

At a graduation party for the hospital's residents two weeks ago -- the emergency department's first social gathering in nearly two years -- the DJ read the room and decided not to play any music, Dr. Rosenberg said. ''People in my department usually love to dance but everyone just wanted to talk, catch up and get a hug.''

Dr. Rosenberg, who is also president of the American College of Emergency Physicians, is processing his own losses. They include his friend, Dr. Lorna Breen, who took her own life in the first months of the pandemic and whose death has inspired federal legislation that seeks to address suicide and burnout among health care professionals.

Most of the suffering goes unseen or unacknowledged. Dr. Rosenberg compared the hidden trauma to what his father, a World War II veteran, experienced after the hostilities ended.

''My dad didn't like to talk about the war but once in a while he did and what he said was that so many of his fellow soldiers died after they came home,'' he said. ''We would now describe this as PTSD, and I see the same thing happening among health care workers.''

Dr. Rosenberg said he had mixed feelings about the festivities planned for July 4. He is proud of the camaraderie and self-sacrifice he witnessed among colleagues who bravely faced down a deadly virus, but he is uncomfortable with the expression ''health care heroes,'' especially given the widespread resistance to vaccinations.

''We're ready to stand shoulder to shoulder again and face whatever comes our way,'' he said. ''But to be honest, we're wiped out and we just want society to show us that we really are appreciated -- by getting vaccinated.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/health/covid-nurses-doctors-burnout.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/health/covid-nurses-doctors-burnout.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Right, Dr. Mati Hlatshwayo Davis, an infectious disease physician in St. Louis

below, Dr. Terrence Coulter, a critical care specialist at CoxHealth in Springfield, Mo., where coronavirus cases are rising

bottom, Mary Turner, a nurse in Minneapolis who lost her father to Covid-19 early in the pandemic. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEETA SATAM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

CAROLINE YANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 6, 2021

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[***Sanders Is Going For Broke***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC4-YMR1-JBG3-6058-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 6, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 911 words

**Byline:** By Paul Krugman

**Body**

Is maximalism the best political strategy?

Few political movements have experienced as quick and dramatic a fall from grace as what happened to the Sanders campaign between the Nevada caucuses and Super Tuesday. Over the course of 10 days Bernie Sanders went from the presumptive Democratic nominee to a very long shot.

In fact, things have gotten so bad that Sanders is running an ad that attempts to portray him as best buddies with former President Barack Obama.

Fact checkers have pointed out that the ad is deeply misleading. It jumbles together things Obama said over the course of a decade and leaves out important context.

But a frame-by-frame analysis actually understates how disingenuous it is for Sanders to try to tie himself to Obama. For Sandersism, as a philosophy, is all about rejecting Obamaism. That is, it's about refusing to accept incremental, half-a-loaf-is-better-than-none politics and demanding go-for-broke maximalism instead.

The thing is, there is a case for the Sanders critique of Obama. But Sanders should own that critique, not pretend that he never made it.

So what is this debate about? It's not about values, although Sanders and those around him have a bad habit of suggesting that anyone who questions their political strategy is a corrupt tool of the oligarchy. Obama was, and Joe Biden is, clearly in favor of progressive goals such as universal health coverage and reduced income inequality.

But Obama pursued those goals via incremental changes. Obamacare was designed to expand health coverage while doing as little as possible to disrupt the lives of people who already had health insurance. Obama raised taxes on the wealthy more than most people realize -- by 2016 the average federal tax rate on the 1 percent was almost as high as it was pre-Reagan -- but he did so quietly, without much populist rhetoric.

In the Sanders view, this incremental, low-key approach reflected a failure of nerve (or perhaps corruption by the ''establishment''). Obama should have gone the whole way and (somehow) enacted Medicare for All. He should have made a frontal assault on inequality, with much bigger tax hikes for ''millionaires and billionaires.''

And to be fair, I actually agree that Obama was much too cautious on some fronts. Back in 2009 I was very publicly tearing my hair out over the obvious inadequacy of Obama's economic stimulus, which I predicted (correctly) would be a political disaster, because the failure to achieve dramatic results would play into Republican hands. And I believe that Obama could have gotten much more if he had been willing to use reconciliation to bypass the filibuster, the way Republicans did in ramming through the 2017 tax cut.

I was also very unhappy, in real time, when Obama began echoing Republican arguments for fiscal austerity despite continuing high unemployment.

And I still believe that Obama could and should have taken a couple of big banks into temporary receivership as the price of being bailed out. Obama definitely showed too much respect for the bankers who got us into the financial crisis in the first place.

But Sanders isn't making a selective case, arguing that Obama should have been more aggressive on some fronts. He's arguing for a maximalist agenda on all fronts: complete elimination of private health insurance and a vast expansion of government programs that would require major tax increases on the middle class as well as the wealthy.

The political theory behind this maximalism is an assertion that a bold populist program would transform the electoral landscape, winning over white ***working-class*** voters and bringing a surge of new voters, all of this on a scale sufficient both to win a smashing victory in November and to intimidate centrist members of Congress into accepting radical proposals.

There is, unfortunately, no evidence to support this political theory; in particular, the promised surge in young voters failed to materialize on Super Tuesday. So Sandersism is looking more than a bit like Green Lanternism -- a belief that political miracles can be achieved by sheer force of will.

Of course, many Sanders supporters will claim that I'm only saying this because I'm in the pay of billionaires, or something.

In any case, we need to be clear about the nature of the argument in what remains of the Democratic primary contest. Again, it's not about values: Democrats as a group have become far more progressive than they were, and even a ''centrist'' like Biden is advocating policies, like a major expansion of Obamacare, that would have been considered pretty far left not long ago.

That said, I do worry that if Biden becomes president he will compromise too easily; progressives will have to hold his feet to the fire, and make sure that incrementalism doesn't turn into pre-emptive surrender.

Sanders, however, despite his last-minute attempts to link himself to Obama, is committed to a strategy of maximalism, without compromise. I understand that strategy's emotional appeal, especially to his young supporters. But everything we know suggests that a progressive who insists on going for broke will end up, well, broke.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/opinion/bernie-sanders-obama.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/opinion/bernie-sanders-obama.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Obama and Bernie Sanders at the White House in June 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Zach Gibson for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

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[***If You Want Real Change, Don't Vote for Sanders***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YBY-8071-DXY4-X1KX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 5, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 26

**Length:** 906 words

**Byline:** By Nicholas Kristof

**Body**

Sanders's grand hopes won't come true.

If you want to oust President Trump this fall and then achieve far-reaching changes such as universal health care, whom should you vote for?

Until last week, the answer for many was Bernie Sanders, the champion of a ''political revolution'' that includes Medicare for All. But increasingly there's a sense that in practice the real ''change candidate'' may be Joe Biden -- because he has a better chance of winning the presidency and helping to elect a Democratic Congress -- and that's why he was the big winner on Super Tuesday.

This was a triumph of pragmatism, an embrace by voters of a candidate they like rather than one they love, and that's why Biden is now apparently the Democratic front-runner.

''I'm here to report that we are very much alive,'' Biden announced after his Super Tuesday victories. Until South Carolina voters weighed in on Saturday, people were checking his campaign to see if rigor mortis was setting in.

Angry Bernie voters may protest furiously that it was the ''establishment'' that revived Biden to seize a prize that seemed theirs. But that's wrong. Biden's rescuers weren't party elders but a marginalized constituency that is often taken for granted: Southern blacks.

It was black voters who gave Biden a huge win in South Carolina on Saturday, reviving his fortunes and clarifying his role as the alternative to Sanders. It obviously helped that Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar exited the race and, along with Beto O'Rourke, endorsed Biden in time for Super Tuesday (and Klobuchar may end up Biden's running mate, while Buttigieg could end up in a Biden cabinet). But this wasn't a coronation; it was a groundswell among moderates fearful that a Sanders nomination would be a Republican dream.

We in the pundit world are awful at predictions, and we should all be humbled by the conventional wisdom of 2016 that Trump was unelectable. Still, Sanders is the single most liberal member of the Senate, according to GovTrack, and old-timers remember what happened to Barry Goldwater on the right and George McGovern on the left. Democratic members of the House -- who presumably know something about their own districts -- say that it would be harder for them to win with Sanders at the top of the ticket.

At a dinner with a dozen Democratic House members recently, I was struck by how worried some were that a Sanders nomination would cost them any chance of a Democratic Senate and might even hand the House itself back to Republicans.

I'm closer to some of Sanders's positions than to Biden's, and I particularly admire Sanders's leadership and authenticity on human rights issues like Yemen. But I don't think Sanders would be able to accomplish his aims as president any more than he has been able to as a senator (he was a primary sponsor of only seven bills that became law, and they are mostly insignificant items, such as naming post offices or designating ''Vermont Bicentennial Day'').

What the Democrats need to stage a revolution, or even a healthy evolution, is to win not only the presidency but also the House and the Senate. Democrats flipped the House in 2018 with moderate candidates running on a practical, limited agenda, while progressives running in swing districts did poorly, and that's a lesson for 2020.

Winning the Senate for Democrats got tougher with Roy Moore's defeat in the Republican primary in Alabama on Tuesday, for Moore would have made it easier for Senator Doug Jones, a Democrat, to be re-elected. The betting markets suggest that Republicans have a better chance of winning the House than the Democrats do the Senate.

Republicans sometimes seemed giddy about the prospect of a Sanders nomination. Trump's tweets suggested that he was terrified of Biden and Mike Bloomberg, and it's no accident that Republicans were calling for investigations into the Biden family rather than into allegations about the Sanders family and Burlington College.

In Arizona, when Senator Martha McSally tried to discredit her Democratic rival, Mark Kelly, her strategy was to release an ad accusing him of being a ''Bernie Bro.'' Being a ''Biden Bro'' conjures something less frightening.

Biden is plodding and uncharismatic, but he has solid ***working-class*** credentials and he's also one of the most decent people in politics. His empathy is hard-won from the pain of the loss of two children. Samantha Power, the former ambassador to the United Nations, says Biden would give out his private cellphone number to strangers who had suffered great personal loss, saying: If you feel low and have no place to turn, call me.

I think the Democrats with Biden have a good chance of winning the presidency, holding the House and perhaps taking the Senate. An economic slowdown seems likely because of the coronavirus, which also highlights Trump's administrative incompetence. And Republican rhetoric about Democrats as socialists -- the theme of CPAC this year was ''America vs. Socialism'' -- is laughable if Biden is on top of the ticket.

So while Biden's proposals aren't as soaring as Sanders's, nor as comprehensive as I would like, they strike me as more achievable. In that sense, Biden may be the real candidate of change.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/04/opinion/biden-2020-election.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/04/opinion/biden-2020-election.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Joe Biden thanking supporters on Super Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Josh Haner/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 5, 2020

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[***Why Biden Is the Change Candidate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YBS-FWH1-JBG3-62G7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 4, 2020 Wednesday 12:16 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 923 words

**Byline:** Nicholas Kristof

**Highlight:** Sanders’s grand hopes won’t come true.

**Body**

Sanders’s grand hopes won’t come true.

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PHOTO: Joe Biden thanking supporters on Super Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Josh Haner/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

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[***Trump Fulfills His Promises on Abortion, and to Evangelicals***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YV5-R651-DXY4-X428-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 6, 2020 Wednesday 10:01 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 963 words

**Byline:** Michael Tackett

**Highlight:** President Trump, through his appointment of judges who oppose abortion rights and his graphic language, is again speaking a language that evangelicals embrace.

**Body**

WASHINGTON — Richard Land, a prominent evangelical Christian leader, said he could pinpoint the moment that Donald J. Trump secured his election. It was in the third presidential debate with Hillary Clinton, and the question was about [*abortion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/06/us/politics/young-republicans-trump.html).

“If you go with what Hillary is saying in the ninth month, you can take the baby and rip the baby out of the womb of the mother just prior to the birth of the baby,” Mr. Trump said.

That emotive, visceral answer, Mr. Land said, was probably enough to win over skeptical ***working-class*** Catholic voters in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, who at that moment found an unlikely champion in [*Mr. Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/06/us/politics/young-republicans-trump.html) on the single issue that would determine their choice and deliver the White House to Mr. Trump.

“The relationship that evangelicals have with President Trump is a very transactional one,” said Mr. Land, who serves on a spiritual advisory board to the president. “They feel like their voices are heard and he is keeping their promises to them.”

Mr. Land said that Mr. Trump, far more than Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, an evangelical himself, has given evangelicals a place at the table and a welcome at the White House.

As he enters his re-election campaign, Mr. Trump, through his appointment of judges who oppose abortion rights, [*including to the Supreme Court*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/06/us/politics/young-republicans-trump.html), and his equally graphic language about late-term abortions, is again speaking a language that evangelicals embrace.

The issue has taken on renewed prominence after the [*Alabama Legislature passed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/06/us/politics/young-republicans-trump.html) one of the nation’s most restrictive abortion laws, drawing fierce opposition from Democratic opponents and presidential candidates seeking to challenge Mr. Trump.

The president must maintain evangelicals’ committed backing to win a second term, and has clearly decided that he will try to frame the election as part of a culture war, even as he talks about the strength of the economy. By speaking so directly of his opposition to abortion, Mr. Trump is putting himself squarely on one side of perhaps the nation’s most divisive social issue.

It is a side that he only recently occupied. For much of his life, Mr. Trump favored abortion rights.

In a 1999 interview on NBC’s “Meet the Press,” he described himself as “very pro-choice,” though he also said he “hated” abortion. Mr. Trump said that his views on abortion were shaped in part by living in Manhattan, where abortion rights are overwhelmingly favored.

He has moved decisively to the other side, and has started to emphasize the issue at his rallies and during other political speeches. On April 2, during a speech to the National Republican Congressional Committee, Mr. Trump took credit for introducing the term “rip” into the debate.

“You can rip the baby out of the womb and kill the baby,” he said, incorrectly describing the medical procedure.

Mr. Trump has also repeatedly reminded his supporters of the conservative judges he has appointed to the federal bench as abortion cases make their way through the federal courts.

“Sadly, on immigration and so many other issues, Democrat lawmakers have totally abandoned the American mainstream,” Mr. Trump said this year at the Conservative Political Action Conference convention. “But that’s going to be good for us in 2020. They’re embracing open borders, socialism and extreme late-term abortion.”

Mr. Trump started to lay the foundation for making abortion a signal issue in the campaign during his State of the Union address in February, though in much less florid language. “To defend the dignity of every person, I am asking the Congress to pass legislation to prohibit the late-term abortion of children who can feel pain in the mother’s womb,” he said.

“Let us work together to build a culture that cherishes innocent life,” he added. “And let us reaffirm a fundamental truth: All children — born and unborn — are made in the holy image of God.”

Mr. Trump also solidified his support among evangelicals with the selection of Vice President Mike Pence, who has deep roots in that world, Mr. Land said, calling the vice president the “24-karat-gold standard” among them.

While Mr. Trump’s rhetoric has escalated of late, he has at times been more equivocal, especially when pressed on whether he wanted to see Roe v. Wade overturned.

Shortly after his election, in an interview with “60 Minutes,” Mr. Trump was asked if he was looking to appoint a Supreme Court justice who wanted to overturn the landmark decision legalizing abortion.

“So, look, here’s what’s going to happen — I’m going to — I’m pro-life. The judges will be pro-life,” he said.

“But having to do with abortion, if it ever were overturned, it would go back to the states,” he added.

He was then asked if he thought it would be acceptable that women might have to travel to another state to have an abortion. He replied: “Well, we’ll see what happens. It’s got a long way to go, just so you understand. That has a long, long way to go.”

Mr. Trump has said that he changed his views on abortion when a couple he knew decided against an abortion and he later met their child.

“It was a personal change,” Mr. Trump told a conservative radio host. “And, you know, Ronald Reagan made that personal change, too. Many people have made the personal change. I mean, some make the personal change the other way, also.”

PHOTOS: Richard Land, head of the Southern Evangelical Seminary, said President Trump won over evangelicals during a debate with Hillary Clinton, at left, when he criticized her stance on abortion. Mr. Land said that evangelicals “feel like their voices are heard.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK HUMPHREY/ASSOCIATED PRESS; DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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* [*Alabama Aims Squarely at Roe, but the Supreme Court May Prefer Glancing Blows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/06/us/politics/young-republicans-trump.html)

1. [*Lawmakers Vote to Effectively Ban Abortion in Alabama*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/06/us/politics/young-republicans-trump.html)

**Load-Date:** May 6, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Turkey’s Coffeehouses, a Hub of Male Social Life, May Not Survive Virus; Istanbul Dispatch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61HP-6GM1-DXY4-X13D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 15, 2020 Tuesday 12:28 EST

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**Byline:** Carlotta Gall

**Highlight:** Coffeehouses, mainstays of Turkish neighborhoods for centuries, are suffering under pandemic restrictions — particularly a ban on games. Regulars fear losing “our jokes, our laughter.”

**Body**

Coffeehouses, mainstays of Turkish neighborhoods for centuries, are suffering under pandemic restrictions — particularly a ban on games. Regulars fear losing “our jokes, our laughter.”

ISTANBUL — For years, Varan Suzme has frequented the Kiral Coffeehouse near his home, where men of his Istanbul neighborhood while away hours chatting, sipping from tiny, steaming cups and playing backgammon and cards.

“Every day I used to come here,” said Mr. Suzme, 77, a retired textile salesman. “This is our second home. It’s a place I love, I see my friends, and I am happy and I play games.”

Until the pandemic. A lockdown earlier this year closed coffeehouses across the country, along with bars and restaurants, and when the government allowed them to reopen in June, it forbade the usual games, saying they increased the risk of viral transmission.

Customers, who are mostly middle-aged and retired, stopped coming for fear of the virus, and with games banned, coffeehouse owners saw business dwindle. Even before another lockdown took effect this month, they had been worried that the coronavirus could endanger the survival of many coffeehouses, robbing the country of an essential hub of Turkish life.

A uniquely male preserve, the Turkish coffeehouse is everything from a post office to a social club, fueled by cups of coffee — or these days, as tastes change, tea. In every neighborhood, from Istanbul’s narrow back alleys to the ancient towns spread across the country, it is where men stop on the way to and from work, pensioners meet up and swap gossip, and political parties campaign.

“We miss our friends and playing backgammon,” said Mamuk Katikoy, 70, when he recently came by the Kiral Coffeehouse in the Istanbul neighborhood of Yesilkoy for an interview. “I haven’t seen this man for eight months,” he said, greeting a 90-year-old friend who also stopped by.

Several coffee shop owners complained that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s religiously conservative government was opposed to the games because of their association with gambling, and that the ban was more ideological than hygiene related.

The country was already in an economic downturn when the pandemic hit, and with government help scarce, many businesses have been forced to close for good.

Several famous cafes in the artistic neighborhood of Beyoglu have shut down in recent months. They had introduced Italian espresso to Istanbul society — Simdi Cafe, now closed, was famous for its 1960s-era espresso machine — and came to represent a flowering of Turkey’s intellectual and artistic life.

The traditional Turkish coffeehouse is a more humble affair, where the regulars are mainly ***working-class*** people, playing cards, backgammon and ”okey,” a game similar to rummy, played with numbered tiles. Some coffeehouses charge for running games by the hour, while others just make their money from the drinks they serve.

But without games, business between lockdowns was so poor that most coffeehouses closed or have few patrons. Owners warn that without more government aid they may have to close permanently.

“Our businesses are empty,” said Murat Agaoglu, the head of the Turkey Coffee Houses and Buffets Federation, who predicted that 20 percent of country’s coffeehouses would go out of business.

That could rob Turkey of a mainstay of its communities that is almost as old as coffee drinking itself. The custom spread from Arabia northward to Turkey and on to Europe in the 16th century.

The first coffeehouses in Turkey were founded by two Syrian merchants in the Tahtakale district of what was then called Constantinople, close to the seat of power of the Ottoman Empire and among the teeming alleys of the spice bazaar.

“At that moment, Istanbul was one of the most populous cities in the world,” said Cemal Kafadar, a professor of Turkish Studies at Harvard University. “Imagine the commercial potential of this innovation. There were hundreds of coffeehouses in the city within half a century. And since then, we are able to enjoy the blessed brew of this blessed bean in private or in public.”

The Ottoman sultans’ court embraced coffee drinking. Artisans crafted tiny, delicate cups and slender-necked coffee pots, women began serving coffee to guests in their homes, and the men gathered in the coffeehouses, smoking tobacco in extravagantly long-stemmed pipes. Later the water pipe became fashionable.

The coffeehouses developed into meeting places where men of business socialized, but they also became centers of literary activity and public entertainment. Some had reading rooms or hosted storytellers and puppeteers. Many still bear names that hark back to their Arabic origins, “kahvehane,” meaning a coffeehouse, and “kiraathane,” meaning a reading house.

Inevitably, the coffeehouses became centers for political gossip and activism, as they did across Europe, and were periodically shut down when political agitation rose, Mr. Kafadar said.

Over time they lost their standing in the eyes of the better-educated urban public and gradually became inexpensive haunts for workers. “From the mid-19th century onward, modernizers associated them with idleness and backwardness,” Mr. Kafadar said.

The traditional coffeehouses, regulated by the government, are licensed to sell tea and coffee and other soft drinks, including salep, a popular beverage made from orchid bulbs that dates from Ottoman times.

The drinks and games, together with the prices, are listed on the license which is posted on the coffeehouse wall. Prices are regulated and set low.

They serve traditional Turkish coffee, each cup brewed individually, bitter or sweet to taste, and small glasses of strong black tea. Water pipes are still listed among the offerings, but the government of Mr. Erdogan banned use of them indoors more than a decade ago.

For Guven Kiral, running a coffeehouse has been his life. He inherited his from his father and moved it to new premises in the same neighborhood.

“This place is like my child,” he said. “I have a son, but it is like a second son to me.”

On busy days he would have 60 people playing, he said, but the pandemic has ended that, silencing the shuffle of cards and the sharp click and slap of backgammon pieces.

“If I open, customers come for a tea and they sit for a while, but then they say ‘Sorry, there are no games,’ and they leave,” said Mr. Kiral, who is worried he’ll be forced to close down for good. “We are hurtling downhill. The pandemic has caused us a huge loss.”

He demonstrated his antivirus hygiene regime: spreading disposable tablecloths, breaking out a new deck of cards for every game, and soaking the backgammon counters in detergent. Tables would be widely spaced and even expanded to distance customers from each other, he said.

“The big issue is the ban on games, both for the customers and the people who work in these places,” said Bendevi Palandoken, head of the of the Turkish Chamber of Artisans, which represents owners and workers in 120,000 coffeehouses nationwide. “We want the government to lighten the burden with social security premiums and cash support for people who are breadwinners.”

A flyer on the wall in the Kiral Coffeehouse reads: “We ask the government, don’t we matter to you?”

Mr. Kiral said he would be heartbroken to lose the business.

“For my regulars the first thing will be separation. They will not see people anymore,” he said. “We would lose our jokes, our laughter.”

On a broader level, he said the entire older generation would be penalized. “The cost will be to a certain age group. They will have nowhere to go.”

PHOTOS: Guven Kiral inherited his Istanbul coffeehouse from his father. “This place is like my child,” he said. “I have a son, but it is like a second son to me.” The ban on games such as backgammon and cards has stunted his business. “We are hurtling downhill,” he said.; From left: patrons enjoying outdoor seating at a coffeehouse in Istanbul; an illicit game of “okey,” a popular number game similar to rummy; an open, yet deserted, coffeehouse in the city. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 15, 2020

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[***Virus Throttles Turkey's Coffeehouses, Hubs of Games and Gossip***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61HX-MDB1-DXY4-X31S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 15, 2020 Tuesday

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**Byline:** By Carlotta Gall

**Body**

Coffeehouses, mainstays of Turkish neighborhoods for centuries, are suffering under pandemic restrictions -- particularly a ban on games. Regulars fear losing ''our jokes, our laughter.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/world/europe/turkey-coffeehouse-coronavirus-games.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/world/europe/turkey-coffeehouse-coronavirus-games.html)

**Graphic**

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From left: patrons enjoying outdoor seating at a coffeehouse in Istanbul

an illicit game of ''okey,'' a popular number game similar to rummy

an open, yet deserted, coffeehouse in the city. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 16, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Case for Accepting Defeat on Roe***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60Y8-KYV1-JBG3-61GB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

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**Byline:** Joan C. Williams

**Highlight:** Maybe it is time to face the fact that abortion access will be fought for in legislatures, not courts.

**Body**

Maybe it is time to face the fact that abortion access will be fought for in legislatures, not courts.

In “Unpregnant,” the HBO bildungsroman released this month, the plot revolves around a 17-year-old heroine who travels from [*Missouri to Albuquerque*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) — a road trip of 1,000 miles — because that’s the nearest place she can get an abortion without parental consent. Watching it made me recall a conversation with a feminist friend, who shocked the hell out of me last year by saying that progressives were too focused on protecting [*Roe v. Wade*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/).

Why? The argument is that we currently have the worst of both worlds. We’ve basically lost the abortion fight: If [*Roe*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/)  [*is overturned*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/), access to abortion will depend on where you live — but access to abortion already depends on where you live. At the same time, we have people voting for Donald Trump because he’ll appoint justices who will overturn Roe. Maybe it is time to face the fact that abortion access will be fought for in legislatures, not courts.

I was shocked, but I could see the logic. It’s true that abortion access is already abysmal. The stressful road trip in “Unpregnant” is actually in some ways a best-case scenario; many women seeking abortions aren’t suburban teenagers without economic pressures or family responsibilities. Nearly 60 percent have [*already had one child*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) and nearly half live below the poverty level; some fear they’ll be fired if they take time off, particularly if they need to make two trips, as they must in the 26 states with [*mandatory*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) waiting periods.

The argument that the left has already lost the abortion fight reflects the fact that there’s no abortion clinic in [*90 percent of American counties*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/). This is the result of the highly successful death-by-a-thousand-cuts anti-abortion strategy, which has piled on restriction after restriction to make abortion inaccessible to as many American women as possible.

Chief Justice John Roberts’s concurring opinion this summer in June Medical Services v. Russo — the one that mattered — was hailed as a surprise victory for abortion rights, but not by me. Justice Roberts refused to uphold Louisiana restrictions virtually identical to those the court struck down as unconstitutional just four years earlier, but clearly stated that his reluctance [*was because of his respect for precedent*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/). Anyone with their eyes open could see the justice signaling to abortion opponents to continue the process of eroding Roe v. Wade’s nigh-absolute protection of access to abortion during the first trimester by inventing new types of restrictions, which they have been remarkably creative in doing.

If Judge Amy Coney Barrett becomes the next Supreme Court justice, Justice Roberts’s vote will be irrelevant, anyway. And if things already looked pretty grim, now they look much worse: [*Up to 21 states*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) have passed laws banning or limiting abortions in ways that are currently unconstitutional. Many will go into effect immediately if Roe is fully overturned.

So what should we do now? Often forgotten is that R.B.G. herself had decided that Roe was a mistake. In 1992, she [*gave a lecture*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) musing that the country might be better off if the Supreme Court had written a narrower decision and opened up a “dialogue” with state legislatures, which were trending “toward liberalization of abortion statutes” ([*to quote the Roe*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) [*c*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) [*ourt*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/)). Roe “halted a political process that was moving in a reform direction and thereby, I believe, prolonged divisiveness and deferred stable settlement of the issue,” Justice [*Ginsburg argued*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/). In the process, “a well-organized and vocal right-to-life movement rallied and succeeded, for a considerable time, in turning the legislative tide in the opposite direction.”

What Ginsburg called Roe’s “divisiveness” was instrumental in the rise of the American right, which was flailing until Phyllis Schlafly discovered the galvanizing force of opposition to abortion and the Equal Rights Amendment. Schlafly wrote [*the culture wars*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) playbook that created the odd coupling of the country-club business elite with evangelicals and blue-collar whites. In exchange for business-friendly policies like tax cuts and deregulation, Republicans now allow these groups to control their agenda on religion and abortion. It’s hard to remember now but [*this was not inevitable*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/): abortion was [*not always seen as the partisan issue it is today*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/), [*nor did evangelicals uniformly oppose abortion*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/).

Whether or not R.B.G.’s assessment of Roe was correct, the best tribute we can pay to her is to do what she suggests: open up the kind of dialogue that occurred in Ireland, where young people knocked on grannies’ doors and persuaded them to vote to legalize abortion, which — much to the distress of the Catholic Church — [*they did*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/). (At the same time, activists galvanized to ensure that, [*in the absence of a referendum*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/), women throughout the country would have access to and knowledge about medication abortions.)

I don’t want Roe to be overturned, but if that happens, it could bring political opportunity. The emotional heat that surrounds abortion as an issue manages to obscure that the attitudes driving opposition to abortion actually reveal some surprising common ground with progressives on economic issues.

Non-elites often see elites’ obsession with abortion rights as evidence that they are slaves to ambition who don’t see that “family comes first.” But look closer and one can find embedded in this ideology [*a powerful critique of capitalism*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/): “I think we’ve accepted abortion because we’re a very materialistic society and there is less time for caring,” as one woman told the anthropologist Faye Ginsburg. The [*feminist historian Linda Gordon agreed*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/): Those against abortion “fear a completely individualized society with all services based on cash nexus relationships, without the influence of nurturing women counteracting the completely egoistic principles of the economy.”

I’m still reluctant to embrace the “overrule and move on” strategy, but moving on may be our only choice. And if abortion stops playing such a role in presidential elections, then Democrats may fare better with the [*19 percent of Trump voters*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) who have bipartisan voting habits and warm feelings toward minorities; we know 83 percent of them think the economy is rigged in favor of the rich and 68 percent favor raising taxes on the rich.

Once their presidential vote is not driven by Supreme Court appointments, how many might decide to vote on economic issues? And what greater tribute could there be to R.B.G. than both a legislative restoration of abortion rights, and a new Democratic Party that can win — not just by a hair but by a landslide?

Joan C. Williams is a professor of law at the University of California Hastings College of the Law and the author of “White ***Working Class***.”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://variety.com/2020/film/reviews/unpregnant-review-haley-lu-richardson-1234766450/).

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2021

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[***Finding More Than Humbug in Scrooge and Company; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61HF-7PN1-DXY4-X04H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 13, 2020 Sunday 13:04 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1266 words

**Byline:** Maya Phillips

**Highlight:** This year a critic (and fan) of “A Christmas Carol” finds it especially resonant as a “timely study of what it truly means to be a decent person in a community.”

**Body**

This year a critic (and fan) of “A Christmas Carol” finds it especially resonant as a “timely study of what it truly means to be a decent person in a community.”

When I was younger, I drank in every version of “A Christmas Carol” I could find like they were tumblers of eggnog. Eventually, I became a connoisseur. (I maintain the supremacy of “[*The Muppet Christmas Carol*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E)” and “[*Scrooged*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E),” which I am obligated to watch whenever they’re on TV.)

It isn’t the holly-jolliness that draws me in; I’ve always been intrigued by Scrooge’s scrooginess and the various interpretations of the three ghosts. But this year, as I indulged in a holiday buffet of different productions of “A Christmas Carol,” I found not just a story of redemption and the Christmas spirit but a study of what it truly means to be a decent person in a community. Dickens’s tale, like many of his others, is grounded in progressive politics, and I saw that especially now, in every version I encountered this year, as coronavirus numbers remain high.

This isn’t just about Scrooge; it’s about a society that values profit over humanity, fails to hold its most privileged accountable and refuses to support its most vulnerable.

My first foray this year was a streamable one-man version of “[*A Christmas Carol*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E)” with Jefferson Mays, filmed live without an audience at the United Palace Theater in Manhattan and brilliantly directed by Michael Arden.

In this iteration (based on a 2018 Geffen Playhouse production), Mays takes on 50 roles, with the help of some slick lighting and sound design by Ben Stanton and Joshua D. Reid. His Olympic-level performance gymnastics aren’t all that made this production spark: The very concept of a solo performance gives the misanthropic Scrooge a new dimension. In dexterously switching from Scrooge’s jovial nephew, Fred, to his kindly clerk, Bob Cratchit, to the dastardly Scrooge himself, Mays is embodying one of the text’s central themes: a real and lasting connection to the community.

Some versions of “A Christmas Carol” fail to show much of Scrooge’s world and the people in it, in favor of a sleeker, hyperfocused story. But representing it that way undercuts the political themes. In the Milwaukee Rep’s filmed version of its 2016 [*“Christmas Carol,” directed by Mark Clements*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E), the otherwise very traditional adaptation is punctuated by moments of audience participation.

Jonathan Wainwright, as Scrooge, asks the crowd whether he is imagining his ghosts, requests that onlookers point him in the direction of the next spirit and questions them about how he should proceed. As audience members respond with noises of judgment to his hearty pre-haunting meal of gruel, they take on some responsibility for this man and his redemption. After all, what else is an audience but a community?

I thought of community, too, as I listened to the [*Goodman Theater’s audio adaptation*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E) of Dickens’s story during a walk through Prospect Park. With the Ghost of Christmas Present, Scrooge goes on a tour — unique to this version — of locations around town where ***working-class*** folk are keeping merry while laboring along: Miners join in a chorus of “Silent Night”; two women wish each other “Merry Christmas” within a lighthouse; and crew members on a ship hum carols.

In the park, I swerved on my path as the miners sang, trying to maintain social distance, hopping to the side as a stroller unexpectedly changed direction on the narrow walkway, reminding me with a jolt of my place in the world, as someone accountable for my neighbors.

“Will you decide who shall live and who shall die?” this Ghost of Christmas Present asked Scrooge, a question asked many times this year: Is it those in government who played down the disease, those in law enforcement who disregarded Black lives or those who have put others at risk during the pandemic?

Two other “Christmas Carol” adaptations I watched explicitly took on contemporary issues using very different artistic tools.

[*“Manual Cinema’s Christmas Carol,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E) a gorgeous mixed-media adaptation, features stunning puppetry and animation, and live music and performers. It inlays Dickens’s tale within a story about a woman named Trudy (N. LaQuis Harkins) who grudgingly keeps up the holiday tradition of presenting a “Christmas Carol” puppet show, this time via her computer screen; it was something her cheery, Christmas-loving husband, who died from Covid-19, loved to do.

Trudy, however, is too busy to worry about festive puppets and ugly sweaters. She mentions all the disasters of the year, her jingle-jangle attitude officially gone — and, really, who can blame her?

Like Trudy, the protagonist of the campy musical “[*Estella Scrooge*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E)” — with music and lyrics by Paul Gordon and book by Gordon and John Caird — is a lady boss with no time for sentimentality. Caird directed the cast (which includes such notables as Patrick Page and Lauren Patten) in separate locations; the final product has them presented amid vivid, realistic backgrounds and special effects, along with an overabundance of musical numbers and a muddle of Dickens references.

Beyond these fancy trappings, the rendition (presented by Streaming Musicals) pointedly gestures to how our economic structures fail so many, especially the poor and ill.

Estella (Betsy Wolfe) is the head of Bleak House, a big bad corporation that pinches pennies everywhere it can. Her company won’t even provide proper health insurance to her assistant’s sick child, Tiny Tammy, with its “Silver Dollar Plan.”

When Estella returns to her hometown to put up a strip mall, which requires tearing down a hotel that’s a refuge for the troubled, poor and lost, she says she’s helping the needy help themselves, with new jobs (“food service!” “maintenance!”). It’s a wonder Ayn Rand doesn’t show up. “She’s the oligarchy!” declares a hotel resident who calls Estella a “pickpocket in a pantsuit” … a.k.a., a capitalist.

After all, Estella represents the worst of the United States, where big business takes priority over human life. (When Scrooge tells the tortured ghost of his old partner Jacob Marley that he was a good businessman, the ghost declares, “Business! Mankind is my business!”) In Scrooge I see a whole nation that fails to protect and honor those who live under the thumb of the rich old Ebenezers.

Remember what the Ghost of Christmas Present hid under his luxurious robe? It’s not included in some versions, though it made the cut in most of these. Scrooge spies a gaunt hand that belongs to a child, one of two under the robe, whom the ghost says belong to Scrooge and all of mankind: One is Ignorance. The other is Want. They are our progeny, our plague, and Scrooge shrinks away from them in horror.

This year we have faced our ghosts and reckoned with our responsibility for the people around us. That story is beyond Dickens and Scrooge and beyond the Christmas season — it is now and forever, each of us for the other, if we can hope to someday be merry together.

A Christmas Carol (Geffen Playhouse)

Available through Jan. 3; [*achristmascarollive.com*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E)

A Christmas Carol (Milwaukee Rep)

Available through Dec. 24; [*milwaukeerep.com*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E)

A Christmas Carol (Goodman Theater)

Available through Dec. 31; [*carol.goodmantheatre.org*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E)

Manual Cinema’s Christmas Carol

Through Dec. 20; [*manualcinema.com*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E)

Estella Scrooge

Available at [*estellascrooge.com*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQMJQCizF-E)

PHOTOS: Above, Jefferson Mays plays more than 50 roles in a one-man filmed version of “A Christmas Carol,” from the Geffen Playhouse. Right, Patrick Page, upside down, as the Ghost of Christmas Future in “Estella Scrooge.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES; TYLER MILLIRON)

**Load-Date:** December 16, 2020

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[***Will the Economy Re-elect Trump? Should It?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YB3-HJS1-JBG3-610G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 1, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BU; Column 0; Money and Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 3

**Length:** 908 words

**Byline:** By N. Gregory Mankiw

**Body**

People often vote with their wallets, crediting, or blaming, the president for things that economists say are outside any policymaker's control.

Last year, I was having lunch with a fellow economist who confessed a secret desire. ''I hope the next recession begins soon,'' he said.

''Why?'' I asked, startled.

''Because otherwise we'll get another four years of Donald Trump.''

He had a point. Many people give credit -- or blame -- to the president for the state of the economy. A member of my own family, for example, explained privately why she continues to favor President Trump.

I asked her, ''What has Donald Trump done that you like?''

''The economy is doing great,'' she said.

''Yes, it is, but what has Donald Trump done that you like?''

She gave me a quizzical look. ''He's given us a strong economy.''

I let the matter drop then. The role of lecturing professor is not well suited for family gatherings. But there are three lessons that politicians and voters should keep in mind during this election season.

Lesson 1: The economy really is in good shape.

My relative was right. Despite the stock market decline over the last two weeks, the American economy is doing great. The current expansion is now 128 months old, the longest on record.

Employment is strong: 80.6 percent of prime-age adults -- those 25 to 54 years old -- are working, the highest level since June 2001.

And the jobs pay well. A good measure of real wages is average hourly earnings of production and nonsupervisory workers (that is, excluding the bosses), adjusted for inflation using the personal consumption expenditure index. By this gauge, real wages are up 4 percent over the past three years, putting them at their highest level ever.

To be sure, income inequality is still high, a phenomenon that has been unfolding for several decades. This fact animates some of Mr. Trump's challengers, most notably Senator Bernie Sanders, who often rails against millionaires and billionaires.

But many people are moved more by the state of their own finances than by comparisons with the rich. Take the Great Depression, for example. The income share of the top 1 percent, including realized capital gains, fell to 16 percent in 1932 from 24 percent in 1928. This large move toward greater equality might have made some people feel better, but it did little to assuage the hardship from soaring unemployment.

Conversely, while the stock market gains of the past few years have mainly accrued to the wealthy, they do not undermine the recent improvement in the wage and job picture for ***working-class*** Americans.

Lesson 2: The economy exerts a strong influence on electoral outcomes.

My economist friend was also right. The state of the economy profoundly affects voters.

One person who studies this issue is the Yale economist Ray Fair. He finds that a small number of economic variables, such as growth and inflation, and a small number of political variables, such as incumbency, are good predictors of election results.

According to Mr. Fair's most recent forecast, made at the end of January, Mr. Trump will receive 54.4 percent of the two-party vote in November, which is likely enough for a victory in the Electoral College. Consistent with this forecast, in an average of recent polls, 55.7 percent of voters approved of Mr. Trump's handling of the economy.

But a Trump victory is not inevitable. For one thing, the economy could still turn down, changing the prediction from Mr. Fair's equation. That outcome is possible but unlikely.

Or Mr. Fair's equation may miss this one. After all, it does not predict perfectly. Mr. Trump may be an outlier for election forecasting models, as he is in so many other ways.

Lesson 3: Assigning proper credit for economic conditions is hard.

Perhaps the greatest disagreement between my family member and my lunch companion is over why the economy is booming. Mr. Fair's equation seems to suggest that most voters ascribe the economy's ups and downs to the incumbent president. Most economists, however, are skeptical that a president can be judged so simply.

Are we now experiencing a Trump boom, or a continuation of the recovery that began under President Barack Obama? The right answer is a bit of both and a bit of neither.

Many economic developments are outside any policymaker's control. Some economists stress technological change as a force driving the business cycle. Others look to irrational waves of optimism and pessimism. The impact of the coronavirus on economies around the world is a vivid reminder that shocks can be hard for policymakers to anticipate and address.

Most economists I know judge presidents by their actions rather than by the results that happen to occur under their watch. From this perspective, Mr. Trump's record is mixed at best.

I give him credit for cutting the corporate tax rate to 21 percent, from 35 percent, putting it in line with the average rate in Europe. But his regular fights with the Federal Reserve and America's trading partners are hard to justify, as is his lack of interest in climate change and the exploding government debt.

If voters can be persuaded to focus on the long-term implications of Mr. Trump's actions, the eventual Democratic nominee will have a shot at victory. Otherwise, unless the economy truly falters, the race is Mr. Trump's to lose.

N. Gregory Mankiw is the Robert M. Beren professor of economics at Harvard University.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/28/business/will-economy-re-elect-trump.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/28/business/will-economy-re-elect-trump.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Martin Gee FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2020

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[***The Workhorse***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61H9-52X1-DXY4-X4PC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 13, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 19; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1294 words

**Byline:** By Jeff Shesol

**Body**

CATCHING THE WINDEdward Kennedy and the Liberal HourBy Neal Gabler

By the time Edward Kennedy died, in August 2009, he had represented Massachusetts in the United States Senate for nearly 47 years -- longer than any of his brothers had lived. He was eulogized as one of the most important legislators in American history, an assessment reflecting not only the affection he enjoyed on both sides of the aisle, but also genuine awe at his achievements. Over the course of five decades, Ted Kennedy had sponsored nearly 700 bills that became law, and left his imprint on scores of others. The Voting Rights Act of 1965; the Immigration and Nationality Act of that same year; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 -- all bore his influence or were advanced by his efforts.

None of this was foreordained -- or even all that likely. He was a Kennedy, of course, and Kennedys were born to advantage; but as a child and young man, he was seen within the family not merely as the last of the Kennedy brothers, but the least: the least talented, serious, capable, promising. The press, initially, saw him that way, too. During his first campaign for the Senate, at the age of 30 in 1962, he was derided as President John F. Kennedy's callow kid brother -- a man so obviously unqualified that his election, in the view of The New York Times, could only demean ''the dignity of the Senate and the democratic process.'' Kennedy won that race, and set to work defying expectations. Still, the long, consequential career that followed would to the end remain, in profound ways, a struggle -- against the fates, the tides of history and, in no small part, his own failings.

That struggle and its significance are the subjects of ''Catching the Wind,'' the first installment of a two-volume treatment by Neal Gabler, the author of well-regarded books on Walt Disney and Walter Winchell. Kennedy's expansive life has yielded no shortage of biographies, but Gabler's is on its way toward becoming the most complete and ambitious. As a character study it is rich and insightful, frank in its judgments but deeply sympathetic to the man Gabler regards as ''the most complex of the Kennedys.'' The story of Ted's brother Bobby is typically written in two acts: before and after the assassination of President Kennedy in November 1963. Ted's time at center stage, so much longer than Bobby's, was more varied, consisting of numerous acts, twists, turns and apparent endings -- less a linear progression than, as Gabler describes it, a ''cycle of sin and expiation,'' loss and renewal.

Within weeks of entering office, Kennedy talked about staying there the rest of his life. He adored the Senate's traditions; he adapted quickly to its rhythms and norms. And, to the surprise of many, he was willing to work. John Kennedy had served eight years in the Senate without ever investing much of himself in it; he was -- often visibly -- bored by its slow-moving machinery. But Ted Kennedy relished it: the pressing of levers, the working of gears, the intricate business of cutting a deal. No less important, as Gabler writes, ''there was a joy in him, a great love of people.'' He drew them in -- whether voters back home or the Southern septuagenarians who ran the Senate -- won them over, made them willing, even eager, to support him. He was the most natural politician in his family, a close match in temperament to his grandfather John ''Honey Fitz'' Fitzgerald, who had taught him, Gabler notes, ''what empathy meant.''

''Catching the Wind'' lends a cinematic sweep to Kennedy's legislative crusades -- for example, his failed if noble campaign in 1965 to ban use of the poll tax, that old, racist roadblock to the African-American vote, in state elections. (The 24th Amendment, ratified in 1964, had prohibited its use in federal elections. The year after Kennedy's effort foundered, the Supreme Court ruled the poll tax unconstitutional at the state level.) Gabler makes these battles exciting, though at times he seems intent on making everything exciting; scenes are often over-egged, amped up by incantation: ''And then Ted quoted at length, great length, from a speech, a remarkable speech,'' reads a typical passage. ''Richard Nixon was wounded now, badly wounded, wounded and reeling from his wounds,'' begins another.

The reader needs no such prodding; the drama, as it develops, is real enough. The swiftness with which Ted Kennedy went from being teased by Republicans as ''Little Brother'' to becoming the patriarch of a political dynasty -- the bearer, as he himself put it, of his martyred brothers' ''fallen standard'' -- is unfathomable, however familiar the story remains. In 1968, when Robert was killed in Los Angeles while running for president, Ted was only 36. The pressure upon him to carry forward the campaign was instantaneous: One of Bobby's aides cornered Ted on the flight that carried his brother's body back to New York, pleading, ''You gotta run.'' Kennedy knew himself well enough not to accept a draft -- he was deeply depressed, immobilized by grief. But he had lost control over himself and his future. Tragedy begat tragedy, and Los Angeles led, in some indirect but inexorable fashion, to Chappaquiddick in July 1969. The death of Mary Jo Kopechne in Kennedy's car was, as Gabler writes, ''indelible -- a stain he bore that no amount of penance could erase.''

And Gabler suggests it was more than that. Because Kennedy, he writes, was ''the face and the voice of modern liberalism,'' Chappaquiddick cost liberalism its moral authority -- at a time, the end of the '60s, when that authority was already waning. ''Catching the Wind'' is presented as something of a parable -- ''This book,'' Gabler states, ''is about political morality'' -- but the concept never quite coheres. By ''political morality,'' the author seems to mean, exclusively, a concern for the ''voiceless and powerless,'' as Kennedy often put it. There is no discussion of its conservative counterpoint, that system of belief that saw abortion and homosexuality, for example, as morally intolerable and the death penalty as defensible. Instead, Kennedy's foil, in Gabler's account, is the amoral Nixon and his politics of resentment and racial division. This is accurate enough in itself, but less than the full story that the book aims to tell. The decline of liberalism, in any event, had at least as much to do with economic stagnation as it did with moral authority or the imperfections of liberal apostles.

Kennedy, for his part, felt the winds shifting. In the wake of Bobby's death and Chappaquiddick, as the book describes, he redoubled his commitment to be ''the senator of all those in need.'' Yet the book ends with Kennedy on the run from a rock-throwing mob in his own hometown of Boston, which, in 1974, had exploded over the busing of Black students into overwhelmingly white school districts. ''You're a disgrace to the Irish!'' a protester shouted, one of the milder comments that day. Never mind that Kennedy was not a particularly strong proponent of busing; what the crowd made clear, as Gabler writes in a powerful closing, was that ''he was no longer one of them.'' To the white ***working class*** from which the Kennedys had risen, Ted was now ''just another condescending liberal who favored minority rights over their rights.'' As Gabler's next volume will no doubt describe, Kennedy's response was not to change course. He would simply sail harder.Jeff Shesol is the author of ''Supreme Power: Franklin Roosevelt vs. the Supreme Court.'' His book on John Glenn, John Kennedy and the space race will be published next year.CATCHING THE WINDEdward Kennedy and the Liberal HourBy Neal Gabler928 pp. Crown. $40.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/28/books/review/catching-the-wind-neal-gabler.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/28/books/review/catching-the-wind-neal-gabler.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Edward Kennedy at work, 1968. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE TAMES/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 13, 2020

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[***Will the Economy Re-elect Trump? Should It?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y9N-1581-DXY4-X09Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 28, 2020 Friday 11:18 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 907 words

**Byline:** N. Gregory Mankiw

**Highlight:** People often vote with their wallets, crediting, or blaming, the president for things that economists say are outside any policymaker’s control.

**Body**

People often vote with their wallets, crediting, or blaming, the president for things that economists say are outside any policymaker’s control.

Last year, I was having lunch with a fellow economist who confessed a secret desire. “I hope the next recession begins soon,” he said.

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“Because otherwise we’ll get another four years of Donald Trump.”

He had a point. Many people give credit — or blame — to the president for the state of the economy. A member of my own family, for example, explained privately why she continues to favor President Trump.

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My relative was right. Despite the stock market decline over the last two weeks, the American economy is doing great. The current expansion is now 128 months old, the [*longest on record*](https://www.nber.org/cycles.html).

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To be sure, [*income inequality is still high*](https://www.nber.org/cycles.html), a phenomenon that has been unfolding for several decades. This fact animates some of Mr. Trump’s challengers, most notably Senator Bernie Sanders, who often rails against millionaires and billionaires.

But many people are moved more by the state of their own finances than by comparisons with the rich. Take the Great Depression, for example. The [*income share of the top 1 percent*](https://www.nber.org/cycles.html), including realized capital gains, fell to 16 percent in 1932 from 24 percent in 1928. This large move toward greater equality might have made some people feel better, but it did little to assuage the hardship from soaring unemployment.

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According to Mr. Fair’s [*most recent forecast*](https://www.nber.org/cycles.html), made at the end of January, Mr. Trump will receive 54.4 percent of the two-party vote in November, which is likely enough for a victory in the Electoral College. Consistent with this forecast, in   [*an average of recent polls*](https://www.nber.org/cycles.html), 55.7 percent of voters approved of Mr. Trump’s handling of the economy.

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N. Gregory Mankiw is the Robert M. Beren professor of economics at Harvard University.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Martin Gee FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2020

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[***Frontline Health Care Workers Aren’t Feeling the ‘Summer of Joy’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:631Y-RJY1-DXY4-X496-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 1, 2021 Thursday 17:07 EST

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**Section:** HEALTH

**Length:** 1822 words

**Highlight:** Doctors and nurses are reeling from new Covid cases, staff burnout and the prolonged stress of dealing with the pandemic.

**Body**

A largely unmasked nation will celebrate the nation’s return to near-normalcy this weekend with a ticker-tape parade in [*New York City*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/07/20/nyregion/ny-service-workers-covid.html), a dazzling fireworks display over the Washington Monument and countless Independence Day gatherings in cities and towns across the country.

“A summer of freedom. A summer of joy,” is how the White House tried to promote a new national mood in a letter encouraging local officials to hold public events during the July 4th holiday.

And in most parts of the country, Americans have reason to cheer, with more than half of those over 12 fully vaccinated, state after state lifting all emergency restrictions and caseloads decreasing by double-digits week over week. Families are traveling again, diners are flocking to restaurants and baseball is back as America’s seasonal pastime.

But the summer is turning out to be fairly joyless in places like CoxHealth Medical Center in Springfield, Mo., where [*nurses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/26/us/nebraska-delta-nurses-unvaccinated.html), doctors and respiratory therapists have been grappling with a resurgence in coronavirus cases that forced the [*hospital*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/22/nyregion/staten-island-covid-vaccine-workers.html) to reopen the 80-bed Covid unit it had shuttered in May.

Dr. Terrence Coulter, a critical care specialist at CoxHealth, said he and his colleagues were stunned to find themselves back in the trenches after the briefest of respites. “With everyone masked, you learn to read the emotions in your co-workers’ eyes,” he said. “They’re weary and they’re also disappointed that the country has started the end zone dance before we cross the goal line. The truth is we’re fumbling the ball before we even get there.”

America’s health care workers are in crisis, even in places that have had sharp declines in coronavirus infections and deaths. Battered and burned out, they feel unappreciated by a nation that lionized them as Covid heroes but often scoffed at mask mandates and refused to follow social distancing guidelines. Many of those same Americans are now ignoring their pleas to get vaccinated.

Doctors and [*nurses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/23/world/asia/singapore-nurse-rowing-olympics.html) are also overworked, thanks to chronic staffing shortages made worse by a pandemic that drove thousands from the field. Many are struggling with depression and post-traumatic stress; others are mourning at least [*3,600 colleagues*](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2020/aug/11/lost-on-the-frontline-covid-19-coronavirus-us-healthcare-workers-deaths-database) who won’t be around for the celebrations.

“People don’t realize what it was like to be on the front lines and risking your own safety without adequate protective gear while dealing with so much death,” said Mary Turner, a registered nurse in Minneapolis who was unable to comfort her own father as he lay dying alone of Covid in a nursing home in the early days of the pandemic. A few months later, she found herself sobbing uncontrollably in a hospital room as she held up a phone so a man could say goodbye to his father. “A lot of us are still dealing with PTSD,” she said.

In recent weeks, a familiar sense of dread has returned to emergency rooms across the South and Mountain West as the more transmissible Delta variant gained traction among the unvaccinated, fueling a jump in hospitalizations. In Missouri alone, [*caseloads increased more than 40 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/missouri-covid-cases.html) from two weeks earlier; at CoxHealth where Dr. Coulter works, the Delta variant comprised 93 percent of all cases last week, he said.

Dr. Clay Smith, an emergency room doctor who travels between two distant hospitals in South Dakota and Wyoming, said he worried about his children, who are both too young to get inoculated. “It’s really disconcerting to work in a community where people are doing so little to protect themselves and others from the virus,” Dr. Smith said.

With fewer than a third of adults in the counties served by the hospitals fully vaccinated, he has been treating a small but steady stream of Covid patients, some of whom insist the coronavirus is a hoax even as they struggle to breathe. “People think they are exercising their rights by refusing to get vaccinated, but in reality they’re exposing themselves and others to risk,” Dr. Smith said.

Some health care workers are also refusing to get jabbed. Last month, [*153 employees at the Houston Methodist hospital system*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/us/houston-hospital-covid-vaccine.html)resigned or were terminated after they refused to abide by a policy requiring all staff to be vaccinated against Covid. Similar standoffs over vaccine mandates will most likely multiply as hospitals across the country embrace similar policies.

In interviews, nearly two dozen health care providers expressed a range of conflicting emotions: Elation over how quickly the vaccines were created and relief that the pandemic’s darkest days are in the past, but fear that the large number of unvaccinated Americans could lead to localized outbreaks that persist for the foreseeable future.

Few are in a celebratory mood.

Deborah Burger, co-president of [*National Nurses United*](https://www.nationalnursesunited.org/about), a union that represents 170,000 registered nurses, said the revelries planned for the Fourth of July weekend felt ill-conceived and tone deaf, and not just because the pandemic continues to claim [*hundreds of lives a day.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/covid-19-vaccine-doses.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage)

Nurses, she said, face a welter of indignities at work. Dire staff shortages are preventing many from taking much-needed vacations, and some hospitals are still requiring employees to reuse disposable N95 masks even though supply chain [*bottlenecks have eased*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/10/health/covid-masks-china-united-states.html). Then there is the open hostility from patients who have spent months steeped in right-wing commentary and conspiracy theories that have turned health workers into adversaries.

“I’ve been in the field for 45 years and I’ve never seen things this bad,” said Ms. Burger, who is a registered nurse. “It’s really frustrating and dispiriting that the pandemic has been turned into a political event, rather than a public health crisis, and it’s health care workers who are left to deal with the aftermath.”

The pandemic continues to vex hospitals and their employees, often in unexpected ways. Dr. Mara Windsor, an emergency room doctor in Phoenix, rarely sees Covid patients these days, but she said an alarming shortage of nurses had gummed up the admissions process, forcing patients to wait upward of eight hours before they can be seen by a doctor. The problem is shared by hospitals across the city.

Infuriated patients, she said, often scream at her; others will storm out before they can be treated. “It’s very anxiety provoking to have 30 patients in the lobby and not being able to take them because we have no nurses,” said Dr. Windsor, who has been forced to scale back her hours and take a pay cut because of the drop off in admissions. “What if someone has a heart attack? The whole environment has become really challenging.”

The conflict over vaccines has complicated, and sometimes curdled, the relationship between patients and health care providers. As a woman of color well aware of the systemic racism in American health care, Dr. Mati Hlatshwayo Davis, an infectious disease doctor in St. Louis, said she was sympathetic to the vaccine-hesitant but that she sometimes struggled to contain her frustration, especially given that her sisters in South Africa had little hope of getting the shots any time soon.

“There are moments of overwhelming joy when seeing patients I know who survived Covid, but then I’ll treat multiple members of a family with Covid or we will have to intubate someone and you can’t help but think this was preventable,” she said. “It’s heartbreaking, but we’re also really, really tired.”

Dr. Teena Chopra, the medical director of infection prevention and hospital epidemiology at the [*Detroit Medical Center*](https://www.dmc.org/), takes a no-nonsense approach with the Covid patients she treats, most of them increasingly young. Although caseloads across the state have dropped significantly since a calamitous third surge ended in April, only 51 percent of adults in Michigan have received one vaccine dose. [*In Detroit*](https://detroitmi.gov/departments/detroit-health-department/programs-and-services/communicable-disease/coronavirus-covid-19/covid-19-data-dashboard), that figure is 40 percent.

The interactions she has with Covid patients, many of them African American, often leave her shaken. She recalled a recent exchange with a woman in her 40s who was struggling to breathe. When Dr. Chopra asked whether she had been vaccinated, the woman shook her head defiantly between gasps, insisting that the vaccines were more harmful than the virus. The patient later died.

“It leaves me angry, frustrated and sad,” Dr. Chopra said. “These nonbelievers will never accept our viewpoint, and the result is that they are putting others at risk and overwhelming the health care system.”

The emotional fallout of the last 16 months takes many forms, including a spate of early retirements and suicides among health care providers. Dr. Mark Rosenberg, an emergency room doctor at [*St. Joseph’s University Medical Center*](https://stjosephshealth.org/sjrmc) in Paterson, N.J., a predominantly ***working class***, immigrant community that was hit hard by the pandemic, sees the toll all around him.

He recently found himself comforting a fellow doctor who blamed himself for infecting his in-laws. They died four days apart. “He just can’t get past the guilt,” Dr. Rosenberg said.

At a graduation party for the hospital’s residents two weeks ago — the emergency department’s first social gathering in nearly two years — the DJ read the room and decided not to play any music, Dr. Rosenberg said. “People in my department usually love to dance but everyone just wanted to talk, catch up and get a hug.”

Dr. Rosenberg, who is also president of the American College of Emergency Physicians, is processing his own losses. They include his friend, [*Dr. Lorna Breen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/11/nyregion/lorna-breen-suicide-coronavirus.html), who took her own life in the first months of the pandemic and whose death has inspired federal [*legislation*](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/4349?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22d%22%5D%7D&amp;s=1&amp;r=3) that seeks to address suicide and burnout among health care professionals.

Most of the suffering goes unseen or unacknowledged. Dr. Rosenberg compared the hidden trauma to what his father, a World War II veteran, experienced after the hostilities ended.

“My dad didn’t like to talk about the war but once in a while he did and what he said was that so many of his fellow soldiers died after they came home,” he said. “We would now describe this as PTSD, and I see the same thing happening among health care workers.”

Dr. Rosenberg said he had mixed feelings about the festivities planned for July 4. He is proud of the camaraderie and self-sacrifice he witnessed among colleagues who bravely faced down a deadly virus, but he is uncomfortable with the expression “health care heroes,” especially given the widespread resistance to vaccinations.

“We’re ready to stand shoulder to shoulder again and face whatever comes our way,” he said. “But to be honest, we’re wiped out and we just want society to show us that we really are appreciated — by getting vaccinated.”

PHOTOS: Right, Dr. Mati Hlatshwayo Davis, an infectious disease physician in St. Louis; below, Dr. Terrence Coulter, a critical care specialist at CoxHealth in Springfield, Mo., where coronavirus cases are rising; bottom, Mary Turner, a nurse in Minneapolis who lost her father to Covid-19 early in the pandemic. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NEETA SATAM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; CAROLINE YANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 17, 2024

**End of Document**



[***Industry City: Here’s What Happened; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60X6-T4V1-JBG3-63RN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 24, 2020 Thursday 08:30 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1174 words

**Byline:** Juliana Kim

**Highlight:** After a long battle to rezone the business hub in Brooklyn, developers abandoned the plan, eliminating a possible 20,000 new jobs.

**Body**

[Want to get New York Today by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

It’s Thursday.

Weather: Mixed sun and clouds, with a high in the upper 70s.

Alternate-side parking: In effect until Monday (Yom Kippur). [*Read about the amended regulations here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

After more than a year of back and forth, the showdown over Industry City in Brooklyn is over. On Tuesday, developers yanked the major commercial project, eliminating the prospect of 20,000 new jobs.

Industry City was the latest clash of competing visions for the city, following the collapsed Amazon deal in Queens last year. The Brooklyn project was intensely divisive.

As my colleague Emma G. Fitzsimmons reported, community activists in Sunset Park voiced concerns from the onset that rezoning would spur more gentrification and displacement in the surrounding neighborhoods. But others argued that the rezoning would ultimately be helpful to a city in the grip of an economic crisis.

The chief executive of Industry City, Andrew Kimball, told Ms. Fitzsimmons, “If a project like this can’t succeed, it concerns me very much about the future of New York City.”

[Read more about [*how the Industry City project in Brooklyn was defeated by progressives*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

Here’s what you need to know.

What is Industry City?

Industry City, a 19th-century industrial complex on the waterfront in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, caught the eye of developers in 2013. It had become a hub for small business and artisans, then grew to include more than 500 businesses, and they wanted to transform the area into a shopping and office giant.

The project was spearheaded by Jamestown, the developer that created Chelsea Market. Jamestown also brought in Mr. Kimball, who led a similar redevelopment at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Why were developers pursuing a zoning change?

Industry City had already helped the area attract new businesses and tourists. But developers wanted to take it a step further. Rezoning would allow them to expand and add more retail, business and academic facilities.

But not everyone was on board. Residents and advocacy groups expressed concerns that rezoning would hurt the ***working-class*** residents of Sunset Park.

Why was the proposal scrapped?

A few months ago, Carlos Menchaca, who represents Sunset Park on the City Council, came out against the rezoning. Then last week, Brooklyn lawmakers followed suit and [*urged the Council*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) to vote against the plan.

The opposition came to be too much for developers of Industry City.

Ms. Fitzsimmons reported that developers withdrew their application for two reasons: the lack of political leadership and fears that a battle could harm their reputation. “We can’t have that be damaged by a continued political food fight that lacks very little substance,” Mr. Kimball told Ms. Fitzsimmons.

What comes next?

Mr. Menchaca [*wrote on Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) that the proposal’s defeat was “a win for Sunset Park.” He added: “Our work continues as community voice drives the growth and future of our neighborhood.”

But Eric Ulrich, a Council member from Queens, told my colleague, “We are sending such a terrible message to the rest of the country that we’re not open for business, and we’re not open to economic development and new jobs.”

Earlier this month, Mr. Kimball said that if the rezoning failed, Industry City could lease space for an Amazon-type warehouse, [*The City reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

A virtual New Year’s Eve ball drop in Times Square

The New Year’s Eve celebration in Times Square will be largely virtual this year, organizers said on Wednesday.

Details on what shape the ceremony would take were not immediately disclosed.

But organizers said that the typical celebration, with hundreds of thousands of revelers gathering to watch the ball drop and be showered in confetti, would be replaced by virtual events, along with a small group of people in the square “who will reflect the themes, challenges and inspirations of 2020.”

— Mihir Zaveri

From The Times

[*Virus Cases Are Reported in 100 N.Y.C. School Buildings*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Judge Orders Eric Trump to Testify in N.Y. Fraud Inquiry*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Museum Fires Curator Who It Says Sexually Harassed Student Researcher*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

Want more news? [*Check out our full coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

The Mini Crossword: Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

What we’re reading

Mayor Bill de Blasio announced additional furloughs that will affect more than 9,000 New York City employees. [[*Daily News*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

A female pastor accused several churches in the city of retaliation after coming forward with sexual misconduct allegations against a minister. [[*Gothamist*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

A New York University professor stirred controversy after telling students that masks do not prevent the spread of the coronavirus. [[*NBC New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

And finally: The Metropolitan Opera will remain dark

The Times’s Michael Cooper writes:

The Metropolitan Opera announced Wednesday that the still-untamed coronavirus pandemic has forced it to cancel its entire 2020-21 season, prolonging one of the gravest crises it has faced in its 137-year history and keeping it dark until next September.

The decision is likely to send ripples of concern through New York and the rest of the country, as Broadway theaters, symphony halls, rock venues, comedy clubs, dance spaces and other live arts institutions grapple with the question of when it will be safe again to perform indoors. Far from being a gilded outlier, the Met, the nation’s largest performing arts organization, may well prove to be a bellwether.

The outbreak has kept the 3,800-seat opera house closed since mid-March, sapping it of more than $150 million in revenue and leaving roughly 1,000 full-time employees, including its world-class orchestra and chorus, furloughed without pay since April.

[Read more: [*The Met is making plans to adapt to a world transformed by the pandemic.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

The Met plans to return to its stage next September with Terence Blanchard’s “[*Fire Shut Up in My Bones*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday),” the first time it will mount an opera by a Black composer — a long-overdue milestone, and part of a new focus on contemporary works alongside the ornate productions of canonical pieces for which the company is famous.

The Met will also experiment with earlier curtain times, shortening some operas and offering more family fare as it tries to lure back audiences.

It’s Thursday — make music.

Metropolitan Diary: Got the time?

Dear Diary:

One day in 1998, I walked from my job on Barclay Street to spend my lunch hour at the Borders bookstore at 5 World Trade Center.

After a pleasant half-hour or so, I took my books to the checkout. When it was my turn to pay, I noticed that the clerk who was ringing me up was wearing two watches, one on each wrist.

“Why are you wearing a watch on each wrist?” I asked.

He looked up at me briefly, and then looked back down at the book.

“I’m ambidextrous,” he said.

— Gail S. Clark

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We’re experimenting with the format of New York Today. What would you like to see more (or less) of? Post a comment or email us: [*nytoday@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Victor J. Blue for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Here to Help; 5 Unusual Streaming Movies for Unusual Times***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60X7-3G01-JBG3-64FB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 24, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 3; BEYOND THE ALGORITHM

**Length:** 1221 words

**Byline:** By Jason Bailey

**Body**

Looking for a few fresh and different streaming options? We offer some assistance.

In normal times, the shift into fall would mean film festivals jockeying for marquee premieres and prestige Oscar hopefuls filling the multiplexes and art houses. Instead, we're still watching movies from home, and while this month's crop of out-of-the-box streaming service picks may not have any festival laurels, there's plenty of blood-soaked vengeance and uncorked sexuality to dig into instead.

'An Easy Girl'

Stream it on Netflix.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

A young woman is both stunned and fascinated by her free-spirited, sexually liberated cousin in this playful and provocative picture from the French director Rebecca Zlotowski, who finds both comedy and drama in the characters' search for self-awareness. Sofia (Zahia Dehar) has fashioned herself the quintessential sex kitten -- Brigitte Bardot's hair, Sophia Loren's eyes, Anna Karina's ennui -- but it always seems a show, even for Naïma (Mina Farid), whose attempts to emulate her cousin only underscore their vast contrasts. Zlotowski accomplishes the tricky feat of both presenting and critiquing the male gaze; she gets how Sofia wants the world to see her, and how much more they'll never know.

'Blush'

Stream it on Amazon Prime.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Few actors are as easily, consistently funny as Wendi McLendon-Covey, who steals scenes by the handful in ''Bridesmaids'' and on ''Reno 911!'' and ''The Goldbergs.'' The shock of seeing her take the leading role in a serious indie drama is surpassed only by the power of the thorny, lived-in performance she builds for the writer and director Debra Eisenstadt. McLendon-Covey is muted, present and entirely believable as Cathy, a housewife and mother whose rigid, controlled routine is shaken to its core by complications and desires that she can't keep at bay. Steve Little (of ''Eastbound & Down'') similarly and successfully plays against type as Cathy's disengaged husband.

'White Girl'

Stream it on Netflix.

Morgan Saylor, best known as Dana Brody on ''Homeland,'' performs a kindred act of confounding expectations with her leading role in this frank, candid and frequently upsetting story of a young woman's descent into hedonism. She's startlingly good, capturing the character's increasing appetites and desperation without the kind of wide-eyed overacting too common in stories like these. The writer and director Elizabeth Wood also carefully sidesteps those tricky ''After School Special'' land mines. She weaves something closer to ''Kids,'' a cautionary tale that nevertheless understands the irresistible draw of independence, escape and a good time.

'Everly'

Stream it on Amazon Prime.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Keanu Reeves and Liam Neeson aren't the only marquee stars to take a second-act spin as action heroes; this 2015 shoot-'em-up finds Salma Hayek trapped in her apartment, fighting off an army of thugs and bad guys sent to kill her for turning snitch. The director, Joe Lynch, uses the claustrophobic setting to his advantage, working up increasingly ingenious (and sometimes preposterous) ways to keep his heroine alive while keeping her in place, and Hayek is more than up to the task. She's tough and tenacious, and wields her weapons convincingly, while imbuing the character with genuine depth and personality.

'Nightingale'

Stream it on HBO Max.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

David Oyelowo performs what amounts to a cinematic one-man show in this 2015 HBO movie as Peter Snowden, a lonely veteran we meet at exactly the moment his sociopathic inclinations have gotten the best of him. Desperately trying to prepare his home for a visit from an old friend, he embarks on a long, searching and scary monologue of confession and self-delusion. Oyelowo is never less than riveting, while the director, Elliott Lester, finds inventive ways to keep visual interest circling around his star.

'Blue Ruin'

Stream it on Netflix.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The writer and director Jeremy Saulnier (''Green Room'') crafts a lean, mean artsploitation movie with this tale of a vagrant (Macon Blair) who exacts revenge against the man who killed his parents -- and must then deal with the consequences. Saulnier's sensitive writing and semi-experimental style turn this bloody tale of righteous vengeance into a thoughtful and sometimes horrifying rumination on the true toll of guilt and justice. And then it works as an action movie, delivering grisly kills and stylized violence with admirable aplomb.

'Lowlife'

Stream it on Hulu.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

On paper, Ryan Prows's crime anthology looks like a leftover '90s Quentin Tarantino rip-off: unexpectedly intersecting story lines, freewheeling chronology, cheerfully overdone violence. But Prows has a singular, gonzo energy and delirious sense of cinematic style that smooths over the sense of déjà vu. His story of death, kidnapping and organ harvesting is relentlessly bleak, but not without its doses of dark humor, and though the hyper-violence and gore is genuinely shocking, the film doesn't take it lightly -- it all comes from a place of genuine pain and anguish, which allows the picture to close on a grace note of earned emotion.

'Brawl in Cell Block 99'

Stream it on Amazon Prime.

Vince Vaughn stars as a ***working-class*** guy whose ill-advised career shift to drug mule takes a particularly grisly turn in this prison thriller from the writer and director S. Craig Zahler. As in his films ''Bone Tomahawk'' and ''Dragged Across Concrete,'' Zahler exhibits an attentiveness to procedural detail (both in the crime movie setup and the prison movie payoff) and a worldview of inherent, grim hopelessness; his matter-of-fact brutality gives way to a kind of Grand Guignol insanity in the homestretch. Yet the acting is grounded and the characters are fully realized, while his odd detours into momentary humanism give the film a surprising sense of gravity.

'VHYes'

Stream it on Hulu.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Jack Henry Robbins's feature is a strange mash-up of analog nostalgia, sketch comedy and ''Stranger Things''-style '80s kid adventure, ostensibly pulled from a VHS tape where young Ralph (Mason McNulty) is trying out his new VHS camcorder by recording over the only tape he could find: his parents' wedding video. His captures of late-night infomercials and public access oddities (many of them enacted by alums of ''The State'' and ''Reno 911!'') provide broad laughs, but the juxtaposition of that wedding video and Ralph's current, miserable family life creates drama where you least expect it.

'Mavis!'

Stream it on HBO Max.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

In her six-plus decades of performance, Mavis Staples has just about sung it all: gospel, soul, funk, folk, rock, Americana. Her journey is, in many ways, the journey of American Black music, and the director Jessica Edwards gives it the proper weight in this affectionate bio documentary. Staples has collected plenty of juicy stories over the course of her dazzling career, and she shares them with verve and wit; her remembrances are illustrated with priceless archival footage and home movies. But the draw, of course, is the music -- sweet, joyful music, reverberating with the kindness and wisdom of its creator.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movie-recommendations.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/movies/offbeat-streaming-movie-recommendations.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEPH CULTICE/HBO)

**Load-Date:** October 1, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Another Way the 2020s Might Be Like the 1930s***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60BV-S0H1-JBG3-63D2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 29, 2020 Wednesday 05:42 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 982 words

**Byline:** Jamelle Bouie

**Highlight:** The strikes at Amazon and elsewhere over working conditions and low pay have been small, but they may spark a new movement.

**Body**

The strikes at Amazon and elsewhere over working conditions and low pay have been small, but they may spark a new movement.

Class consciousness does not flow automatically out of class identity. Being a worker does not necessarily mean you will come to identify as a worker. Instead, you can think of class consciousness as a process of discovery, of insights derived from events that put the relationships of class into stark relief.

Or as the political theorist Cedric J. Robinson observed about the Civil War and Emancipation,

Groups moved to the logic of immediate self-interest and to historical paradox. Consciousness, when it did develop, had come later in the process of the events. The revolution had caused the formation of revolutionary consciousness and had not been caused by it. The revolution was spontaneous.

We aren’t yet living through a revolution. But we are seeing how self-interest and paradox are shaping the consciousness of an entire class of people. The coronavirus pandemic has forced all but the most “essential” workers to either leave their jobs or work from home. And who are those essential workers? They work in hospitals and grocery stores, warehouses and meatpacking plants. They tend to patients and cash out customers, clean floors and stock shelves. They drive trucks, deliver packages and help sustain this country as it tries to fight off a deadly virus.

The close-quarters, public-facing nature of this work mean these workers are also more likely to be exposed to disease, and many of them are furious with their employers for not doing enough to protect them. To protect themselves, they’ve begun to speak out. Some have even decided to strike.

At the start of the crisis, in mid-March, bus drivers in Detroit refused to drive, citing safety concerns. “The drivers didn’t feel safe going on the bus, spreading their germs and getting germs from anybody,” Glenn Tolbert, president of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 26, said in [*an interview*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) with The Detroit News. “We are on the front lines and picking up more sick people than doctors see. This was a last resort but drivers didn’t feel safe.” Their actions prompted officials to increase cleaning, provide masks to passengers and drivers, and eliminate fares to keep person-to-person interactions to a minimum.

[*That same month*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/), at an Amazon warehouse on Staten Island, a group of workers walked out over safety concerns, chanting, “How many cases we got? Ten!” in reference to workers there who had tested positive for the coronavirus. Amazon [*fired*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) Chris Smalls, the worker who led the demonstration, supposedly for violating the warehouse’s social-distancing policy, but this didn’t stop [*other workers*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) at [*other warehouses*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) from organizing walkouts to protest a lack of protective equipment. (Notably, Letitia James, the attorney general of New York, has informed Amazon that her office is [*scrutinizing*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) the firing of Mr. Smalls.)

Workers at Whole Foods, owned by Amazon, [*went on strike*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) to demand paid leave and free coronavirus testing, as did workers for the grocery-delivery service Instacart, who [*demanded*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) protective supplies and hazard pay. Sanitation workers in Pittsburgh staged a similar strike over a lack of protective gear, and workers at America’s meatpacking plants [*are staying home*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) rather than deal with unsafe conditions.

It’s true these actions have been limited in scope and scale. But if they continue, and if they increase, they may come to represent the first stirrings of something much larger. [*The consequential strike wave of 1934*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) — which paved the way for the National Labor Relations Act and created new political space for serious government action on behalf of labor — was presaged by a year of unrest in workplaces across the country, from factories and farms to newspaper offices and Hollywood sets.

These workers weren’t just discontented. They were also coming into their own as workers, beginning to see themselves as a class that when organized properly can work its will on the nation’s economy and political system.

American labor is at its lowest point since the New Deal era. Private-sector unionization is at a historic low, and entire segments of the economy are unorganized. Depression-era labor leaders could look to President Franklin Roosevelt as an ally — or at least someone open to negotiation and bargaining — but labor today must face off against the relentlessly anti-union Donald Trump. Organized capital, working through the Republican Party, has a powerful grip on the nation’s legal institutions, including the Supreme Court, whose conservative majority appears ready to make the entire United States an open shop.

The inequities and inequalities of capitalist society remain. American workers continue to face deprivation and exploitation, realities the coronavirus crisis has made abundantly clear.

The strikes and protests of the past month have been small, but they aren’t inconsequential. The militancy born of immediate self-protection and self-interest can grow into calls for deeper, broader transformation. And if the United States continues to stumble its way into yet another generation-defining economic catastrophe, we may find that even more of its ***working class*** comes to understand itself as an agent of change — and action.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/).

Follow The New York Times Opinion section on [*Facebook*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/), [*Twitter (@NYTopinion)*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/) and [*Instagram*](https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2020/03/17/city-urges-ddot-bus-riders-find-transportation-due-driver-shortage/5065943002/).

PHOTOS: Taking action, then and now: left, textile factory workers calling for a strike amid the Depression in 1934; an Amazon warehouse employee picketing during a one-day walkout on Staten Island last month. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEYSTONE-FRANCE/GAMMA-KEYSTONE, VIA GETTY IMAGES; ANGELA WEISS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***10 Unusual Streaming Movies for Unusual Times; Beyond the Algorithm***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60X1-P2W1-DXY4-X13N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 23, 2020 Wednesday 23:59 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1211 words

**Byline:** Jason Bailey

**Highlight:** Looking for a few fresh and different streaming options? We offer some assistance.

**Body**

Looking for a few fresh and different streaming options? We offer some assistance.

In normal times, the shift into fall would mean film festivals jockeying for marquee premieres and prestige Oscar hopefuls filling the multiplexes and art houses. Instead, we’re still watching movies from home, and while this month’s crop of out-of-the-box streaming service picks may not have any festival laurels, there’s plenty of blood-soaked vengeance and uncorked sexuality to dig into instead.

‘An Easy Girl’

[*Stream it on Netflix*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603)]

A young woman is both stunned and fascinated by her free-spirited, sexually liberated cousin in this playful and provocative picture from the French director Rebecca Zlotowski, who finds both comedy and drama in the characters’ search for self-awareness. Sofia (Zahia Dehar) has fashioned herself the quintessential sex kitten — Brigitte Bardot’s hair, Sophia Loren’s eyes, Anna Karina’s ennui — but it always seems a show, even for Naïma (Mina Farid), whose attempts to emulate her cousin only underscore their vast contrasts. Zlotowski accomplishes the tricky feat of both presenting and critiquing the male gaze; she gets how Sofia wants the world to see her, and how much more they’ll never know.

‘Blush’

[*Stream it on Amazon Prime*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603)]

Few actors are as easily, consistently funny as Wendi McLendon-Covey, who steals scenes by the handful in “Bridesmaids” and on “Reno 911!” and “The Goldbergs.” The shock of seeing her take the leading role in a serious indie drama is surpassed only by the power of the thorny, lived-in performance she builds for the writer and director Debra Eisenstadt. McLendon-Covey is muted, present and entirely believable as Cathy, a housewife and mother whose rigid, controlled routine is shaken to its core by complications and desires that she can’t keep at bay. Steve Little (of “Eastbound &amp; Down”) similarly and successfully plays against type as Cathy’s disengaged husband.

‘White Girl’

[*Stream it on Netflix*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

Morgan Saylor, best known as Dana Brody on “Homeland,” performs a kindred act of confounding expectations with her leading role in this frank, candid and frequently upsetting story of a young woman’s descent into hedonism. She’s startlingly good, capturing the character’s increasing appetites and desperation without the kind of wide-eyed overacting too common in stories like these. The writer and director Elizabeth Wood also carefully sidesteps those tricky “After School Special” land mines. She weaves something closer to “Kids,” a cautionary tale that nevertheless understands the irresistible draw of independence, escape and a good time.

‘Everly’

[*Stream it on Amazon Prime*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603)]

Keanu Reeves and Liam Neeson aren’t the only marquee stars to take a second-act spin as action heroes; this 2015 shoot-’em-up finds Salma Hayek trapped in her apartment, fighting off an army of thugs and bad guys sent to kill her for turning snitch. The director, Joe Lynch, uses the claustrophobic setting to his advantage, working up increasingly ingenious (and sometimes preposterous) ways to keep his heroine alive while keeping her in place, and Hayek is more than up to the task. She’s tough and tenacious, and wields her weapons convincingly, while imbuing the character with genuine depth and personality.

‘Nightingale’

[*Stream it on HBO Max*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603)]

David Oyelowo performs what amounts to a cinematic one-man show in this 2015 HBO movie as Peter Snowden, a lonely veteran we meet at exactly the moment his sociopathic inclinations have gotten the best of him. Desperately trying to prepare his home for a visit from an old friend, he embarks on a long, searching and scary monologue of confession and self-delusion. Oyelowo is never less than riveting, while the director, Elliott Lester, finds inventive ways to keep visual interest circling around his star.

‘Blue Ruin’

[*Stream it on Netflix*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603)]

The writer and director Jeremy Saulnier (“Green Room”) crafts a lean, mean artsploitation movie with this tale of a vagrant (Macon Blair) who exacts revenge against the man who killed his parents — and must then deal with the consequences. Saulnier’s sensitive writing and semi-experimental style turn this bloody tale of righteous vengeance into a thoughtful and sometimes horrifying rumination on the true toll of guilt and justice. And then it works as an action movie, delivering grisly kills and stylized violence with admirable aplomb.

‘Lowlife’

[*Stream it on Hulu*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603)]

On paper, Ryan Prows’s crime anthology looks like a leftover ’90s Quentin Tarantino rip-off: unexpectedly intersecting story lines, freewheeling chronology, cheerfully overdone violence. But Prows has a singular, gonzo energy and delirious sense of cinematic style that smooths over the sense of déjà vu. His story of death, kidnapping and organ harvesting is relentlessly bleak, but not without its doses of dark humor, and though the hyper-violence and gore is genuinely shocking, the film doesn’t take it lightly — it all comes from a place of genuine pain and anguish, which allows the picture to close on a grace note of earned emotion.

‘Brawl in Cell Block 99’

[*Stream it on Amazon Prime*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

Vince Vaughn stars as a ***working-class*** guy whose ill-advised career shift to drug mule takes a particularly grisly turn in this prison thriller from the writer and director S. Craig Zahler. As in his films “Bone Tomahawk” and “Dragged Across Concrete,” Zahler exhibits an attentiveness to procedural detail (both in the crime movie setup and the prison movie payoff) and a worldview of inherent, grim hopelessness; his matter-of-fact brutality gives way to a kind of Grand Guignol insanity in the homestretch. Yet the acting is grounded and the characters are fully realized, while his odd detours into momentary humanism give the film a surprising sense of gravity.

‘VHYes’

[*Stream it on Hulu*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603)]

Jack Henry Robbins’s feature is a strange mash-up of analog nostalgia, sketch comedy and “Stranger Things”-style ’80s kid adventure, ostensibly pulled from a VHS tape where young Ralph (Mason McNulty) is trying out his new VHS camcorder by recording over the only tape he could find: his parents’ wedding video. His captures of late-night infomercials and public access oddities (many of them enacted by alums of “The State” and “Reno 911!”) provide broad laughs, but the juxtaposition of that wedding video and Ralph’s current, miserable family life creates drama where you least expect it.

‘Mavis!’

[*Stream it on HBO Max*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603).

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81081603)]

In her six-plus decades of performance, Mavis Staples has just about sung it all: gospel, soul, funk, folk, rock, Americana. Her journey is, in many ways, the journey of American Black music, and the director Jessica Edwards gives it the proper weight in this affectionate bio documentary. Staples has collected plenty of juicy stories over the course of her dazzling career, and she shares them with verve and wit; her remembrances are illustrated with priceless archival footage and home movies. But the draw, of course, is the music — sweet, joyful music, reverberating with the kindness and wisdom of its creator.

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEPH CULTICE/HBO)

**Load-Date:** October 1, 2020

**End of Document**



[***New York Mayor’s Race in Chaos After Elections Board Counts 135,000 Test Ballots***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:631J-FJC1-JBG3-63M3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 29, 2021 Tuesday 07:32 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1782 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** The extraordinary sequence of events threw the closely watched Democratic primary contest into a new period of uncertainty and seeded further confusion about the outcome.

**Body**

The extraordinary sequence of events threw the closely watched Democratic primary contest into a new period of uncertainty and seeded further confusion about the outcome.

The [*New York City mayor’s race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/06/nyregion/nyc-mayor-race-votes.html) plunged into chaos on Tuesday night when the city Board of Elections released a new tally of votes in the [*Democratic mayoral primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), and then removed the tabulations from its website after citing a “discrepancy.”

The results released earlier in the day had suggested that the race between [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/06/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html) and his two closest rivals had tightened significantly.

But just a few hours after releasing the preliminary results, the elections board issued a [*cryptic tweet*](https://twitter.com/BOENYC/status/1410000282654842886?s=20) revealing a “discrepancy” in the report, saying that it was working with its “technical staff to identify where the discrepancy occurred.”

By Tuesday evening, the tabulations had been taken down, replaced by a [*new advisory*](https://web.enrboenyc.us/rcv/) that the ranked-choice results would be available “starting on June 30.”

Then, around 10:30 p.m., the board finally released a statement, explaining that it had failed to remove sample ballot images used to test its ranked-choice voting software. When the board ran the program, it counted “both test and election night results, producing approximately 135,000 additional records,” the statement said. The ranked-choice numbers, it said, would be tabulated again.

The extraordinary sequence of events seeded further confusion about the outcome, and threw the closely watched contest into a new period of uncertainty at a consequential moment for the city.

For the [*Board of Elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/nyregion/nyc-elections-board-reform.html), which has long been [*plagued by dysfunction*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/03/nyregion/nyc-mail-ballots-voting.html) [*and nepotism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/26/nyregion/nyc-voting-election-board.html), this was its first try at implementing ranked-choice voting on a citywide scale. Skeptics had expressed doubts about the board’s ability to pull off the process, though it is used successfully in other cities.

Under [*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), voters can list up to five candidates on their ballots in preferential order. If no candidate receives more than 50 percent of first-choice votes in the first round, the winner is decided by a process of elimination: As the lower-polling candidates are eliminated, their votes are reallocated to whichever candidate those voters ranked next, and the process continues until there is a winner.

The Board of Elections released preliminary, unofficial ranked-choice tabulations on Tuesday afternoon, showing that Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html) — who had held a significant advantage on primary night — was narrowly ahead of Kathryn Garcia in the [*ballots*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/nyregion/absentee-ballots-nyc-boe.html) cast in person during early voting or on Primary Day. Maya D. Wiley, who came in second place in the initial vote count, was close behind in third place. The board then took down the results and disclosed the discrepancy.

The results may well be scrambled again: Even after the Board of Elections sorts through the preliminary tally, it must count around [*124,000 Democratic absentee ballots*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/29/nyregion/ranked-choice-voting-mayor.html). Once they are tabulated, the board will take the new total that includes them and run a new set of ranked-choice elimination rounds, with a final result not expected until mid-July.

Some [*Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/briefing/democrats-election-working-class-voters.html), bracing for an acrimonious new chapter in the race, are concerned that the incremental release of results by the Board of Elections — and the discovery of an error — may stir distrust of ranked-choice voting and of the city’s electoral system more broadly.

In a statement late Tuesday night, Ms. Wiley laced into the Board of Elections, calling the error “the result of generations of failures that have gone unaddressed,” and adding: “Sadly, it is impossible to be surprised.”

“Today, we have once again seen the mismanagement that has resulted in a lack of confidence in results, not because there is a flaw in our election laws, but because those who implement it have failed too many times,” she said. “The B.O.E. must now count the remainder of the votes transparently and ensure the integrity of the process moving forward.”

Ms. Garcia said the release of the inaccurate tally was “deeply troubling and requires a much more transparent and complete explanation.”

“Every ranked choice and absentee vote must be counted accurately so that all New Yorkers have faith in our democracy and our government,” she said. “I am confident that every candidate will accept the final results and support whomever the voters have elected.”

And Mr. Adams noted the “unfortunate” error by the Board of Elections and emphasized the importance of handling election results correctly.

“It is critical that New Yorkers are confident in their electoral system, especially as we rank votes in a citywide election for the first time,” he said in a statement released on Tuesday night. “We appreciate the board’s transparency and acknowledgment of their error. We look forward to the release of an accurate, updated simulation, and the timely conclusion of this critical process.”

If elected, Mr. Adams would be the city’s second Black mayor, after David N. Dinkins. Some of Mr. Adams’s supporters have already cast the ranked-choice process as [*an attempt*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html) to disenfranchise [*voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/briefing/democrats-election-working-class-voters.html) of color, an argument that intensified among some backers on Tuesday afternoon as the race had appeared to tighten, and is virtually certain to escalate should he lose his primary night lead to Ms. Garcia, who is white.

Surrogates for Mr. Adams have suggested without evidence that an apparent ranked-choice alliance between Ms. Garcia and another rival, Andrew Yang, could amount to an attempt to suppress the votes of Black and Latino New Yorkers; [*Mr. Adams himself claimed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/19/nyregion/yang-garcia-endorsement.html) that the alliance was aimed at preventing a Black or Latino candidate from winning the race.

In the final days of the race, Ms. Garcia and Mr. Yang campaigned together across the city, especially in neighborhoods that are home to sizable Asian American communities, and appeared together on campaign literature.

To advocates of ranked-choice voting, the round-by-round shuffling of outcomes is part of the process of electing a candidate with broad appeal. But if Ms. Garcia or Ms. Wiley were to prevail, the process — which was approved by voters in a 2019 ballot measure — would likely attract fresh scrutiny, with some of Mr. Adams’s backers and others already urging a new referendum on it.

By Tuesday night, though, it was the Board of Elections that was attracting ire from seemingly all corners.

Betsy Gotbaum, the city’s former public advocate who now runs Citizens Union, a good-government group, warned that “the entire country is watching” the Board of Elections. “New Yorkers deserve elections, and election administrators, that they can have the utmost faith in,” Ms. Gotbaum added.

A comparison between first-place vote totals released on primary night and those released on Tuesday offered some insight into how the 135,000 erroneous votes were distributed. The bottom four candidates received a total of 42,000 new votes, roughly four times their actual vote total; the number of write-in ballots also skyrocketed to 17,516 from 1,336. Mr. Adams and Mr. Yang received the highest number of new votes.

It was not known, however, how the test votes were reallocated during the ranked-choice tabulations, making it impossible to determine how they affected the preliminary results that were released and then retracted.

When accurate vote counts are in place, it is difficult, but [*not unheard-of*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/nyregion/ranked-choice-voting-nyc-mayor.html) for a trailing candidate in a ranked-choice election to eventually win the race through later rounds of voting — that happened in Oakland, Calif., in 2010, and nearly occurred in San Francisco in 2018.

The winner of New York’s Democratic primary, who is almost certain to become the city’s next mayor, will face Curtis Sliwa, the founder of the Guardian Angels, who won the Republican primary.

According to the now-withdrawn tabulation released Tuesday, Ms. Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio, nearly made it to the final round. She finished closely behind Ms. Garcia, the former sanitation commissioner, before being eliminated in the penultimate round of the preliminary exercise.

After the count of in-person ballots last week, Ms. Garcia had trailed Ms. Wiley by about 2.8 percentage points. Asked if she had been in touch with Ms. Wiley’s team, Ms. Garcia suggested there had been staff-level conversations.

“The campaigns have been speaking to each other,” Ms. Garcia said in a phone call on Tuesday afternoon, saying the two candidates had not yet spoken directly. “Hopefully we don’t have to step in with attorneys. But it is about really ensuring that New York City’s voices are heard.”

Ms. Wiley ran well to the left of Ms. Garcia on a number of vital policy matters, including around policing and on some education questions. Either candidate would be the first woman elected mayor of New York, and Ms. Wiley would be the city’s first Black female mayor.

Mr. Adams, a former police captain and a relative moderate on several key issues, was a non-starter for many progressive voters who may have preferred Ms. Garcia and her focus on competence over any especially ideological message.

But early results suggested that Mr. Adams had significant strength among ***working-class*** voters of color, and some traction among white voters with moderate views.

City Councilman I. Daneek Miller, an Adams supporter who is pressing for a new referendum on ranked-choice voting, suggested in a text message on Tuesday that the system had opened the door to “an attempt to eliminate the candidate of moderate working people and traditionally marginalized communities,” as he implicitly criticized the Yang-Garcia alliance.

“It is incumbent on us now to address the issue of ranked voting and how it is being weaponized against a wide portion of the public,” said Mr. Miller, the co-chair of the Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus on the City Council.

Other close observers of the election separately expressed discomfort with the decision to release a ranked-choice tally without accounting for absentee ballots.

“There is real danger that voters will come to believe a set of facts about the race that will be disproven when all votes are in,” said Ben Greenfield, a senior survey data analyst at Change Research, which conducted polling for a pro-Garcia PAC. “The risk is that this could take a system that’s already new and confusing and increase people’s sense of mistrust.”

Dana Rubinstein, Jeffery C. Mays, Anne Barnard, Andy Newman and Mihir Zaveri contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Clockwise from above, Eric Adams, Kathryn Garcia and Maya Wiley. The winner won’t be known for weeks, though new ranked-choice results were to be announced on Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DESIREE RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***6 Movies That Take Place in a Single Location (Mostly)***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6060-5Y41-JBG3-615K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 22, 2020 Monday 12:07 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1082 words

**Byline:** Chris Azzopardi

**Highlight:** With the release of “7500” on Amazon Prime Video, here’s a look at a handful of films that create dramatic tension in one space (or outer space).

**Body**

With the release of “7500” on Amazon Prime Video, here’s a look at a handful of films that create dramatic tension in one space (or outer space).

As we emerge from state-ordered quarantine, consider this: In movies, a locked-down set is often an artistic choice (or sometimes the result of a strapped budget). Some filmmakers find the challenges of these limitations to be a thrill in itself; for others, intimate spaces simply better serve the story.

When done on a smaller scale, film adaptations of plays can put the focus on the heart of a dialogue-driven drama. And horror movies set in constricted, no-escape spaces can intensify the dread. Here are six primarily single-location films that demonstrate how filmmakers can think outside the box — even when their work is set in an actual box.

‘7500’

[*Stream on Amazon Prime Video.*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb)]

The location: A plane’s cockpit

The problem: When terrorists hijack a Berlin-to-Paris flight, it’s up to a young American co-pilot, Tobias (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), to direct the aircraft to safety and, in the process, make some distressing split-second decisions.

The results: For his debut feature, the director Patrick Vollrath creates a close-quarters nail-biter that keeps you exactly where he wants you: in the pilot’s seat. So that we experience the film from Tobias’s point of view, Vollrath makes clever use of a surveillance monitor in the locked cockpit.

The screen displays impersonal glimpses of passengers as the flight attendants pass through the service curtain. Hostages held in the cabin are also only visible on the screen. By keeping tight focus on Gordon-Levitt’s commitment to his character’s emotional agony, the film pushes new buttons on old themes.

‘Gravity’

Rent on [*YouTube*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb), [*Amazon Prime Video*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb), [*iTunes*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb) and other platforms.

The location: 600 kilometers above Earth

The problem: The medical engineer Dr. Ryan Stone (Sandra Bullock) is faced with finding a way back to Earth after her space shuttle is damaged by debris from a destroyed satellite.

The results: This 2013 science-fiction drama is so utterly immersive it makes you feel like Dr. Stone. We are centered in the action, even pulled inside her astronaut’s helmet; there, we can sense the panic of free-falling into an ocean of emptiness, alone. (And you thought you’ve been self-isolating.)

Rather than relying on flashbacks to illustrate her back story, the screenwriters Alfonso Cuarón (who also directed) and his son Jonás reveal Dr. Stone’s grief through her achingly tragic soliloquy, delivered in space as she floats against a backdrop of star-speckled darkness. Cuarón’s existential spectacle sustains its own kind of emotional gravity.

‘Locke’

[*Stream on Netflix.*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb)

The location: A slate-gray BMW X5

The problem: On a London-bound drive, a construction foreman, Ivan Locke (Tom Hardy), bounces between calls and follows his moral compass into the night.

The results: It’s hard to believe that one of the dilemmas Ivan is faced with in the writer-director Stephen Knight’s [*2014 lo-fi road drama*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb) involves orchestrating a concrete pour. Even harder to believe that the film manages to render a multidimensional portrait of a flawed man from this otherwise mundane subject matter.

This is an exceptional showcase for Hardy, whose transfixing performance drives a rich, theatrical narrative that reaches dramatic heights through nothing more than phone conversations in a car.

‘Fences’

Rent on [*YouTube*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb), [*Amazon Prime Video*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb), [*iTunes*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb) and other platforms.

The location: A ***working-class*** Pittsburgh home, but most memorably in its bare-bones backyard.

The problem: Troy (played by Denzel Washington, who also directed) struggles with his marriage (to Rose, played by Viola Davis) and tries to protect his youngest son from the same disappointments he experienced as a black man whose dreams were shattered.

The results: If you have total command of the screen like Washington and Davis do in “Fences,” then it’s fine for location to be ancillary. Staying true to August Wilson’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play for this film adaptation, Davis and Washington engage in character-building repartee and deeper, meaningful dialogue to illustrate this story about one black family’s experiences in a racially divided America.

The film is appropriately intimate in scope, emphasizing the emotional weight of Wilson’s writing and the actors who bring it to life. Still, the tiny backyard setting is unforgettable. And those porch steps, certainly by the movie’s end, have their own story to tell.

‘Rope’

Rent on [*YouTube*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb), [*Amazon Prime Video*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb), [*iTunes*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb) and other platforms.

The location: A swanky Manhattan apartment

The problem: Two prep-school pals kill their classmate, stuff him in a chest, then host a dinner party in the same room where his corpse lies. Can they keep the body concealed from their friends and finally prove their elitist superiority by doing so?

The results: Based on Patrick Hamilton’s 1929 play, “Rope” maximizes Alfred Hitchcock’s minimalist approach. With just an apartment and its panoramic view of the city skyline to work with, Hitchcock relies on technique — his ability to make the film appear as one long, continuous shot — and the play’s sharp, catty, tension-building dialogue.

Hitchcock lets the awkwardness of the dead-body-in-the-room setup be the film’s real star.

‘Buried’

Rent on [*YouTube*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb), [*Amazon Prime Video*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb), [*iTunes*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb) and other platforms.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/amzn1.dv.gti.aab9292d-965b-a164-37d2-18d48b98488e?autoplay=1&amp;ref_=atv_cf_strg_wb)]

The location: A wooden coffin

The problem: An Iraq-based American civilian truck driver, Paul Conroy (Ryan Reynolds), is buried alive. His air supply is diminishing, and he has nothing but a few tools to help him escape.

The results: Ninety-five minutes is a long time to be stuffed in a coffin. But with the director Rodrigo Cortés’s fraught 2010 thriller, he makes a bone-chilling case for setting an entire movie in a big box with a single onscreen character.

We first find Paul under the flickering glow of a lighter, the blood vessels in his eye in sharp focus. The film’s use of frantic camerawork and close-ups paired with Reynolds’s strong, desperate-to-escape performance establish an environment that is so wincingly claustrophobic, you might try to look for a way out, too.

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top right: Joseph Gordon-Levitt in “7500”; Sandra Bullock in “Gravity”; Tom Hardy in “Locke”; Ryan Reynolds in “Buried”; James Stewart in “Rope”; Denzel Washington and Viola Davis in “Fences.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMAZON STUDIOS; WARNER BROS.; A24; DAVID LEE/PARAMOUNT PICTURES; WARNER BROS.; LIONSGATE)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Has Biden Changed? He Tells Us.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62R5-WJF1-JBG3-649G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 21, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 21; DAVID BROOKS

**Length:** 1672 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

What happened to Joe Biden? Many people thought he was a moderate incrementalist, but now he's promoting whopping big legislative packages that make many on the progressive left extremely happy.

I asked him that when I spoke on the phone with him this week. The answer seems to be -- it's complicated.

The values that drive him have been utterly consistent over the decades, and the policies he is proposing now are similar to those he's been championing for decades.

It's the scale that is gigantically different. It's as if a company that was making pleasure boats started turning out ocean liners. And that's because Biden believes that in a post-Trump world we're fighting not just to preserve the middle class, but to survive as the leading nation of the earth.

''We're kind of at a place where the rest of the world is beginning to look to China,'' Biden said. ''The most devastating comment made after I was elected -- it wasn't so much about me -- but it was by the Irish taoiseach'' -- prime minister -- ''saying that 'Well, America can't lead. They can't even get their arms around Covid.'''

I asked him how he developed his view of the role government should play in our lives. He started talking about his dad. During World War II his father managed a branch of a company that retrofitted merchant vessels. When he started a wholesale business after the war, his partner blew all the money on his gambling problem.

''After the war he was doing fairly well and that's when he lost everything,'' Biden recalled. From then on, Biden's dad mostly struggled, taking any job he could get. ''I watched my dad get the hell kicked out of him in terms of his pride.''

This may seem like an unusual way to answer a question about the role of government, but it is quintessential Biden. Some people get their worldviews from ideological constructs or philosophical movements like ''conservatism'' or ''progressivism.'' Biden derives his worldview from lived experience, especially the world of his youth, and how his parents taught him to see that world.

It created the moral underpinnings of the big legislative packages he is proposing.

The story about his father includes the key elements of the Biden worldview.

First, a social location. What matters is not only how a person sees an issue, but also where he or she sees it from. Biden sees most issues from the vantage of the folks that used to be called ''the common man,'' the lower-middle- and middle-class Truman Democrats he grew up around.

Second, an acute awareness of the vicissitudes of life. Biden said that his dad once showed him an image of the comic strip Viking, Hagar the Horrible, getting hammered by life and screaming out, ''Why Me?!'' God answers, ''Why Not?'' Biden still has that comic strip. ''That was my dad,'' he added.

Third, an intense focus on human dignity. ''I think the Irish most often use the world 'dignity' of any other group of people,'' Biden said. ''I think it's because when you've been deprived of dignity you put a high, high premium on it.'' In the white ethnic hierarchies of midcentury America, ''To be Irish was to be second class,'' Biden recalls. ''The English owned the town.''

Out of these three elements emerges a governing philosophy, and subsequently a set of policies, that works strenuously to support people amid the setbacks of life, that offers people good jobs so they can live with dignity, that pushes against the arrogance of wealth.

Another piece of his basic worldview comes from 20th-century Catholic social teaching. He said that his father loved the French Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain, and later in the conversation mentioned that he, too, was guided by Maritain.

Like most of the major figures of Catholic social teaching, Maritain placed great emphasis on social solidarity, the organic interdependence of people and communities. If you're drenched in Maritain, you believe we have serious responsibilities for one another.

Out of these basic values grows a practical legislative agenda. The White House gave me a long list of various Biden legislative initiatives, showing how long Biden has been championing many of the ideas that are in his current big packages.

In 2003, according to the White House document, he co-sponsored a bill to expand the Refundable Child Tax Credit. In 1993 Biden introduced ''The Infrastructure Growth and Employment Act.'' In 1974 he voted to raise the minimum wage, something he's done many times since. In 2003 he voted to create a tax credit for caregivers. In 1983, he effectively voted to increase funding for education by $1.5 billion.

When you look at the legislation he's sponsored or supported over the decades, you notice that the dollar amounts are generally in the millions or low billions. Today, the Biden agenda is in the trillions. So what has changed, even since January 2017, when he and Barack Obama left office?

''I think circumstances have changed drastically. We're at a genuine inflection point in history,'' Biden said. He says we're experiencing a ''Fourth Industrial Revolution,'' which encompasses developments ranging from the rise of information technology to the rise of the Chinese superstate, to shifts in the global competitive environment.

Biden spent a lot of his Senate career working on foreign policy matters and sometimes talks about domestic policy through an international or grand strategic lens.

''We've gotten to a point where I think our economic competence has a gigantic impact on our international influence and capacity,'' he said.

He grew up when America was the undisputed world leader and now he sees that rapidly slipping away, failing to invest enough in research and development.

''We're eating our seed corn,'' he continued, quoting corporate executives who talked to him about how the private sector wasn't looking to the long term.

In this context, Biden sees the greatest risks in incrementalism.

''The risk is not trying to go big,'' Biden said. ''If we stay small, I don't know how we change our international status and competitive capacity.''

The Biden administration has broken with the thinking that dominated the Clinton and Obama administrations in other ways as well, though it's not clear how much of this is driven by Biden and how much by the team around him. As Ronald Brownstein noted in The Atlantic, for years the dominant Democratic view was that wages would rise if you gave people more skills and education. The dominant Biden era view is that you also have to give people more union bargaining power to balance corporate power. For years Democrats predominantly believed you could help Black Americans if you designed colorblind policies aimed at the ***working class***. Now Biden officials are more likely to believe you have to create race-conscious policies that explicitly benefit Blacks.

So has Biden now become a straight-up progressive? Biden certainly doesn't think so. ''The progressives don't like me because I'm not prepared to take on what I would say and they would say is a socialist agenda.'' He thinks the people who take the big risks to generate wealth should reap the big rewards.

He's suspicious of the generous college debt forgiveness plans that have sprung up on the left. ''The idea that you go to Penn and you're paying a total of 70,000 bucks a year and the public should pay for that? I don't agree.''

There's also a difference in the way Biden and the left critique big corporations. Some on the left make a comprehensive critique of capitalism, while Biden wants capitalism to keep within the bounds of common decency. He argues that corporations used to take responsibility for their communities, now it's just shareholder value. ''The C.E.O.s back as late as the 70s were making 35, 40 times as much as the average employee. Now it's 320 times. What are they promoting? What are they doing? As my mother used to say, 'Who died and made you boss?'''

I asked him, where is the limit between what government should and shouldn't do? He said workers should ''earn what they get. But they have to be given an opportunity. I think the thing that moved us ahead of the rest of the world at the turn of the 20th century was the notion that we had universal education.'' Then he added, ''If we were sitting down today to say, 'OK, what does public education consist of in the 21st century? Think anybody would say 12 years is enough? I don't.''

Biden has written that his grandfather and Finnegan uncles were Truman Democrats and suspected Adlai Stevenson because they thought he was too soft. There's long been a tension between the union wing of the Democratic Party and the college educated professional wing.

Over the last decades, the heirs of Stevenson -- Rhodes scholars and Ivy League grads -- have dominated the heirs of Truman and the party has tended to see the world from the vantage of college educated professionals.

But Biden is from the other side of the party.

''He was at his best and most comfortable when meeting with union guys,'' an economics aide who worked with Biden for more than a decade told me. It's telling that in his address to Congress last month, he bragged that ''nearly 90 percent of the infrastructure jobs created in the American Jobs Plan don't require a college degree; 75 percent don't require an associate degree.''

Biden is not a progressive in the current sense. He is the kind of liberal that emerged after World War II: confident in America's greatness, confident in the state, having little interest in the culture wars that emerged since the 1960s, fierce about civil rights, deeply rooted in the working and middle classes.

Biden hasn't really changed; he's just doing everything bigger.

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**Graphic**

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

**Load-Date:** May 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Lending Apps In India Use Shame to Collect***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62CC-FDS1-JBG3-607R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 5, 2021 Monday

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1443 words

**Byline:** By Mujib Mashal and Hari Kumar

**Body**

With techniques honed in China, a new breed of company offers expensive loans to people devastated by the pandemic. If they can't repay, family and friends hear all about it.

HYDERABAD, India -- The harassing calls began soon after sunrise. Kiran Kumar remained in bed and, for hours, thought about how he was going to end his hostage of a life.

The cement salesman had initially borrowed about $40 from a lender through an online app to supplement his $200-a-month salary. But he couldn't pay the mounting fees and interest, so he borrowed from others. By that morning, Mr. Kumar owed roughly $4,000.

Even worse, the lenders had the phone numbers of those closest to him, and were threatening to make his problems public.

''If I am labeled a fraud in front of everyone, my self-respect is gone, my honor is gone,'' Mr. Kumar, 28, said in an interview. ''What is left?''

The authorities in India are increasingly worried that many more victims like Mr. Kumar may be out there. They believe a new breed of lender, its technique sharpened in China, has been preying on ***working-class*** and rural people who have been devastated by the impact of the coronavirus on the Indian economy.

These lenders don't require credit scores or visits to a bank. But they charge high costs over a brief period. They also require access to a borrower's phone, siphoning up contacts, photos, text messages, even battery percentage.

Then they bombard borrowers and their social circles with pleas, threats and sometimes fake legal documents threatening dire consequences for nonpayment. In conservative, tightly knit communities, such loss of honor can be devastating.

One police investigation alone in the city of Hyderabad has mapped out about 14 million transactions across the country worth $3 billion over about six months. India's central bank as well as national authorities are now investigating.

''It is becoming difficult for us to count the zeros,'' said Avinash Mohanty, the joint commissioner of police in Hyderabad. The police attribute five suicides in the city to the lenders.

About 100 loan apps have been removed from the Google platform, according to the Indian government. A Google spokesperson said it reviewed hundreds of loan apps and removed those that violated its terms.

The investigations are raising alarms in India over the vulnerability of a population of 1.3 billion who are still getting accustomed to digital payments. Online transactions in India will reach more than $3 trillion by 2025, according to PwC, the consulting firm. Further fraud findings could spur the government, which has already limited the personal data that online companies can use, to take a tighter grip on the industry.

The apps also speak to the global nature of online fraud. Many of the companies use techniques that flourished in China two years ago before the authorities there shut them down, and that have since reappeared elsewhere.

The loan apps emerged at a desperate time. The government enacted a tough, two-month lockdown a year ago to contain the virus, plunging India into a deep recession. Millions were thrown out of work. Traditional forms of lending, like banks and microlenders, were temporarily closed.

With names like Money Now, First Cash, Super Cash and Cool Cash -- according to police documents -- the apps came and went on Google's app store in India, some reappearing with a slight change of identity. Most were built with off-the-shelf software that made their creation as easy as starting a blog, said Srikanth Lakshmanan, one of the coordinators of Cashless Consumers, a collective of technology volunteers who have been studying the apps.

With a few taps on a phone and a fresh selfie, a borrower could get the cash needed for a doctor's appointment, for restocking the kitchen or for paying a child's school fees.

Repayment could be due as quickly as a week. Lenders often added interest and fees amounting to as much as one-third of the loan even before they sent the money, so borrowers would already owe more than received. And to get money, borrowers had to hand over their personal information.

That was when the call centers went into action, according to the police and analysts. First they would badger borrowers into paying back the principal, interest and fees. Then they would call friends and family, sometimes falsely saying the borrower was wanted by the police. Some created WhatsApp groups, added members from the borrower's contact list, then bombarded the group with accusations. Some would steer desperate borrowers to other services that lent money, further ensnaring them.

The police in Hyderabad took notice this past winter after the suicides and after people lodged harassment complaints. They were stymied until an informant came forward and, in return for a roughly $150 reward, shared the address and details of a call center where a close friend worked as a collection agent.

In an interview with The New York Times, the collection agent -- a fast-talking 24-year-old who made about $130 a month -- said each day he would receive electronic files on about 50 borrowers. The files included their personal details, copies of their government IDs and their contact lists.

Workers could make a weekly bonus of about $7 for if they pressured three-fourths of the borrowers to pay loans back, said the collection agent, who asked for anonymity for fear of reprisal from his former employer. The bonus doubled for a success rate of four-fifths or more. Clients often begged for time, the agent said, and some even said the constant harassment would lead to their deaths. The collection agent, eyes on the bonus, would continue anyway.

So far, the investigations in Hyderabad have led to raids on call centers in at least four Indian cities, with each center employing between 100 and 600.

Some of the companies have connections to China. So far, at least four Chinese nationals have been arrested, the police said. In reverse-engineering the most exploitative apps, activists like Mr. Lakshmanan found that a large number were hosted on Chinese cloud services and used Chinese software development kits and facial recognition tools.

The police have frozen bank accounts with about $40 million so far. But the trail often leads to shell companies, networks used for money laundering or cryptocurrencies, which are difficult for governments to track.

Still, the publicity in Hyderabad has powered a public backlash.

Mr. Kumar, the cement salesman, is now part of one online advocacy group. About 60 victims have joined its WhatsApp channel, where they devise responses to harassing calls that continue, or provide support.

What saved Mr. Kumar on the morning last summer when he lay in bed and thought of ending his life was a final call to a friend. The friend recognized the urgency, rushed to the room and within hours helped collect the $400 Mr. Kumar had to pay that day to ease some of the harassment.

''If it wasn't for my friend, I was 90 percent sure that day I would commit suicide,'' Mr. Kumar said. ''I still get calls. But now I tell them, 'Do whatever you can.' I am not worried now. I feel protected.''

But for some families, neither the pain nor the harassment has gone away.

G. Chandra-Mohan, a 38-year-old father of three who worked at a clothing warehouse, took out loans of about $1,000. After interest, fees and penalties, plus borrowing from other services to stay afloat, his balance was five times that. With a salary of $200 a month, and the $80 a month that his wife, Sarita, made from a part-time job at a laboratory, he couldn't pay it back.

Mr. Chandra-Mohan maxed out his credit cards and drew from dozens of loan apps, his family said. When he complained of the harassment to the police, they told him to switch off his phone for a few days and return if it continued, his father-in-law, M. Sailu, said. The police said that he might have called a cybercrime hotline but that they didn't have a record of him visiting a police station.

One morning, after Mr. Chandra-Mohan had driven his wife to her office on the back of his motorbike, he gave his three young daughters some change and sent them to their grandparents' house around the corner. Then, he hanged himself from a fan.

''Even after his suicide,'' his wife said, ''the phone keeps ringing.''

If you are having thoughts of suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline in the United States at 1-800-273-8255 (TALK). In India, contact 91-9820466726 or to go the website of Aasra.info for more resources.

Cao Li contributed reporting from Hong Kong.Cao Li contributed reporting from Hong Kong.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/26/business/india-lending-apps.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/26/business/india-lending-apps.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Suicides and harassment complaints prompted the police in Hyderabad, India, to investigate lenders. One investigation in that city alone has mapped out about 14 million transactions across the country worth $3 billion over six months. (B1)

The loan apps emerged at a desperate time when millions were thrown out of work. The police attribute five suicides in the city of Hyderabad to the lenders.

''It is becoming difficult for us to count the zeros,'' said Avinash Mohanty, the joint commissioner of police in Hyderabad, above. A list of online apps that a borrower in Hyderabad used, left, and one of the raided call centers, below. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAUMYA KHANDELWAL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** April 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***For Location Scouts, These Films Were Easy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6065-57M1-JBG3-61TD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 22, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1043 words

**Byline:** By Chris Azzopardi

**Body**

With the release of ''7500'' on Amazon Prime Video, here's a look at a handful of films that create dramatic tension in one space (or outer space).

As we emerge from state-ordered quarantine, consider this: In movies, a locked-down set is often an artistic choice (or sometimes the result of a strapped budget). Some filmmakers find the challenges of these limitations to be a thrill in itself; for others, intimate spaces simply better serve the story.

When done on a smaller scale, film adaptations of plays can put the focus on the heart of a dialogue-driven drama. And horror movies set in constricted, no-escape spaces can intensify the dread. Here are six primarily single-location films that demonstrate how filmmakers can think outside the box -- even when their work is set in an actual box.

'7500'

Stream on Amazon Prime Video.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The location: A plane's cockpit

The problem: When terrorists hijack a Berlin-to-Paris flight, it's up to a young American co-pilot, Tobias (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), to direct the aircraft to safety and, in the process, make some distressing split-second decisions.

The results: For his debut feature, the director Patrick Vollrath creates a close-quarters nail-biter that keeps you exactly where he wants you: in the pilot's seat. So that we experience the film from Tobias's point of view, Vollrath makes clever use of a surveillance monitor in the locked cockpit.

The screen displays impersonal glimpses of passengers as the flight attendants pass through the service curtain. Hostages held in the cabin are also only visible on the screen. By keeping tight focus on Gordon-Levitt's commitment to his character's emotional agony, the film pushes new buttons on old themes.

'Gravity'

Rent on YouTube, Amazon Prime Video, iTunes and other platforms.

The location: 600 kilometers above Earth

The problem: The medical engineer Dr. Ryan Stone (Sandra Bullock) is faced with finding a way back to Earth after her space shuttle is damaged by debris from a destroyed satellite.

The results: This 2013 science-fiction drama is so utterly immersive it makes you feel like Dr. Stone. We are centered in the action, even pulled inside her astronaut's helmet; there, we can sense the panic of free-falling into an ocean of emptiness, alone. (And you thought you've been self-isolating.)

Rather than relying on flashbacks to illustrate her back story, the screenwriters Alfonso Cuarón (who also directed) and his son Jonás reveal Dr. Stone's grief through her achingly tragic soliloquy, delivered in space as she floats against a backdrop of star-speckled darkness. Cuarón's existential spectacle sustains its own kind of emotional gravity.

'Locke'

Stream on Netflix.

The location: A slate-gray BMW X5

The problem: On a London-bound drive, a construction foreman, Ivan Locke (Tom Hardy), bounces between calls and follows his moral compass into the night.

The results: It's hard to believe that one of the dilemmas Ivan is faced with in the writer-director Stephen Knight's 2014 lo-fi road drama involves orchestrating a concrete pour. Even harder to believe that the film manages to render a multidimensional portrait of a flawed man from this otherwise mundane subject matter.

This is an exceptional showcase for Hardy, whose transfixing performance drives a rich, theatrical narrative that reaches dramatic heights through nothing more than phone conversations in a car.

'Fences'

Rent on YouTube, Amazon Prime Video, iTunes and other platforms.

The location: A ***working-class*** Pittsburgh home, but most memorably in its bare-bones backyard.

The problem: Troy (played by Denzel Washington, who also directed) struggles with his marriage (to Rose, played by Viola Davis) and tries to protect his youngest son from the same disappointments he experienced as a black man whose dreams were shattered.

The results: If you have total command of the screen like Washington and Davis do in ''Fences,'' then it's fine for location to be ancillary. Staying true to August Wilson's Pulitzer Prize-winning play for this film adaptation, Davis and Washington engage in character-building repartee and deeper, meaningful dialogue to illustrate this story about one black family's experiences in a racially divided America.

The film is appropriately intimate in scope, emphasizing the emotional weight of Wilson's writing and the actors who bring it to life. Still, the tiny backyard setting is unforgettable. And those porch steps, certainly by the movie's end, have their own story to tell.

'Rope'

Rent on YouTube, Amazon Prime Video, iTunes and other platforms.

The location: A swanky Manhattan apartment

The problem: Two prep-school pals kill their classmate, stuff him in a chest, then host a dinner party in the same room where his corpse lies. Can they keep the body concealed from their friends and finally prove their elitist superiority by doing so?

The results: Based on Patrick Hamilton's 1929 play, ''Rope'' maximizes Alfred Hitchcock's minimalist approach. With just an apartment and its panoramic view of the city skyline to work with, Hitchcock relies on technique -- his ability to make the film appear as one long, continuous shot -- and the play's sharp, catty, tension-building dialogue.

Hitchcock lets the awkwardness of the dead-body-in-the-room setup be the film's real star.

'Buried'

Rent on YouTube, Amazon Prime Video, iTunes and other platforms.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The location: A wooden coffin

The problem: An Iraq-based American civilian truck driver, Paul Conroy (Ryan Reynolds), is buried alive. His air supply is diminishing, and he has nothing but a few tools to help him escape.

The results: Ninety-five minutes is a long time to be stuffed in a coffin. But with the director Rodrigo Cortés's fraught 2010 thriller, he makes a bone-chilling case for setting an entire movie in a big box with a single onscreen character.

We first find Paul under the flickering glow of a lighter, the blood vessels in his eye in sharp focus. The film's use of frantic camerawork and close-ups paired with Reynolds's strong, desperate-to-escape performance establish an environment that is so wincingly claustrophobic, you might try to look for a way out, too.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/21/movies/single-location-movies-7500.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/21/movies/single-location-movies-7500.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top right: Joseph Gordon-Levitt in ''7500''

Sandra Bullock in ''Gravity''

Tom Hardy in ''Locke''

Ryan Reynolds in ''Buried''

James Stewart in ''Rope''

Denzel Washington and Viola Davis in ''Fences.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMAZON STUDIOS

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**Load-Date:** June 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***What Does a Future Without Herd Immunity Look Like?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62R1-YCW1-JBG3-641X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 20, 2021 Thursday 18:00 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1674 words

**Byline:** Spencer Bokat-Lindell

**Highlight:** Many experts now say that the fixation on herd immunity as the only path back to normalcy is misguided.

**Body**

This article is part of the Debatable newsletter. You can [*sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) to receive it on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

For many months after the coronavirus locked the world into a strange and fearsome new reality, herd immunity was billed as the key to our escape. Vaccinate enough of the population, the theory went — between 60 percent and 70 percent, [*it was estimated*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) — and the virus would no longer be able to spread widely.

But recently, the tantalizing promise of a clean exit from the pandemic has receded. “There is widespread consensus among scientists and public health experts,” The Times’s Apoorva Mandavilli [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) two weeks ago, “that the herd immunity threshold is not attainable — at least not in the foreseeable future, and perhaps not ever.”

How did herd immunity come to be seen as a remote possibility, and what does a future without it look like? Here’s what people are saying.

Is this all because too many Americans don’t want to get vaccinated?

Vaccine hesitancy is certainly a major factor in the [*vaccination slowdown*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) — but it’s not the only one.

* While 28 million American adults remain outright [*opposed to getting vaccinated*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable), an even larger number — 30 million Americans, or about 10 percent of the population — say they are open to getting vaccinated but haven’t yet managed to do so, [*according*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) to an analysis of U.S. census data. This “vaccine amenable” population is predominantly ***working class***, and many of its members have scarce free time and cannot afford to take time from work if they experience side effects.

1. Dr. Tom Frieden, a former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, believes the best way to increase uptake among this population is simply to make the vaccine more accessible. “That means walk-in hours,” he [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) last week. “That means easy locations, easy hours, supporting transportation and setting up pop-up sites outside of everywhere, from ballgames to bars to bowling alleys to shopping centers.”

But even if the United States could vaccinate a large majority of its population, global obstacles to herd immunity are likely to remain.

* The initial estimate for the herd immunity threshold was made before the appearance of the much more contagious B.1.1.7 variant, which pushed the estimate to at least [*80 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). If more contagious variants emerge, the estimate will increase again.

1. The longer the virus has to spread uncontrolled in unvaccinated parts of the world, the more opportunities it will have to develop such variants, which would inevitably make their way to the United States. And right now, the global distribution of vaccines remains [*staggeringly unequal*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable), with only [*0.3 percent of all doses*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) administered in low-income countries.
2. Just as vaccine access is a global problem, so is vaccine hesitancy: About 32 percent of adults worldwide — or 1.3 billion people — said they would not take the vaccine, [*according*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) to a Gallup poll released this month.

All of these factors make global elimination of the coronavirus an unlikely prospect:[*A January survey*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) conducted by the journal Nature of more than 100 immunologists, infectious-disease researchers and virologists found that about 90 percent expected the coronavirus to become endemic, meaning it will circulate at a constant level around the world for years to come.

Does this mean life will never return to normal?

No. Many experts now say that the fixation on herd immunity as the only path back to normalcy is misguided. “Achieving herd immunity is a matter of numbers and can become a distraction from what people actually care about,” Abraar Karan, a global health physician at Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Harvard Medical School, and Julie Parsonnet, an epidemiologist at Stanford, [*write*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) in The Washington Post. “For many people, it’s more important to see loved ones without worry or to live without having to wear masks in public spaces.”

The history of previous pandemics here is instructive: In the case of the 1918 flu, the world didn’t even have a vaccine. Nor did humans develop so-called natural herd immunity, which Howard Forman, a public-health professor at Yale, told The Atlantic [*has never been achieved*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) for any disease. Rather, Helen Branswell [*explains*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) in Stat, as more and more people became immune to the 1918 virus, it evolved, bequeathing milder versions that still circulate today.

“The truth of the matter is that pandemics always end,” Ms. Branswell writes. “And to date vaccines have never played a significant role in ending them.”

So if herd immunity isn’t achievable, what is the goal? In the medium term, well-vaccinated populations may find it possible to eliminate the virus or reduce it to a containable threat, like measles. “What we want to do at the very least is get to a point where we have just really sporadic little flare-ups,” Carl Bergstrom, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Washington in Seattle, [*told*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) The Times. “That would be a very sensible target in this country where we have an excellent vaccine and the ability to deliver it.”

Depending on vaccine uptake, some parts of the country are likely to fare better than others. “As time goes along, some regions of the nation may see something close to herd immunity with very few infections, rare outbreaks and only very modest measures needed to keep infections under control,” Ashish K. Jha, the dean of the Brown University School of Public Health, [*writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) in The Washington Post. “In states with lower rates of vaccination, we are likely to see large outbreaks that run for longer before they are contained by public health interventions.”

Other variables — population density and the prevalence of non-pharmaceutical interventions, like ventilation and masking, for example — will also determine how resistant a community is to outbreaks. As Dr. David M. Morens, a virologist and senior adviser to Dr. Anthony Fauci, [*told*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) The Times, “The herd immunity for a wealthy neighborhood might be X, then you go into a crowded neighborhood one block away and it’s 10X.”

Much more could also be done to close the yawning gap in vaccine access between rich and poor countries. While the Biden administration’s newfound support for [*suspending vaccine patents*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) is an important step to that end, Dr. Karan and Dr. Parsonnet say, the World Trade Organization has yet to vote on the measure, and “we still require technology transfers, provision of essential supplies and serious scaling up of vaccines in countries that have not yet seen adequate access.”

Over the coming years, experts hope the novel coronavirus will evolve to become more like the four coronaviruses that cause common colds, which frequently reinfect people but very rarely cause severe illness. With those viruses, people often get infected as children and develop partial immunity that protects them in adulthood.

“It’s not a death sentence in any way, shape or form to say we’re not going to have herd immunity,” Jennie Lavine, a biology research fellow at Emory University, told Ms. Branswell. “It just means it’s going to become endemic and then the question is, is it going to be mild and endemic, or is it going to be severe and endemic? And I would say my odds are on mild and endemic at some point. I think that seems really, really likely.”

That’s the best-case scenario. What’s the worst?

Many viruses become less deadly as they mutate, but [*there’s no guarantee*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) this will happen with the coronavirus. The B.1.1.7 variant is a case in point: [*Several studies*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) have suggested that it’s not only more contagious but also significantly more deadly. And while all of the major vaccines in use are highly protective against that variant, others may emerge that prove capable of escaping the vaccines’ defenses.

“Much like what has been proposed with influenza, we must develop Covid risk assessment tools that can identify the viral properties of dominant strains — how transmissible they may be or how resistant they are to current drugs or vaccines — to help us align our public health response with the level of risk,” William A. Haseltine, the founder of Harvard’s cancer and H.I.V./AIDS research departments, [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) in Scientific American in February. “Otherwise, we’ll be setting ourselves up for failure once more.”

Many scientists are preparing for this possibility. Dozens of research teams are now working on creating a universal coronavirus vaccine that could protect against variants not yet in existence, a race that Dr. Fauci [*told*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) The Atlantic could yield a winning candidate even before the pandemic ends.

In the meantime, “public health officials and infectious disease epidemiologists are going to be looking over their shoulders going: ‘All right, the variants out there — what are they doing? What are they capable of?’” Jeffrey Shaman, an epidemiologist at Columbia University, [*told*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) The Times. “Maybe the general public can go back to not worrying about it so much, but we will have to.”

Do you have a point of view we missed? Email us at [*debatable@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). Please note your name, age and location in your response, which may be included in the next newsletter.

READ MORE

[*“We Can’t Hide in Our Bubble of Immunity Forever”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable)[The Atlantic]

[*“Why So Many People Are Resisting Vaccination”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [The New York Times]

[*“How to Talk to Someone Who Doesn’t Want the Vaccine”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [The New York Times]

[*“It’s Time for America’s Fixation on Herd Immunity to End, Scientists Say”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [NPR]

[*“Our Pathetic Herd Immunity Failure”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [The New York Times]

WHAT YOU’RE SAYING

Here’s what a reader had to say about the last debate: [*Why can’t the Republican Party quit Donald Trump?*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable)

William, 72, from Ohio: “As important as fealty to Trump is, the reason for this fealty is grievances, and the splendid way in which Trump seems to champion them. If Trump withdraws or dies, the grievances do not go away and his image can continue to empower a movement. Very, very few of Trump’s supporters will abandon this movement in his absence.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by The New York Times; photographs by Marko Geber, Radoslav Zilinsky and Spiderplay via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Has Biden Changed? He Tells Us.; David Brooks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62R2-54G1-DXY4-X088-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 20, 2021 Thursday 08:16 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1662 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** In an interview, the president describes how he developed his view of the world.

**Body**

What happened to Joe Biden? Many people thought he was a moderate incrementalist, but now he’s promoting whopping big legislative packages that make many on the progressive left extremely happy.

I asked him that when I spoke on the phone with him this week. The answer seems to be — it’s complicated.

The values that drive him have been utterly consistent over the decades, and the policies he is proposing now are similar to those he’s been championing for decades.

It’s the scale that is gigantically different. It’s as if a company that was making pleasure boats started turning out ocean liners. And that’s because Biden believes that in a post-Trump world we’re fighting not just to preserve the middle class, but to survive as the leading nation of the earth.

“We’re kind of at a place where the rest of the world is beginning to look to China,” Biden said. “The most devastating comment made after I was elected — it wasn’t so much about me — but it was by the Irish taoiseach” — prime minister — “saying that ‘Well, America can’t lead. They can’t even get their arms around Covid.’”

I asked him how he developed his view of the role government should play in our lives. He started talking about his dad. During World War II his father managed a branch of a company that retrofitted merchant vessels. When he started a wholesale business after the war, his partner blew all the money on his gambling problem.

“After the war he was doing fairly well and that’s when he lost everything,” Biden recalled. From then on, Biden’s dad mostly struggled, taking any job he could get. “I watched my dad get the hell kicked out of him in terms of his pride.”

This may seem like an unusual way to answer a question about the role of government, but it is quintessential Biden. Some people get their worldviews from ideological constructs or philosophical movements like “conservatism” or “progressivism.” Biden derives his worldview from lived experience, especially the world of his youth, and how his parents taught him to see that world.

It created the moral underpinnings of the big legislative packages he is proposing.

The story about his father includes the key elements of the Biden worldview.

First, a social location. What matters is not only how a person sees an issue, but also where he or she sees it from. Biden sees most issues from the vantage of the folks that used to be called “the common man,” the lower-middle- and middle-class Truman Democrats he grew up around.

Second, an acute awareness of the vicissitudes of life. Biden said that his dad once showed him an image of the comic strip Viking, Hagar the Horrible, getting hammered by life and screaming out, “Why Me?!” God answers, “Why Not?” Biden still has that comic strip. “That was my dad,” he added.

Third, an intense focus on human dignity. “I think the Irish most often use the world ‘dignity’ of any other group of people,” Biden said. “I think it’s because when you’ve been deprived of dignity you put a high, high premium on it.” In the white ethnic hierarchies of midcentury America, “To be Irish was to be second class,” Biden recalls. “The English owned the town.”

Out of these three elements emerges a governing philosophy, and subsequently a set of policies, that works strenuously to support people amid the setbacks of life, that offers people good jobs so they can live with dignity, that pushes against the arrogance of wealth.

Another piece of his basic worldview comes from 20th-century Catholic social teaching. He said that his father loved the French Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain, and later in the conversation mentioned that he, too, was guided by Maritain.

Like most of the major figures of Catholic social teaching, Maritain placed great emphasis on social solidarity, the organic interdependence of people and communities. If you’re drenched in Maritain, you believe we have serious responsibilities for one another.

Out of these basic values grows a practical legislative agenda. The White House gave me a long list of various Biden legislative initiatives, showing how long Biden has been championing many of the ideas that are in his current big packages.

In 2003, according to the White House document, he co-sponsored a bill to expand the Refundable Child Tax Credit. In 1993 Biden introduced “The Infrastructure Growth and Employment Act.” In 1974 he voted to raise the minimum wage, something he’s done many times since. In 2003 he voted to create a tax credit for caregivers. In 1983, he effectively voted to increase funding for education by $1.5 billion.

When you look at the legislation he’s sponsored or supported over the decades, you notice that the dollar amounts are generally in the millions or low billions. Today, the Biden agenda is in the trillions. So what has changed, even since January 2017, when he and Barack Obama left office?

“I think circumstances have changed drastically. We’re at a genuine inflection point in history,” Biden said. He says we’re experiencing a “Fourth Industrial Revolution,” which encompasses developments ranging from the rise of information technology to the rise of the Chinese superstate, to shifts in the global competitive environment.

Biden spent a lot of his Senate career working on foreign policy matters and sometimes talks about domestic policy through an international or grand strategic lens.

“We’ve gotten to a point where I think our economic competence has a gigantic impact on our international influence and capacity,” he said.

He grew up when America was the undisputed world leader and now he sees that rapidly slipping away, failing to invest enough in research and development.

“We’re eating our seed corn,” he continued, quoting corporate executives who talked to him about how the private sector wasn’t looking to the long term.

In this context, Biden sees the greatest risks in incrementalism.

“The risk is not trying to go big,” Biden said. “If we stay small, I don’t know how we change our international status and competitive capacity.”

The Biden administration has broken with the thinking that dominated the Clinton and Obama administrations in other ways as well, though it’s not clear how much of this is driven by Biden and how much by the team around him. As Ronald Brownstein noted in [*The Atlantic*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/05/biden-economy-inflation-yellen/618816/), for years the dominant Democratic view was that wages would rise if you gave people more skills and education. The dominant Biden era view is that you also have to give people more union bargaining power to balance corporate power. For years Democrats predominantly believed you could help Black Americans if you designed colorblind policies aimed at the ***working class***. Now Biden officials are more likely to believe you have to create race-conscious policies that explicitly benefit Blacks.

So has Biden now become a straight-up progressive? Biden certainly doesn’t think so. “The progressives don’t like me because I’m not prepared to take on what I would say and they would say is a socialist agenda.” He thinks the people who take the big risks to generate wealth should reap the big rewards.

He’s suspicious of the generous college debt forgiveness plans that have sprung up on the left. “The idea that you go to Penn and you’re paying a total of 70,000 bucks a year and the public should pay for that? I don’t agree.”

There’s also a difference in the way Biden and the left critique big corporations. Some on the left make a comprehensive critique of capitalism, while Biden wants capitalism to keep within the bounds of common decency. He argues that corporations used to take responsibility for their communities, now it’s just shareholder value. “The C.E.O.s back as late as the 70s were making 35, 40 times as much as the average employee. Now it’s 320 times. What are they promoting? What are they doing? As my mother used to say, ‘Who died and made you boss?’”

I asked him, where is the limit between what government should and shouldn’t do? He said workers should “earn what they get. But they have to be given an opportunity. I think the thing that moved us ahead of the rest of the world at the turn of the 20th century was the notion that we had universal education.” Then he added, “If we were sitting down today to say, ‘OK, what does public education consist of in the 21st century?’ Think anybody would say 12 years is enough? I don’t.”

Biden has written that his grandfather and Finnegan uncles were Truman Democrats and suspected Adlai Stevenson because they thought he was too soft. There’s long been a tension between the union wing of the Democratic Party and the college educated professional wing.

Over the last decades, the heirs of Stevenson — Rhodes scholars and Ivy League grads — have dominated the heirs of Truman and the party has tended to see the world from the vantage of college educated professionals.

But Biden is from the other side of the party.

“He was at his best and most comfortable when meeting with union guys,” an economics aide who worked with Biden for more than a decade told me. It’s telling that in his address to Congress last month, he bragged that “nearly 90 percent of the infrastructure jobs created in the American Jobs Plan don’t require a college degree; 75 percent don’t require an associate degree.”

Biden is not a progressive in the current sense. He is the kind of liberal that emerged after World War II: confident in America’s greatness, confident in the state, having little interest in the culture wars that emerged since the 1960s, fierce about civil rights, deeply rooted in the working and middle classes.

Biden hasn’t really changed; he’s just doing everything bigger.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/05/biden-economy-inflation-yellen/618816/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/05/biden-economy-inflation-yellen/618816/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/05/biden-economy-inflation-yellen/618816/).

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

**Load-Date:** May 27, 2021

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[***A Court Ruling Ending DACA Might Not Be a Good Thing for Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XGT-99N1-DXY4-X4NG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 18, 2020 Thursday 12:18 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 993 words

**Byline:** Maggie Haberman

**Highlight:** It could mean news coverage of the government trying to deport thousands of young immigrants in the midst of what is certain to be a difficult re-election battle.

**Body**

It could mean news coverage of the government trying to deport thousands of young immigrants in the midst of what is certain to be a difficult re-election battle.

[Read more on the Supreme Court’s decision on President [*Trump and DACA*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/18/us/trump-daca-supreme-court.html).]

President Trump may find himself in a political box of his own making when the Supreme Court rules on the fate of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

If the court decides that the administration has the right to end the program, [*known as DACA*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/18/us/trump-daca-supreme-court.html), Mr. Trump will face a consequence he has tried to put off for years: news coverage of efforts by the government to deport thousands of young immigrants in the midst of what is certain to be a difficult re-election battle.

[*In oral arguments on Tuesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/18/us/trump-daca-supreme-court.html), Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. suggested that there could be extensive human cost to overturning the program, and that it would need to be mitigated. Still, a ruling that supports the administration’s position sets up a situation in which Mr. Trump — who at times has praised the program and at others condemned it — will face potentially treacherous crosswinds.

The president, who is often pulled by what he thinks his supporters who oppose both legal and illegal immigration might want, has vowed to keep a campaign promise to end DACA, one of President Barack Obama’s singular efforts. At the same time, Mr. Trump has tried to argue that it would not be his fault that the program ended, but the Supreme Court’s.

Based on comments by Chief Justice Roberts and other conservative justices, the court seems poised to let it happen. But the solicitor general, Noel J. Francisco, put perhaps an unintended fine point on the issue for the Trump administration when he told the court on Tuesday, “We own it.”

That might end up being the problem for Mr. Trump, if he has any hope of peeling off support from Latinos and from voters who have recoiled at the administration’s more aggressive immigration policies, like border separations.

Charlie Dent, a former moderate Republican congressman from Pennsylvania and a CNN commentator, said that Mr. Trump would have “bad options or bad outcomes” unless the court ruled that the program was legal.

“I think he’s in a bind politically,” said Mr. Dent, who retired last year. “These young people will be at risk for being thrown out.”

He said that Mr. Trump’s aides might “think they can rally up their base on this thing.” But it is at a cost with the broader population, Mr. Dent added.

Officials with the White House and the Trump campaign did not respond to an email seeking comment.

But Mr. Trump is aware of the politics and how poorly it may play out for him if young immigrants are facing deportation before the 2020 election, according to people close to the White House.

Even when he was ordering Jeff Sessions, the attorney general at the time, to find a solution to DACA, Mr. Trump was asking close aides how he could get out of the political jam he found himself in.

“Presumably, there will be discretion about how aggressively various laws are enforced,” said Whit Ayres, a Republican pollster, “but it does create a political challenge because, consistently, 80 percent of Americans have supported allowing the DACA kids to stay.”

Geoff Garin, a Democratic pollster who has worked for the pro-immigration group FWD.us, said that ending DACA helped reinforce the negative feelings about Mr. Trump’s immigration policies.

“We know from polling that Americans overwhelmingly support DACA. They oppose Trump’s efforts to terminate DACA,” Mr. Garin said. “It reinforces all the other negatives that Trump has established.”

The program, which was announced by Mr. Obama in 2012, lets young people brought to the United States as children apply for a temporary status that lasts two years and can be renewed. It does not offer a pathway to citizenship, something that Mr. Trump’s most hard-line supporters are against.

A national survey by Mr. Garin’s firm of 1,202 voters conducted at the end of the summer showed that 76 percent of all voters said they supported the DACA program. That included 41 percent who strongly supported it, according to a memo the firm wrote. Among a demographic that has supported Mr. Trump, white ***working-class*** voters without a college degree, there was support from 70 percent of the group, according to Mr. Garin’s survey.

Mark Krikorian, an immigration restrictionist and the executive director for the Center for Immigration Studies, said that Mr. Trump could theoretically defer making a decision during the election year. With such a move, Mr. Trump’s White House could say the administration will stop processing renewals of DACA status so that it does not kick in until after the election.

“In the middle of an election year, I think the White House can genuinely say that this is not a good time to broker an immigration deal, not for anyone,” Mr. Krikorian said. “That’s a plausible position for them that may limit the political challenge that they face” by ending the program immediately.

The Supreme Court’s decision will also reinforce the challenge any discussion of an immigration deal faces in Congress, even as Mr. Trump’s son-in-law and senior adviser, Jared Kushner, has tried to push through a broader frame for an immigration compromise. However, White House officials said that they were aware that any broad deal would be difficult to push through right now.

“What’s so frustrating is that 80 percent of Americans also support a secure border, and Congress has thus far seemed unable to put those two 80 percent issues together in a very limited immigration bill,” Mr. Ayres said.

Mr. Dent agreed that Mr. Trump “had an opportunity for real compromise over the last few years” on immigration issues. “He just couldn’t get there” with all the cross pressures, Mr. Dent said.

PHOTO: President Trump made a campaign promise to end the DACA program set up by his predecessor. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***Downey, Calif.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61FT-C2G1-DXY4-X04Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 6, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1286 words

**Byline:** By June Canedo and Erick Galindo

**Body**

The 'Mexican Beverly Hills'

I was having dinner at some fancy beach-side eatery in early March when someone said they had just moved to Downey, a Southeast Los Angeles suburb 12 miles south of downtown.

The other Latinos at the table oohed. ''You finally made it,'' someone said. ''To the Mexican Beverly Hills.''

In many ways, that is what Downey represents. It's hoity-toity, gilded and more conservative than surrounding neighborhoods -- a status-marking place where the average household income, at $88,000, is significantly higher than in other areas in Los Angeles with a similar ethnic makeup. In East Los Angeles, which is also predominantly Latino, the average income is $56,000, according to census data. (If you're wondering, the average income in Beverly Hills is $191,000.)

It's the kind of place where many people feel entitled enough to not wear face masks despite coronavirus infection spikes, where many homes featured ''Thank you, Downey PD'' banners at the peak of the George Floyd protests -- but where an overwhelming majority of its citizens voted for President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. over President Donald J. Trump. (With a vote of roughly 2 to 1 for Mr. Biden, Downey voted more conservatively than Los Angeles County as a whole, which voted for him 3 to 1.)

In short, it's a great example of a place that rebukes the idea of a singular Latino vote, or of any ideological uniformity among the nearly 61 million people of Latin American descent who live in the United States.

Because even in the so-called Mexican Beverly Hills, Latinos are not a monolith. In October, the city was trending on Twitter after a ''Latinos for Trump'' caravan rode through north Downey, drawing snarky social media criticism. That same morning in South Downey, a single horseback rider galloped down Imperial Highway, drinking beer and professing his disdain for the president in Spanish, as people cheered him on from their front lawns.

The city of Downey itself has an interesting history: Home to the world's oldest McDonald's in operation -- and the site of the first Taco Bell (which is now a museum at Taco Bell headquarters in Irvine) -- Downey was also the birthplace of the Apollo Space Program.

The city was essentially modernized from an orange-grove farm town into a missile factory town by Boeing during World War II. The space program was just a continuation of that. In the 1980s, it began to transition into one of the most diverse areas of Los Angeles County thanks in part to Ronald Reagan's 1986 amnesty bill, which naturalized people like my parents and allowed them to come out of the shadows to find higher-paying careers.

Today, many of Downey's fanciest restaurants are Latin American or are owned by Latinos. Spanish is the predominant language of people decked out in Prada, Gucci and Burberry. It is home to fantastically wealthy families, including the Saavedras, who own the Tapatio hot sauce company; the Flores family, who live in a giant estate rumored to be modeled after the Palace of Versailles; and the Infantes, Mexican musical and cinematic royalty.

But there are also the Galindos.

When my family moved here in the mid-90s, after years living in different spots in Southeast L.A. County's poorer neighborhoods, Downey was considered a mostly white, upper-middle-class oasis. It's still upper-middle-class, but the population is about 74 percent Hispanic, and the place where the space program was conceived is now a 24-Hour Fitness, adjacent to a luxury movie theater that shows most blockbuster films with Spanish subtitles.

My immigrant parents scraped and earned and brought us to South Downey in 1995 to keep their five kids out of gangs. The schools in Downey were known for their prowess and the Downey Police for their severity. Back then, we were the only Mexicans on my block, living next to the only Cuban and only Asian-American families for miles.

As early as 1988, the city's edges became a gateway for ***working class*** Latinos seeking to spend their hard-earned savings on a first home in a neighborhood with access to great public schools. The Downey Unified school district consistently ranks in the top 20 safest districts of L.A. County. For parents like mine, who had bought into education as the key to a life of American exceptionalism, Downey was a beacon.

South Downey was considered the poor part of town -- which Beverly Hills also has, by the way -- because it's right on the border of less affluent cities like Lynwood, South Gate and Paramount. And when we first moved there, it was, frankly, boring, and hard to stay out of trouble.

There were fights, drug abuse, police and gun violence. And at times, it appeared each one of us five kids would squander the opportunities our parents were working hard to shape for us. But my family evolved, and South Downey has evolved with it.

It's still changing.

This summer, Downey had what one 60-year resident described as the ''largest display of civil disobedience in a generation.'' It was some 300, mostly young people of color led by a 19-year-old college freshman named Donald Arrington, marching for Black Lives Matter.

Property value here has also boomed as real-estate prices have ballooned to the million-dollar range, according to Sergio Orzynski, a realtor with Keller Williams. A house on the very end of my block just sold for about $700,000 and a few blocks over, there were multiple million-dollar listings.

''We call it the Mexican Beverly Hills, the Latino Beverly Hills, to potential clients. That's how we sell it, basically,'' said Mr. Orzynski.

''I mean, you got all these rich Latino families here, all these mini mansions everywhere. So if you're first generation or second or even a recent immigrant, that's where your American dream is,'' he said. ''It's to one day work so hard that you can live in these large spaces in clean neighborhoods that have these great schools.''

That's the paradoxical part about Downey: It shows that Latinos can live a life of relative wealth and influence in the United States without having to give up ties to their respective and diverse Latin American cultures. But it also exemplifies a distinctly American idea: the possibility of upward mobility across generations.

The phrases ''Mexican Beverly Hills'' and ''Latino Beverly Hills'' aren't great for many reasons, especially because they center the success of people of color through a white lens (Beverly Hills being one of many elite American suburbs that was originally planned as an all-white community). But the truth is, this is the name Southeast L.A.'s Latin American community created, and it signifies an important ideal.

It doesn't hurt that Downey is glittering with mansions, lush gardens and a Portos, the lauded Cuban bakery that always has a massive line out the door and regularly features catty verbal altercations when someone tries to cut.

Elon Musk even considered opening his factory here before Toyota wooed him to Silicon Valley. The long flirtation with South Downey ended with Mr. Musk penning a public letter titled ''Downey is Great.'' (It's true that there are Tesla charging stations all around town.)

My parents don't own a Tesla or mansion. But they do live in a large compound that houses three generations of Galindos. So there are resources and we band them together, a multigenerational approach to long-term stability that has helped us survive the worst of the coronavirus recession.

The whole neighborhood is like that now. Generations of families, working together to put down roots.

Erick Galindo writes about life in Los Angeles for LAist and other publications. June Canedo is a photographer based in Los Angeles, Calif.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/05/style/mexican-beverly-hills-downey-los-angeles.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/05/style/mexican-beverly-hills-downey-los-angeles.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top left: A typical layout on the residential streets of Downey

Lupita Infante, a musician and city resident

Ivonne Rosales-Garcia and Julio Garcia, who recently bought this house

an ornate entry path

family life in the city. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUNE CANEDO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 6, 2020

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[***What Role Have Coaches Played in Your Life?; student opinion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y7Y-7PC1-DXY4-X1MW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 20, 2020 Thursday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** LEARNING

**Length:** 839 words

**Byline:** Jeremy Engle

**Highlight:** An immigrant from Brazil must prove he is an “extraordinary” coach to stay in the U.S. What do you think makes a great coach?

**Body**

An immigrant from Brazil must prove he is an “extraordinary” coach to stay in the U.S. What do you think makes a great coach?

[*Find all our Student Opinion questions here.*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-student-opinion)

Have you ever had a great coach, whether in or out of school? One who not only helped you to master a skill or a sport, but who also helped shape you as a person?

In “[*An Immigrant From Brazil Has Changed Lives as a Coach. Is That Enough to Stay in the U.S.?,*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-student-opinion)” Miriam Jordan writes:

LOS ANGELES — For the past three years, Henrique “Hicu” Motta, a rowing coach, has created unlikely success stories in a sport long associated with the privileged. He has taken his team of high school girls from ***working-class*** families to the national championships and sent several of them to Division I colleges on athletic scholarships.

“I’m Latina, little and had never been on a sports team,” said Isabella Soto, 17, the daughter of a nanny and a machinist who hopes to row at an elite college next fall.

Isabella, who was accepted onto the RowLA team despite being only 5 feet 2 inches tall “on a good day,” is a first-generation American whose parents are undocumented Mexicans. Kassie Kim is the child of Korean immigrants, a cashier and a fire-alarm installer. Samadhi Dissanayake, a Sri Lankan-American raised by a single mother in subsidized housing, rides two buses to practice.

“I hated sports before coming here,” said Samadhi, who is also considering rowing in college. “Now I love rowing and the sense of community.”

But Mr. Motta, 39, a Brazilian who is in the country on a work visa, has been notified that his petition to remain in the United States has been denied. In order to stay, U.S. immigration authorities said, he must prove that he has “extraordinary ability” to do a job that might otherwise go to an American.

In a sport dominated by athletes who are white and wealthy, RowLA under Mr. Motta’s leadership has long made a point of enlisting those who normally would not have access to rowing. Neither build nor athletic acumen determine who gets to compete and succeed. “He can take a girl, regardless of size and ability, and turn her into a serious rower. That’s rare among coaches,” said Liz Greenberger, a retired international security analyst who founded the team a decade ago and brought Mr. Motta in as their second coach in 2017. “It’s Hicu’s philosophy that is perfect for our program,” she said.

Mr. Motta’s philosophy is simple: “I try to make something special out of any girl who wants to give rowing a shot,” he said.

The question is, does that amount to extraordinary ability?

In the three years since receiving a work visa, Mr. Motta has crafted a program of dedicated rowers who have competed in the U.S. Rowing Youth Nationals, the highest level for high school rowers, and won college scholarships. But Mr. Motta does not just coach.

A nutritionist by training, he instructs his athletes to maintain a balanced diet. (No processed food before races. Stick to fruit for energy and coconut water for hydration.) Mr. Motta urges his rowers to spend time on their studies and think about futures that can be full of possibilities.

“We don’t just focus on rowing performance; we’re developing student athletes,” said Mr. Motta, standing in Parking Lot 77 at Marina del Rey in West Los Angeles, where the team assembles six days a week to train, rain or shine.

Students, read the entire article, then tell us:

* What role have coaches played in your life? (Keep in mind that “coach” can be defined broadly as “one who instructs or trains,” so you might consider anyone who has played that role for you, whether in school, through extracurricular activities, at a summer camp or anywhere else where you have learned a skill.) Have any of your coaches had a big effect on you? If so, tell us about your experiences together. Did your coach have any of the qualities of Mr. Motta described in the article?
* What do you think makes a good coach? Mr. Motta says, “We don’t just focus on rowing performance; we’re developing student athletes.” Do you agree with his philosophy? Should coaching focus on more than just performance?
* Why do you think Mr. Motta has such an impact on the girls he has worked with? Based on the article, do you think he has demonstrated “extraordinary abilities”? Why or why not? Would you want him to be your coach?

1. According to the article, one reason the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services agency rejected Mr. Motta’s application for a green card was that he had not received a “major, internationally recognized prize or award” for his team. Should prizes and awards be an important measure of a coach’s abilities? Do you think the government should reverse its decision on whether to grant Mr. Motta permanent legal status? Why or why not?
2. Would you ever consider becoming a coach? What do you imagine would be the rewards of such a job?

Students 13 and older are invited to comment. All comments are moderated by the Learning Network staff, but please keep in mind that once your comment is accepted, it will be made public.

**Load-Date:** February 20, 2020

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[***‘Three Rooms,’ by Jo Hamya: An Excerpt***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63GY-3MC1-JBG3-63BR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 31, 2021 Tuesday 06:37 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1871 words

**Highlight:** An excerpt from “Three Rooms,” by Jo Hamya

**Body**

Sink and unframed mirror. The southwest corner of the room. My phone, propped up between the faucet and the wall, and my lips in the mirror, and my fingers doing their little tap, tap over them with a tissue, blotting lipstick. All to the sound of my mother: Do we think that dress is the right choice for a work party, and my mother, Did you make sure they got the inventory form, and my mother, Are you making friends, and my mother, I miss you, when will you come home? The soft little worries running alongside the tap. I let them go down the plughole. It wasn’t enough. Some aspect of them stayed, as though they’d filtered from the faucet into the glass of water I’d had before leaving for the meet and greet. I got lost on the way to the English faculty and ended up late.

When I found it, from the outside, the building looked like a Bond lair. The whole thing was designed in rectangles by someone who had evidently misunderstood the purpose of Brutalism. For all its sparseness, the building radiated luxury. Rooms done in glass and dark wood spoke, sonorous through their large open windows. The thrum of conversations trickled out leisurely, unhurried. It spread itself out over the building’s brickwork and its flat roofs. The whole thing made no attempt to disguise its status as a new-build; threw itself still further into the role by sitting at odds with a decrepit church and silent, adjacent cemetery. I crossed the road and looked at the graves of well-known men whose afterlife it was to watch their work occasionally reinterpreted, but for the most part ignored by twentysomethings on the pavement opposite. I found Pater’s grave, then resumed my own place on the other side of the street.

The party could be characterized as one only by the sight of a drinks table around which various huddles had formed, each member clutching a glass of champagne. Everything had the air of being slightly stretched. The leather on the sofas shone too brightly, as though strained. The floorboards were bare. Nevertheless, someone had taken great pains to decorate. Noticeboards with numbers for help centers and bits of poetry had been spread all over the walls; there was a placard, and it read — “Join OxfordConnect today for alumni and student events. Available via Apple and Android.” I looked around and in my long, thin red summer dress, immediately felt overdressed; I took my cardigan from my waist and wrapped it around myself. Everyone had already latched onto someone else in the room, and looked as though they had no intention of leaving their particular group now that it had been formed. People asked each other their names, plugged them into search bars. I found a gap in a huddle of students and approached the formation from the side, angling my body half in, half out. I could be ready to leave should they decide they did not want me. A tall brunette girl held the stem of her champagne glass while two boys asked her who she was.

[ Return to the review of [*“Three Rooms.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/28/books/review/three-rooms-jo-hamya.html)]

I’d slid in in time to hear that her name was Ghislane. The boys looked at each other, their heads began to sway.

O-o-o Ghislane. One day she’ll find her fame, they sang. The girl winced.

Bet you get that all the time, said one of the boys, clearly delighted. She tipped the remainder of her glass down her throat and said, Fuck off, into it with some dignity. They did not. Ghislane fixed on me. I think I recognize you, she said. You were walking around town earlier.

She had widely spaced eyes and a long, broad nose. She chewed on her small, wet lips and waited for an answer. With her schoolgirl skirt and turtleneck, with her tailored jacket and darting, impatient gaze, she looked somehow very grown-up and not grown-up at all. There were probably only three years between us. Standing before her made me feel inexplicably unsophisticated.

I told her it was possible, yes.

Okay, she said, accepting her escape route and guiding me towards a table with more champagne. A hand at the small of my back, a steer and request: Please let’s get away from them.

I was trying to pick up the pace. What was that song they were singing with your name in it? I asked.

She winced again. Ghislane. Stupid song from the nineties about a guy whose girlfriend leaves him to be a fame whore or whatever. The #MeToo movement should have killed it except someone made an argument about female agency, so it lived to fight another day. Then someone — a man, obviously — began moaning that it was just an objectively good song and that we — she crooked her fingers in air quotes around the word we — should be allowed to sing it as long as we recognize it as of its time. Really, you’ve never heard it?

I shook my head. This earned me a look of admiration.

It actually is meant to be a classic. Sad girls on the internet quote it when they want to look deep. She passed me a glass of champagne.

That seems like an unfortunate thing to share a name with. I was trying to sound sympathetic, but she shook her head and said no-o-o. The syllable went up in impossible crescendo. It echoed the tune of what the boys had sung earlier. Ghislane fixed me with a firm look: in fact, she was named after it. Having established this, she examined me more closely. What did I do?

I told her. She asked, Do you think you’ll be seeing a lot of everyone here? But I didn’t know, so she began to point out others in the room with impressive flippancy.

[ Return to the review of [*“Three Rooms.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/28/books/review/three-rooms-jo-hamya.html)]

What you’re looking at is mostly contemporary lit. Our year is supposed to be some grand experiment, she said. They went for as many kinds of different people as they could. Apparently, our research proposals are all over the place. They want to see if they can breed the next great generation of literature. So . . . she considered the room over the rim of her glass. Then her mouth became a pistol, firing off bullets in expert shots: they’re nonbinary and gave a proposal on reading the canon as genderless; he’s on antidepressants doing environmentalist lit; she’s queer; she’s autistic, doesn’t speak, but a total genius; he’s obviously a Tory but he’s working on something he’s called “literature for the ***working class***,” whatever the fuck that is; she’s a sweetheart, but she says she gets terrible SAD, so I’m guessing she won’t be much fun once the weather turns . . . and she’s really annoying, don’t talk to her. She glanced around the room to make sure everyone was accounted for, then pointed at herself brightly: Oh, and I have ADHD. So, yeah! What about you? Have you been here long?

I felt incredibly tired. I thought about it, catalogued what might be most true in my head, but all I had to offer up was the fact that I had been in London before. And of course, Ghislane said, you’re BAME. She delivered the pronouncement with great solemnity. It was good that I was here. She’d come from London, too. Did I miss it? I shook my head. I was too recently gone.

Ghislane put down her flute. Sometimes, she said, she would take a night bus back. She got restless. She had already been in Oxford for a few weeks. There was a coach, it ran twenty-four/seven, and she would go and stare at her old flat. She used to share it with some friends, but the lease ran out as she was leaving and they couldn’t find a flatmate in time to be able to afford staying. Which was a shame — it was a nice place in Hammersmith. She would get off the bus around Shepherd’s Bush and walk up the road she used to walk every day. It took her a while to get used to the idea that it wasn’t hers anymore. But once her new reality had set in, she went to see what the new tenants were doing in her old flat. They often left the curtains open, and from across the street, she could appraise all the decorating they’d done. Ghislane stopped looking at me and began musing over the place in her mind. Her face changed: they had made the flat wrong. They had put ugly little chairs in front of the fireplace where she had used to sit on rugs. They had stripped out the wallpaper, which had clearly been there from the seventies and smelt like it too. She couldn’t blame them for that, but — she came out of her reverie and focused back on me — the flat’s former derelict authenticity had been so aesthetically pleasing. Now it all looked brand-new. They had convinced the landlord to let them do it up in cream and chrome. On a moral level she hated all of this, she sniffed, but on a material one, she felt deprived. The extent to which the whole road had been gentrified dawned on her just as she moved out. For most of her stay there, it had resembled something more like a construction site and so she had ignored its daily goings-on. This was no longer the case. Now that the transformation was complete, she resented the fact that other people got to enjoy a yoga studio and coffee bar which she had only ever registered as a bombardment at her front door.

I tried to speak carefully. But her move notwithstanding, wasn’t it probable they were gentrifying it for people like her? Ghislane raised an eyebrow. You’re swilling twenty pounds’ worth of bubbly in that one glass alone, she intoned, and waited for a response. I didn’t take the bait. She sighed, became, by degrees, visibly bored. I could see the boys who had accosted her earlier drawing in. Finally, she said, It was cheap when I moved in and Hammersmith reminded me of being at St. Paul’s. Do you have Instagram?

This threw me a little. I said I did. She seemed cheered.

Okay, sweet. Look, add me on that — she thrust her phone at me — we can talk some other time. I plugged my username onto the screen. She took it back and was gone. Things moved fluidly, as if staged. The boys arrived as she left, looking earnestly after her. The questions came thick and rapid. Was she leaving? What did she say? Did she say where she was going? Why had she given me her phone? When I told them she had asked me to add her on Instagram, the boys exchanged looks.

Fuck me, one of them said, no one said it was a networking event.

I was getting irate. They looked at me with pity, as if I were slow. You’ve never heard of her before, the other asked, have you?

I wanted to protest. I had just met her.

They snickered and walked away. Out of the corner of my eye I could see one remaining bottle of champagne on the drinks table to my right. I hadn’t managed to speak to anyone else. The party could not be approached in any useful way. There were, at most, only four years separating me from the students in the room, and despite the seniority of my position, it was impossible not to feel inadequately young. It would not have surprised me if the boys who had asked after Ghislane had mistaken me for a classmate — I could not claim much on them except a minimum-wage job. We had too many higher powers in common: faculty lecturers; the student finance page of gov.uk. I looked around. I was too shy to approach anyone else. I moved towards the table of champagne, wrapped the last bottle inside my cardigan, and slipped out.

[ Return to the review of [*“Three Rooms.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/28/books/review/three-rooms-jo-hamya.html)]

THREE ROOMS By Jo Hamya 200 pp. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. $25. Copyright 2021 © by Jo Hamya Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 31, 2021

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[***What America Would Look Like in 2025 Under Trump; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64P0-FMV1-DXY4-X2PY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 2, 2022 Wednesday 10:22 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3181 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** It’s not too soon to start worrying about the Republican agenda.

**Body**

What will happen if the political tables are turned and the Republican Party wins the White House in 2024 and the House and Senate along the way?

One clue is that Donald Trump is an Orban worshiper — that’s Viktor Orban, the prime minister of Hungary, a case study in the aggressive pursuit of a right-wing populist agenda.

In his [*Jan. 3 announcement*](https://saveamerica.nucleusemail.com/amplify/v/TFhcK9qrPq?hids=kPXgFJAl&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_source=ncl_amplify&amp;utm_campaign=20220103-endorsement_of_prime_minister_viktor_orban&amp;utm_content=ncl-hW3WFbqVZy&amp;_nlid=hW3WFbqVZy&amp;_nhids=kPXgFJAl) of support for Orban’s re-election, Trump declared: “He is a strong leader and respected by all. He has my Complete support and Endorsement for re-election as Prime Minister!”

What is it about Hungary under Orban that appeals so powerfully to Trump?

“Call it ‘soft fascism,’ ” Zach Beauchamp of Vox [*wrote*](https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/9/13/17823488/hungary-democracy-authoritarianism-trump) on Sept. 13, 2018:

a political system that aims to stamp out dissent and seize control of every major aspect of a country’s political and social life, without needing to resort to “hard” measures like banning elections and building up a police state. One of the most disconcerting parts of observing Hungarian soft fascism up close is that it’s easy to imagine the model being exported. While the Orban regime grew out of Hungary’s unique history and political culture, its playbook for subtle repression could in theory be run in any democratic country whose leaders have had enough of the political opposition.

In “[*How the American Right Fell in Love With Hungary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/19/magazine/viktor-orban-rod-dreher.html)” in The New York Times Magazine, [*Elizabeth Zerofsky*](https://www.newyorker.com/contributors/elisabeth-zerofsky) quoted [*Rod Dreher*](https://muckrack.com/rod-dreher/articles), the combative conservative blogger, on Orban’s immigration policies — building a fence on the border to keep Muslims out, for example. “If you could wind back the clock 50 years and show the French, the Belgian and the German people what mass immigration from the Muslim world would do to their countries by 2021, they never, ever would have accepted it,” he remarked.

In contrast to conservatism as practiced in the United States, Zerofsky wrote about Hungary under Orban: “Here was this other, European tradition of Catholic conservatism that was afraid neither of a strong state nor of using it to promote a conservative vision of life.”

In the [*current issue*](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2021-12-14/illiberalism-real-crisis-global-order) of Foreign Affairs, [*Alexander Cooley*](https://polisci.barnard.edu/profiles/alexander-cooley) and [*Daniel H. Nexon*](https://www.dhnexon.net/), political scientists at Barnard and Georgetown, [*argued*](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2021-12-14/illiberalism-real-crisis-global-order) that Orban has “emerged as a media darling of the American right,” receiving high praise from Tucker Carlson, “arguably the single most influential conservative media personality in the United States.”

The Conservative Political Action Conference, “a major forum of the American right, plans to hold its 2022 annual meeting in Hungary,” Cooley and Nexon wrote. What has Orban done to deserve this attention?

The two authors briefly summarized his record: “Orban consolidated power through tactics that were procedurally legal but, in substance, undercut the rule of law. He stacked the courts with partisans and pressured, captured or shut down independent media.”

Cooley and Nexon demonstrated a parallel between what has taken place in Hungary and current developments in the United States: “Orban’s open assault on academic freedom — including banning gender studies and evicting the Central European University from Hungary — finds analogies in current right-wing efforts in Republican-controlled states to ban the teaching of critical race theory and target liberal and left-wing academics.”

In an email, Nexon elaborated:

There is definitely a transmission belt of ideas between the U.S. and European right; for various stripes of conservatives — reactionary populists, integralists, ethnonationalists — Hungary is becoming what Denmark is for the left: part real-life model, part idealized dreamscape.

Trump and Orban, Nexon continued,

are both opportunists who’ve figured out the political usefulness of reactionary populism. And Trump will push the United States in a broadly similar direction: toward neopatrimonial governance. During his first term, Trump treated the presidency as his own personal property — something that was his to use to punish enemies, reward loyalists and enhance his family’s wealth. If he wins in 2024, we’re likely to see this on steroids

Trump, in Nexon’s view, will be unable to match Orban — by, for example, installing a crony “as president of Harvard” or forcing “Yale to decamp for Canada” — but

it’s pretty clear that he’ll be better at installing absolute loyalists at the Department of Justice and the Department of Defense. So, if Trump succeeds, we’ll be able to find a lot of similar parts, but it won’t be the same model. I suspect it will be worse. The U.S. is a large federation with a lot of capacity for private violence, a major international footprint and a multitrillion-dollar economy. Hungary is a minor player in a confederation dominated by democratic regimes.

Cooley stressed in an email the “active networking among right-wing political associations and groups with Orban,” citing the [*Jan. 24 endorsement*](https://nyyrc.com/endorsements/endorsement-viktor-orban-for-prime-minister-of-hungary/) of Orban’s re-election by the New York Young Republican Club:

Today, both the United States of America and countries in Europe like Hungary face an existential crisis. The ruling elite and political establishment’s failed leadership and ideology have eroded the meaning and purpose of citizenship. For those against this ideology and for the preservation of Western civilization for all countries in the West, it is imperative that we stand in support of one another as national communities.

Orban’s appeal to the right flank of the Republican Party, in Cooley’s view, lies in an

ideology — which rests on redefining the meaning of “the West” away from liberal principles and toward ethnonational ideals and conservative values — and his strategy for consolidating power is to close or take over media, stack the courts, divide and stigmatize the opposition, reject commitments to constraining liberal ideals and institutions and publicly target the most vulnerable groups in society — e.g., refugees.

Orban has [*described*](https://www.economist.com/briefing/2019/08/29/how-viktor-orban-hollowed-out-hungarys-democracy) Hungary under his rule as an “illiberal democracy.” In 2019, Freedom House downgraded Hungary from “free” to “partly free,” making it “the first country in the European Union that is not currently classified” as “free,” according to the [*Budapest Business Journal*](https://bbj.hu/politics/domestic/government/-partly-free-freedom-house-downgrades-hungary).

I asked a number of European scholars about the agenda Trump and a Republican-controlled Congress would be most likely to push in 2025.

In a March 2021 paper, “[*Authoritarian Values and the Welfare State: The Social Policy Preferences of Radical Right Voters*](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Philip-Rathgeb/publication/349738205_Authoritarian_values_and_the_welfare_state_the_social_policy_preferences_of_radical_right_voters/links/604636e7a6fdcc9c78216ec6/Authoritarian-values-and-the-welfare-state-the-social-policy-preferences-of-radical-right-voters.pdf),” [*Philip Rathgeb*](https://www.philiprathgeb.com/), a professor of social policy at the University of Edinburgh, and [*Marius R. Busemeyer*](https://www.polver.uni-konstanz.de/en/busemeyer/team/prof-dr-marius-r-busemeyer/) and [*Alexander H.J. Sahm*](https://scikon.uni-konstanz.de/personen/profile/alexander.sahm/), both of the University of Konstanz, surveyed voters in eight Western European countries to determine what kind of welfare state voters of populist radical-right parties want and how their preferences “differ from voters of mainstream left- and right-wing parties.”

Rathgeb and his co-authors found that populist European voters

want a particularistic-authoritarian welfare state, displaying moderate support only for “deserving” benefit recipients (e.g., the elderly), while revealing strong support for a [*workfare*](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/workfare) approach and little support for social investment.

Rathgeb wrote in an email:

From an ideological perspective, it wouldn’t surprise me if Trump prioritized Medicare over Medicaid, given that the former is targeted at the “deserving” poor, i.e., the elderly and disabled. A pro-elderly outlook is very typical of the radical right in Europe too, because the beneficiaries of schemes like Medicare are typically native (white) citizens who have demonstrated their willingness to “work hard” over their lifetime, thus being deserving of welfare support. By contrast, I expect little support, perhaps even cuts, for Medicaid.

Rathgeb noted that populist parties oppose social investment policies because such programs are often based on

progressive gender values and a commitment to “lifelong learning.” For example, public provision of child care helps working women to reconcile work-family life (versus the male breadwinner model), while training and education foster social mobility in the “knowledge economy” (e.g., high-end services). These ideological considerations are reinforced by material interests, as the main target groups of social investment policies (i.e., the new middle classes, including women and the young with high levels of education) are distant from the typical radical-right voter, who usually displays lower levels of formal education.

In an email, Busemeyer described some of the differences and similarities between Trumpism and European populism:

In Europe, the welfare state and social policy more generally are much ingrained in people’s minds. This means that in the U.S., Trumpism goes along with criticism about the welfare state in general (see the attempts of the Trump administration to get rid of Obamacare), whereas in Europe, it’s really more about “welfare chauvinism,” i.e., protecting the good old welfare state for “deserving” people, namely hard-working natives.

In addition, Busemeyer wrote, “there is a strong ‘corporatist’ element in the Trump movement (i.e., business elites), whereas in European right-wing populism that’s typically not the case.”

The right-wing populist movements on both continents, he continued,

are similar in their rejection of a liberal attitude toward globalization, both regarding the economic side as well as the identity part of globalization. Also, they both subscribe to a traditional role model in the family and traditional gender roles.

[*Cécile Alduy*](https://profiles.stanford.edu/cecile-alduy), a professor at Stanford who studies French politics and the far right, wrote in an email:

If in 2024 Trump or a Ron DeSantis wins the presidency and Republicans control both the House and Senate, the general agenda would be a backlash against any anti-discrimination, against inclusive policies implemented by the Biden administration, for an attempt to shift further the Supreme Court pendulum toward anti-abortion, for originalist constitutionalists, for implementing voter suppression policies and for federal funding limitations on some forms of speech (critical race theory, the teaching or research of segregation, antisemitism or racism in the States) as well for as a return to extremely restrictive anti-immigration policies (rebuilding the wall, for curbing down further visa and green cards and for increasing deportations).

The Republican agenda, Alduy argued,

would be fueled by increased moral panic about white America’s decline, a professed sense of having been spoliated and “stolen the election” and a renewed sentiment of impunity for his most extreme backers from the Jan. 6 insurrection. My bet is that there is an active plan to reshape the political system so that elections are not winnable by Democrats, and the state be run without the foundation of a democracy.

Trump [*signaled his intentions*](https://www.c-span.org/video/?517404-1/president-trump-texas-rally) at a rally last week in Conroe, Texas, declaring that in the case of the Jan. 6 attackers, “if it requires pardons, then we will give them pardons because they are being treated so unfairly.”

Trump went on: “If these radical, vicious, racist prosecutors do anything wrong or illegal, I hope we are going to have in this country the biggest protests we have ever had in Washington, D.C.; in New York; in Atlanta; and elsewhere.”

Or take DeSantis, the governor of Florida, who may challenge Trump for the Republican presidential nomination. On April 10, 2021, DeSantis signed the [*Combating Public Disorder Act*](https://www.flgov.com/2021/04/19/what-they-are-saying-governor-ron-desantis-signs-hallmark-anti-rioting-legislation-taking-unapologetic-stand-for-public-safety/) into law, which his office described as “a robust approach to uphold the rule of law, to stand with those serving in law enforcement and enforce Florida’s zero tolerance policy for violent and disorderly assemblies.”

On Sept. 9, U.S. District Judge Mark Walker issued a [*90-page opinion*](https://www.npr.org/2021/09/09/1035687247/florida-anti-riot-law-ron-desantis-george-floyd-black-lives-matter-protests) declaring that the law’s “vagueness permits those in power to weaponize its enforcement against any group who wishes to express any message that the government disapproves of” and that “the lawless actions of a few rogue individuals could effectively criminalize the protected speech of hundreds, if not thousands, of law-abiding Floridians.”

On Dec. 15 DeSantis [*proposed*](https://www.flgov.com/2021/12/15/governor-desantis-announces-legislative-proposal-to-stop-w-o-k-e-activism-and-critical-race-theory-in-schools-and-corporations/) the Stop the Wrongs to Our Kids and Employees (WOKE) Act, which would give parents the right to sue school systems if they believe their children are being taught “critical race theory,” with a provision granting parents the right to collect attorneys’ fees if they win.

The enactment of laws encouraging citizens to become private enforcers of anti-liberal policies has become increasingly popular in Republican-controlled states. Glenn Youngkin, the newly elected governor of Virginia, created a tip line that parents can use to report teachers whose classes cover “inherently divisive concepts, including critical race theory.”

Youngkin [*told an interviewer*](https://standupandspeakoutamerica.com/news-article/youngkin-sets-up-tip-line-for-parents-to-report-teachers-using-divisive-practices/#:~:text=Virginia%20GOP%20Governor%20Glenn%20Youngkin%20has%20implemented%20a,set%20up%20a%20particular%20e-mail%20address%2C%20called%20helpeducation%40governor.virginia.gov.):

We have set up a particular email address, called [*helpeducation@governor.virginia.gov*](mailto:helpeducation@governor.virginia.gov), for parents to send us any instances where they feel that their fundamental rights are being violated, where their children are not being respected, where there are inherently divisive practices in their schools. We’re asking for input right from parents to make sure we can go right to the source as we continue to work to make sure that Virginia’s education system is on the path to re-establish excellence.

“We’re seeing dozens of G.O.P. proposals to bar whole concepts from classrooms outright,” The Washington Post’s Greg Sargent [*wrote*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/01/31/gop-proposal-targets-negative-us-history/) this week:

The Republican governor of Virginia has debuted a mechanism for parents to rat out teachers. Bills threatening punishment of them are proliferating. Book-banning efforts are outpacing anything in recent memory.

In a parallel strategy focused on abortion, Texas Republicans enacted the [*Texas Heartbeat Act*](https://www.texastribune.org/2021/05/18/texas-heartbeat-bill-abortions-law/) in May, legislation that not only bans abortions as soon as a fetal heartbeat is detected but also turns private citizens into enforcers of the law [*by giving them the power*](https://legiscan.com/TX/text/SB8/id/2395961) to sue abortion providers and any person who

knowingly engages in conduct that aids or abets the performance or inducement of an abortion, including paying for or reimbursing the costs of an abortion through insurance or otherwise, if the abortion is performed or induced in violation of this subchapter, regardless of whether the person knew or should have known that the abortion would be performed or induced in violation of this subchapter.

Winners of such suits would receive a minimum of $10,000 plus court costs and other fees.

Not to be outdone, Republican members of the New Hampshire legislature are pushing forward [*legislation*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/01/31/gop-proposal-targets-negative-us-history/) that proclaims that

no teacher shall advocate any doctrine or theory promoting a negative account or representation of the founding and history of the United States of America in New Hampshire public schools which does not include the worldwide context of now outdated and discouraged practices. Such prohibition includes but is not limited to teaching that the United States was founded on racism.

The use of citizens as [*informants*](https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/organized-crime/module-8/key-issues/special-investigative-techniques/informants.html) to enforce intrusions of this sort is, to put it mildly, inconsistent with democratic norms — reminiscent of [*East Germany*](https://www.dw.com/en/east-german-stasi-had-189000-informers-study-says/a-3184486-1), where the [*Stasi*](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Stasi) made use of an estimated 189,000 citizen informers.

One of the early goals of a Trump White House backed by Republican congressional majorities, in the view of [*Harry Holzer*](https://gufaculty360.georgetown.edu/s/contact/00336000014RcL5AAK/harry-holzer), a professor of public policy at Georgetown, would be the immediate rollback of legislation and executive orders put in place by the Biden administration:

The first priority of a Trump or DeSantis presidency would be to undo any major changes Biden had implemented through executive orders. That would include a vaccination/testing mandate for health care workers, environmental regs, bolstering A.C.A. and anything Biden had done on race relations or immigration.

A critical issue for Senate Republicans and a second Trump administration would be whether to eliminate the filibuster to prevent Democratic senators from blocking their wilder legislative plans.

Holzer remarked that he is sure that

they would love to pass laws outlawing mask mandates in schools, the teaching of critical race theory or liberal voting rules, but they won’t have 60 votes in the Senate for that unless they also manage to kill or limit the filibuster. If they kill the filibuster, they might try to outlaw abortion, although Susan Collins, Lisa Murkowski and others would balk at that.

[*Herbert P. Kitschelt*](https://scholars.duke.edu/person/h3738), a political scientist at Duke, emailed a selection of likely Republican initiatives:

* The new government will use regulatory measures to support the sectors and industries that support it most in terms of electoral votes and party funding: carbon industries, the construction sector, domestic manufacturing.

1. The Republican regime will exit from all participation in efforts to stop global warming.
2. The politics of a populist Republican administration will aim at undermining American democracy and changing the level playing field in favor of a party-penetrated state apparatus.

Kitschelt cited Orban as a model for Trump in achieving the goals of:

* Undermining the professionalism and neutrality of the judiciary, starting with the attorney general’s office.

1. Undermining the nonpartisanship of the military, using the military for domestic purposes to repress civil liberties and liberal opposition to the erosion of American democracy.
2. Redeploying the national domestic security apparatus — above all, the F.B.I. — for partisan purposes.
3. Passing libel legislation to harass and undercut the liberal media and journalists, with the objective to drive them economically out of business, while consolidating conservative media empires and social websites.

The politics of cultural polarization, Kitschelt argued, “will intensify to re-establish the U.S. as a white Christian evangelical country,” although simultaneously

efforts will be made to attract culturally traditionalist strands in the Hispanic community. The agenda of the culture war may shift to gender relations, emphasizing the traditional family with male authority. At the margin, this may appeal to males, including minorities.

Kitschelt’s last point touches on what is sure to be a major motivating force for a Republican Party given an extended lease on life under Trump: the need to make use of every available tool — from manipulation of election results to enactment of favorable voting laws to appeals to minority voters in the ***working class*** to instilling fear of a liberal state run amok — to maintain the viability of a fragile coalition in which the core constituency of white noncollege voters is steadily declining as a share of the electorate. It is an uphill fight requiring leaders, at least in their minds, to consider every alternative in order to retain power, whether it’s democratic or authoritarian, ethical or unethical, legal or illegal.

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PHOTO: “If it requires pardons, then we will give them pardons.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Meridith Kohut for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***The ‘Mexican Beverly Hills’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61FJ-TVB1-JBG3-616F-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** June Canedo and Erick Galindo

**Highlight:** How a former white enclave became an aspirational suburb for Latinos in Los Angeles.

**Body**

The ‘Mexican Beverly Hills’

I was having dinner at some fancy beach-side eatery in early March when someone said they had just moved to Downey, a Southeast Los Angeles suburb 12 miles south of downtown.

The other Latinos at the table oohed. “You finally made it,” someone said. “To the Mexican Beverly Hills.”

In many ways, that is what Downey represents. It’s hoity-toity, gilded and more conservative than surrounding neighborhoods — a status-marking place where the average household income, at $88,000, is significantly higher than in other areas in Los Angeles with a similar ethnic makeup. In East Los Angeles, which is also predominantly Latino, the average income is $56,000, according to census data. (If you’re wondering, the average income in Beverly Hills is $191,000.)

It’s the kind of place where many people feel entitled enough to not wear face masks despite coronavirus infection spikes, where many homes featured “Thank you, Downey PD” banners at the peak of the George Floyd protests — but where an overwhelming majority of its citizens voted for President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. over President Donald J. Trump. (With a vote of roughly 2 to 1 for Mr. Biden, Downey voted more conservatively than Los Angeles County as a whole, which voted for him 3 to 1.)

In short, it’s a great example of a place that rebukes the idea of a singular Latino vote, or of any ideological uniformity among the [*nearly 61 million people*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/07/u-s-hispanic-population-surpassed-60-million-in-2019-but-growth-has-slowed/) of Latin American descent who live in the United States.

Because even in the so-called Mexican Beverly Hills, Latinos are not a monolith. In October, the city was trending on Twitter after a “Latinos for Trump” caravan rode through north Downey, drawing snarky social media criticism. That same morning in South Downey, a single horseback rider galloped down Imperial Highway, drinking beer and professing his disdain for the president in Spanish, as people cheered him on from their front lawns.

The city of Downey itself has an interesting history: Home to the world’s oldest McDonald’s in operation — and the site of the first Taco Bell (which is now a museum at Taco Bell headquarters in Irvine) — Downey was also the birthplace of the Apollo Space Program.

The city was essentially modernized from an orange-grove farm town into a missile factory town by Boeing during World War II. The space program was just a continuation of that. In the 1980s, it began to transition into one of the most diverse areas of Los Angeles County thanks in part to Ronald Reagan’s 1986 amnesty bill, which naturalized people like my parents and allowed them to come out of the shadows to find higher-paying careers.

Today, many of Downey’s fanciest restaurants are Latin American or are owned by Latinos. Spanish is the predominant language of people decked out in Prada, Gucci and Burberry. It is home to fantastically wealthy families, including the Saavedras, who own the Tapatio hot sauce company; the Flores family, who live in a giant estate rumored to be modeled after the Palace of Versailles; and the Infantes, Mexican musical and cinematic royalty.

But there are also the Galindos.

When my family moved here in the mid-90s, after years living in different spots in Southeast L.A. County’s poorer neighborhoods, Downey was considered a mostly white, upper-middle-class oasis. It’s still upper-middle-class, but the population is about 74 percent Hispanic, and the place where the space program was conceived is now a 24-Hour Fitness, adjacent to a luxury movie theater that shows most blockbuster films with Spanish subtitles.

My immigrant parents scraped and earned and brought us to South Downey in 1995 to keep their five kids out of gangs. The schools in Downey were known for their prowess and the Downey Police for their severity. Back then, we were the only Mexicans on my block, living next to the only Cuban and only Asian-American families for miles.

As early as 1988, the city’s edges became a gateway for ***working class*** Latinos seeking to spend their hard-earned savings on a first home in a neighborhood with access to great public schools. The Downey Unified school district consistently ranks in the top 20 safest districts of L.A. County. For parents like mine, who had bought into education as the key to a life of American exceptionalism, Downey was a beacon.

South Downey was considered the poor part of town — which Beverly Hills also has, by the way — because it’s right on the border of less affluent cities like Lynwood, South Gate and Paramount. And when we first moved there, it was, frankly, boring, and hard to stay out of trouble.

There were fights, drug abuse, police and gun violence. And at times, it appeared each one of us five kids would squander the opportunities our parents were working hard to shape for us. But my family evolved, and South Downey has evolved with it.

It’s still changing.

This summer, Downey had what one 60-year resident described as the “largest display of civil disobedience in a generation.” It was some 300, mostly young people of color led by a 19-year-old college freshman named Donald Arrington, marching for Black Lives Matter.

Property value here has also boomed as real-estate prices have ballooned to the million-dollar range, according to Sergio Orzynski, a realtor with Keller Williams. A house on the very end of my block just sold for about $700,000 and a few blocks over, there were multiple million-dollar listings.

“We call it the Mexican Beverly Hills, the Latino Beverly Hills, to potential clients. That’s how we sell it, basically,” said Mr. Orzynski.

“I mean, you got all these rich Latino families here, all these mini mansions everywhere. So if you’re first generation or second or even a recent immigrant, that’s where your American dream is,” he said. “It’s to one day work so hard that you can live in these large spaces in clean neighborhoods that have these great schools.”

That’s the paradoxical part about Downey: It shows that Latinos can live a life of relative wealth and influence in the United States without having to give up ties to their respective and diverse Latin American cultures. But it also exemplifies a distinctly American idea: the possibility of upward mobility across generations.

The phrases “Mexican Beverly Hills” and “Latino Beverly Hills” aren’t great for many reasons, especially because they center the success of people of color through a white lens (Beverly Hills being one of many elite American suburbs that was [*originally*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/07/u-s-hispanic-population-surpassed-60-million-in-2019-but-growth-has-slowed/) [*planned*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/07/u-s-hispanic-population-surpassed-60-million-in-2019-but-growth-has-slowed/) as an all-white community). But the truth is, this is the name Southeast L.A.’s Latin American community created, and it signifies an important ideal.

It doesn’t hurt that Downey is glittering with mansions, lush gardens and a Portos, the lauded Cuban bakery that always has a massive line out the door and regularly features catty verbal altercations when someone tries to cut.

Elon Musk [*even considered*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/07/u-s-hispanic-population-surpassed-60-million-in-2019-but-growth-has-slowed/)opening his factory here before Toyota wooed him to Silicon Valley. The long flirtation with South Downey ended with Mr. Musk penning [*a public letter titled “Downey is Great.”*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/07/u-s-hispanic-population-surpassed-60-million-in-2019-but-growth-has-slowed/) (It’s true that there are Tesla charging stations all around town.)

My parents don’t own a Tesla or mansion. But they do live in a large compound that houses three generations of Galindos. So there are resources and we band them together, a multigenerational approach to long-term stability that has helped us survive the worst of the coronavirus recession.

The whole neighborhood is like that now. Generations of families, working together to put down roots.

Erick Galindo writes about life in Los Angeles for LAist and other publications. [*June Canedo*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/07/u-s-hispanic-population-surpassed-60-million-in-2019-but-growth-has-slowed/) is a photographer based in Los Angeles, Calif.

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top left: A typical layout on the residential streets of Downey; Lupita Infante, a musician and city resident; Ivonne Rosales-Garcia and Julio Garcia, who recently bought this house; an ornate entry path; family life in the city. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUNE CANEDO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Questions for New York's Candidates for Governor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65SP-NDH1-JBG3-62KV-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Nicholas Fandos

**Body**

Ahead of the state primary elections, Republican and Democratic candidates expound on the issues -- and exactly where upstate New York begins.

In the primary races for governor of New York, the candidates in each party naturally have some common alliances but also some surprising differences.

Of the four Republican candidates, for example, one would shun possible support from the former President Donald J. Trump. The three Democratic hopefuls adamantly disagree on how to approach New York's affordability crunch.

And the candidates' bagel preferences? All over the map.

With early voting already underway and just days to go before New York's June 28 primaries, Democrats and Republicans are locked in sharp contests of ideology, experience and taste that will help determine the future of New York State as it tries to move past the coronavirus pandemic.

The winners are most likely headed toward the most competitive general election the state has seen in two decades, in which voters will decide whether to extend Democrats' 16-year hold on the governor's mansion, or make a course correction in Albany.

On the Democratic side, Gov. Kathy Hochul has the upper hand against both Jumaane D. Williams, the progressive New York City public advocate, and Representative Thomas R. Suozzi, a Long Island centrist. But the three have put forward conflicting Democratic Party visions on how to fix the housing crisis, fight crime, and win back voters exiting the party.

Who will emerge as the Republican nominee remains anyone's guess. Representative Lee Zeldin, who hails from Suffolk County, has the official endorsements of the Republican and Conservative parties, but he has faced spirited challenges from Harry Wilson, Rob Astorino and Andrew Giuliani, the son of the former New York City mayor. All four Republicans want to end New York's cashless bail law, but they sharply diverge on questions of abortion rights, the 45th president, and where ''upstate'' actually begins.

Our political reporters questioned each of the candidates in the races' final weeks to get an idea of their positions. Here are edited excerpts from the interviews.

The Democrats

Kathy Hochul, 63, served nearly six years as lieutenant governor before assuming the governorship last August when Andrew M. Cuomo resigned. She has the official endorsement of the state's Democratic Party.

Thomas R. Suozzi, 59, is a former Nassau County executive who is in his third term representing a Long Island swing district in Congress.

Jumaane D. Williams, 46, has been the New York City public advocate since 2019, and in 2018, he nearly defeated Ms. Hochul in the Democratic primary for lieutenant governor.

What will you do to speed the transition away from fossil fuels and guarantee New York a clean, renewable energy future?

Suozzi: I will provide incentives to homeowners, vehicle owners, landlords, businesses and utilities to incentivize renewable energy and efficiency.

Williams: Unfortunately, this past legislative session was probably the worst for climate -- just abysmal. As public advocate, I supported funding the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, including trying to urge the state to move from fossil fuels to renewable energy, including supporting the Build Public Renewables Act. Also, we need an immediate moratorium on ''proof of work'' crypto mining.

Hochul: I'm really proud that my first month on the job, I was able to make a significant commitment of $4.2 billion through a bond act, which we're going to have on the ballot this November. We hope voters will support this to give us the resources to build climate resilience and to protect our environment. It's about creating green energy jobs as well.

Also, we just authorized two transmission lines to bring clean energy power into New York City that is going to wean us off fossil fuels. These are the equivalent of two more Niagara power authorities. This is transformational. They'll be operational by 2027.

As governor, how would you address elevated crime in New York's cities?

Suozzi: I have a 15-point crime intervention and prevention plan to fix bail reform and give judges the discretion to consider the dangerousness of the defendants coming before them. I'll address mental health not only for homeless people but for the over one million people suffering from severe mental health challenges. I'll support community policing and violence interruption, and I will dramatically reform our schools to include the provision of health and human services.

Williams: I'm proud to have been a leader in this space, helping to get New York State from where we were in 2012 to where we were in 2018. Stops of young Black men went down. Use of force went down. Arrests went down. Complaints of use of force went down. And shootings and murders went down.

So on the supply side, we definitely need to see if we can pass more that prevents these guns from coming in the first place, but I think where we always don't structure and fund properly is on the demand side to stop people from using these guns in the first place. Which is why we asked for $1 billion to be put in this budget specifically for gun-violence prevention and victim services. And we couldn't get it.

Hochul: We just passed 10 nation-leading bills on gun safety, focusing not just on mass shootings but the everyday street shootings. We need some time for those to start having the effect that's intended. But it's also about making sure that our subways are safe, so people will go back to their jobs, and letting people know that, you know, there's no tolerance for these crimes.

We can have justice and we can have safety. They truly can go hand in hand. We are not going backward on criminal justice reforms, but we've also made sure that we deal with the fact that it's just too easy to get a gun.

How would you revive New York's subway system: Increase state funding, raise fares or cut service?

Suozzi: I think that's a false choice. The most important thing is to increase ridership, which requires us to make the subway safer. People cannot afford a fare increase right now. Reducing services is antithetical to both our economic recovery and our climate change objectives. And we already have the highest taxes in the United States of America. So we have to use existing funds, including funds from the $1.2 trillion federal infrastructure deal that I helped negotiate.

Williams: I'm very surprised to hear some of the opposition from Albany for congestion pricing. That's one way of trying to slow down the use of cars and actually raise revenue for the M.T.A. Everyone would benefit from a cleaner, more on-time subway system and, frankly, a bus system as well.

Hochul: The M.T.A. is the lifeblood. We will be focusing on ways to generate revenues with congestion pricing. That is back on track after a few hiccups with the federal government. We have no fare increases planned, because we want people to come back to work.

But also, people have to feel safe on the subways. We're working with Mayor Adams and the N.Y.P.D., who are responsible for policing the subways.

Under what conditions would you support a mask or vaccine mandate for schoolchildren?

Suozzi: I do not support any mandates for schoolchildren in the foreseeable future. The only circumstances I would consider would be if there was the emergence of a deadly new variant.

Williams: I think we have to continue to look at the numbers and have science guide us. We know we can't just look at the Covid case numbers, but we have to look at the deaths and hospitalizations -- all those numbers combined. We did wait as a state until it was too late before, and I think it cost people's lives.

Hochul: We had a mandate in place. It was one of the toughest decisions I had to make early on. It's my job to protect the schoolchildren and ensure we don't close schools again.

Mask mandates? Only if we feel they will make a difference.

Do you support good cause eviction legislation that would cap rent increases and make it harder to evict tenants?

Suozzi: No, we already have the most protective tenant protections in America.

Williams: Good cause is actually the baseline of what we should be doing. Just to clarify, if you own and occupy a four-family home, this doesn't impact you at all. If you're not owner-occupied or you have more than a four-family, you can still evict people, you just have to give a reason: nonpayment of rent, violation of lease, destroying of property or if you simply need it for your own family. All this is about is to prevent the eviction crisis from getting worse and protecting people.

Hochul: No, I don't support that. I'm very concerned about the small landlords. Many of them have not been paid rent in a very long time.

With the expiration of 421a, a longstanding tax break to promote the construction of affordable housing, what more should the state do to address the housing crisis here?

Suozzi: The most important thing the state must do is save NYCHA housing. Second, we must have a new 421a immediately that caps the rate of return for developers below 10 percent and requires that all tax-incentivized housing be done with union labor.

Williams: This is another place where there's a key distinction between our campaign and the current administration, which wants to build and preserve 100,000 units in the next five years. We want to build and preserve one million units in the next 10 years. And no one pays 30 percent or more of their income in rent.

421a was abysmal. If we're going to use taxpayer's money, we need to actually use it for the type of housing that the public needs. Of course you need additional money and better management for NYCHA and public housing across the state.

Hochul: We will be revisiting the version of 421a that I proposed, which will increase up to 30 percent how much of new builds would have to be affordable housing. Also, we needed to lower the income threshold so we could have more lower income people eligible for the benefit of living in these places.

In the meantime, we are starting a $25 billion affordable housing plan: 100,000 units, 10,000 supportive housing, as well as helping people cover their rent. We had over $1.6 billion out the door in rent relief to help people who are struggling and need rent just to get their head above water.

How would you make Albany more transparent?

Suozzi: I would reduce contribution limits for the governor's office, from what is currently $67,000 per person to the same as the federal limits of $2,900. I would require that any expenditure over $10 million that is not included in the governor's, the Senate's or the Assembly's budget must go through a public hearing to avoid another Buffalo Bills taxpayer giveaway.

The only real way to make government more accountable and less corrupt is to have more people involved in the political process and more competition in politics.

Williams: You have to elect someone who hasn't come from how Albany operates. So you have just a totally different view. I've always said I think the budget is probably the most important thing that New Yorkers understand the least. I'd love to have a more open conversation while the budget negotiations are going.

Hochul: Already what we've done with the FOIL requests. Public records were being withheld. We've unleashed the pipe of information that should have been going out to the public from Day 1. I believe in releasing taxes. I believe in releasing schedules. I believe in telling people how decisions are made. Also, our economic development projects -- there needs to be transparency in terms of a database where people can look up: Is the public investment getting the return on the dollar that was promised?

How will you stop New York from bleeding residents?

Suozzi: Reduce crime and cut taxes.

Williams: The No. 1 reason people are moving away is New York is no longer affordable. You literally have the highest rents in the entire nation. We must make New York State more affordable when it comes to rent, when it comes to how much people are paid. And you do want to make sure that people are safe and feel safe.

Hochul: I'm finding ways to cut the tax burden, such as expediting the middle-class tax cut and giving property tax relief to people. We need to let people know that this city is coming back, and it's coming back very quickly. We know there is no city like New York, and people have kind of lost it during the pandemic, during the tough times and concern about public safety. It's our job to turn that around. We're also going to continue looking out for communities of color that have been bypassed when there's been recoveries. It's not a real successful comeback until I feel all the people have been represented and shared in that.

Would you accept the support of former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo in this race?

Suozzi: Yes.

Williams: Andrew Cuomo would never support me.

Hochul: No. It's time to look forward, not backward.

Are New York's tax rates, among the highest in the nation, set at the right levels?

Suozzi: No. They are too high. I would cut income taxes by 10 percent.

Williams: There are working- and middle-class New Yorkers who've got too much of the burden of taxes. There are 120-some-odd billionaires who made $220 billion more during the pandemic; it's their responsibility to do more. We have to have revenue raisers that can help ease the burden on ***working-class*** and middle-class New Yorkers.

Hochul: I think they're high. We need to examine our tax structure. We made sure we capped the property tax at 2 percent. We're focused on eliminating the reasons that people find it too expensive to be here. Many businesses can go anywhere they want in the nation, and it's competitive.

Do you agree with Democrats who believe the Republican agenda is fueled by white supremacy?

Suozzi: I believe that the agenda of some Republicans is fueled by white supremacy.

Williams: Unfortunately, too much of the Republican Party is fueled by supremacy, and there's just no way around it. I'm hoping that at some point the party that lost itself in a cult of personality will stop. But many of us have been saying for a while that this was the route that the party would take.

Hochul: That's a broad statement, to say that the entire agenda is fueled by white supremacy. But I will tell you white supremacy has reared its ugly head in a lot of ways, and the Republicans acquiesced to the assault on our nation's Capitol. Where are the Republicans in the talks about the slaughter of Black shoppers in Buffalo? So I would say they're complicit in it, many are complicit.

Some Asian American voters in New York City have begun to vote more Republican. Why are Democrats losing those voters?

Suozzi: Because they're failing to address their core concerns regarding crime and public safety, regarding taxes and affordability, and regarding the promotion of quality education for their children.

Williams: The Democratic Party has done a horrific job when it comes to discussing public safety. They just don't know how to do it. So instead they go to Republican-light talking points. If the party would stop giving voters a boogeyman to vote against and give a vision to vote for, I think we would be much more successful.

Hochul: There's fear because they've been targeted, especially after the pandemic. Donald Trump put a spotlight and blamed China, called it the China flu. They feel that Democrats need to do more to protect them against the street crimes and hate crimes.

What's one issue on which you are closely aligned with Mayor Eric Adams and one issue you wish he would handle differently?

Suozzi: One hundred percent aligned on crime reduction and public safety. I wouldn't have made some of the appointments he made.

Williams: I've known the mayor for a very long time, so there are more parts to how we address the gun violence that we agree on. There's probably a difference when it comes to whether we should be doing hybrid working.

Hochul: We're aligned in our common desire to make cities safer. One hundred percent. At a personal level, I know he's a vegan, and I don't mind a good hamburger once in a while.

Go-to bagel order?

Suozzi: I don't know if I would get a salt bagel with tuna fish or a poppy-seed bagel with lox, onions, tomato and schmear.

Williams: A raisin bagel plus lox, cream cheese and capers.

Hochul: I have a sweet tooth. I'd say a cinnamon raisin bagel, cream cheese and some places they would put maple syrup cream cheese.

Best governor of New York in your lifetime?

Suozzi: Mario Cuomo. Loved him.

Williams: I've had issues with a lot of folks. But I'm hoping next year it will be Governor Williams.

Hochul: Mario Cuomo was a transformative governor.

The Republicans

Rob Astorino, 55, served as the Westchester County executive from 2010 to 2017 and was the 2014 Republican nominee for governor.

Andrew Giuliani, 36, is the son of the former New York City mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani and worked in the White House for President Donald J. Trump.

Harry Wilson, 50, is a corporate turnaround specialist who served in the Obama administration and was the 2010 Republican candidate for state comptroller.

Lee Zeldin, 42, is an Army veteran who has represented Suffolk County in the State Senate and in Congress since 2011. He has the formal backing of New York's Republican and Conservative Parties.

What will you do to speed the transition away from fossil fuels and guarantee New York a clean, renewable energy future?

Zeldin: New Yorkers want access to clean air and clean water regardless of what party they are. There, unfortunately, has been a push inside the Legislature to set dates to hit particular targets without a plan on how to hit that target. I have a concern about the lack of supply that currently is being tapped into, as well as the rising energy costs.

They're looking to pass a bill that would ban all gas hookups on new construction statewide. I oppose that. I believe that we need to start safely extracting our natural resources from the Marcellus and Utica Shales. Especially the Southern Tier. It would create jobs and generate revenue and revitalize communities, and I believe that we can enact the greatest tax cut in the history of the state.

Astorino: My approach is an all-of-the-above approach to energy. I agree with renewables, but I also think we can safely extract natural gas because we need it and potentially even site new nuclear power plants.

Wilson: I believe in an all-of-the-above energy policy and a focus on a smart and efficient transition to lower carbon emissions. What that means in practice is scrapping New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and investing more broadly in nuclear, natural gas and renewables.

Giuliani: New Yorkers' immediate need is affordable energy sources, which is why I support fracking. The Marcellus Shale covers the entire Southern Tier of New York, and it covers two-thirds of the landmass in the state of New York.

As governor, how would you address elevated crime in New York's cities?

Zeldin: We should repeal cashless bail. Judges should have the discretion to weigh dangerousness and flight risk and past criminal record and the seriousness of the offense on far more offenses. I believe that we should repeal the Less Is More Act. Thousands of people have been released early who should be behind bars.

We should be doing more to support law enforcement, passing a law enforcement bill of rights. I oppose all efforts to defund, dismantle, abolish law enforcement.

Astorino: Repeal no-cash bail. Use tools for law enforcement that actually work, like stop, question and frisk. And fire Alvin Bragg and any prosecutor who chooses to not enforce the laws.

Wilson: Our Making New York Safe crime plan addresses four primary changes in policy. First, we would repeal bail reform. Second, we would support our great men and women in law enforcement with increased financial support. Third, we would fire rogue district attorneys who refuse to enforce the law. And fourth, we have a long series of additional reforms that we believe get to the root causes of the current spike in crime.

Giuliani: Bad policies like bail reform and defunding the police are making it impossible for the men and women in blue to protect and serve New Yorkers. Allowing criminals to get out of jail within hours of committing a crime is setting us up for one avoidable tragedy after another. I will reverse those policies and use my power to fire any activist prosecutor who is beholden to criminals rather than law-abiding citizens.

How would you revive New York's subway system?

Zeldin: The security concerns are the biggest factor I'm hearing. The more people who feel safe and choose to ride it, that helps to stabilize the finances of public transit.

Astorino: We need to make sure that subways are safe so people actually want to use them. And we need a complete forensic audit of the M.T.A. to know how the dollars are being spent or wasted before we start throwing more money at that.

Wilson: We need a long-term turnaround plan for the M.T.A., rather than the short-term band-aid approach that's been in place for the last several years. One, we have to improve public safety in the M.T.A. so that people feel safe using it. Second, we need a long-term capital plan that can really create a world-class infrastructure that is today driven by excessive costs, operations and maintenance capital expense.

Giuliani: People are avoiding the subway because it's no longer safe. Fortunately, in New York the governor has more board seats on the M.T.A. than the mayor. I would use that power to increase the transit police presence around the subway so that riders won't feel like they're endangering their lives using mass transit. That needs to happen before we re-evaluate the M.T.A. budget.

Under what conditions would you support a mask or vaccine mandate for schoolchildren?

Zeldin: I don't support a mask or vaccine mandate for schoolchildren.

Astorino: No vaccine mandate for kids who attend school and no mask mandates either.

Wilson: I don't support mask or vaccine mandates for school-age children.

Giuliani: I am opposed to mask and vaccine mandates, especially for children.

Do you support good cause eviction legislation that would cap rent increases and make it harder to evict tenants?

Zeldin: I do not. I believe that it's the one-size-fits-all approach. Policies are enacted in Albany as if everybody owns 10,000 units, and it's causing tremendous pain for New Yorkers, who are trying to achieve the American dream.

Astorino: No. We need to go back to if you're into contract and property law and bankruptcy court, we cannot have a cancel rent culture. I would look to rent decontrol, a more market based approach, at the same time building more affordable housing like I did the Westchester.

Wilson: Generally speaking, I think the landlord's have been suffering because of the policy constraints and have not been able to invest in their physical facilities. We need to return to a more market-based environment around housing and eviction policy.

Giuliani: Overregulation is crippling small businesses, including landlords, who are already at a disadvantage when it comes to evicting tenants who stop paying rent.

With the expiration of 421a, a longstanding tax break to promote the construction of affordable housing, what more should the state do to address the housing crisis here?

Zeldin: I don't believe that 421a should have expired, and I support for 420a continuing.

Astorino: I think 421a or something similar needs to be re-enacted.

Wilson: I do think just given how far we are from affordable in New York City, there is a need for some level of subsidization to create the opportunity for more housing, but we need a much broader solution. We have to expand supply. To do that, you have to attack each of the underlying constraints, which range from zoning to time delays and approvals to construction costs to union contracts to create a lower cost approach.

Giuliani: Kathy Hochul didn't have the support in the Legislature to extend 421a, but New York voters are in the process of re-evaluating whether being overtaxed, overregulated and underprotected is right for the Empire State.

How would you make Albany more transparent?

Zeldin: The three-persons-in-a-room approach needs to end. That's no way to run this government. You need more rank-and-file state legislators to be involved in the budget process and the crafting of legislation.

I support term limits in government. I believe that all of our statewide elected officials should be termed out at two terms of four years each. I would add press conferences. When you're at the 11th hour of crafting a budget and there's so many questions that the media has, the public has, that the Legislature has, as you're agreeing to certain aspects of the budget, don't keep it a secret.

Astorino: In Westchester, everything was posted online: meeting agendas, livestreaming. The governor needs to be more interactive with the public, which I would do through town hall meetings around the state.

Wilson: Within our policy plan, we have two broad buckets. The first is ''how do we improve the quality of people in public life?'' and the second is ''how do we create accountability for those people?'' On the first, we wanted to expand access to elections both for candidates and parties. We want to eliminate the LLC loophole and have penalties for it. We want to pass term limits: eight years for statewide elected officials and 12 years for legislative leaders. We want to have open primaries and expand the pool of voters who can participate, and we want to drive election integrity to make sure that there are properly monitored elections.

On the second piece of improving accountability, I support initiative, referendum and recall provisions. We need a public ethics watchdog to replace both JCOPE and Governor Hochul's new entity.

Giuliani: Corruption and transparency don't mix. I will drain the Albany swamp.

How will you stop New York from bleeding residents?

Zeldin: We have to reverse the attacks on wallets, safety, freedom and quality of education.

Astorino: Get crime under control, reduce regulations and foster an environment where businesses thrive, and reduce taxes dramatically.

Wilson: The underlying problems to me are crime, taxes and the cost of living.

Giuliani: No one wants to live where they feel unsafe. Cutting taxes and regulations as well as unconstitutional mandates will also make it more attractive to live here. And if you want families to stay, it's imperative to increase the cap on charter schools and offer school vouchers. We also need to get back to educating our children instead of indoctrinating them with both age-inappropriate and divisive content.

If the Supreme Court overturns Roe v. Wade, would you support adding new limits to abortion access in New York? Or would you enforce laws protecting abortion currently on the books?

Zeldin: New York has already codified far more than what Roe provided, so the law in New York State is exactly the same the day after the Supreme Court decision gets released. I opposed the legislation that was passed into law that codified late-term, partial-birth abortion and nondoctors' performing abortion. We should have parental consent and informed consent, and we should also be doing more to promote adoption.

Astorino: I am pro-life. Nobody's ever going to think otherwise. But I understand in New York, it's very unlikely that abortion will ever be banned. That does not mean we can't have some reasonable restrictions. Things like banning third-trimester partial-birth abortion, except to save the life of the woman, is reasonable. Encourage adoption, and get back to what Bill Clinton said: Safe, legal and rare.

Wilson: I'm pro-choice. I've said I will not make any changes to the abortion laws in the state.

Giuliani: I am pro-life. If Roe v. Wade is overturned, I would support ending late-term abortions.

Do you support gun control measures, like New York's decision to raise the minimum age to 21 for the purchase of an AR-15-style weapon, a federal assault weapons ban or a federal red flag law?

Zeldin: I don't support raising the age. I signed up for the military when I was 18. I don't support a federal assault weapons ban. Red flag laws are something that has to be heard with the leadership of individual states. I disagree with New York's law because it allows firearms to be taken away without notifying that firearm owner that there's a hearing.

Astorino: Raising the age to 21 was found unconstitutional by the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco, and it'll likely be the same here. I believe in red flag laws so long as there is due process. I'd also like to add mental health records to the background check. But I'm a strong supporter of the Second Amendment.

Wilson: I've been a staunch defender of the Second Amendment my whole life. I grew up in a rural town, where I started shooting when I was 8. The problem is not law-abiding citizens. The problem is three groups of people: criminals, the mentally ill with violent tendencies, and purveyors of hate, who should not have access to weapons. So that's where we need to focus our attention, not on curtailing the rights of law-abiding citizens.

We have a red flag law and background checks that I do support and are not working because they haven't been properly administered.

Giuliani: I support the Second Amendment. Restricting an American's right to bear arms is unconstitutional.

Democrats have charged that your party's agenda is fueled by white supremacy. Do you agree?

Zeldin: Absolutely not.

Astorino: Radical progressives in the Democratic Party are tearing apart the economy, our individual rights and are using racism as a boogeyman. I detest when they say Republicans are white supremacists.

Wilson: No.

Giuliani: The notion that Republicans condone of white supremacy is a rumor perpetrated by some members of the Democratic Party and their mouthpiece, the mainstream media. That this is even a question says more about The New York Times than it does about any Republican I know.

Who did you vote for in the 2020 election?

Zeldin: Donald Trump.

Astorino: Donald Trump.

Wilson: I wrote in a conservative Republican, Nikki Haley.

Giuliani: Donald J. Trump

Do you believe that Joe Biden won the 2020 election fairly and is the legitimate president of the United States?

Zeldin: He did win. I have long expressed my concern that there were nonstate legislative actors in certain states that were changing the ways the election was being administered without getting approval from the state legislature against the plain text of the U.S. Constitution. I have never at any point ever made a statement calling him or the election illegitimate.

Astorino: I believe that there were issues with the election with regard to the rules being changed in the middle of the game, and the heavy hand of social media having an undue influence. But I do believe Joe Biden won the presidency, but now we're paying the price for it.

Wilson: Yes.

Giuliani: I certainly have questions about the security of the election.

Would you accept the endorsement of -- or campaign with -- Donald Trump?

Zeldin: Yes.

Astorino: If he wants to, but you know, I'm focused on issues like crime in our cities and the economy and education, which is failing in New York. Those are the things that people were talking about, like inflation. I'd definitely accept the endorsement.

Wilson: I'm not seeking an endorsement. I'm not playing the politician game and seeking endorsements like some of my rivals.

Giuliani: I have campaigned for President Trump and would campaign with him. I'm proud to have worked in the Trump administration.

Where does ''upstate New York'' begin?

Zeldin: It seems like in a state of 19 million or so people that there seems to be about that 20 million different answers.

Astorino: If you ask people from Long Island and New York City, they say it begins in Westchester, which is totally wrong. I would say it begins in the northern part of the Hudson Valley after basically the M.T.A. line.

Wilson: I don't like to divide the state. I actually think about a regional approach to the state. Western New York is very different from the Capital District, where I grew up.

Giuliani: A lot of people say it begins where Metro-North ends, but I would say if one identifies as an upstater, then go with it.

Go-to bagel order?

Zeldin: When I was a kid, I used to always get an egg bagel and cream cheese, and I still find myself sticking with the basics.

Astorino: I love bagels with strawberry cream cheese.

Wilson: Sesame with cream cheese. Some people like butter, but I never understood that.

Giuliani: We all know that real New York bagels don't need to be toasted. Other than that, I'm not picky.

Who was the best governor of New York in your lifetime?

Zeldin: Hands down it would be Governor Pataki.

Astorino: It would have to be Pataki because he's basically been the only Republican in my life. And I like him a lot personally.

Wilson: Pataki.

Giuliani: George Pataki.

Jesse McKinley contributed reporting.Jesse McKinley contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/24/nyregion/hochul-zeldin-governor-issues.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/24/nyregion/hochul-zeldin-governor-issues.html)

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**Body**

Adewale Adeyemo's role in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations and work at BlackRock could complicate his confirmation hearings.

WASHINGTON -- Speaking at a Washington think tank in the summer of 2016, Adewale Adeyemo, President Barack Obama's international economics adviser, warned about the perils of protectionism, explained how a growing Chinese economy was good for the world and talked up the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade deal he helped negotiate that Democrats ultimately rejected.

Four years later, such talk might sound out of touch with a Democratic Party that has become even more hawkish on China and increasingly wary of sprawling international trade deals. But that was not a concern for President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr., who this week tapped Mr. Adeyemo to be deputy Treasury secretary, solidifying his team with another stalwart veteran of the Obama administration who would bring center-left economic ideas, deep experience and diversity to Mr. Biden's top ranks.

Like many of Mr. Biden's hires so far, Mr. Adeyemo, who goes by Wally, brings a mainstream policy perspective with a background that breaks barriers. Mr. Adeyemo would be part of a history-making duo at Treasury: He would be the first Black deputy at the Treasury, serving with the first female secretary, Janet L. Yellen.

And like some of Mr. Biden's picks, the selection of Mr. Adeyemo is coming under scrutiny from the left over his private-sector work. In 2017, after the Trump administration took over, Mr. Adeyemo went to work for BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, as a senior adviser and interim chief of staff to Larry Fink, its chief executive. He left last year to become president of the Obama Foundation, where he managed day-to-day operations and carried out its strategic plan.

If confirmed, Mr. Adeyemo will have risen to the Treasury's No. 2 spot from humble beginnings. Born in Nigeria, he emigrated with his parents to the United States when he was a baby and settled in Southern California outside Los Angeles. His father was a teacher, his mother a nurse. Mr. Adeyemo, 39, and his younger brother and sister grew up sharing a room in a two-bedroom apartment.

As he was introduced by Mr. Biden on Tuesday, Mr. Adeyemo talked about his desire to reduce inequality in the United States and increase the fortunes of the middle class. He described his roots growing up in a state that was hit hard by the 2008 financial crisis.

''In California's Inland Empire, where I had grown up in a ***working-class*** neighborhood, the Great Recession hit us hard,'' he said. ''We were one of the foreclosure capitals of the United States. The pain of this was real for me.''

Mr. Adeyemo attended the University of California, Berkeley, where he was the president of the students' association, and went on to get a law degree from Yale. His interest in policy percolating, he worked on the presidential campaigns of John Kerry, John Edwards and Mr. Obama.

Mr. Adeyemo joined the Treasury Department in 2009, working as deputy executive secretary to Secretary Timothy F. Geithner. Just over a year later, he was dispatched to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to help get the new agency up and running. There, he worked as chief of staff for Elizabeth Warren, now a senator from Massachusetts, who had come up with the idea for the consumer bureau and was picked by Mr. Obama to oversee the agency's establishment.

The ability to toggle between the likes of Mr. Geithner and Ms. Warren was an early sign of Mr. Adeyemo's knack for straddling the moderate and progressive wings of the Democratic Party's policymaking machine. At his 2015 confirmation hearing to be the Treasury's assistant secretary for international markets and development, Ms. Warren offered effusive praise.

''He remembers who he grew up with, and he tries every day to make this a better country,'' said Ms. Warren, who became one of the most prominent progressives within the Democratic Party. A spokeswoman said Ms. Warren would support Mr. Adeyemo's nomination as deputy secretary.

Mr. Adeyemo ultimately became deputy chief of staff at the Treasury, serving under Jacob J. Lew. In that role, he was immersed in many issues including sanctions and international trade. During the negotiations over the 12-country Trans-Pacific Partnership, Mr. Adeyemo was focused on brokering a deal over currency provisions in the agreement's foreign exchange chapter.

Mr. Lew recalled Mr. Adeyemo's flying across the world from Asia to Latin America and engaging in economic shuttle diplomacy to broker an agreement that would create greater transparency and enforcement of foreign exchange policy in the deal.

''He put together an approach that frankly has withstood the test of time, even though TPP has not had U.S. participation,'' Mr. Lew said in an interview. ''It became the model of how currency issues were dealt with in subsequent trade agreements.''

In 2015, Mr. Obama recruited Mr. Adeyemo to the White House to be his international economic adviser on the National Security Council. He represented the president at the Group of 20 and Group of 7 summits and steered the international economic policy agenda across government agencies.

The soft-spoken and deliberate Mr. Adeyemo's approach will provide a stark contrast to the Trump administration's combative tone in economic diplomacy. At the 2016 event sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Mr. Adeyemo described the importance of encouraging China to liberalize its markets by making the case that doing so was in its own economic interests -- and in the interests of the United States.

''A growing Chinese economy is an economy where U.S. companies can sell goods and services,'' he said. ''And a growing Chinese economy is something that will help boost global growth.''

That multilateral approach to dealing with China could be a complication for Mr. Adeyemo at his confirmation hearing, as Republicans have become accustomed to Mr. Trump's confrontational stance.

And Mr. Adeyemo's work at BlackRock will probably raise questions from some Democrats, as progressives have already expressed their displeasure.

Robert Kuttner, founder of The American Prospect, a progressive publication, warned this week that BlackRock could stand to gain if Mr. Adeyemo got the No. 2 job at the Treasury, saying he could work to prevent tougher regulatory oversight of the asset manager.

Matt Stoller, the director of research at the American Economic Liberties Project, a left-leaning group that targets corporate power, suggested that BlackRock worked to implant officials that would do its bidding inside the federal government.

''BlackRock needs to be broken up and regulated,'' Mr. Stoller said. ''BlackRock C.E.O. Larry Fink knows this, so he's been storing hack Democrats on ice so they can go into the Biden administration and make sure that doesn't happen.''

A BlackRock spokesman did not respond to a request for comment.

A Biden transition team aide said Mr. Adeyemo, who was hired to establish BlackRock's internal think tank, did not have any business responsibility for or oversight of its investments or policy decisions. The aide said the experience also deepened Mr. Adeyemo's understanding of financial markets and the role that firms like BlackRock play in creating wealth for the middle class.

David S. Cohen, the Treasury's under secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence during the Obama administration, said Mr. Adeyemo's familiarity with the inner workings of the Treasury and experience with domestic policy, international economics and national security would make him a strong partner for Ms. Yellen, who is an academic economist and former central banker.

''In some respects, he's a perfect complement to Yellen at Treasury,'' Mr. Cohen said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/01/us/politics/treasury-Adewale-Adeyemo.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/01/us/politics/treasury-Adewale-Adeyemo.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Adewale Adeyemo was named by President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. as his choice for deputy secretary of the Treasury. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CSPAN)

**Load-Date:** December 2, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Yang and Adams Clash, Councilman Exits: 5 Takeaways From N.Y.C. Mayor’s Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:629W-10M1-JBG3-633D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Katie Glueck, Dana Rubinstein and Jeffery C. Mays

**Highlight:** The campaigns of Andrew Yang and Eric Adams exchanged harsh attacks, and Carlos Menchaca, a city councilman from Brooklyn, dropped out of the race.

**Body**

The campaigns of Andrew Yang and Eric Adams exchanged harsh attacks, and Carlos Menchaca, a city councilman from Brooklyn, dropped out of the race.

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)]

For much of the 2021 [*New York City mayoral campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), the major Democratic candidates have been polite and collegial, with few flash points of tension.

Those days are over.

The two leading candidates, Andrew Yang and [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), have gone from the occasional tepid squabble to a full boil.

In recent days, Mr. Adams inaccurately said “people like Andrew Yang,” the former presidential hopeful, have never held a job. Mr. Yang’s campaign responded by accusing Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, of making “false and reprehensible attacks.”

The Adams campaign shot back with a statement claiming the Yang campaign was “attempting to mislead people of color.”

The attacks were a reflection of how the race seemed to be narrowing as the June 22 primary draws closer; indeed, the field grew thinner last week, as a council member from Brooklyn dropped out of the race.

Here is what you need to know:

The Adams-Yang rivalry comes into focus

Although many voters are [*still undecided*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in the mayor’s race, one dynamic in the contest has become increasingly clear: the growing tension between Mr. Adams and Mr. Yang.

Mr. Yang, with his high name recognition, celebrity status and intense in-person campaign schedule, has topped the sparse public polling, as well as some private polling; even detractors privately acknowledge he has injected energy into the race.

Mr. Adams, with a Brooklyn base, several major union endorsements and strong ties to a range of key constituencies, has come in second — by varying margins — in several surveys.

In the last week, the two campaigns engaged in their most significant clashes to date.

Mr. Adams and his campaign ripped into Mr. Yang’s résumé and accused him of abandoning the city at “its darkest moment” during the pandemic, referring to Mr. Yang’s decision to [*relocate his family*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) to the Hudson Valley for long stretches of last year.

Mr. Yang’s campaign accused the Adams camp of launching attacks laced with “hate-filled vitriol” and sought to elevate Mr. Adams’s record on stop-and-frisk policing tactics as an issue in the race. Both campaigns suggested the other was acting in bad faith.

The exchanges signaled just how personal, and ugly, the race could become — and offered a clear sign that the competition is intensifying.

“I think it’s too early to say it’s a two-person race,” said Chris Coffey, a co-campaign manager for Mr. Yang, in a briefing with reporters on Friday. But, he went on, “Right now, I’d rather be Andrew and then I’d rather be Eric than anyone else.”

Who has the most signatures to get on the ballot?

Polls and fund-raising are not the only indicators of enthusiasm for candidates — there are also petition hauls required to get on the ballot.

A mayoral candidate only needs 2,250 signatures to be on the ballot, but most garner far more, as a cushion to guard against invalidated signatures and for bragging rights.

Mr. Yang arrived at the Board of Elections office in Lower Manhattan last week to file his 9,000 signatures, belting out his own petition-themed lyrics to the song “Seasons of Love” from the Broadway musical “Rent.”

“How many signatures could you get in a year? Through Covid and clipboards and winter and cups of coffee,” he sang before trailing off.

Mr. Adams’s campaign said it filed more than 20,000 signatures. Scott M. Stringer, the city comptroller, claimed 25,000.

Dianne Morales, a former nonprofit executive, said she had collected 13,000 signatures. In an email, her campaign thanked her purple-clad volunteers, including some who created colorful shoes in her honor reading “Mayorales” and “DM4NYC.”

Menchaca exits the race

Carlos Menchaca’s moment of truth came in mid-March, when he looked at his comparatively meager fund-raising numbers and realized he would not become New York City’s next mayor after all.

Mr. Menchaca, a councilman from Brooklyn, had by that point raised just $87,000 in a race featuring several multimillion-dollar campaign war chests and two super PACs dedicated to other candidates.

And so on Wednesday, he announced on Twitter his decision to [*suspend his campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html).

In an interview, Mr. Menchaca said he would rededicate himself to serving out his final year in the City Council, focusing on the same New Yorkers who were at the center of his campaign: essential workers, many of them immigrants.

In particular, he wants to give noncitizens the power to vote in municipal elections, a position [*embraced by several*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)of his competitors.

Mr. Menchaca also plans to endorse a candidate in the mayoral race but has not identified his choice. At this point, he believes the race is wide open.

“New Yorkers have yet to truly engage,” Mr. Menchaca said. That belief is supported by a recent poll finding [*half of likely Democratic voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) have yet to decide on a mayoral candidate.

Nor, he noted, have his allies in the progressive world coalesced behind a particular candidate. By not doing so, they have lost an opportunity to wield influence in city government, in his view.

“The more time goes by, the less ability the noncandidate energy is going to have to impact the race,” he said.

Will the next mayor expand preschool for all?

Mayor Bill de Blasio announced last week that he is expanding a 3-K program for 3-year-olds — the sequel to universal prekindergarten, his signature mayoral achievement — to roughly 40,000 total seats.

This year’s candidates for mayor have their own education proposals, but how would they treat the prekindergarten program?

At the mayor’s news conference, Laurie Cumbo, the majority leader of the City Council, said the next mayor should expand the program to 2-K for 2-year-olds. Most of the candidates agree, though they have different plans for doing it. Some want to focus on less wealthy families.

Mr. Stringer said he supported the idea and pointed to his [*“NYC Under 3” plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) to subsidize child-care costs for families making less than $100,000.

“As mayor, I have a plan to go even bolder and ensure that every family has access to quality child care starting at birth,” he said.

Mr. Yang said his family had benefited from universal prekindergarten.

“We should not only expand existing 3-K services, but also work to create 2-K programs in the coming years,” he said in a statement.

Mr. Adams’s campaign said his plan focuses on subsidies and tax breaks for parents and providing free space to child-care providers to bring down their costs.

Others who support a 2-K expansion include Raymond J. McGuire, a former Wall Street executive,; Maya Wiley, a former counsel to Mr. de Blasio; Shaun Donovan, a former Obama administration official; and Kathryn Garcia, the city’s former sanitation commissioner. Ms. Garcia’s child-care plan focuses on families making less than $70,000 a year.

Yang is criticized for ditching a forum focused on poverty

Running for mayor in the middle of a pandemic has meant a constant stream of virtual forums for the top-tier candidates, who sometimes attend multiple online events in the same day.

Mr. Yang, citing forum fatigue, pulled out of a candidates’ forum last week focused on economic and housing security for poor and ***working-class*** New Yorkers — a move that disappointed the organizers, given that Mr. Yang is probably best known for proposing a universal basic income as a tool to fight poverty.

“This was a forum that brought together groups who advocate on behalf of low-income New Yorkers and the working poor,” said Jeff Maclin, vice president for governmental and public relations for the Community Service Society, one of the forum’s sponsors. “We were a little surprised that he was passing up an opportunity to deliver a message to this community.”

Several other top mayoral contenders attended the forum.

Sasha Ahuja, Mr. Yang’s co-campaign manager, said in a statement that he attended three forums last week and had also participated in a Community Service Society forum on health care in January. Mr. Yang also spent time with The Amsterdam News, a co-sponsor of the forum, for a profile recently, “but there are far too many forums and we can’t do each one,” Ms. Ahuja said.

Elinor R. Tatum, the editor in chief and publisher of The Amsterdam News, a New York-based Black newspaper, moderated the forum. She said Mr. Yang’s decision to not attend might hurt him among her readers.

“He’s got a lot of name recognition, but our community doesn’t know him,” said Ms. Tatum. “We know him as a presidential candidate in name only. We know him from talking about national issues. We don’t know him as a New Yorker.”

PHOTOS: Eric Adams; Scott Stringer; Carlos Menchaca

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**End of Document**



[***A Prestigious Istanbul University Fights Erdogan's Reach***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61X5-2DJ1-JBG3-61R0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 2, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1408 words

**Byline:** By Carlotta Gall

**Body**

Students and professors at Bogazici University, one of Turkey's most well-known institutions, are protesting President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's appointment of a new rector.

ISTANBUL -- For several weeks -- rain, shine, or even snow -- a rebellion has been underway in one of the most hallowed establishments of Turkish academia: the campus of Bogazici University in Istanbul.

Every day, faculty members stand on the main lawn in a socially distanced, silent protest, their backs turned on the office of the rector, whose appointment by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan they oppose.

Traditionally, the university academics elect the rector, who controls much of the life in the university, from their own ranks. By naming an outside appointee to his liking, Mr. Erdogan has set off a battle for control of one of Turkey's institutional jewels.

Bogazici University is one of the best universities in Turkey, endowed with a startlingly beautiful campus, perched above a crenelated fortress on the shores of the Bosporus. Once part of the American-founded Robert College that opened in 1863, it is famous for its Western-leaning liberal arts culture.

As such, it has long been a target of Mr. Erdogan and his religiously conservative supporters, who not only covet its prestige but deplore its liberal attitudes.

The appointment of Melih Bulu, a businessman known for his ties to Mr. Erdogan's Justice and Development Party, or A.K. Party -- he was an unsuccessful election candidate for the party several years ago -- has been seen as one more step Mr. Erdogan has taken to extend his influence over every aspect of Turkish social and cultural life.

Mr. Erdogan has amassed sweeping powers since a failed coup in 2016. Under a state of emergency, he ordered a widespread crackdown against his opponents, including many who had no connection to the coup plot, such as journalists, politicians and human rights activists.

In the months before the coup, his target had been the world of academia. Thousands of academics were purged from their jobs for signing a petition calling for peace with Kurdish militants in early 2016. Then under a presidential decree later that year, Mr. Erdogan claimed the right to appoint university rectors.

Bogazici University had been spared the worst of the purges, but students and faculty members said they always knew a battle was looming. They were forced to accept a compromise candidate for rector four years ago, and several students who protested Turkey's intervention in Syria were prosecuted.

Mr. Erdogan appointed Mr. Bulu on Jan. 1. Within days, hundreds of students turned out to protest, some clashing with the police, who closed off the university's main entrance to the campus, and more tussling with plainclothes officers inside the campus.

At least 30 students were detained in police raids on their homes after the first protests and in supporting demonstrations in other cities. Several students have filed complaints about being subjected to strip searches. In response, the students turned to other forms of protest, creating art exhibitions, making cartoons, and composing and playing songs around the campus.

Tensions rose sharply after members of the government denounced artwork by L.G.B.T.Q. protesters and the police detained four students and confiscated pride flags.

The protesters called for trade unions and political parties to join mass protests on Monday and the police turned out in force, sealing off the main entrance to the campus and detaining dozens of students as they invaded the campus and ordered them home.

Bogazici students have insisted they will keep up a sustained protest until Mr. Bulu's appointment is withdrawn or he resigns.

''We don't want an appointed rector,'' said Ardis Canturk, 23, a construction engineering student, who is among those attending the daily protests. ''We want our own elected rector from our own university.''

He said the protesters did not object to Mr. Bulu himself but to the manner in which he took the post. Protesters compared his appointment to the cases of more than 100 elected mayors who have been removed from their posts and replaced with government appointees in recent years.

Mr. Bulu tried at first to engage with the students, talking to them on campus, and expressing his love of the heavy metal band, Metallica. But as the protests continued he has declined interviews and increased security measures around his office.

Academics have raised questions about Mr. Bulu's qualifications on social media, accusing him of plagiarism in his articles and his academic dissertations. Mr. Bulu has denied plagiarism and explained in a television interview that he had just forgotten to place quotation marks in some places in his writings.

But professors and students are most concerned about what his appointment means for the future of the university and its famously freethinking campus. Students said that they feared that clubs and extracurricular activities would be shut down, and that the faculty would change.

''We have certain principles that were officially stated in 2012 by the University Senate, related to academic freedoms, academic and scientific autonomy, as well as democratic values of our university,'' said Can Candan, who teaches documentary film studies at Bogazici and is among those protesting daily. ''This appointment clearly violates these principles. So we decided we have to speak up and say we don't accept this.''

Halil Ibrahim Yenigun, who was purged from his post at a Turkish university for signing the peace petition in 2016, and now teaches political science at San Jose State University in California, called the appointment a ''hostile takeover'' of one of the last universities that has retained any academic autonomy.

''This was a long expected onslaught against academia as Erdogan was taking over all the stream of social life one by one,'' he said.

The aim was twofold, he said. Mr. Erdogan was set on raising a generation of Turks to turn back a century of secularism in a republic founded by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, Turkey's first president. But his supporters also wanted the upward mobility that Bogazici University offers, he said; its graduates lead many of Turkey's top companies and academic institutions.

Mr. Erdogan's supporters explain the move in terms of righting decades of discrimination against religious conservatives who were long shut out of public education and government jobs. Women who wear head scarves were not allowed to enroll in public universities until Mr. Erdogan reversed that ruling a decade ago.

A pro-government columnist, Hilal Kaplan, a Bogazici graduate who wears a hijab, compared religious conservatives' struggle to that of Malcolm X and Black Americans and warned in an opinion piece that the ''privileged'' secularists who ruled the country for decades would fight back.

''They will oppose you with a self-fulfilling arrogance,'' she warned the new rector in a Twitter post, ''and I expect you to go on your path without caring about them. Bogazici does not only belong to the elitists, but to the nation.''

Many Bogazici alumni have denounced that characterization, pointing out that the university is a public institution and open to students with the highest scores on countrywide entrance exams.

Murat Sevinç, a professor of constitutional law who has lectured at Bogazici, wrote in a newspaper column how his illiterate mother and ***working-class*** father had pinched and saved to give him and his sisters an education.

''The son of parents who never saw school became a professor,'' he wrote. ''Elitist, this and that, come off it, leave that rubbish aside. It is work, work, work.''

Deniz Karakullukcu, a philosophy student who is also a founding member of DEVA, a new political party, dismissed Ms. Kaplan's view as government propaganda.

''This is not the situation at all,'' he said. ''There are students from every province, from very different cultures, world views and religious beliefs, but when they come to Bogazici they tend to take a more liberal view.''

Zeynep Bayrak, a political science student in her final year who wears a hijab, said she had joined the protests because the appointment of the rector was undemocratic. She said she had received abuse on social media but also received many messages of support.

''I am religious; I am a Muslim; I believe we can all coexist,'' she said. ''We won't stop.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/01/world/asia/turkey-bogazici-university-protests-erdogan.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/01/world/asia/turkey-bogazici-university-protests-erdogan.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Police officers clashed last month in Istanbul with students angry at the appointment of a Bogazici University rector by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, below. The move was seen as an attempt to extend his power over Turkish life. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZEYNEP KURAY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

ADEM ALTAN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** February 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Biden Pick for Treasury’s No. 2, a Moderate Voice, Breaks Racial Barrier***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61DS-2261-DXY4-X2W4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 1, 2020 Tuesday 17:34 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1321 words

**Byline:** Alan Rappeport

**Highlight:** Adewale Adeyemo’s role in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations and work at BlackRock could complicate his confirmation hearings.

**Body**

Adewale Adeyemo’s role in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations and work at BlackRock could complicate his confirmation hearings.

WASHINGTON — Speaking at a [*Washington think tank*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzRCOkFp7Ws) in the summer of 2016, Adewale Adeyemo, President Barack Obama’s international economics adviser, warned about the perils of protectionism, explained how a growing Chinese economy was good for the world and talked up the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a trade deal he helped negotiate that Democrats ultimately rejected.

Four years later, such talk might sound out of touch with a Democratic Party that has become even more hawkish on China and increasingly wary of sprawling international trade deals. But that was not a concern for President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr., who this week tapped Mr. Adeyemo to be deputy Treasury secretary, solidifying his team with another stalwart veteran of the Obama administration who would bring center-left economic ideas, deep experience and diversity to Mr. Biden’s top ranks.

Like many of [*Mr. Biden’s hires so far*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzRCOkFp7Ws), Mr. Adeyemo, who goes by Wally, brings a mainstream policy perspective with a background that breaks barriers. Mr. Adeyemo would be part of a history-making duo at Treasury: He would be the first Black deputy at the Treasury, serving with the[*first female secretary, Janet L. Yellen*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzRCOkFp7Ws).

And like some of Mr. Biden’s picks, the selection of Mr. Adeyemo is coming under scrutiny from the left over his private-sector work. In 2017, after the Trump administration took over, Mr. Adeyemo went to work for BlackRock, the world’s largest asset manager, as a senior adviser and interim chief of staff to Larry Fink, its chief executive. He left last year to become president of the Obama Foundation, where he managed day-to-day operations and carried out its strategic plan.

If confirmed, Mr. Adeyemo will have risen to the Treasury’s No. 2 spot from humble beginnings. Born in Nigeria, he emigrated with his parents to the United States when he was a baby and settled in Southern California outside Los Angeles. His father was a teacher, his mother a nurse. Mr. Adeyemo, 39, and his younger brother and sister grew up sharing a room in a two-bedroom apartment.

As he was introduced by Mr. Biden on Tuesday, Mr. Adeyemo talked about his desire to reduce inequality in the United States and increase the fortunes of the middle class. He described his roots growing up in a state that was hit hard by the 2008 financial crisis.

“In California’s Inland Empire, where I had grown up in a ***working-class*** neighborhood, the Great Recession hit us hard,” he said. “We were one of the foreclosure capitals of the United States. The pain of this was real for me.”

Mr. Adeyemo attended the University of California, Berkeley, where he was the president of the students’ association, and went on to get a law degree from Yale. His interest in policy percolating, he worked on the presidential campaigns of John Kerry, John Edwards and Mr. Obama.

Mr. Adeyemo joined the Treasury Department in 2009, working as deputy executive secretary to Secretary Timothy F. Geithner. Just over a year later, he was dispatched to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to help get the new agency up and running. There, he worked as chief of staff for Elizabeth Warren, now a senator from Massachusetts, who had come up with the idea for the consumer bureau and was picked by Mr. Obama to [*oversee the agency’s establishment*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzRCOkFp7Ws).

The ability to toggle between the likes of Mr. Geithner and Ms. Warren was an early sign of Mr. Adeyemo’s knack for straddling the moderate and progressive wings of the Democratic Party’s policymaking machine. At his 2015 confirmation hearing to be the Treasury’s assistant secretary for international markets and development, Ms. Warren offered effusive praise.

“He remembers who he grew up with, and he tries every day to make this a better country,” said Ms. Warren, who became one of the most prominent progressives within the Democratic Party. A spokeswoman said Ms. Warren would support Mr. Adeyemo’s nomination as deputy secretary.

Mr. Adeyemo ultimately became deputy chief of staff at the Treasury, serving under Jacob J. Lew. In that role, he was immersed in many issues including sanctions and international trade. During the negotiations over the 12-country Trans-Pacific Partnership, Mr. Adeyemo was focused on brokering a deal over currency provisions in the agreement’s foreign exchange chapter.

Mr. Lew recalled Mr. Adeyemo’s flying across the world from Asia to Latin America and engaging in economic shuttle diplomacy to broker an agreement that would create greater transparency and enforcement of foreign exchange policy in the deal.

“He put together an approach that frankly has withstood the test of time, even though TPP has not had U.S. participation,” Mr. Lew said in an interview. “It became the model of how currency issues were dealt with in subsequent trade agreements.”

In 2015, Mr. Obama recruited Mr. Adeyemo to the White House to be his international economic adviser on the National Security Council. He represented the president at the Group of 20 and Group of 7 summits and steered the international economic policy agenda across government agencies.

The soft-spoken and deliberate Mr. Adeyemo’s approach will provide a stark contrast to the Trump administration’s combative tone in economic diplomacy. At the 2016 event sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Mr. Adeyemo described the importance of encouraging China to liberalize its markets by making the case that doing so was in its own economic interests — and in the interests of the United States.

“A growing Chinese economy is an economy where U.S. companies can sell goods and services,” he said. “And a growing Chinese economy is something that will help boost global growth.”

That multilateral approach to dealing with China could be a complication for Mr. Adeyemo at his confirmation hearing, as Republicans have become accustomed to Mr. Trump’s confrontational stance.

And Mr. Adeyemo’s work at BlackRock will probably raise questions from some Democrats, as progressives have already expressed their displeasure.

Robert Kuttner, founder of The American Prospect, a progressive publication, [*warned this week*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzRCOkFp7Ws) that BlackRock could stand to gain if Mr. Adeyemo got the No. 2 job at the Treasury, saying he could work to prevent tougher regulatory oversight of the asset manager.

Matt Stoller, the director of research at the American Economic Liberties Project, a left-leaning group that[*targets corporate power*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzRCOkFp7Ws), suggested that BlackRock worked to implant officials that would do its bidding inside the federal government.

“BlackRock needs to be broken up and regulated,” Mr. Stoller said. “BlackRock C.E.O. Larry Fink knows this, so he’s been storing hack Democrats on ice so they can go into the Biden administration and make sure that doesn’t happen.”

A BlackRock spokesman did not respond to a request for comment.

A Biden transition team aide said Mr. Adeyemo, who was hired to establish BlackRock’s internal think tank, did not have any business responsibility for or oversight of its investments or policy decisions. The aide said the experience also deepened Mr. Adeyemo’s understanding of financial markets and the role that firms like BlackRock play in creating wealth for the middle class.

David S. Cohen, the Treasury’s under secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence during the Obama administration, said Mr. Adeyemo’s familiarity with the inner workings of the Treasury and experience with domestic policy, international economics and national security would make him a strong partner for Ms. Yellen, who is an academic economist and former central banker.

“In some respects, he’s a perfect complement to Yellen at Treasury,” Mr. Cohen said.

PHOTO: Adewale Adeyemo was named by President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. as his choice for deputy secretary of the Treasury. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CSPAN)

**Load-Date:** December 2, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Crime, Taxes, Abortion: Where the 7 Candidates for N.Y. Governor Stand***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65S8-6961-DXY4-X16H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Nicholas Fandos

**Highlight:** Ahead of the state primary elections, Republican and Democratic candidates expound on the issues — and exactly where upstate New York begins.

**Body**

Ahead of the state primary elections, Republican and Democratic candidates expound on the issues — and exactly where upstate New York begins.

In the primary races for governor of New York, the candidates in each party naturally have some common alliances but also some surprising differences.

Of the four Republican candidates, for example, one would shun possible support from the former President Donald J. Trump. The three Democratic hopefuls adamantly disagree on how to approach New York’s affordability crunch.

And the candidates’ bagel preferences? All over the map.

With early voting already underway and just days to go before New York’s June 28 primaries, Democrats and Republicans are locked in sharp contests of ideology, experience and taste that will help determine the future of New York State as it tries to move past the coronavirus pandemic.

The winners are most likely headed toward [*the most competitive general election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/nyregion/republicans-midterm-election-ny.html) the state has seen in two decades, in which voters will decide whether to extend Democrats’ 16-year hold on the governor’s mansion, or make a course correction in Albany.

On the Democratic side, [*Gov. Kathy Hochul*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/16/nyregion/kathy-hochul-governor.html) has the upper hand against both [*Jumaane D. Williams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/27/nyregion/jumaane-williams-governor.html), the progressive New York City public advocate, and [*Representative Thomas R. Suozzi*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/11/nyregion/tom-suozzi-governor.html), a Long Island centrist. But the three have put forward conflicting Democratic Party visions on how to fix the housing crisis, fight crime, and win back voters exiting the party.

Who will emerge as the Republican nominee remains anyone’s guess. [*Representative Lee Zeldin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/08/nyregion/lee-zeldin-governor.html), who hails from Suffolk County, has the official endorsements of the Republican and Conservative parties, but he has faced spirited challenges from Harry Wilson, Rob Astorino and [*Andrew Giuliani*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/12/nyregion/andrew-giuliani-rudy-governor.html), the son of the former New York City mayor. All four Republicans want to end New York’s cashless bail law, but they sharply diverge on questions of abortion rights, the 45th president, and where “upstate” actually begins.

Our political reporters questioned each of the candidates in the races’ final weeks to get an idea of their positions. Here are edited excerpts from the interviews.

The Democrats

Kathy Hochul, 63, served nearly six years as lieutenant governor before assuming the governorship last August when Andrew M. Cuomo resigned. She has the official endorsement of the state’s Democratic Party.

Thomas R. Suozzi, 59, is a former Nassau County executive who is in his third term representing a Long Island swing district in Congress.

Jumaane D. Williams, 46, has been the New York City public advocate since 2019, and in 2018, he nearly defeated Ms. Hochul in the Democratic primary for lieutenant governor.

What will you do to speed the transition away from fossil fuels and guarantee New York a clean, renewable energy future?

Suozzi: I will provide incentives to homeowners, vehicle owners, landlords, businesses and utilities to incentivize renewable energy and efficiency.

Williams: Unfortunately, this past legislative session was probably the worst for climate — just abysmal. As public advocate, I supported funding [*the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/18/nyregion/greenhouse-gases-ny.html), including trying to urge the state to move from fossil fuels to renewable energy, including supporting the Build Public Renewables Act. Also, we need an immediate moratorium on “proof of work” crypto mining.

Hochul: I’m really proud that my first month on the job, I was able to make a significant commitment of $4.2 billion through a bond act, which we’re going to have on the ballot this November. We hope voters will support this to give us the resources to build climate resilience and to protect our environment. It’s about creating green energy jobs as well.

Also, we just authorized [*two transmission lines to bring clean energy power*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/29/nyregion/hochul-electrical-grid-climate-change.html) into New York City that is going to wean us off fossil fuels. These are the equivalent of two more Niagara power authorities. This is transformational. They’ll be operational by 2027.

As governor, how would you address [*elevated crime in New York’s cities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/nyregion/shootings-new-york-city-safety.html)

Suozzi: I have a 15-point crime intervention and prevention plan to fix bail reform and give judges the discretion to consider the dangerousness of the defendants coming before them. I’ll address mental health not only for homeless people but for the over one million people suffering from severe mental health challenges. I’ll support community policing and violence interruption, and I will dramatically reform our schools to include the provision of health and human services.

Williams: I’m proud to have been a leader in this space, helping to get New York State from where we were in 2012 to where we were in 2018. Stops of young Black men went down. Use of force went down. Arrests went down. Complaints of use of force went down. And shootings and murders went down.

So on the supply side, we definitely need to see if we can pass more that prevents these guns from coming in the first place, but I think where we always don’t structure and fund properly is on the demand side to stop people from using these guns in the first place. Which is why we asked for $1 billion to be put in this budget specifically for gun-violence prevention and victim services. And we couldn’t get it.

Hochul: We just passed 10 nation-leading bills on gun safety, focusing not just on mass shootings but the everyday street shootings. We need some time for those to start having the effect that’s intended. But it’s also about making sure that our subways are safe, so people will go back to their jobs, and letting people know that, you know, there’s no tolerance for these crimes.

We can have justice and we can have safety. They truly can go hand in hand. We are not going backward on criminal justice reforms, but we’ve also made sure that we deal with the fact that it’s just too easy to get a gun.

How would you revive New York’s subway system: Increase state funding, raise fares or cut service?

Suozzi: I think that’s a false choice. The most important thing is to increase ridership, which requires us to make the subway safer. People cannot afford a fare increase right now. Reducing services is antithetical to both our economic recovery and our climate change objectives. And we already have the highest taxes in the United States of America. So we have to use existing funds, including funds from the $1.2 trillion federal infrastructure deal that I helped negotiate.

Williams: I’m very surprised to hear some of the opposition from Albany for congestion pricing. That’s one way of trying to slow down the use of cars and actually raise revenue for the M.T.A. Everyone would benefit from a cleaner, more on-time subway system and, frankly, a bus system as well.

Hochul: The M.T.A. is the lifeblood. We will be focusing on ways to generate revenues with congestion pricing. That is back on track after a few hiccups with the federal government. We have no fare increases planned, because we want people to come back to work.

But also, people have to feel safe on the subways. We’re working with Mayor Adams and the N.Y.P.D., who are responsible for policing the subways.

Under what conditions would you support a mask or vaccine mandate for schoolchildren?

Suozzi: I do not support any mandates for schoolchildren in the foreseeable future. The only circumstances I would consider would be if there was the emergence of a deadly new variant.

Williams: I think we have to continue to look at the numbers and have science guide us. We know we can’t just look at the Covid case numbers, but we have to look at the deaths and hospitalizations — all those numbers combined. We did wait as a state until it was too late before, and I think it cost people’s lives.

Hochul: We had a mandate in place. It was one of the toughest decisions I had to make early on. It’s my job to protect the schoolchildren and ensure we don’t close schools again.

Mask mandates? Only if we feel they will make a difference.

Do you support [*good cause eviction legislation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/realestate/good-cause-eviction-renters-new-york.html) that would cap rent increases and make it harder to evict tenants?

Suozzi: No, we already have the most protective tenant protections in America.

Williams: Good cause is actually the baseline of what we should be doing. Just to clarify, if you own and occupy a four-family home, this doesn’t impact you at all. If you’re not owner-occupied or you have more than a four-family, you can still evict people, you just have to give a reason: nonpayment of rent, violation of lease, destroying of property or if you simply need it for your own family. All this is about is to prevent the eviction crisis from getting worse and protecting people.

Hochul: No, I don’t support that. I’m very concerned about the small landlords. Many of them have not been paid rent in a very long time.

With [*the expiration of 421a*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/26/nyregion/tax-exemption-housing-development.html), a longstanding tax break to promote the construction of affordable housing, what more should the state do to address the housing crisis here?

Suozzi: The most important thing the state must do is save NYCHA housing. Second, we must have a new 421a immediately that caps the rate of return for developers below 10 percent and requires that all tax-incentivized housing be done with union labor.

Williams: This is another place where there’s a key distinction between our campaign and the current administration, which wants to build and preserve 100,000 units in the next five years. We want to build and preserve one million units in the next 10 years. And no one pays 30 percent or more of their income in rent.

421a was abysmal. If we’re going to use taxpayer’s money, we need to actually use it for the type of housing that the public needs. Of course you need additional money and better management for NYCHA and public housing across the state.

Hochul: We will be revisiting the version of 421a that I proposed, which will increase up to 30 percent how much of new builds would have to be affordable housing. Also, we needed to lower the income threshold so we could have more lower income people eligible for the benefit of living in these places.

In the meantime, we are starting a $25 billion affordable housing plan: 100,000 units, 10,000 supportive housing, as well as helping people cover their rent. We had over $1.6 billion out the door in rent relief to help people who are struggling and need rent just to get their head above water.

How would you make Albany more transparent?

Suozzi: I would reduce contribution limits for the governor’s office, from what is currently $67,000 per person to the same as the federal limits of $2,900. I would require that any expenditure over $10 million that is not included in the governor’s, the Senate’s or the Assembly’s budget must go through a public hearing to avoid another Buffalo Bills taxpayer giveaway.

The only real way to make government more accountable and less corrupt is to have more people involved in the political process and more competition in politics.

Williams: You have to elect someone who hasn’t come from how Albany operates. So you have just a totally different view. I’ve always said I think the budget is probably the most important thing that New Yorkers understand the least. I’d love to have a more open conversation while the budget negotiations are going.

Hochul: Already what we’ve done with the FOIL requests. Public records were being withheld. We’ve unleashed the pipe of information that should have been going out to the public from Day 1. I believe in releasing taxes. I believe in releasing schedules. I believe in telling people how decisions are made. Also, our economic development projects — there needs to be transparency in terms of a database where people can look up: Is the public investment getting the return on the dollar that was promised?

How will you stop New York from bleeding residents?

Suozzi: Reduce crime and cut taxes.

Williams: The No. 1 reason people are moving away is New York is no longer affordable. You literally have the highest rents in the entire nation. We must make New York State more affordable when it comes to rent, when it comes to how much people are paid. And you do want to make sure that people are safe and feel safe.

Hochul: I’m finding ways to cut the tax burden, such as expediting the middle-class tax cut and giving property tax relief to people. We need to let people know that this city is coming back, and it’s coming back very quickly. We know there is no city like New York, and people have kind of lost it during the pandemic, during the tough times and concern about public safety. It’s our job to turn that around. We’re also going to continue looking out for communities of color that have been bypassed when there’s been recoveries. It’s not a real successful comeback until I feel all the people have been represented and shared in that.

Would you accept the support of [*former Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/nyregion/andrew-cuomo-resigns.html)in this race?

Suozzi: Yes.

Williams: Andrew Cuomo would never support me.

Hochul: No. It’s time to look forward, not backward.

Are New York’s tax rates, among the highest in the nation, set at the right levels?

Suozzi: No. They are too high. I would cut income taxes by 10 percent.

Williams: There are working- and middle-class New Yorkers who’ve got too much of the burden of taxes. There are 120-some-odd billionaires who made $220 billion more during the pandemic; it’s their responsibility to do more. We have to have revenue raisers that can help ease the burden on ***working-class*** and middle-class New Yorkers.

Hochul: I think they’re high. We need to examine our tax structure. We made sure we capped the property tax at 2 percent. We’re focused on eliminating the reasons that people find it too expensive to be here. Many businesses can go anywhere they want in the nation, and it’s competitive.

Do you agree with Democrats who believe the Republican agenda is fueled by white supremacy?

Suozzi: I believe that the agenda of some Republicans is fueled by white supremacy.

Williams: Unfortunately, too much of the Republican Party is fueled by supremacy, and there’s just no way around it. I’m hoping that at some point the party that lost itself in a cult of personality will stop. But many of us have been saying for a while that this was the route that the party would take.

Hochul: That’s a broad statement, to say that the entire agenda is fueled by white supremacy. But I will tell you white supremacy has reared its ugly head in a lot of ways, and the Republicans acquiesced to the assault on our nation’s Capitol. Where are the Republicans in the talks about the slaughter of Black shoppers in Buffalo? So I would say they’re complicit in it, many are complicit.

Some Asian American voters in New York City have begun to vote more Republican. Why are Democrats losing those voters?

Suozzi: Because they’re failing to address their core concerns regarding crime and public safety, regarding taxes and affordability, and regarding the promotion of quality education for their children.

Williams: The Democratic Party has done a horrific job when it comes to discussing public safety. They just don’t know how to do it. So instead they go to Republican-light talking points. If the party would stop giving voters a boogeyman to vote against and give a vision to vote for, I think we would be much more successful.

Hochul: There’s fear because they’ve been targeted, especially after the pandemic. Donald Trump put a spotlight and blamed China, called it the China flu. They feel that Democrats need to do more to protect them against the street crimes and hate crimes.

What’s one issue on which you are closely aligned with Mayor Eric Adams and one issue you wish he would handle differently?

Suozzi: One hundred percent aligned on crime reduction and public safety. I wouldn’t have made some of the appointments he made.

Williams: I’ve known the mayor for a very long time, so there are more parts to how we address the gun violence that we agree on. There’s probably a difference when it comes to whether we should be doing hybrid working.

Hochul: We’re aligned in our common desire to make cities safer. One hundred percent. At a personal level, I know he’s a vegan, and I don’t mind a good hamburger once in a while.

Go-to bagel order?

Suozzi: I don’t know if I would get a salt bagel with tuna fish or a poppy-seed bagel with lox, onions, tomato and schmear.

Williams: A raisin bagel plus lox, cream cheese and capers.

Hochul: I have a sweet tooth. I’d say a cinnamon raisin bagel, cream cheese and some places they would put maple syrup cream cheese.

Best governor of New York in your lifetime?

Suozzi: Mario Cuomo. Loved him.

Williams: I’ve had issues with a lot of folks. But I’m hoping next year it will be Governor Williams.

Hochul: Mario Cuomo was a transformative governor.

The Republicans

Rob Astorino, 55, served as the Westchester County executive from 2010 to 2017 and was the 2014 Republican nominee for governor.

Andrew Giuliani, 36, is the son of the former New York City mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani and worked in the White House for President Donald J. Trump.

Harry Wilson, 50, is a corporate turnaround specialist who served in the Obama administration and was the 2010 Republican candidate for state comptroller.

Lee Zeldin, 42, is an Army veteran who has represented Suffolk County in the State Senate and in Congress since 2011. He has the formal backing of New York’s Republican and Conservative Parties.

What will you do to speed the transition away from fossil fuels and guarantee New York a clean, renewable energy future?

Zeldin: New Yorkers want access to clean air and clean water regardless of what party they are. There, unfortunately, has been a push inside the Legislature to set dates to hit particular targets without a plan on how to hit that target. I have a concern about the lack of supply that currently is being tapped into, as well as the rising energy costs.

They’re looking to pass a bill that would ban all gas hookups on new construction statewide. I oppose that. I believe that we need to start safely extracting our natural resources from the Marcellus and Utica Shales. Especially the Southern Tier. It would create jobs and generate revenue and revitalize communities, and I believe that we can enact the greatest tax cut in the history of the state.

Astorino: My approach is an all-of-the-above approach to energy. I agree with renewables, but I also think we can safely extract natural gas because we need it and potentially even site new nuclear power plants.

Wilson: I believe in an all-of-the-above energy policy and a focus on a smart and efficient transition to lower carbon emissions. What that means in practice is scrapping [*New York’s Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/18/nyregion/greenhouse-gases-ny.html) and investing more broadly in nuclear, natural gas and renewables.

Giuliani: New Yorkers’ immediate need is affordable energy sources, which is why I support fracking. The Marcellus Shale covers the entire Southern Tier of New York, and it covers two-thirds of the landmass in the state of New York.

As governor, how would you address [*elevated crime in New York’s cities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/nyregion/shootings-new-york-city-safety.html)

Zeldin: We should repeal cashless bail. Judges should have the discretion to weigh dangerousness and flight risk and past criminal record and the seriousness of the offense on far more offenses. I believe that we should repeal [*the Less Is More Act*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/02/nyregion/parole-lawsuit-legal-aid.html). Thousands of people have been released early who should be behind bars.

We should be doing more to support law enforcement, passing a law enforcement bill of rights. I oppose all efforts to defund, dismantle, abolish law enforcement.

Astorino: Repeal no-cash bail. Use tools for law enforcement that actually work, like stop, question and frisk. And fire Alvin Bragg and any prosecutor who chooses to not enforce the laws.

Wilson: Our Making New York Safe crime plan addresses four primary changes in policy. First, we would repeal bail reform. Second, we would support our great men and women in law enforcement with increased financial support. Third, we would fire rogue district attorneys who refuse to enforce the law. And fourth, we have a long series of additional reforms that we believe get to the root causes of the current spike in crime.

Giuliani: Bad policies like bail reform and defunding the police are making it impossible for the men and women in blue to protect and serve New Yorkers. Allowing criminals to get out of jail within hours of committing a crime is setting us up for one avoidable tragedy after another. I will reverse those policies and use my power to fire any activist prosecutor who is beholden to criminals rather than law-abiding citizens.

How would you revive New York’s subway system?

Zeldin: The security concerns are the biggest factor I’m hearing. The more people who feel safe and choose to ride it, that helps to stabilize the finances of public transit.

Astorino: We need to make sure that subways are safe so people actually want to use them. And we need a complete forensic audit of the M.T.A. to know how the dollars are being spent or wasted before we start throwing more money at that.

Wilson: We need a long-term turnaround plan for the M.T.A., rather than the short-term band-aid approach that’s been in place for the last several years. One, we have to improve public safety in the M.T.A. so that people feel safe using it. Second, we need a long-term capital plan that can really create a world-class infrastructure that is today driven by excessive costs, operations and maintenance capital expense.

Giuliani: People are avoiding the subway because it’s no longer safe. Fortunately, in New York the governor has more board seats on the M.T.A. than the mayor. I would use that power to increase the transit police presence around the subway so that riders won’t feel like they’re endangering their lives using mass transit. That needs to happen before we re-evaluate the M.T.A. budget.

Under what conditions would you support a mask or vaccine mandate for schoolchildren?

Zeldin: I don’t support a mask or vaccine mandate for schoolchildren.

Astorino: No vaccine mandate for kids who attend school and no mask mandates either.

Wilson: I don’t support mask or vaccine mandates for school-age children.

Giuliani: I am opposed to mask and vaccine mandates, especially for children.

Do you support [*good cause eviction legislation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/realestate/good-cause-eviction-renters-new-york.html)that would cap rent increases and make it harder to evict tenants?

Zeldin: I do not. I believe that it’s the one-size-fits-all approach. Policies are enacted in Albany as if everybody owns 10,000 units, and it’s causing tremendous pain for New Yorkers, who are trying to achieve the American dream.

Astorino: No. We need to go back to if you’re into contract and property law and bankruptcy court, we cannot have a cancel rent culture. I would look to rent decontrol, a more market based approach, at the same time building more affordable housing like I did the Westchester.

Wilson: Generally speaking, I think the landlord’s have been suffering because of the policy constraints and have not been able to invest in their physical facilities. We need to return to a more market-based environment around housing and eviction policy.

Giuliani: Overregulation is crippling small businesses, including landlords, who are already at a disadvantage when it comes to evicting tenants who stop paying rent.

With [*the expiration of 421a*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/26/nyregion/tax-exemption-housing-development.html), a longstanding tax break to promote the construction of affordable housing, what more should the state do to address the housing crisis here?

Zeldin: I don’t believe that 421a should have expired, and I support for 420a continuing.

Astorino: I think 421a or something similar needs to be re-enacted.

Wilson: I do think just given how far we are from affordable in New York City, there is a need for some level of subsidization to create the opportunity for more housing, but we need a much broader solution. We have to expand supply. To do that, you have to attack each of the underlying constraints, which range from zoning to time delays and approvals to construction costs to union contracts to create a lower cost approach.

Giuliani: Kathy Hochul didn’t have the support in the Legislature to extend 421a, but New York voters are in the process of re-evaluating whether being overtaxed, overregulated and underprotected is right for the Empire State.

How would you make Albany more transparent?

Zeldin: The [*three-persons-in-a-room approach*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/24/nyregion/us-attorney-preet-bharara-criticizes-albanys-three-men-in-a-room-culture.html) needs to end. That’s no way to run this government. You need more rank-and-file state legislators to be involved in the budget process and the crafting of legislation.

I support term limits in government. I believe that all of our statewide elected officials should be termed out at two terms of four years each. I would add press conferences. When you’re at the 11th hour of crafting a budget and there’s so many questions that the media has, the public has, that the Legislature has, as you’re agreeing to certain aspects of the budget, don’t keep it a secret.

Astorino: In Westchester, everything was posted online: meeting agendas, livestreaming. The governor needs to be more interactive with the public, which I would do through town hall meetings around the state.

Wilson: Within our policy plan, we have two broad buckets. The first is “how do we improve the quality of people in public life?” and the second is “how do we create accountability for those people?” On the first, we wanted to expand access to elections both for candidates and parties. We want to eliminate the LLC loophole and have penalties for it. We want to pass term limits: eight years for statewide elected officials and 12 years for legislative leaders. We want to have open primaries and expand the pool of voters who can participate, and we want to drive election integrity to make sure that there are properly monitored elections.

On the second piece of improving accountability, I support initiative, referendum and recall provisions. We need a public ethics watchdog to replace both [*JCOPE*](https://jcope.ny.gov/) and [*Governor Hochul’s new entity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/08/nyregion/budget-highlights-hochul.html).

Giuliani: Corruption and transparency don’t mix. I will drain the Albany swamp.

How will you stop New York from bleeding residents?

Zeldin: We have to reverse the attacks on wallets, safety, freedom and quality of education.

Astorino: Get crime under control, reduce regulations and foster an environment where businesses thrive, and reduce taxes dramatically.

Wilson: The underlying problems to me are crime, taxes and the cost of living.

Giuliani: No one wants to live where they feel unsafe. Cutting taxes and regulations as well as unconstitutional mandates will also make it more attractive to live here. And if you want families to stay, it’s imperative to increase the cap on charter schools and offer school vouchers. We also need to get back to educating our children instead of indoctrinating them with both age-inappropriate and divisive content.

If the Supreme Court [*overturns Roe v. Wade*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/03/us/roe-wade-abortion-supreme-court), would you support adding new limits to abortion access in New York? Or would you enforce laws protecting abortion currently on the books?

Zeldin: New York has already codified far more than what Roe provided, so the law in New York State is exactly the same the day after the Supreme Court decision gets released. I opposed the legislation that was passed into law that codified late-term, partial-birth abortion and nondoctors’ performing abortion. We should have parental consent and informed consent, and we should also be doing more to promote adoption.

Astorino: I am pro-life. Nobody’s ever going to think otherwise. But I understand in New York, it’s very unlikely that abortion will ever be banned. That does not mean we can’t have some reasonable restrictions. Things like banning third-trimester partial-birth abortion, except to save the life of the woman, is reasonable. Encourage adoption, and get back to what Bill Clinton said: Safe, legal and rare.

Wilson: I’m pro-choice. I’ve said I will not make any changes to the abortion laws in the state.

Giuliani: I am pro-life. If Roe v. Wade is overturned, I would support ending late-term abortions.

Do you support gun control measures, like [*New York’s decision to raise the minimum age*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/nyregion/guns-abortion-laws-ny.html) to 21 for the purchase of an AR-15-style weapon, a federal assault weapons ban or a federal red flag law?

Zeldin: I don’t support raising the age. I signed up for the military when I was 18. I don’t support a federal assault weapons ban. Red flag laws are something that has to be heard with the leadership of individual states. I disagree with New York’s law because it allows firearms to be taken away without notifying that firearm owner that there’s a hearing.

Astorino: Raising the age to 21 was found unconstitutional by the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco, and it’ll likely be the same here. I believe in red flag laws so long as there is due process. I’d also like to add mental health records to the background check. But I’m a strong supporter of the Second Amendment.

Wilson: I’ve been a staunch defender of the Second Amendment my whole life. I grew up in a rural town, where I started shooting when I was 8. The problem is not law-abiding citizens. The problem is three groups of people: criminals, the mentally ill with violent tendencies, and purveyors of hate, who should not have access to weapons. So that’s where we need to focus our attention, not on curtailing the rights of law-abiding citizens.

We have a red flag law and background checks that I do support and are not working because they haven’t been properly administered.

Giuliani: I support the Second Amendment. Restricting an American’s right to bear arms is unconstitutional.

Democrats have charged that your party’s agenda is fueled by white supremacy. Do you agree?

Zeldin: Absolutely not.

Astorino: Radical progressives in the Democratic Party are tearing apart the economy, our individual rights and are using racism as a boogeyman. I detest when they say Republicans are white supremacists.

Wilson: No.

Giuliani: The notion that Republicans condone of white supremacy is a rumor perpetrated by some members of the Democratic Party and their mouthpiece, the mainstream media. That this is even a question says more about The New York Times than it does about any Republican I know.

Who did you vote for in the 2020 election?

Zeldin: Donald Trump.

Astorino: Donald Trump.

Wilson: I wrote in a conservative Republican, Nikki Haley.

Giuliani: Donald J. Trump

Do you believe that Joe Biden won the 2020 election fairly and is the legitimate president of the United States?

Zeldin: He did win. I have long expressed my concern that there were nonstate legislative actors in certain states that were changing the ways the election was being administered without getting approval from the state legislature against the plain text of the U.S. Constitution. I have never at any point ever made a statement calling him or the election illegitimate.

Astorino: I believe that there were issues with the election with regard to the rules being changed in the middle of the game, and the heavy hand of social media having an undue influence. But I do believe Joe Biden won the presidency, but now we’re paying the price for it.

Wilson: Yes.

Giuliani: I certainly have questions about the security of the election.

Would you accept the endorsement of — or campaign with — Donald Trump?

Zeldin: Yes.

Astorino: If he wants to, but you know, I’m focused on issues like crime in our cities and the economy and education, which is failing in New York. Those are the things that people were talking about, like inflation. I’d definitely accept the endorsement.

Wilson: I’m not seeking an endorsement. I’m not playing the politician game and seeking endorsements like some of my rivals.

Giuliani: I have campaigned for President Trump and would campaign with him. I’m proud to have worked in the Trump administration.

Where does “upstate New York” begin?

Zeldin: It seems like in a state of 19 million or so people that there seems to be about that 20 million different answers.

Astorino: If you ask people from Long Island and New York City, they say it begins in Westchester, which is totally wrong. I would say it begins in the northern part of the Hudson Valley after basically the M.T.A. line.

Wilson: I don’t like to divide the state. I actually think about a regional approach to the state. Western New York is very different from the Capital District, where I grew up.

Giuliani: A lot of people say it begins where Metro-North ends, but I would say if one identifies as an upstater, then go with it.

Go-to bagel order?

Zeldin: When I was a kid, I used to always get an egg bagel and cream cheese, and I still find myself sticking with the basics.

Astorino: I love bagels with strawberry cream cheese.

Wilson: Sesame with cream cheese. Some people like butter, but I never understood that.

Giuliani: We all know that real New York bagels don’t need to be toasted. Other than that, I’m not picky.

Who was the best governor of New York in your lifetime?

Zeldin: Hands down it would be Governor Pataki.

Astorino: It would have to be Pataki because he’s basically been the only Republican in my life. And I like him a lot personally.

Wilson: Pataki.

Giuliani: George Pataki.

Jesse McKinley contributed reporting.

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[***Southern Bands That Are Politically Progressive, and Proud of It***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5N2H-8FR1-DXY4-X377-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 2272 words

**Byline:** Brett Anderson

**Highlight:** In many ways, the South is still a bastion of conservatism, but groups like Drive-By Truckers and Shovels &amp; Rope still carry the banner of progressives.

**Body**

On the first week of his life as an expatriate southerner, Patterson Hood of the rock band Drive-By Truckers [*wrote an essay denouncing the Confederate flag*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html). It was July 2015, and the 52-year-old, who had never lived outside the states of Georgia or his native Alabama, had just moved with his wife and two children to Portland, Ore.

His new home was about as far from the South as Mr. Hood could get without leaving the Lower 48, and the plan was to stop writing so much music about the issues he had obsessed over for decades. But the [*massacre at the Emanuel A.M.E. Church*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html) in Charleston, S.C., that June drew Mr. Hood back into entrenched disputes over race, region and identity. When Mr. Hood and Mike Cooley, 50, the band’s other principle songwriter, started work on what would become their recently released album, “American Band,” their left-leaning lyrics were stocked with tales about immigration and guns, blood and burning crosses.

“It’s hard to look away right now,” Mr. Cooley said of the topical nature of the Truckers’ new songs. “What am I going to do, not write this stuff?”

From police treatment of African-Americans to the current presidential election, the issues roiling America today have led the Truckers to drill down on the topic that has preoccupied them for 20 years — the South — while bringing a relatively unheard perspective to pop music’s discourse: that of the progressive white Southerner.

And they aren’t alone: A few other white Southern groups, like the country-folk duo Shovels &amp; Rope and the soul revivalists St. Paul &amp; the Broken Bones, have started releasing overtly political music that stands with movements like Black Lives Matter. Their work joins passionate voices from the hip-hop and R&amp;B worlds that have been galvanizing fans on a large scale, from [*Beyoncé’s “Lemonade”*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html) to Kendrick Lamar’s “To Pimp a Butterfly.” On the Drive-By Truckers’ new song “What It Means,” which was written in response to the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., Mr. Hood sings, “If you say it wasn’t racial when they shot him in his tracks, well I guess that means that you ain’t black.”

That Mr. Hood and Mr. Cooley regard their Southern legacy as baggage (as opposed to a source of unquestioned pride) has always injected political undercurrents into their take on Southern rock: country-tinged and edged with punk’s temper, arena rock’s bombast and the craftsmanship of Southern rhythm and blues. But now their counternarrative is aligning with cultural concerns, and “American Band” has landed at a heightened political moment.

SOUTHERN ROCK IS a slippery genre. Its name evokes a preposterously broad sonic terrain, but it is commonly identified with its 1970s standard-bearers like Lynyrd Skynyrd, which emphasized rock’s country and blues roots in songs that generally reflected Southern ***working-class*** concerns, with ambiguous political affiliations.

But the genre took a conservative turn in the 2000s, as many of Southern rock’s best-known artists became surrogates for conservative political interests. A New York Times article about the Southern rock artists playing the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York City was headlined “[*G.O.P.’s Southern Strategy? Cranking Up Lynyrd Skynyrd*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html).”

The band, or a version of it, famous for its 1973 hit “Sweet Home Alabama” and for flying the Confederate flag onstage, regularly performs in support of conservative politicians, including during the [*Republican National Convention in Cleveland*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html) in July.

Another conservative musician, [*Charlie Daniels*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html), is a former Jimmy Carter supporter turned conservative-nationalist firebrand, expressing his disdain for the “flower child president,” Barack Obama, in an ad for the National Rifle Association.

Lyrically speaking, Mr. Hood and Mr. Cooley follow in a long tradition of liberal-leaning Southern songsmiths like Johnny Cash, Tom T. Hall and Emmylou Harris. But like those artists, the Truckers and like-minded contemporary Southern musicians, such as Brad Paisley, are still “swimming against the current,” said Frye Gaillard, an Alabama songwriter, journalist and historian. Citing as an example the Dixie Chicks’ 2003 criticism of President George W. Bush, and the [*CD-burning and widespread radio bans*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html) that followed, Mr. Gaillard said it still takes “a certain amount of bravery” for Southern musicians to speak their liberal minds.

Mainstream country’s conservative fans can still operate like unofficial censors. Last year, radio stations across the country stopped playing Little Big Town’s “Girl Crush” after some listeners [*complained that it promoted homosexuality*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html). (The song is actually about a heterosexual romance.)

The Truckers found their voice during the period when both Southern rock and mainstream country became increasingly synonymous with white conservative values, seizing on the rich creative potential of an alternate strategy: Southern music that interrogates the South while also embracing it.

“American Band,” the Truckers’ 11th studio album, arrives 15 years after “Southern Rock Opera,” the double-disc record that all but declared the Truckers’ official muse as their white Southern identity. The Truckers recorded the new album “when we still didn’t think Trump stood a chance of being a nominee,” Mr. Cooley said. But as it became apparent that Donald J. Trump was on a path to winning the Republican presidential nomination, the Truckers sped up the album’s production schedule to guarantee its appearance in the teeth of the election.

“We’re middle-aged, Southern white guys from ***working-class*** backgrounds,” Mr. Cooley said. Mr. Hood elaborated in a separate interview, suggesting it can be constructively provocative for listeners to hear “a white guy with a heavy Southern accent say ‘Black Lives Matter.’”

In August, at an outdoor festival in Lexington, Ky., Mr. Cooley sat for an interview, wearing cargo shorts and flip-flops. A Black Lives Matter sign pasted to the front of a keyboard was the band’s only stage decoration. He spoke about being particularly angered by the Charleston massacre.

“I found that especially chilling of all the mass shootings simply because of what a young man this shooter was, and how old school that particular act was,” Mr. Cooley explained. He recalled what Dylann Roof, the accused Charleston shooter, was believed to have said — “You are raping our women and taking over our country” — to his black victims. “That’s old-school, lynch-mob talk.”

OVER THE PAST YEAR, the Drive-By Truckers have been joined by other musicians who have the same conflicted feelings about their roots.

Michael Trent and Cary Ann Hearst, the married duo who perform as Shovels &amp; Rope, are native Southerners who live in Charleston and describe themselves as “leftist, modern Southern people.” Their first response to the A.M.E. church shootings was to write a song, “BWYR,” that they never intended to put on their new album, “Little Seeds.” (“BWYR” stands for black, white, yellow, red — an allusion, Mr. Trent said, to the lyrics of the children’s song “Jesus Loves the Little Children.”) Ms. Hearst said they changed their mind after their manager discovered the song’s lyrics on a computer “and reminded us that it was important for us to not be afraid to put the song on the record.”

Paul Janeway, frontman for the Alabama soul group St. Paul &amp; the Broken Bones, traces the politically conscious lyrics on his band’s new record, “Sea of Noise,” to his reading of “Just Mercy,” a memoir by the Alabama-based, African-American civil rights lawyer Bryan Stevenson. The book, Mr. Janeway said, moved him to tears.

“It was almost like a religious moment,” said Mr. Janeway, 33. “I was like, I have to write a record like this, from a lyrical stance. If I don’t, it’s not going to mean anything.”

These artists are quick to point out that racism is, and always has been, a national problem, not just a Southern one, and they are wary that their speaking out on the subject could be construed to suggest otherwise. As Mr. Cooley put it, “The South is certainly guilty of everything it’s charged with” but added that racism “was never uniquely a Southern thing.”

The Dexateens, which formed in Tuscaloosa, Ala., just put out “Teenage Hallelujah,” an album that opens with “Old Rebel,” a song that tweaks Southerners who celebrate the Confederacy.

“People already say that Alabamans are racist,” the band’s frontman, Elliott McPherson, explained in an interview with [*punknews.org*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html). “Why give the rest of the country more ammo to fire at us?”

Lee Bains III, the Atlanta-based leader of the rock band the Glory Fires (and a former Dexateens guitarist), considers his music to be part of a long, pan-racial Southern tradition. “I’d say it goes back to Jimmie Rodgers cutting songs with Louis Armstrong,” he said, “to Hank Williams learning guitar from the African-American blues musician Rufus ‘Tee-Tot’ Payne.” Mr. Bains and others also credit Southern hip-hop and outlaw country artists for bringing diverse voices from the South to broader attention.

Mr. Bains’s raw, guitar-driven music challenges listeners to “come to terms with the wages of sin” that he’s grappled with since he discovered, as a child growing up in Birmingham, that his family attended the same Methodist church as Bull Connor, the city’s brutally segregationist commissioner of public safety.

MR. HOOD AND MR. COOLEY roughly split the Truckers’ songwriting duties. Both grew up in North Alabama, in the area around Muscle Shoals, where an extraordinary number of African-American soul artists recorded significant hits in the ’60s and ’70s. Mr. Hood’s father, the bassist David Hood, played on many of those sessions as part of the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section.

“My dad was always an unabashed, proud liberal,” Mr. Hood said. “He hated George Wallace.” Mr. Hood recalled his father saying as much before “he would leave and go to work backing up Wilson Pickett and Aretha Franklin.”

The Truckers have never shied from hot-button material. Their first album, “Gangstabilly” from 1998, includes a tribute to a friend who died of AIDS. In 2004, while on tour during the Kerry-Bush race, Mr. Hood said the band was met with jeers when it played “Putting People on the Moon,” which is pointedly critical of Ronald Reagan.

“One night in Charlottesville, Va., it got so heated, I thought we were going to have a riot in front of the stage,” Mr. Hood recalled. “There were frat boys shooting us birds. I think we ran off a certain part of the fan base over that.”

Truckers songs are populated by Southern characters, not caricatures, and they are drawn with an empathy that has brought flattering comparisons to Bruce Springsteen and Southern literary heroes like Flannery O’Connor and Larry Brown. Like all of the group’s albums, “American Band” bristles with the love-hate tensions that animate the Truckers’ relationship with the South. But Mr. Cooley and Mr. Hood’s new songs, including those on the 2014 record “English Oceans,” pivot more frequently from the metaphoric to specifically address flash points of the late-Obama political era.

Mr. Hood and Mr. Cooley said they never consider how their chosen subject matter will affect the Truckers’ commercial prospects. In varying degrees, the Truckers helped nurture the talents of recent Grammy winners like Alabama Shakes, who Mr. Hood first saw perform at a North Alabama record store, and Jason Isbell, a songwriting member of the Truckers until he left in 2007. But it remains to be seen if those artists’ success will pave a path to a larger audience for the Truckers.

Jessie Scott, program director of WMOT-FM, the new 100,000-watt Americana station out of Nashville, said she expects songs from “American Band” to become part of her rotation. Alabama Shakes, Mr. Isbell and St. Paul &amp; the Broken Bones already are.

The Americana format, which could be loosely described as alt-country or Southernish, “has by and large taken a left-leaning political slant,” Ms. Scott said. “There are a lot of different flavors under that umbrella. It’s not all ‘my country, right or wrong.’”

The Truckers have never benefited significantly from radio play. Relentless touring has been their most effective means of audience development. The only aspect of the Truckers’ performance in Kentucky that appeared controversial was its relative brevity, as mandated by the Moontower Music Festival: barely an hour, or roughly the length of one of the Truckers’ more fiery encores.

The band ended its set with an extended cover of Prince’s “Sign o’ the Times,” and the audience members didn’t voice any obvious disapproval of the political Truckers songs that came before it. Mr. Hood suggested it wouldn’t have mattered if they did.

“This is what we do,” Mr. Hood said. “If you like it, great. If you don’t like, go see someone else. Go see Charlie Daniels.”

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top, the Drive-By Truckers, who have a new album, “American Band,” which they hurried to finish before next month’s presidential election; Michael Trent and Cary Ann Hearst, known as Shovels &amp; Rope; Johnny Van Zant of Lynyrd Skynyrd; and Paul Janeway of St. Paul &amp; the Broken Bones. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY EBRU YILDIZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; PAUL MORIGI/GETTY IMAGES FOR BLACKBIRD PRODUCTIONS; MIKE COPPOLA/GETTY IMAGES FOR BLACKBIRD PRODUCTIONS; PARAS GRIFFIN/GETTY IMAGES FOR SOUTHERN COMPANY) (AR16); Above left, Charlie Daniels, holding a fiddle, with his band. Mr. Daniels is known for his conservative-nationalist political views. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LARRY BUSACCA/GETTY IMAGES) (AR17)

**Related Articles**

* [*The South’s Heritage Is So Much More Than a Flag*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html)

1. [*Jason Isbell, Unloaded*](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/09/magazine/the-souths-heritage-is-so-much-more-than-a-flag.html)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***Prestigious Istanbul University Fights Erdogan’s Reach***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61X0-P631-DXY4-X4JY-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Students and professors at Bogazici University, one of Turkey’s most well-known institutions, are protesting President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s appointment of a new rector.

**Body**

Students and professors at Bogazici University, one of Turkey’s most well-known institutions, are protesting President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s appointment of a new rector.

ISTANBUL — For several weeks — rain, shine, or even snow — a rebellion has been underway in one of the most hallowed establishments of Turkish academia: the campus of Bogazici University in Istanbul.

Every day, faculty members stand on the main lawn in a socially distanced, silent protest, their backs turned on the office of the rector, whose appointment by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan they oppose.

Traditionally, the university academics elect the rector, who controls much of the life in the university, from their own ranks. By naming an outside appointee to his liking, Mr. Erdogan has set off a battle for control of one of Turkey’s institutional jewels.

Bogazici University is one of the best universities in Turkey, endowed with a startlingly beautiful campus, perched above a crenelated fortress on the shores of the Bosporus. Once part of the American-founded Robert College that opened in 1863, it is famous for its Western-leaning liberal arts culture.

As such, it has long been a target of Mr. Erdogan and his religiously conservative supporters, who not only covet its prestige but deplore its liberal attitudes.

The appointment of Melih Bulu, a businessman known for his ties to Mr. Erdogan’s Justice and Development Party, or A.K. Party — he was an unsuccessful election candidate for the party several years ago — has been seen as one more step Mr. Erdogan has taken to extend his influence over every aspect of Turkish social and cultural life.

Mr. Erdogan has amassed sweeping powers since a failed coup in 2016. Under a state of emergency, he ordered a widespread crackdown against his opponents, including many who had no connection to the coup plot, such as journalists, politicians and human rights activists.

In the months before the coup, his target had been the world of academia. [*Thousands of academics were purged*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/24/magazine/the-era-of-people-like-you-is-over-how-turkey-purged-its-intellectuals.html) from their jobs for signing a petition calling for peace with Kurdish militants in early 2016. Then under a presidential decree later that year, Mr. Erdogan claimed the right to appoint university rectors.

Bogazici University had been spared the worst of the purges, but students and faculty members said they always knew a battle was looming. They were forced to accept a compromise candidate for rector four years ago, and several students who protested Turkey’s intervention in Syria were prosecuted.

Mr. Erdogan appointed Mr. Bulu on Jan. 1. Within days, hundreds of students turned out to protest, some clashing with the police, who closed off the university’s main entrance to the campus, and more tussling with plainclothes officers inside the campus.

At least 30 students were detained in police raids on their homes after the first protests and in supporting demonstrations in other cities. Several students have filed complaints about being subjected to strip searches. In response, the students turned to other forms of protest, creating art exhibitions, making cartoons, and composing and playing songs around the campus.

Tensions rose sharply after members of the government denounced artwork by L.G.B.T.Q. protesters and the police detained four students and confiscated pride flags.

The protesters called for trade unions and political parties to join mass protests on Monday and the police turned out in force, sealing off the main entrance to the campus and detaining dozens of students as they invaded the campus and ordered them home.

Bogazici students have insisted they will keep up a sustained protest until Mr. Bulu’s appointment is withdrawn or he resigns.

“We don’t want an appointed rector,” said Ardis Canturk, 23, a construction engineering student, who is among those attending the daily protests. “We want our own elected rector from our own university.”

He said the protesters did not object to Mr. Bulu himself but to the manner in which he took the post. Protesters compared his appointment to the cases of more than 100 elected mayors who have been removed from their posts and replaced with government appointees in recent years.

Mr. Bulu tried at first to engage with the students, talking to them on campus, and expressing his love of the heavy metal band, Metallica. But as the protests continued he has declined interviews and increased security measures around his office.

Academics have raised questions about Mr. Bulu’s qualifications on social media, accusing him of plagiarism in his articles and his academic dissertations. Mr. Bulu has denied plagiarism and explained in a television interview that he had just forgotten to place quotation marks in some places in his writings.

But professors and students are most concerned about what his appointment means for the future of the university and its famously freethinking campus. Students said that they feared that clubs and extracurricular activities would be shut down, and that the faculty would change.

“We have certain principles that were officially stated in 2012 by the University Senate, related to academic freedoms, academic and scientific autonomy, as well as democratic values of our university,” said Can Candan, who teaches documentary film studies at Bogazici and is among those protesting daily. “This appointment clearly violates these principles. So we decided we have to speak up and say we don’t accept this.”

Halil Ibrahim Yenigun, who was purged from his post at a Turkish university for signing the peace petition in 2016, and now teaches political science at San Jose State University in California, called the appointment a “hostile takeover” of one of the last universities that has retained any academic autonomy.

“This was a long expected onslaught against academia as Erdogan was taking over all the stream of social life one by one,” he said.

The aim was twofold, he said. Mr. Erdogan was set on raising a generation of Turks to turn back a century of secularism in a republic founded by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, Turkey’s first president. But his supporters also wanted the upward mobility that Bogazici University offers, he said; its graduates lead many of Turkey’s top companies and academic institutions.

Mr. Erdogan’s supporters explain the move in terms of righting decades of discrimination against religious conservatives who were long shut out of public education and government jobs. Women who wear head scarves were not allowed to enroll in public universities until Mr. Erdogan reversed that ruling a decade ago.

A pro-government columnist, Hilal Kaplan, a Bogazici graduate who wears a hijab, compared religious conservatives’ struggle to that of Malcolm X and Black Americans and warned in an opinion piece that the “privileged” secularists who ruled the country for decades would fight back.

“They will oppose you with a self-fulfilling arrogance,” she warned the new rector in a [*Twitter post*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/24/magazine/the-era-of-people-like-you-is-over-how-turkey-purged-its-intellectuals.html), “and I expect you to go on your path without caring about them. Bogazici does not only belong to the elitists, but to the nation.”

Many Bogazici alumni have denounced that characterization, pointing out that the university is a public institution and open to students with the highest scores on countrywide entrance exams.

Murat Sevinç, a professor of constitutional law who has lectured at Bogazici, wrote in a newspaper column how his illiterate mother and ***working-class*** father had pinched and saved to give him and his sisters an education.

“The son of parents who never saw school became a professor,” he wrote. “Elitist, this and that, come off it, leave that rubbish aside. It is work, work, work.”

Deniz Karakullukcu, a philosophy student who is also a founding member of DEVA, a new political party, dismissed Ms. Kaplan’s view as government propaganda.

“This is not the situation at all,” he said. “There are students from every province, from very different cultures, world views and religious beliefs, but when they come to Bogazici they tend to take a more liberal view.”

Zeynep Bayrak, a political science student in her final year who wears a hijab, said she had joined the protests because the appointment of the rector was undemocratic. She said she had received abuse on social media but also received many messages of support.

“I am religious; I am a Muslim; I believe we can all coexist,” she said. “We won’t stop.”

PHOTOS: Police officers clashed last month in Istanbul with students angry at the appointment of a Bogazici University rector by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, below. The move was seen as an attempt to extend his power over Turkish life. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZEYNEP KURAY/ASSOCIATED PRESS; ADEM ALTAN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** February 2, 2021

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[***Using Shame, Lending Apps in India Squeeze Billions Out of the Desperate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6297-DJX1-DXY4-X540-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Mujib Mashal and Hari Kumar

**Highlight:** With techniques honed in China, a new breed of company offers expensive loans to people devastated by the pandemic. If they can’t repay, family and friends hear all about it.

**Body**

With techniques honed in China, a new breed of company offers expensive loans to people devastated by the pandemic. If they can’t repay, family and friends hear all about it.

HYDERABAD, India — The harassing calls began soon after sunrise. Kiran Kumar remained in bed and, for hours, thought about how he was going to end his hostage of a life.

The cement salesman had initially borrowed about $40 from a lender through an online app to supplement his $200-a-month salary. But he couldn’t pay the mounting fees and interest, so he borrowed from others. By that morning, Mr. Kumar owed roughly $4,000.

Even worse, the lenders had the phone numbers of those closest to him, and were threatening to make his problems public.

“If I am labeled a fraud in front of everyone, my self-respect is gone, my honor is gone,” Mr. Kumar, 28, said in an interview. “What is left?”

The authorities in [*India*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/asia/india-coronavirus-oxygen.html) are increasingly worried that many more victims like Mr. Kumar may be out there. They believe a new breed of lender, its technique sharpened in China, has been preying on ***working-class*** and rural people who have been [*devastated by the impact of the coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/asia/india-coronavirus-oxygen.html) on the Indian economy.

These lenders don’t require credit scores or visits to a bank. But they charge high costs over a brief period. They also require access to a borrower’s phone, siphoning up contacts, photos, text messages, even battery percentage.

Then they bombard borrowers and their social circles with pleas, threats and sometimes fake legal documents threatening dire consequences for nonpayment. In conservative, tightly knit communities, such loss of honor can be devastating.

One police investigation alone in the city of Hyderabad has mapped out about 14 million transactions across the country worth $3 billion over about six months. India’s central bank as well as national authorities are now investigating.

“It is becoming difficult for us to count the zeros,” said Avinash Mohanty, the joint commissioner of police in Hyderabad. The police attribute five suicides in the city to the lenders.

[*About 100 loan apps*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/asia/india-coronavirus-oxygen.html) have been removed from the Google platform, according to the Indian government. A Google spokesperson said it reviewed hundreds of loan apps and removed those that violated its terms.

The investigations are raising alarms in India over the vulnerability of a population of 1.3 billion who are still getting accustomed to digital payments. Online transactions in India will reach more than [*$3 trillion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/asia/india-coronavirus-oxygen.html) by 2025, according to PwC, the consulting firm. Further fraud findings could spur the government, which has [*already limited*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/asia/india-coronavirus-oxygen.html) the personal data that online companies can use, to take a tighter grip on the industry.

The apps also speak to the global nature of online fraud. Many of the companies use techniques that flourished in China two years ago before the authorities there shut them down, and that have since [*reappeared*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/asia/india-coronavirus-oxygen.html) [*elsewhere*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/asia/india-coronavirus-oxygen.html).

The loan apps emerged at a desperate time. The government enacted a tough, two-month lockdown a year ago to contain the virus, plunging India into a deep recession. Millions were thrown out of work. Traditional forms of lending, like banks and microlenders, were temporarily closed.

With names like Money Now, First Cash, Super Cash and Cool Cash — according to police documents — the apps came and went on Google’s app store in India, some reappearing with a slight change of identity. Most were built with off-the-shelf software that made their creation as easy as starting a blog, said Srikanth Lakshmanan, one of the coordinators of Cashless Consumers, a collective of technology volunteers who have been studying the apps.

With a few taps on a phone and a fresh selfie, a borrower could get the cash needed for a doctor’s appointment, for restocking the kitchen or for paying a child’s school fees.

Repayment could be due as quickly as a week. Lenders often added interest and fees amounting to as much as one-third of the loan even before they sent the money, so borrowers would already owe more than received. And to get money, borrowers had to hand over their personal information.

That was when the call centers went into action, according to the police and analysts. First they would badger borrowers into paying back the principal, interest and fees. Then they would call friends and family, sometimes falsely saying the borrower was wanted by the police. Some created WhatsApp groups, added members from the borrower’s contact list, then bombarded the group with accusations. Some would steer desperate borrowers to other services that lent money, further ensnaring them.

The police in Hyderabad took notice this past winter after the suicides and after people lodged harassment complaints. They were stymied until an informant came forward and, in return for a roughly $150 reward, shared the address and details of a call center where a close friend worked as a collection agent.

In an interview with The New York Times, the collection agent — a fast-talking 24-year-old who made about $130 a month — said each day he would receive electronic files on about 50 borrowers. The files included their personal details, copies of their government IDs and their contact lists.

Workers could make a weekly bonus of about $7 for if they pressured three-fourths of the borrowers to pay loans back, said the collection agent, who asked for anonymity for fear of reprisal from his former employer. The bonus doubled for a success rate of four-fifths or more. Clients often begged for time, the agent said, and some even said the constant harassment would lead to their deaths. The collection agent, eyes on the bonus, would continue anyway.

So far, the investigations in Hyderabad have led to raids on call centers in at least four Indian cities, with each center employing between 100 and 600.

Some of the companies have connections to China. So far, at least four Chinese nationals have been arrested, the police said. In reverse-engineering the most exploitative apps, activists like Mr. Lakshmanan found that a large number were hosted on Chinese cloud services and used Chinese software development kits and facial recognition tools.

The police have frozen bank accounts with about $40 million so far. But the trail often leads to shell companies, networks used for money laundering or cryptocurrencies, which are difficult for governments to track.

Still, the publicity in Hyderabad has powered a public backlash.

Mr. Kumar, the cement salesman, is now part of one online advocacy group. About 60 victims have joined its WhatsApp channel, where they devise responses to harassing calls that continue, or provide support.

What saved Mr. Kumar on the morning last summer when he lay in bed and thought of ending his life was a final call to a friend. The friend recognized the urgency, rushed to the room and within hours helped collect the $400 Mr. Kumar had to pay that day to ease some of the harassment.

“If it wasn’t for my friend, I was 90 percent sure that day I would commit suicide,” Mr. Kumar said. “I still get calls. But now I tell them, ‘Do whatever you can.’ I am not worried now. I feel protected.”

But for some families, neither the pain nor the harassment has gone away.

G. Chandra-Mohan, a 38-year-old father of three who worked at a clothing warehouse, took out loans of about $1,000. After interest, fees and penalties, plus borrowing from other services to stay afloat, his balance was five times that. With a salary of $200 a month, and the $80 a month that his wife, Sarita, made from a part-time job at a laboratory, he couldn’t pay it back.

Mr. Chandra-Mohan maxed out his credit cards and drew from dozens of loan apps, his family said. When he complained of the harassment to the police, they told him to switch off his phone for a few days and return if it continued, his father-in-law, M. Sailu, said. The police said that he might have called a cybercrime hotline but that they didn’t have a record of him visiting a police station.

One morning, after Mr. Chandra-Mohan had driven his wife to her office on the back of his motorbike, he gave his three young daughters some change and sent them to their grandparents’ house around the corner. Then, he hanged himself from a fan.

“Even after his suicide,” his wife said, “the phone keeps ringing.”

If you are having thoughts of suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline in the United States at 1-800-273-8255 (TALK). In India, contact 91-9820466726 or to go the website of [*Aasra.info*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/world/asia/india-coronavirus-oxygen.html) for more resources.

Cao Li contributed reporting from Hong Kong.

Cao Li contributed reporting from Hong Kong.

PHOTOS: Suicides and harassment complaints prompted the police in Hyderabad, India, to investigate lenders. One investigation in that city alone has mapped out about 14 million transactions across the country worth $3 billion over six months. (B1); The loan apps emerged at a desperate time when millions were thrown out of work. The police attribute five suicides in the city of Hyderabad to the lenders.; “It is becoming difficult for us to count the zeros,” said Avinash Mohanty, the joint commissioner of police in Hyderabad, above. A list of online apps that a borrower in Hyderabad used, left, and one of the raided call centers, below. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAUMYA KHANDELWAL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2021

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[***Saving Our Freelancers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6297-DW41-DXY4-X00V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 26, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1587 words

**Byline:** By E. Tammy Kim

**Body**

The Protecting the Right to Organize Act would give us additional rights. But not everyone is a fan of it.

Two years ago, a beauty company in New York hired a freelance writer named Leigh to draft copy for products and advertisements. It was a part-time job with a 1099 contract that didn't pay enough for her to turn down other assignments, and she wasn't sure how long it would last.

Some months in, the company increased her hours to the point that she was essentially full-time. The job became her sole source of income and was no different from a regular employee's. Yet the company still treated her as an independent contractor. She had no paid time off, no sick leave or 401(k), and had to buy her own health insurance. Then, at the beginning of the pandemic, she came down with what she hoped was just a vicious cold. She didn't dare call in sick, consult with sympathetic co-workers or complain to her boss.

''I was a little scared to argue about my status,'' she told me. ''I didn't have any power or leverage.'' As a contractor, she was on her own: Freelancers have no right under current federal law to collectively bargain or organize with other workers for help. (Leigh recently became a W2 employee and asked that I use only her middle name, for fear of retaliation for complaining about her previous classification.)

The Protecting the Right to Organize Act is a radically worker-friendly bill that would give freelancers like Leigh a chance to fight for more. Its intent is to patch holes in the tattered cloth of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, which gives most private-sector employees the right to come together and speak out about conditions on the job. Recently passed by the House and now bound for a skeptical Senate, the PRO Act would make it much easier for workers already covered by the N.L.R.A. to organize and pressure employers to improve pay and health standards. It would also give millions of 1099 independent contractors and freelancers the same right to organize that traditional W2 employees have, greatly expanding the universe of workers covered by the N.L.R.A. As a freelance journalist myself, I'm especially excited about this part of the legislation.

Should the PRO Act clear the Senate, independent cosmetologists working for the same salon chain could collectively negotiate for masks and air filters. Freelance content producers at a marketing firm could openly share their hourly rates to check pay across race and gender. Postproduction television editors could unionize to negotiate over hours. And freelance construction workers could protect themselves from retaliation for reporting sexual harassment. At the same time, the PRO Act would not bar independent contractors from determining their own hours or rates, writing off business expenses or keeping their copyrights. Nor would it give one state's freelancers an advantage over another's.

All the PRO Act would do is grant additional rights -- which is why I'm surprised that not all freelancers share my enthusiasm for the bill. A vocal group of writers and consultants, many of whom identify as successful entrepreneurs, have denounced it, arguing that the move to fit non-employees under the N.L.R.A. could very well destroy ''our'' careers. They feel that they are doing just fine and don't need the right to organize; they also reject the idea of being lumped in with so-called gig workers. But the reality is, all of us are vulnerable when we act alone.

Most independent contractors are not doing well. Our median income is just $32,000 per year, and many of us identify as part of a larger ***working class***. ''The vast majority of freelancers have no labor rights, are no longer covered by civil rights law or labor laws,'' Larry Goldbetter, the president of the National Writers Union, told me. Those opposing the PRO Act ''claim they're doing better than ever and that our people are losers, basically,'' he added.

What critics of the PRO Act object to, in particular, is its use of the three-pronged ''ABC test'' to broaden the right to collectively bargain. The test states that a worker hired by a company for a particular service should be classified as an employee unless she is free from the company's control when performing that service, the service does not fall under the company's main business and she has an independent enterprise that provides a similar service. It targets the enormous problem of misclassification -- of employers choosing to call workers ''contractors'' instead of ''employees'' often to avoid paying them fair wages, providing health benefits and workers' compensation or submitting to laws against discrimination and sexual harassment. As a result, states and the federal government lose hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenues and employer contributions to unemployment insurance; workers and their families suffer when they find themselves ineligible for family leave or employer-provided health insurance.

The ABC test first drew public attention in 2019, when it was applied in California through Assembly Bill 5. That law went far beyond the PRO Act: It gave hundreds of thousands of ''independent'' construction workers, beauticians and Uber drivers, among others, the right to the hourly wages and protections of full-fledged employees. Yet this pro-labor victory was overshadowed by a backlash from mostly white-collar freelancers who worried about losing work.

JoBeth McDaniel, a California resident with the group Freelancers Against AB5, told me in an email that the law hurt a wide swath of independent contractors. She said she still hears ''new horror stories,'' representing just a ''tiny portion of the blood bath out there.'' Ms. McDaniel is also a plaintiff in a lawsuit that contests AB5 on First Amendment grounds, filed by the Pacific Legal Foundation, which fights for ''the right to earn an honest living free from unreasonable government interference.''

AB5 Personal Stories, a website run by Karen Anderson, a freelance editor, features dozens of Facebook testimonials against the ABC test as applied in California. On the site, I found several accounts by people who said that they had indeed lost work. Yet many other stories were from individuals who predicted that they would lose work or who turned down some offers of employment because they didn't want taxes deducted from their paychecks. Not quite a ''blood bath.''

According to Ms. McDaniel, most news stories about the ABC test have focused on ''unskilled workers'' who, according to her, can easily leave their job if they are unhappy, while ignoring the impact on people like writers, licensed pharmacists, medical translators and court reporters. Her implication: White-collar freelancers should not be punished for the success they enjoyed before the ABC test came along. But my interviews over the years with dozens of Uber and Lyft drivers, health technicians, artists, tech workers and fellow journalists have shown me just how little separates the working conditions of blue- and white-collar freelancers.

O., a freelance software designer in the Bay Area (who asked that I use only his first initial for fear of losing work) told me that he's had to moonlight for Uber and Lyft since 2014 to survive periodic downturns in tech. He supported AB5 but opposed Proposition 22, a subsequent ballot measure that allows Uber and Lyft to continue to treat their drivers as independent contractors. He now backs the PRO Act because ''people need a union,'' he said.

The lasting anger over AB5 has tainted understanding of the PRO Act, which amends only the N.L.R.A., and obscured the reality of contemporary work. Opponents of the ABC test tend to overstate both the flexibility of freelancing and the rigidity of W2 employment. In fact, thousands of unionized actors, electricians, art handlers, sound technicians and health care workers already have short-term W2 jobs for multiple employers.

Robin Kaiser-Schatzlein, a writer and art installer in New York, receives a W2 for work in museums and galleries, but is still a freelancer with a flexible schedule. As a writer, he is a member of the Freelance Solidarity Project, an organizing initiative for independent newspaper and magazine writers, editors, illustrators and photographers housed under the National Writers Union. I joined the project last year, looking for something as close to a union as I could get without having the legal right to one.

Some of us in the Freelance Solidarity Project are misclassified permalancers (permanent freelancers like Leigh was), while others have W2 day jobs; most work for many outlets at once. We share advice on pitching and contracts, and swap information on industry rates. The PRO Act would give us a key additional tool: the ability to collectively bargain with the outlets that depend on our labor.

''The PRO Act eats away at the small-business-cooperation problem,'' Mr. Kaiser-Schatzlein explained. ''Even if you're a freelancer and you don't want to unionize, you should at least have a group that advocates for your rights. If you're doing your thing and you get six figures, that's fine, but you should see the benefit of banding together to do that.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Angie Wang FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Health Hazards and the Future of Gowanus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61WR-R7S1-DXY4-X278-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 31, 2021 Sunday

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**Length:** 1455 words

**Byline:** By Ginia Bellafante

**Body**

The city may approve a plan in Brooklyn that is one of the biggest rezoning projects in memory. But the debate is not playing out in predictable ways.

Earlier this week, as if an omen sent from the gods of city planning, a barge carrying toxic sediment nearly sank in Gowanus Bay. It was loaded with the ''black mayonnaise'' dredged up from the Gowanus Canal, sludge that appeared to be in the midst of a dangerous round trip -- potentially recontaminating the water that was so slowly being cleaned up after so long. Designated a Superfund site by the federal government in 2010, the canal is a graveyard to industrial sins committed for more than a century.

The filth has not deterred the real estate industry, which sees in every natural asset the potential for leverage. Where a chemist might see poison, the investor so often conjures a room with a view. For decades now, developers have sketched their fantasies onto the waterway's immediate surrounding area, 20 or so blocks in the middle of brownstone Brooklyn at the nexus of warehouse chic and rowhouse cozy. The will to overlook the downsides has been fierce. Five years ago, a single empty lot near the canal sold for just under $3 million, or roughly $340 per buildable square foot.

At that point, a grand development agenda had already been set in motion to update a neighborhood of metal fabricators, wood shops, a tour-bus parking lot, artists' studios, a manufacturer of coffins and, in more recent years, the encroachment of luxury apartments. Mayor Bill de Blasio and other officials joined developers in imagining high-rises with thousands of new residents -- some well-off, others not. Eventually, a proposal emerged that put the neighborhood on the path to one of the biggest rezoning projects in the modern history of New York. As ever, the future hangs on whose vision will prevail.

In recent days, as city officials move closer toward approving the plan, activists opposing it have sued, hoping to slow things down long enough so that the next mayor might re-evaluate it or perhaps abandon it all together.

Alignments and conflicts in the community are not playing out in predictable ways. A prominent local arts group, for example, supports the rezoning, believing it will help rebalance a neighborhood with a 22 percent net decrease in rent stabilized housing stock between 2007 and 2014. Gowanus is already a place with a rock-climbing gym, a Whole Foods and a place to buy $42 salted caramel apple pie.

If the real-estate class finds itself with unlikely allies, it is because of a broadening recognition of how just central mixed communities are to racial and social equality. Fair housing is the starting point.

On one side of the debate are those who see the housing crisis, which has been made only worse by the pandemic, as the city's paramount challenge. They believe that any effort to bring modestly priced apartments to the area is worth whatever other sacrifices might come. On the other are leftists of an old guard -- teachers, public-interest lawyers, artists -- who, in many cases, have lived in the neighborhood for decades and largely been mischaracterized as NIMBYs. They are the early readers of ''Silent Spring,'' those who look around at a landscape subject to so much environmental abuse and wonder why so many other people are being encouraged to live amid so many unknowns.

In many ways, the plan is much more sensitive to progressive social goals than similar efforts have been. Often during the past 20 years, politicians have alienated the communities they hope to refashion by minimally engaging them in the planning process and then capitulating to the demands of developers, extracting far too little value in return.

These disputes are as common in New York as traffic, and they typically reach the point of heated collision when a developer is permitted to build luxury towers in a neighborhood with rapidly changing demographics simply if it commits to making 20 percent of them ''affordable.'' Increasingly, these affordable units don't even have to be on the site in question. Very often they end up somewhere else in the city, where land is cheaper, foregoing any potential benefit of economically integrated communities. Generally, ''affordable'' has meant unaffordable to the working poor.

The Gowanus plan relies on more favorable ratios. Of the 8,000 units to be built over the next decade, more than a third will be reserved for lower-income individuals and families. Some two-bedroom apartments would cost as little as $850 a month. There will be apartments designated for those currently living in shelters or on the street or those who require supportive housing. According to Brad Lander, the city councilman for Gowanus and a chief proponent of the plan, more will be required of developers in exchange for the tax breaks that come to them.

Mr. Lander has also insisted that the city contribute tens of millions of dollars toward repairs necessary in the projects belonging to the New York City Housing Authority situated in and around Gowanus. This is something the community has asked for all along during the many years that rezoning has been discussed.

The real issue here is that 950 units of low-income housing would be built on an enormous city-owned lot -- known alternately as Public Place or Gowanus Green -- where coal-gas had been manufactured from the mid-19th century through the middle of the 20th. Of the three coal-gas plants that were in Gowanus, two of them, according to Maureen Koetz, a longtime environmental lawyer who has been consulting for those opposing development, were categorized as Class 2 in the early 2000s, meaning that they had been deemed to present a significant threat to public and environmental health. (Class 1 is the most dangerous.)

Currently, the proposed housing site is undergoing cleanup of various hazardous byproducts of manufactured gas, paid for by the public utility company that inherited the problem long ago. ''The general practice is not to put housing, or schools for that matter, on these remediated sites,'' Ms. Koetz told me. ''If you are in a warehouse or shopping or in a park, you are there for a limited amount of time so you're not getting that much exposure.''

In the mid-1940s, when we knew less about environmental toxins, Stuyvesant Town, the sprawling middle-class housing complex on the East River, was built on a defunct coal-gas site. If anyone has ever studied cancer rates over the long term there, this would be the time for the city to reflect on the data and make it known.

At a neighborhood meeting in December, Christos Tsiamis, a chemical engineer managing the cleanup of the canal for the Environmental Protection Agency, warned that compounds even 15 feet below the surface of the gas site will volatilize as a result of construction and could, within a decade, find a pathway into buildings and accumulate, potentially endangering the people who will live in them.

''Nobody who had the resources to live somewhere else would choose to be there,'' said Penn Rhodeen, a former children's aid lawyer involved with the activist group Voice of Gowanus. ''So it becomes an issue of environmental morality.''

The fight against the Gowanus plan is unfolding at a moment when anti-development activists in New York have been able to claim major victories. Two years ago, they repelled plans for Amazon's headquarters in Queens. More recently, in Brooklyn's Industry City, they prevented the kind of rezoning that would have delivered far greater benefits to big business than to the ***working class***.

There is no way to downplay the city's housing emergency. But it is a dubious proposition to continually market ''sustainability'' and ''resilience'' as civic virtues if you cannot assure the most economically vulnerable that the places where you invite them to live won't eventually make them sick. The current mayoral administration disgraced itself with its deceptions around lead paint in public housing. Why would it proceed now with anything but the greatest vigilance?

The barge accident this week provides a symbolic reminder of history's relentless talent for payback. By the late 19th century, the Gowanus Canal had become the receptacle for waste from the coal-gas plants, paper factories, masonries, farms and other entities nearby. In 1889, a special commission was dispatched to study the effects of the dumping. It recommended that the canal close because it was such an obvious threat to public health -- ''a disgrace to Brooklyn.''

The cost of doing so was going to come in at about $75,000. Everyone decided it was too much.Email [*bigcity@nytimes.com*](mailto:bigcity@nytimes.com); follow Ginia Bellafante on Twitter: @GiniaNYT

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/29/nyregion/gowanus-canal-development-nyc.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/29/nyregion/gowanus-canal-development-nyc.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn. Rival visions for the future of the Gowanus neighborhood raise questions about real-estate developers, affordable housing and ''environmental morality.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN HAGEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 31, 2021

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[***Eddie S. Glaude Jr.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6372-FKJ1-DXY4-X4DJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 25, 2021 Sunday

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 6; BY THE BOOK

**Length:** 1838 words

**Body**

Glaude, the author of ''Begin Again,'' says that ''No Name in the Street'' (1972) ''tries to offer an account of what happened between Little Rock, Dr. King's assassination and the emergence of Black Power. Trauma and wound saturate his sentences, and his memory fails him in places. It is a masterpiece at the level of form and substance.''

What books are on your night stand?

I tend to read several books at once (returning to one or the other depending on my mood). So right now I have Octavia Butler's ''Patternmaster,'' W. Ralph Eubanks, ''A Place Like Mississippi: A Journey Through a Real and Imagined Literary Landscape,'' Sarah Bakewell, ''How to Live: Or, A Life of Montaigne in One Question and Twenty Attempts at an Answer'' and Edwidge Danticat, ''The Farming of Bones.''

What's the last great book you read?

Jesmyn Ward's ''Sing, Unburied, Sing.'' I keep returning to this book. It is a novel that feels completely of our time and, without strain or pretense, carries forward the power of our literary tradition. I am attracted to the economy of her prose -- words never get in the way of the intensity of the emotion. When she writes about home (we are both from the Mississippi Gulf Coast) I feel it in my gut. I am also haunted by the tree of ghosts in the novel, of all of those who didn't die right and how that baby, Kayla, quieted them, if just for a moment.

Are there any classic novels that you only recently read for the first time?

Last summer, I found myself reading Thomas Hardy's ''Jude the Obscure.'' Right before the country shut down, I joined this amazing reading group with some of my closest friends, and we started with this novel. I can't seem to let go of the character, Arabella Donn. I also read Jan Carew's ''Black Midas.'' I love the rhythm of his sentences. And I love seeing these two books as part of one answer.

Describe your ideal reading experience (when, where, what, how).

Reading outside, in a quiet place, with a glass of Irish whiskey and a cigar. There, when a sentence strikes me or a thought grabs hold, I can look up, especially when I am in my backyard and the trees surround me, and see more than just walls.

What's your favorite book no one else has heard of?

I am sure people have heard of the book, but I would have to say Jose Saramago's ''Seeing.'' It is this jaw-dropping allegory about how quickly democracies can turn into something much more sinister -- especially when ordinary people dare to make their positions known. Margaret Jull Costa's translation is exquisite.

In ''Begin Again,'' you revisit James Baldwin's work through the lens of today's racial injustice. What Baldwin books would you recommend to a beginner?

If you are interested in his nonfiction writings, I would urge you to pick up his ''Collected Essays,'' edited by Toni Morrison, or ''The Price of the Ticket.'' Start from the beginning and read it straight through. One can see the continuity of theme across his writings and how the changing conditions of the country shift the accents.

Do you have a personal favorite among Baldwin's books?

''No Name in the Street'' is my favorite. Baldwin referred to the book as ''mighty.'' Published in 1972, he tries to offer an account of what happened between Little Rock, Dr. King's assassination and the emergence of Black Power. Trauma and wound saturate his sentences, and his memory fails him in places. It is a masterpiece at the level of form and substance. When I first started writing ''Begin Again,'' I tried to imitate the form of ''No Name.'' Failed miserably. I am still trying to figure out how to write history presently, if that makes sense.

Your academic specialty is the intersection of race and religion. Who writes especially well on that subject today, and what's your favorite book to assign to and discuss with your students at Princeton?

There are some brilliant scholars of race and religion in the country. Many of them were on full display in Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s PBS special on the Black church. My colleagues, Judith Weisenfeld and Wallace Best, come to mind. Lerone Martin, Josef Sorett, Anthea Butler, William Hart, Mayra Rivera, Monica Coleman and Keri Day also stand out. I am really excited that the dissertation of the legendary scholar, Hortense Spillers, will be published by Duke University Press. ''Fabrics of History: Essays on the Black Sermon'' will have an immediate impact on the field.

To be honest, my favorite book to assign, besides ''The Fire Next Time,'' is Toni Morrison's novel ''Beloved.'' I have been teaching both books for over 20 years. At some point, everyone should read Baby Suggs's sermon in the clearing. And every one of my students must grapple with the question Baldwin asks on Page 104 of the Vintage edition of ''The Fire Next Time'': ''What will happen to all that beauty?''

Has a book ever brought you closer to another person, or come between you?

Yes! I loved Ralph Ellison. In my first year of graduate school, I wrote every single paper on him. I wrote a general exam on Ellison's ''Invisible Man'' and the French theorist Michel de Certeau. I still think that ''Shadow and Act'' and ''Going to the Territory'' are extraordinary works of American criticism. But after reading Arnold Rampersad's biography of Ellison, I despised the man. The way he treated his mother, his betrayal of Albert Murray -- monstrous.

Another book comes to mind. I read Orhan Pamuk's ''The Museum of Innocence'' with a friend and we found communion in how we were both unsettled by the novel.

What book would you add to the canon, and which would you remove?

Given my love of ''No Name in the Street,'' I would add it to the canon. The book I would remove would probably be ''The Ambassadors,'' by Henry James. I know how important the book is to Baldwin, but James defeats me every time I crack open his work. I prefer his brother, William. His sentences dance. Henry's, not so much.

What's the most interesting thing you learned from a book recently?

I should have known this, but I didn't. In W. Ralph Eubanks's wonderful book ''A Place Like Mississippi,'' he mentions Gilbert Mason, a local physician in Biloxi who led a series of ''wade-ins'' at Biloxi beaches. On April 24, 1960, ''hundreds of peaceful Black protesters were beaten by a mob of whites carrying pool cues, clubs, chains, blackjacks, lead pipes and baseball bats.''

Which subjects do you wish more authors would write about?

Honestly, I haven't thought about this much. I am more concerned with figuring out how to get what is going on in my head on the page. Thinking about the relationship between history, memory, wound and democracy, and trying to find a form to write about it all at once.

What moves you most in a work of literature?

I am moved whenever a writer taps the root and reveals something fundamental about what it means to be human, and she does so with beautiful sentences. I love sentences that cast you into deep waters. I remember reading a long, meandering Faulkner sentence in ''As I Lay Dying'' on a flight to South Africa. I paced up and down an airplane. Or, I read an Edwidge Danticat sentence in ''Breath, Eyes, Memory'' that carried so much emotion, with so few words, that I screamed an obscenity.

Which genres do you especially enjoy reading? And which do you avoid?

I love novels and essays. I am not good at reading poetry. Whatever that might mean. I try, but I keep missing something.

How do you organize your books?

Organize is a strong word (LOL). I tend to arrange them according to subject matter and then I group authors together. I might have my Baldwin books sitting next to Harold Bloom sitting next to V. S. Naipaul. I stole a practice from Cornel West. I tend to turn around books that are important to me. I want to see the cover of the book or the face of the writer when I walk into my study or my office at Princeton. They are like companions -- walking partners. But generally my library and office are a mess. Books are everywhere. The piles may be organic. They grow and move.

What book might people be surprised to find on your shelves?

Probably Samuel Beckett or T. S. Eliot. People might be shocked to see Borges too.

What's the best book you've ever received as a gift?

A first-edition signed copy of James Baldwin's ''Go Tell It on the Mountain.'' Now I am obsessed with finding signed first editions of all of his work.

Who is your favorite fictional hero or heroine? Your favorite antihero or villain?

I have never thought about her as a heroine, but Baby Suggs in ''Beloved'' stands out among my favorites. She offers the wisdom that empowers Denver to step into the world: ''Know it, but go on out the yard.'' I live by those words.

My favorite antihero is Bazarov in Turgenev's ''Fathers and Sons.'' Quintessentially modern character with an abiding faith in science, but love tore him up in the end.

What kind of reader were you as a child? Which childhood books and authors stick with you most?

I grew up in a ***working-class*** household on the coast of Mississippi. Outside of school, books were not a part of my daily life. My dad read the newspaper every day. But, for the most part, my parents were busy trying to keep a roof over our heads and food on the table. Playing Dungeons & Dragons introduced me to fantasy and science fiction literature. I was more interested in the world of elves and dragons. I loved J. R. R. Tolkien's ''The Hobbit'' and ''The Lord of the Rings.'' And I loved Terry Brooks's ''The Sword of Shannara.'' I could have burned down the house reading the book by candlelight underneath my bed.

How have your reading tastes changed over time?

They changed as my world expanded. I was introduced to the world of African American literature at Morehouse College. There I discovered Ralph Ellison and Richard Wright, Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Morrison. I also began to read widely in African American history and politics. The seeds of my philosophical interests were planted during those early college years as well as my love of modernist literature. At each stage in my education, my reading habits evolved. One thing remain constant: The books gave me a language to describe the torrent of emotion I was feeling inside.

If you could require the president to read one book, what would it be?

A one-book syllabus?! Well, given the racial reckoning we face now, I would hand him ''No Name in the Street'' and beg him to learn the lesson of that betrayal.

You're organizing a literary dinner party. Which three writers, dead or alive, do you invite?

James Baldwin, W. E. B. Du Bois and Toni Morrison. And I would pray that they all behaved.

What do you plan to read next?

Well, I have to finish Anna Burns's ''Milkman.'' Octavia Butler's ''Parable of the Sower'' is the next book for my reading group. I also have to dive into Ella Baker's papers at the Schomburg and return to John Dewey's ''Individualism Old and New.'' I love that all of these books/papers are part of the same answer too.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/22/books/review/eddie-glaude-jr-by-the-book-interview.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/22/books/review/eddie-glaude-jr-by-the-book-interview.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rebecca Clarke FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Depicting Poverty Isn't Such a Simple Task***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61D2-P6Y1-DXY4-X3HJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1278 words

**Byline:** By Joshua Rothkopf

**Body**

The complex realities of subsistence escape ''Hillbilly Elegy.'' But as far back as Charlie Chaplin's ''City Lights,'' filmmakers have been turning a discerning eye on destitution.

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Filmmakers in Europe and Asia have stronger track records. Italy has its earthy tradition of neorealism, bringing us midcentury heartbreakers like ''Bicycle Thieves'' and ''Umberto D.'' In India, Satyajit Ray made the humane miniatures of his 1950s Apu Trilogy, set just a hair's breadth away from destitution. Socially committed voices like the British Ken Loach (''I, Daniel Blake'') and the Belgian Dardenne brothers (''Rosetta'') have each won Cannes's top prize, the Palme d'Or, twice.

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To its lasting credit, Hollywood produced a mythical moment of compassion during the worst days of the Great Depression: a climactic close-up that even decades later remains nuanced and open-ended. Charlie Chaplin's ''City Lights'' (1931) is a comedy vibrating with economic anxiety. While its iconic hero's resourcefulness is never seriously in doubt, the Little Tramp looks pretty rough by film's end -- penniless, on the streets, clothes in tatters after a stretch in jail. In the final shot, though, he is seen for what he is by the one he loves; his eyes shine, knowing there can be no more hiding his true identity. Does she love him back? (By extension, do we?) The fade to black on Chaplin's quivering face is both hopeful and a touch uncertain.

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Like ''Wendy and Lucy,'' honest movies about subsistence living never prescribe a one-size-fits-all solution. Sometimes they're not about fixing things. Amid the squalor of Sean Baker's pastel-tinted ''The Florida Project'' (2017) and Harmony Korine's cringe-a-minute ''Gummo'' (1997), children go about the business of dreaming and playing, inventing their own escapes, not so innocently. A pre-''Hunger Games'' Jennifer Lawrence is too young to be saddled with rearing her siblings and finding her missing father but somehow that's exactly what she does in the Ozarks thriller ''Winter's Bone'' (2010) from Debra Granik.

In the forthcoming ''Nomadland'' (a critical sensation at the fall film festivals), Frances McDormand disappears into the role of Fern, a hardened widow living in her van and traveling from job to job after her Nevada factory town collapses. (She is ''houseless, not homeless,'' the character insists.) The movie is careful to preserve Fern's cryptic streak of independence, which sometimes registers to others as frosty. McDormand and the director Chloé Zhao improvised and shot their project with real van-dwelling nomads.

Finding a strain of autonomy or boldness is crucial in elevating a film about poverty -- even a modestly budgeted one -- from seeming condescending. Michelle Pfeiffer carved out the performance of her career in ''Where Is Kyra?'' (2018), Andrew Dosunmu's little-seen indie masterpiece of urban isolation. It's about an unemployed, divorced Brooklyn woman falling through the cracks of the social safety net. (Kyra is on the cusp of becoming a bag lady.) Her desperation is offset by a willingness to go to scary lengths.

That's because poverty itself is scary. Financial ruin serves as the subtext of so many classic American horror films, perhaps because monsters are easier to deal with than the real thing. Leatherface and his cannibal clan from ''The Texas Chain Saw Massacre'' (1974) would have no ax to grind if they hadn't been laid off at the meatpacking plant. The hook-handed stalker of ''Candyman'' (1992) preys on the downtrodden Chicagoans of the crime-ridden Cabrini-Green housing project, at least before he begins indulging a taste for grad students obsessed with urban legends.

A science-fiction film that pays more than lip service to the plight of the poor is John Carpenter's sociopolitically inflamed ''They Live'' (1988), flatly described by the director as a reaction to Reaganomics. Its homeless hero, Nada (Roddy Piper), drifts between construction jobs before donning a pair of special sunglasses that allows him to see the alien (i.e., yuppie) invasion already at hand. According to Piper, who himself experienced homelessness before his pro wrestling career took off, Carpenter offered daily wages to vagrants appearing as extras. He fed them, too.

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Like a photograph, a film crystallizes pain, traps it in time. In the case of these dramas -- along with the finest of them, Charles Burnett's ''Killer of Sheep'' (1978) -- a universality attaches itself to scenes that anyone struggling will recognize: tense conversations at the kitchen table, fury at a steady stream of disappointments, from car troubles to the sickening monotony of existence. (Burnett's beaten-down patriarch works in a slaughterhouse.) The camera watches on, a steady companion.

That same documentarylike eye also grabs something serendipitous from the hazy Watts summer air: boys skipping rooftops from building to building. It's dangerous and crazy -- and also euphoric. There is freedom in their leap. The camera tilts down and we see no safety net. Burnett includes the shot for all those reasons and one more: Maybe you can fly away.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/movies/hillbilly-elegy-nomadland.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/movies/hillbilly-elegy-nomadland.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The shame and despair that accompany destitution are tricky subjects. Clockwise from above: Glenn Close as Mamaw, a grandmother subsisting on Meals on Wheels, in ''Hillbilly Elegy''

children inventing their own escapes while living at a motel in ''The Florida Project''

Charlie Chaplin's destitute Little Tramp in ''City Lights''

and Jennifer Lawrence with Ashlee Thompson, left, and Isaiah Stone in ''Winter's Bone.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LACEY TERRELL/NETFLIX

A24

UNITED ARTISTS

SEBASTIAN MLYNARSKI/ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS)

**Load-Date:** November 28, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Some Movies Actually Understand Poverty in America***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61CW-CHB1-JBG3-60HG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Joshua Rothkopf

**Highlight:** The complex realities of subsistence escape “Hillbilly Elegy.” But as far back as Charlie Chaplin’s “City Lights,” filmmakers have been turning a discerning eye on destitution.

**Body**

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**Load-Date:** November 29, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Once the Gowanus Canal Is Rid of ‘Black Mayonnaise,’ Who Will Benefit?; Big City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61W9-70D1-DXY4-X0N2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

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**Byline:** Ginia Bellafante

**Highlight:** The city may approve a plan in Brooklyn that is one of the biggest rezoning projects in memory. But the debate is not playing out in predictable ways.

**Body**

The city may approve a plan in Brooklyn that is one of the biggest rezoning projects in memory. But the debate is not playing out in predictable ways.

Earlier this week, as if an omen sent from the gods of city planning, [*a barge carrying toxic sediment nearly sank in Gowanus Bay*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/nyregion/gowanus-canal-dredging-spill.html). It was loaded with the “black mayonnaise” dredged up from the [*Gowanus Canal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/nyregion/gowanus-canal-dredging-spill.html), sludge that appeared to be in the midst of a dangerous round trip — potentially recontaminating the water that was so slowly being cleaned up after so long. Designated a Superfund site by the federal government in 2010, the canal is a graveyard to industrial sins committed for more than a century.

The filth has not deterred the real estate industry, which sees in every natural asset the potential for leverage. Where a chemist might see poison, the investor so often conjures a room with a view. For decades now, developers have sketched their fantasies onto the waterway’s immediate surrounding area, 20 or so blocks in the middle of brownstone Brooklyn at the nexus of warehouse chic and rowhouse cozy. The will to overlook the downsides has been fierce. Five years ago, a single empty lot near the canal sold for just under $3 million, or roughly $340 per buildable square foot.

At that point, a grand development agenda had already been set in motion to update a neighborhood of metal fabricators, wood shops, a tour-bus parking lot, artists’ studios, a manufacturer of coffins and, in more recent years, the encroachment of luxury apartments. Mayor Bill de Blasio and other officials joined developers in imagining high-rises with thousands of new residents — some well-off, others not. Eventually, a proposal emerged that put the neighborhood on the path to one of the biggest rezoning projects in the modern history of New York. As ever, the future hangs on whose vision will prevail.

In recent days, as city officials move closer toward approving the plan, activists opposing it have sued, hoping to slow things down long enough so that the next mayor might re-evaluate it or perhaps abandon it all together.

Alignments and conflicts in the community are not playing out in predictable ways. A[*prominent local arts group, for example, supports the rezoning*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/nyregion/gowanus-canal-dredging-spill.html), believing it will help rebalance a neighborhood with a 22 percent net decrease in rent stabilized housing stock between 2007 and 2014. Gowanus is already a place with a rock-climbing gym, a Whole Foods and a place to buy [*$42 salted caramel apple pie.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/nyregion/gowanus-canal-dredging-spill.html)

If the real-estate class finds itself with unlikely allies, it is because of a broadening recognition of how just central mixed communities are to racial and social equality. Fair housing is the starting point.

On one side of the debate are those who see the housing crisis, which has been made only worse by the pandemic, as the city’s paramount challenge. They believe that any effort to bring modestly priced apartments to the area is worth whatever other sacrifices might come. On the other are leftists of an old guard — teachers, public-interest lawyers, artists — who, in many cases, have lived in the neighborhood for decades and largely been mischaracterized as NIMBYs. They are the early readers of [*“Silent Spring,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/nyregion/gowanus-canal-dredging-spill.html)” those who look around at a landscape subject to so much environmental abuse and wonder why so many other people are being encouraged to live amid so many unknowns.

In many ways, the plan is much more sensitive to progressive social goals than similar efforts have been. Often during the past 20 years, politicians have alienated the communities they hope to refashion by minimally engaging them in the planning process and then capitulating to the demands of developers, extracting far too little value in return.

These disputes are as common in New York as traffic, and they typically reach the point of heated collision when a developer is permitted to build luxury towers in a neighborhood with rapidly changing demographics simply if it commits to making 20 percent of them “affordable.” Increasingly, these affordable units don’t even have to be on the site in question. Very often they end up somewhere else in the city, where land is cheaper, foregoing any potential benefit of economically integrated communities. Generally, “affordable” has meant unaffordable to the working poor.

The Gowanus plan relies on more favorable ratios. Of the 8,000 units to be built over the next decade, more than a third will be reserved for lower-income individuals and families. Some two-bedroom apartments would cost as little as $850 a month. There will be apartments designated for those currently living in shelters or on the street or those who require supportive housing. According to Brad Lander, the city councilman for Gowanus and a chief proponent of the plan, more will be required of developers in exchange for the tax breaks that come to them.

Mr. Lander has also insisted that the city contribute tens of millions of dollars toward repairs necessary in the projects belonging to the New York City Housing Authority situated in and around Gowanus. This is something the community has asked for all along during the many years that rezoning has been discussed.

The real issue here is that 950 units of low-income housing would be built on an enormous city-owned lot — known alternately as Public Place or Gowanus Green — where coal-gas had been manufactured from the mid-19th century through the middle of the 20th. Of the three coal-gas plants that were in Gowanus, two of them, according to Maureen Koetz, a longtime environmental lawyer who has been consulting for those opposing development, were categorized as Class 2 in the early 2000s, meaning that they had been deemed to present a significant threat to public and environmental health. (Class 1 is the most dangerous.)

Currently, the proposed housing site is undergoing cleanup of various hazardous byproducts of manufactured gas, paid for by the public utility company that inherited the problem long ago. “The general practice is not to put housing, or schools for that matter, on these remediated sites,’’ Ms. Koetz told me. “If you are in a warehouse or shopping or in a park, you are there for a limited amount of time so you’re not getting that much exposure.”

In the mid-1940s, when we knew less about environmental toxins, Stuyvesant Town, the sprawling middle-class housing complex on the East River, was built on a defunct coal-gas site. If anyone has ever studied cancer rates over the long term there, this would be the time for the city to reflect on the data and make it known.

At a neighborhood meeting in December, [*Christos Tsiamis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/nyregion/gowanus-canal-dredging-spill.html), a chemical engineer managing the cleanup of the canal for the Environmental Protection Agency, warned that compounds even 15 feet below the surface of the gas site [*will volatilize as a result of construction and could, within a decade, find a pathway into buildings and accumulate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/nyregion/gowanus-canal-dredging-spill.html), potentially endangering the people who will live in them.

“Nobody who had the resources to live somewhere else would choose to be there,’’ said Penn Rhodeen, a former children’s aid lawyer involved with the activist group Voice of Gowanus. “So it becomes an issue of environmental morality.”

The fight against the Gowanus plan is unfolding at a moment when anti-development activists in New York have been able to claim major victories. Two years ago, they repelled plans for Amazon’s headquarters in Queens. More recently, in [*Brooklyn’s Industry City, they prevented the kind of rezoning*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/nyregion/gowanus-canal-dredging-spill.html) that would have delivered far greater benefits to big business than to the ***working class***.

There is no way to downplay the city’s housing emergency. But it is a dubious proposition to continually market “sustainability” and “resilience” as civic virtues if you cannot assure the most economically vulnerable that the places where you invite them to live won’t eventually make them sick. The current mayoral administration disgraced itself with its [*deceptions around lead paint in public housing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/nyregion/gowanus-canal-dredging-spill.html). Why would it proceed now with anything but the greatest vigilance?

The barge accident this week provides a symbolic reminder of history’s relentless talent for payback. By the late 19th century, the Gowanus Canal had become the receptacle for waste from the coal-gas plants, paper factories, masonries, farms and other entities nearby. In 1889, a special commission was dispatched to study the effects of the dumping. It recommended that the canal close because it was such an obvious threat to public health — “a disgrace to Brooklyn.’’

The cost of doing so was going to come in at about $75,000. Everyone decided it was too much.

Email [*bigcity@nytimes.com*](mailto:bigcity@nytimes.com); follow Ginia Bellafante on Twitter: @GiniaNYT

PHOTO: The Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn. Rival visions for the future of the Gowanus neighborhood raise questions about real-estate developers, affordable housing and “environmental morality.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN HAGEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 9, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Why Did So Many Americans Vote for Trump?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61CW-2BP1-DXY4-X25J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 27, 2020 Friday 02:02 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1406 words

**Byline:** Will Wilkinson

**Highlight:** To the dismay of Democrats, the president’s strategy of ignoring the pandemic mostly worked for Republicans.

**Body**

To the dismay of Democrats, the president’s strategy of ignoring the pandemic mostly worked for Republicans.

President Trump’s disastrous mishandling of the coronavirus pandemic probably cost him re-election. Yet it seems mind-boggling that he still won more votes than any incumbent president in American history despite his dereliction of responsibility at a time of a once-in-a-century health crisis and economic devastation.

Why are President-elect Joe Biden’s margins so thin in the states that clinched his victory? And why did the president’s down-ticket enablers flourish in the turbulent, plague-torn conditions they helped bring about?

Democrats, struggling to make sense of it all, are locked in yet another round of mutual recrimination: They were either too progressive for swing voters — too socialist or aggressive with ambitious policies like the Green New Deal — or not progressive enough to inspire potential Democratic voters to show up or cross over.

But they should understand that there was really no way to avoid disappointment. Three factors — the logic of partisan polarization, which inaccurate polling obscured; the strength of the juiced pre-Covid-19 economy; and the success of Mr. Trump’s denialist, open-everything-up nonresponse to the pandemic — mostly explain why Democrats didn’t fare better.

This shocking strategy worked for Republicans, even if it didn’t pan out for the president himself. Moreover, it laid a trap that Democrats walked into — something they should understand and adjust for, as best they can, as they look ahead.

How could a president responsible for one of the gravest failures of governance in American history nevertheless maintain such rock-solid support? Democracy’s throw-the-bums-out feedback mechanism gets gummed up when the electorate disagrees about the identity of the bums, what did and didn’t occur on their watch and who deserves what share of the credit or blame.

When party affiliation becomes a central source of meaning and self-definition, reality itself becomes contested and verifiable facts turn into hot-button controversies. Elections can’t render an authoritative verdict on the performance of incumbents when partisans in a closely divided electorate tell wildly inconsistent stories about one another and the world they share.

Mr. Trump has a knack for leveraging the animosities of polarized partisanship to cleave his supporters from sources of credible information and inflame them with vilifying lies. This time, it wasn’t enough to save his bacon, which suggests that polarization hasn’t completely wrecked our democracy’s capacity for self-correction: Sweeping a medium-size city’s worth of dead Americans under the rug turned out to be too tall an order.

However, Mr. Trump’s relentless campaign to goose the economy by cutting taxes, running up enormous deficits and debt, and hectoring the Fed into not raising rates was working for millions of Americans. We tend to notice when we’re personally more prosperous than we were a few years before.

But the president’s catastrophic response to Covid-19 threw the economy into a tailspin. That is where it gets interesting — and Democrats get uncomfortable.

Mr. Trump abdicated responsibility, shifting the burden onto states and municipalities with busted budgets. He then waged a war of words against governors and mayors — especially Democrats — who refused to risk their citizens’ lives by allowing economic and social activity to resume.

He spurred his supporters to make light of the danger of infection, made the churlish refusal to wear masks into an emblem of emancipation from the despotism of experts and turned public health restrictions on businesses, schools and social gatherings into a tyrannical conspiracy to steal power by damaging the economy and his re-election prospects.

He succeeded in putting Democrats on the defensive about economic restrictions and school closures. As months passed and with no new relief coming from Washington, financially straitened Democratic states and cities had little choice but to ease restrictions on businesses just to keep the lights on. That seemed to concede the economic wisdom of the more permissive approach in majority-Republican states and fed into Mr. Trump’s false narrative of victory over the virus and a triumphant return to normalcy.

But Democrats weren’t destined to get quite as tangled in Mr. Trump’s trap as they did. They had no way to avoid it, but they could have been hurt less by it. They allowed Republicans to define the contrast between the parties’ approaches to the pandemic in terms of freedom versus exhausting, indefinite shutdowns.

Democrats needed to present a competing, compelling strategy to counter Republican messaging. Struggling workers and businesses never clearly heard exactly what they’d get if Democrats ran the show, and Democrats never came together to scream bloody murder that Republicans were refusing to give it to them. Democrats needed to underscore the depth of Republican failure by forcefully communicating what other countries had done to successfully control the virus. And they needed to promise to do the same through something like an Operation Warp Speed for testing and P.P.E. to get America safely back in business.

Instead, they whined that Mr. Trump’s negligence and incompetence were to blame for America’s economic woes and complained that Mitch McConnell wouldn’t even consider the House’s big relief bill. They weren’t wrong, but correctly assigning culpability did nothing to help ***working-class*** breadwinners who can’t bus tables, process chickens, sell smoothies or clean hotel rooms over Zoom.

The Republican message couldn’t have been clearer: Workers should be able to show up, clock in, earn a normal paycheck, pay the rent and feed their kids. Democrats were telling the same workers that we need to listen to science, reopening is premature, and the economy can’t be fully restored until we beat the virus. Correct! But how does that help when rent was due last week?

Make no mistake, it was unforgivably cruel of Republicans to force blue-collar and service workers to risk death for grocery money. Yet their disinformation campaign persuaded many millions of Americans that the risk was minimal and that Democrats were keeping their workplaces and schools closed, their customers and kids at home, and their wallets empty and cupboards bare for bogus reasons.

The president’s mendacious push to hastily reopen everything was less compelling to college-educated suburbanites, who tend to trust experts and can work from home, watch their kids and spare a laptop for online kindergarten. Mr. Trump lost the election mainly because he lost enough of these voters, including some moderate Republicans who otherwise voted straight Republican tickets.

Democrats need to rethink the idea that these voters would have put Democratic House and Senate candidates over the top if only Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez were less radiantly socialist. They need to accept that they took hits on the economy by failing to escape the trap Republicans set by doggedly refusing to do anything about the uncontained contagion destroying it.

And they need to understand how Mr. Trump saved his party by weaponizing polarization. Conservatives needed a way not to get spun by the president’s destabilizing act of disloyalty, so they steadied themselves by reaffirming their loyalty down the remainder of the ballot. They were voting against a personal crisis of identity, not the Green New Deal.

Democrats might have done better had sunny polls and their own biased partisan perceptions not misled them into believing that backlash to indisputably damning Republican failure would deliver an easy Senate majority — but not much better. Until the mind-bending spell of polarization breaks, everything that matters will be fiercely disputed and even the most egregious failures will continue to go unpunished.

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PHOTO: Supporters of President Trump gathered outside the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center while he was being treated for Covid-19. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 30, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Just as Air Travel Is Picking Up, U.K. Imposes a Quarantine***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6037-SXK1-JBG3-60N1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 8, 2020 Monday 10:32 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

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**Byline:** Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** The decision by Boris Johnson has enraged airlines, frustrated travelers and bemused public health experts, who wonder how it can be enforced.

**Body**

The decision by Boris Johnson has enraged airlines, frustrated travelers and bemused public health experts, who wonder how it can be enforced.

LONDON — When the [*coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/world/europe/uk-coronavirus-reopening.html) was spreading at breakneck speed this spring, [*Britain’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/world/europe/uk-coronavirus-reopening.html) government flatly refused to quarantine travelers, even those arriving from virus hot spots like Spain [*or Iran*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/world/europe/uk-coronavirus-reopening.html).

On Monday, as most Western European countries and the United States were easing restrictions, the government introduced a plan requiring everyone entering the country to self-isolate for 14 days.

That includes even people from places like New Zealand, a nation that has declared itself free of Covid-19, the disease caused by the virus.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s belated [*change of heart over quarantines*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/world/europe/uk-coronavirus-reopening.html) has enraged airlines, frustrated travelers and upset lawmakers fearful of the economic damage. Experts doubt that the quarantine measures can be enforced, and question why a nation with one of Europe’s worst infection rates should try now to deter international travel.

To the government’s critics, the new rule is just one of many examples of the mismanagement of the pandemic by Mr. Johnson: a procession of slipshod, overpromising proposals, usually behind the curve and driven more by politics than the science he routinely cites.

“This is at something of a piece with the way this crisis has been handled by the government,” said Anand Menon, a professor of European politics at King’s College London. “The reaction has tended to be late, and there is always an eye to the politics.”

Mr. Johnson’s original hesitancy over closing pubs and restaurants and ordering a full lockdown cost a significant number of lives, according to John Edmunds, a government adviser and professor of infectious disease modeling at the London School of Hygiene &amp; Tropical Medicine.

The government has also struggled to create a system to test for the disease then trace the contacts of those with the virus. And while other countries urged the use of face coverings, Britain demurred. Now it says they will soon be compulsory on public transport.

Although most politicians and public health experts think that the quarantine has come so late as to be of little effect, it is thought to be popular with the ***working-class*** voters in northern [*England*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/world/europe/uk-coronavirus-reopening.html) Mr. Johnson is hoping to court. Many of them voted for the Tories last December for the first time in their lives, and they are not likely to travel abroad themselves.

“It makes very little practical sense to have a blanket quarantine, let alone one that is very, very, hard to enforce,” Mr. Menon said. “The only question is whether it makes political sense.”

Under the new quarantine rules, people entering Britain by plane, train or ferry must fill out a form giving an address where they will self-isolate for two weeks, with fines of up to £1,000, about $1,260, for breaches.

How thoroughly the scheme will be policed is far from clear.

But beyond that, those arriving in the country are not being given a temperature test — and are allowed to use public transport.

The government’s explanation for the late-stage quarantine is that earlier in the pandemic, when the virus was circulating widely in the community, it made little difference whether or not new cases were imported.

Now, with the number of daily deaths down to double figures, it is important to stop imported cases from producing a second spike in infections, government officials say. Given how hard hit the country has been hit — the disease has killed more than 40,000 people in Britain — it makes sense to proceed with caution, they say.

“The public health measures at the border that are being introduced from today are the latest cross-government measures in our collective response and fight to save lives, protect the British people and, importantly, prevent a second wave of coronavirus,” said Britain’s home secretary, Priti Patel.

Nonetheless the plan, to be reviewed every three weeks, is only workable with a series of exemptions, including for truck drivers, fruit pickers, government officials and medical workers, in addition to anyone arriving from Ireland.

“Scientists say the quarantine has come too late, the police say it’s unenforceable, the tourism and aviation industry say it will ruin them,” said Conor McGinn, who speaks for the opposition Labour Party on home affairs issues. He argued for a testing regime at airports.

Critics have called in vain on the government to publish the scientific advice it says it relied upon to justify the quarantine. On Monday, Ms. Patel, the home secretary, once again insisted without elaboration that the policy was based on scientific and medical guidance.

Acknowledging the possible economic costs, Ms. Patel told lawmakers that the government was exploring the creation of “air bridges” that would allow Britons to travel abroad for a summer vacation without quarantine obligations.

The government was also looking at “immunity passports” for people who have recovered from the virus and are immune from infection, and how to digitalize the response at the border, she said.

Whether some Britons will be able to take a foreign summer vacation remains unclear, however. The French government has said that travelers arriving from Britain, whatever their nationality, would also be asked to enter a 14-day isolation from Monday.

Already reeling from the impact of the pandemic, the travel industry is furious with the British government, and three airlines are considering legal action against the government. “These measures are disproportionate and unfair on British citizens, as well as international visitors arriving in the U.K.,” said British Airways, easyJet and Ryanair in a statement.

In an interview with Sky News, Michael O’Leary, the chief executive of Ryanair, used less legalistic language to describe the British plan.

“I think people in the U.K. know that the quarantine is useless,” he said. “It is a political stunt.”

PHOTO: Travelers at Heathrow Airport on Monday as Britain launched its 14-day quarantine requirement for international arrivals. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Toby Melville/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Strike. This Could Be Our Last Stand.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60T1-66Y1-JBG3-60T9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1158 words

**Byline:** Farhad Manjoo

**Highlight:** If we can’t get our government to help us now, when will we ever?

**Body**

If we can’t get our government to help us now, when will we ever?

Labor Day hit with an extra knife-twist of cruel irony this year, in an America that is barely trying to pretend anymore that the plight of tens of millions of working people merits national concern.

On Friday, the government announced [*a slowing recovery*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) from the job losses and economic shutdown caused by the pandemic. [*Nearly 14 million Americans*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) are now unemployed, and almost eight million more are euphemistically called “involuntary part-time,” meaning they would work more if there were enough work.

In March, as part of a wider stimulus, Congress expanded unemployment aid by $600 per week, a plan that scholars say may have [*temporarily reduced the nation’s poverty rate*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO). As of mid-August, about [*29 million Americans*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) were receiving some form of unemployment assistance.

But the $600-per-week bonus ran out in July, and Senate Republicans have rejected Democrats’ bill to extend the payments. The G.O.P. is now working on its own more limited plan, though [*several Republican senators are reluctant to support even that*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO).

Inaction may prove disastrous. Beth Ann Bovino, chief U.S. economist for S &amp; P Global, [*told The Times last week*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) that federal aid was meant as a kind of economic bridge through uncertain times, but, she added, “it looks like the ravine has widened and the bridge is halfway built, so there are a lot of people stranded.”

Bovino’s image suggests a way out of this mess: Workers should band together and demand, collectively, a bridge across the ravine.

To put it more plainly: It’s time for a general strike. Actually, it’s time for a sustained series of strikes, a new movement in which workers across class and even political divides press not just for more unemployment aid but, more substantively, a renewed contract for working in an economy that is increasingly hostile to employees’ health and well-being.

This may be the American worker’s last stand: If we can’t get our government to help us now, when will we ever?

The political case for an expanded safety net is [*drop-dead obvious*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO). Through no fault of their own, because their government failed to keep the nation safe, millions of Americans have lost jobs, they have lost or may soon [*lose health coverage*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO), they [*may lose housing*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO), and many [*are going without food*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO).

Others are facing threats not just to their livelihoods but their lives. [*Schoolteachers*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO), [*college professors*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO), restaurant workers, [*retail workers*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO), meatpackers and others are being pushed to return to work even though it’s far from clear that doing so is safe. Millions more are suffering extreme versions of the Sisyphean task of achieving work-life balance — the high cost and lack of access to quality child care, for instance, has become a consuming worry of just about every parent in the nation.

It is well within the grasp of the mighty federal government to alleviate many of these problems, and economists generally agree that urgent federal aid [*would stimulate wider economic activity*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO), benefiting even those of us who do feel economically secure. Passing extra benefits should not be a hard call; in the most terrible economic climate since the Great Depression, it is just about the least the government could do.

And yet our political system is in a state of paralysis. Even worse, the government’s failure to mitigate this suffering is somehow not the main story of the day — nor even, it seems, a pressing issue in the presidential election. The speaker of the House’s haircut has gotten more coverage, recently, than the millions of people looking for work.

Why has the plight of American workers received so little attention? There are some obvious reasons. For decades, corporations waged [*a sustained assault on labor unions*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO). The assault has worked. [*Unions were once*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) a key voice of political advocacy for low-income Americans; their decline in membership has left them with far less political power, allowing politicians to more easily ignore ***working-class*** voters.

Yet another factor is the corrosive stratification caused by rising inequality. American workers across the class spectrum face [*many similar problems*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) — expensive or inaccessible health care, child care, loosening workplace safety standards, and lax protections against being fired, among other things.

But intense ideological and class polarization limits our ability to organize across these divides. For many wealthy Americans, [*the recession is all but over*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO). Even with recent dips, the stock market has recovered much of its losses. Car sales are down — but the cars that are selling are [*more expensive than ever before*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO). Billionaires are doing better than ever.

These stark class divisions mean that wealthy Americans are often insulated from the plight of the poor. What does it mean to be out of work or poor in pandemic America? Nearly “one in eight households doesn’t have enough to eat,” [*The Times Magazine reported Sunday*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO), alongside a searing collection of images by Brenda Ann Kenneally, a journalist who has been traversing the world’s wealthiest country to document the lives of its hungry multitudes. Our culture is now so fragmented that it’s possible to live a full life in America blissfully ignorant of our neighbors going hungry.

But I’m newly hopeful for change. For much of 2020, the labor movement has been building momentum. In May, essential workers at Amazon, Instacart and other e-commerce and delivery companies [*staged a one-day national strike*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) demanding better protections and higher pay. In July, thousands of workers from a range of industries walked off the job in support of the [*Black Lives Matter movement*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO).

At the other end of the pay scale, [*professional basketball players got their league to adopt a number of social-justice initiatives*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) after they went on strike last month to protest racial inequality and police brutality. Last week, [*several large unions announced*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) they are considering authorizing work stoppages to push for concrete measures to address racial injustice.

Strikes won’t solve our problems overnight. But in the long history of American labor, including in the civil rights movement, walkouts have been an indispensable political tool, because when they get going, they’re hard to stop. Strikes bring about economic and social change the way water channels through canyon rock — forcefully, relentlessly and with time.

Office Hours With Farhad Manjoo

Farhad wants to [*chat with readers on the phone*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO). If you’re interested in talking to a New York Times columnist about anything that’s on your mind, please fill out this form. Farhad will select a few readers to call.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-economy/u-s-job-growth-seen-slowing-in-august-unemployment-rate-falling-below-10-idUSKBN25V0FO).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 9, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Freelancers Shouldn’t Have ‘Horror Stories’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6293-BBX1-JBG3-647C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 25, 2021 Thursday 11:08 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1585 words

**Byline:** E. Tammy Kim

**Highlight:** The Protecting the Right to Organize Act would give us additional rights. But not everyone is a fan of it.

**Body**

The Protecting the Right to Organize Act would give us additional rights. But not everyone is a fan of it.

Two years ago, a beauty company in New York hired a freelance writer named Leigh to draft copy for products and advertisements. It was a part-time job with a 1099 contract that didn’t pay enough for her to turn down other assignments, and she wasn’t sure how long it would last.

Some months in, the company increased her hours to the point that she was essentially full-time. The job became her sole source of income and was no different from a regular employee’s. Yet the company still treated her as an independent contractor. She had no paid time off, no sick leave or 401(k), and had to buy her own health insurance. Then, at the beginning of the pandemic, she came down with what she hoped was just a vicious cold. She didn’t dare call in sick, consult with sympathetic co-workers or complain to her boss.

“I was a little scared to argue about my status,” she told me. “I didn’t have any power or leverage.” As a contractor, she was on her own: Freelancers have no right under current federal law to collectively bargain or organize with other workers for help. (Leigh recently became a W2 employee and asked that I use only her middle name, for fear of retaliation for complaining about her previous classification.)

The Protecting the Right to Organize Act is a radically worker-friendly bill that would give freelancers like Leigh a chance to fight for more. Its intent is to patch holes in the tattered cloth of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, which gives most private-sector employees the right to come together and speak out about conditions on the job. Recently passed by the House and now bound for a skeptical Senate, the PRO Act would make it much easier for workers already covered by the N.L.R.A. to organize and pressure employers to improve pay and health standards. It would also give millions of 1099 independent contractors and freelancers the same right to organize that traditional W2 employees have, greatly expanding the universe of workers covered by the N.L.R.A. As a freelance journalist myself, I’m especially excited about this part of the legislation.

Should the PRO Act clear the Senate, independent cosmetologists working for the same salon chain could collectively negotiate for masks and air filters. Freelance content producers at a marketing firm could openly share their hourly rates to check pay across race and gender. Postproduction television editors could unionize to negotiate over hours. And freelance construction workers could protect themselves from retaliation for reporting sexual harassment. At the same time, the PRO Act would not bar independent contractors from determining their own hours or rates, writing off business expenses or keeping their copyrights. Nor would it give one state’s freelancers an advantage over another’s.

All the PRO Act would do is grant additional rights — which is why I’m surprised that not all freelancers share my enthusiasm for the bill. A vocal group of writers and consultants, many of whom identify as successful entrepreneurs, have denounced it, arguing that the move to fit non-employees under the N.L.R.A. could very well destroy “our” careers. They feel that they are doing just fine and don’t need the right to organize; they also reject the idea of being lumped in with so-called gig workers. But the reality is, all of us are vulnerable when we act alone.

Most independent contractors are not doing well. Our median income is just $32,000 per year, and many of us identify as part of a larger ***working class***. “The vast majority of freelancers have no labor rights, are no longer covered by civil rights law or labor laws,” Larry Goldbetter, the president of the National Writers Union, told me. Those opposing the PRO Act “claim they’re doing better than ever and that our people are losers, basically,” he added.

What [*critics*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/) of the PRO Act object to, in particular, is its use of the three-pronged “ABC test” to broaden the right to collectively bargain. The test states that a worker hired by a company for a particular service should be classified as an employee unless she is free from the company’s control when performing that service, the service does not fall under the company’s main business and she has an independent enterprise that provides a similar service. It targets the enormous problem of misclassification — of employers choosing to call workers “contractors” instead of “employees” often to avoid paying them fair wages, providing health benefits and workers’ compensation or submitting to laws against discrimination and sexual harassment. As a result, states and the federal government [*lose hundreds of millions of dollars*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/) in tax revenues and employer contributions to unemployment insurance; workers and their families suffer when they find themselves ineligible for family leave or employer-provided health insurance.

The ABC test first drew public attention in 2019, when it was applied in California through [*Assembly Bill 5*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/). That law went far beyond the PRO Act: It gave hundreds of thousands of “independent” construction workers, beauticians and Uber drivers, among others, the right to the hourly wages and protections of full-fledged employees. Yet this pro-labor victory was overshadowed by a backlash from mostly white-collar freelancers who worried about losing work.

JoBeth McDaniel, a California resident with the group [*Freelancers Against AB5*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/), told me in an email that the law hurt a wide swath of independent contractors. She said she still hears “new horror stories,” representing just a “tiny portion of the blood bath out there.” Ms. McDaniel is also a plaintiff in [*a lawsuit*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/) that contests AB5 on First Amendment grounds, filed by the [*Pacific Legal Foundation*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/), which fights for “the right to earn an honest living free from unreasonable government interference.”

[*AB5 Personal Stories*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/), a website run by Karen Anderson, a freelance editor, features dozens of Facebook testimonials against the ABC test as applied in California. On the site, I found several accounts by people who said that they had indeed lost work. Yet many other stories were from individuals who predicted that they would lose work or who turned down some offers of employment because they didn’t want taxes deducted from their paychecks. Not quite a “blood bath.”

According to Ms. McDaniel, most news stories about the ABC test have focused on “unskilled workers” who, according to her, can easily leave their job if they are unhappy, while ignoring the impact on people like writers, licensed pharmacists, medical translators and court reporters. Her implication: White-collar freelancers should not be punished for the success they enjoyed before the ABC test came along. But my interviews over the years with dozens of Uber and Lyft drivers, health technicians, artists, tech workers and fellow journalists have shown me just how little separates the working conditions of blue- and white-collar freelancers.

O., a freelance software designer in the Bay Area (who asked that I use only his first initial for fear of losing work) told me that he’s had to moonlight for Uber and Lyft since 2014 to survive periodic downturns in tech. He supported AB5 but opposed Proposition 22, a subsequent ballot measure that allows Uber and Lyft to continue to treat their drivers as independent contractors. He now backs the PRO Act because “people need a union,” he said.

The lasting anger over AB5 has tainted understanding of the PRO Act, which amends only the N.L.R.A., and obscured the reality of contemporary work. Opponents of the ABC test tend to overstate both the flexibility of freelancing and the rigidity of W2 employment. In fact, thousands of unionized actors, electricians, art handlers, sound technicians and health care workers already have short-term W2 jobs for multiple employers.

Robin Kaiser-Schatzlein, [*a writer and art installer*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/) in New York, receives a W2 for work in museums and galleries, but is still a freelancer with a flexible schedule. As a writer, he is a member of the [*Freelance Solidarity Project*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/), an organizing initiative for independent newspaper and magazine writers, editors, illustrators and photographers housed under the National Writers Union. I joined the project last year, looking for something as close to a union as I could get without having the legal right to one.

Some of us in the Freelance Solidarity Project are misclassified permalancers (permanent freelancers like Leigh was), while others have W2 day jobs; most work for many outlets at once. We share advice on pitching and contracts, and swap information on industry rates. The PRO Act would give us a key additional tool: the ability to collectively bargain with the outlets that depend on our labor.

“The PRO Act eats away at the small-business-cooperation problem,” Mr. Kaiser-Schatzlein explained. “Even if you’re a freelancer and you don’t want to unionize, you should at least have a group that advocates for your rights. If you’re doing your thing and you get six figures, that’s fine, but you should see the benefit of banding together to do that.”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://fightforfreelancersusa.com/).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Angie Wang FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Filmmaker Says A&E Suppressed 'Watergate'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:628T-P9S1-DXY4-X2HS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

The director, Charles Ferguson, said in a lawsuit that an executive was concerned about the ''negative reaction it would provoke among Trump supporters and the Trump administration.''

''Watergate,'' a four-hour documentary examining the scandal that ended Richard Nixon's presidency, had its world premiere in 2018 at the Telluride Film Festival, an event known to foretell future Oscar nominations. It went on to be shown at the New York Film Festival and several others, collecting positive reviews that highlighted allusions the series made to the Trump presidency.

It aired on the History Channel over three days in early November, just before the 2018 midterm elections. To the filmmaker's surprise, it was never broadcast on American television again.

The writer and director of the documentary, the award-winning filmmaker Charles Ferguson, is now suing the company that owns the History Channel, A&E Networks, asserting it suppressed the dissemination of his mini-series because it was worried about potential backlash to allusions the documentary makes to the Trump White House.

In the lawsuit filed Friday in State Supreme Court in Manhattan, Mr. Ferguson accuses the company of attempting to delay the documentary until after the 2018 midterm elections because a History Channel executive feared it would offend the White House and Trump supporters.

''He was concerned about the impact of 'Watergate' upon ratings in 'red states,''' the lawsuit said of the executive, Eli Lehrer, ''as well as the negative reaction it would provoke among Trump supporters and the Trump administration.''

Mr. Ferguson resisted that plan, and the mini-series ultimately aired shortly before Election Day. But the filmmaker contends the documentary was given short shrift, despite acclaim in the film industry and previous assurances that it would receive ''extremely prominent treatment.''

The lawsuit describes the treatment of the documentary as part of a ''pattern and practice of censorship and suppression of documentary content'' at A&E Networks, and cites several others that it says were subject to attempted manipulation for political or economic reasons.

A&E called the lawsuit meritless and the assertion that the documentary was suppressed ''absurd,'' saying its decision to not rebroadcast it additional times was based on lower than expected ratings.

In a statement, the company said it has routinely given a platform to storytellers ''to present their unvarnished vision without regard for partisan politics.'' It pointed to its partnership with former President Bill Clinton, formed during the Trump administration, to produce a documentary series about the American presidency and the fact that a subsidiary, Propagate, had produced the four-part docu-series ''Hillary,'' on the life of Hillary Clinton.

''A&E invested millions of dollars in this project and promoted it extensively,'' the company said of ''Watergate'' in its statement. ''Among other efforts, we hired multiple outside PR agencies, provided advance screeners to the press, and submitted it to film festivals and for awards consideration.''

Mr. Ferguson's ''Watergate'' is a deep dive into events set off by the 1972 break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters and the cover up by the Nixon administration. It includes interviews with people who were involved in the events -- such as John Dean, President Nixon's White House counsel -- as well as reporters who covered them, including Bob Woodward, Carl Bernstein and Lesley Stahl. The New York Times's co-chief film critic, A.O. Scott, wrote that the documentary tells a story that is ''part political thriller and part courtroom drama, with moments of Shakespearean grandeur and swerves into stumblebum comedy,'' though other reviews panned the film's re-creations by actors.

Mr. Ferguson, who is best known for his Oscar-winning 2010 documentary ''Inside Job,'' said that when he started pitching the project in 2015, he imagined it as a straightforward ''historical detective story.'' But, the suit says, a drumbeat of events involving the Trump administration made him realize the documentary's renewed political relevance. In 2017, he watched as Mr. Trump fired his F.B.I. director, as the Justice Department appointed a special counsel to oversee the investigation into ties between President Trump's campaign and Russian officials, and as the potential for impeachment loomed.

The series -- which Mr. Ferguson said cost about $4.5 million to produce -- does not mention Mr. Trump's name, but the documentary's subtitle, ''How We Learned to Stop an Out of Control President,'' was a nod toward his administration.

The lawsuit hinges on a conversation between Mr. Ferguson and A&E executives in June 2018, before the film was released. According to the lawsuit, Mr. Lehrer, executive vice president and head of programming at the History Channel, said at that meeting that he would seek to delay the premiere of ''Watergate'' and ''sharply lower'' its publicity profile, expressing concern about its relevance to the politics of the moment and the reaction it would provoke from the Trump administration and Trump supporters.

Mr. Ferguson has worked to collect pieces of evidence to support his contentions, among them an email he provided to The New York Times in which Mr. Lehrer acknowledged discussing the bipartisan nature of the network's audience. In the email, Mr. Lehrer also denied the network was trying to suppress the documentary, writing that the rationale for exploring different airdates was to avoid the series getting swallowed up by heavy sports programming and election coverage.

Mr. Ferguson's contract did not specify how many times the network would show the documentary or whether it would receive theatrical distribution, though successful ones are typically broadcast multiple times.

Nielsen ratings from the time show that ''Watergate'' earned only 529,000 viewers when it aired, including seven days of delayed viewing, compared to History Channel's other multi-episode documentaries like ''Grant'' which bowed in May to 4.4 million viewers, or ''Washington,'' which drew an audience of 3.3 million in February 2020.

Had the ratings been stronger, A&E says, it would have broadcast the series multiple times and it would have had a greater chance of securing additional licenses either with a streaming service or with international distributors.

''The fact is that Watergate, which premiered in prime time on Mr. Ferguson's desired date, drastically underachieved in the ratings, which was disappointing to all of us,'' the company said in its statement.

But the lawsuit says A&E Networks damaged Mr. Ferguson financially by, among other things, failing to make any ''meaningful'' distribution deals or arrange for advertising outside of the network. It says Mr. Ferguson traded a lower-than-normal director's fee in his contract for a higher cut of the royalties, believing that if the documentary was successful, the majority of the viewership revenue would stem from sales to streaming services, foreign cable channels and other customers.

One of the A&E executives named as a defendant, Michael Stiller -- the vice president of programming and development at the History Channel -- had told Mr. Ferguson that there would be rebroadcasts and required him to make slightly shorter versions of the episodes for daytime slots, but those never occurred, according to the lawsuit.

The company noted the documentary is available on several services, which include iTunes, Amazon Prime Video and Google Play, including its own video-on-demand platform, History Vault.

Mr. Ferguson's lawsuit argues that the company executives interfered with his contract, and defamed him by telling industry executives he was difficult to work with, thereby costing him work. In addition to Mr. Lehrer and Mr. Stiller, the other named defendants include Robert Sharenow, the network's president of programming, and Molly Thompson, its former head of documentary films. Ms. Thompson declined to comment. Mr. Lehrer, Mr. Stiller and Mr. Sharenow did not respond to requests for comment.

The lawsuit cites several examples where Mr. Ferguson said he learned about conflicts between A&E executives and documentary filmmakers, including a dispute concerning ''Gretchen Carlson: Breaking the Silence,'' a 2019 documentary on Lifetime about sexual harassment in ***working-class*** industries. The suit says A&E executives questioned including information about McDonald's, an advertiser. The information was ultimately included after the producers fought for it, but the episode was only aired once, on a Saturday at 10 p.m., the lawsuit said. A spokeswoman for Ms. Carlson declined to comment.

The lawsuit also says Mr. Ferguson learned about a dispute regarding a 2019 A&E documentary called ''Biography: The Trump Dynasty'' that examines Mr. Trump's life and family history. According to the lawsuit, A&E executives wanted the production company behind the documentary, Left/Right Productions, to add in the voice of a ''Trump apologist'' who could ''justify'' aspects of Mr. Trump's background, a request that the suit says generated ''significant tensions'' between the network executives and the production company executives.

Left/Right, which works with The New York Times on some documentary productions, did not respond to requests for comment. The Times did not have a role in any of the programming cited in Mr. Ferguson's suit.

Jack Begg contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/arts/television/charles-ferguson-watergate-lawsuit.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/arts/television/charles-ferguson-watergate-lawsuit.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A break-in at the Watergate office building led to the end of Richard M. Nixon's presidency. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, VIA HISTORY CHANNEL) (C1)

Charles Ferguson, whose film ''Inside Job'' won an Oscar in 2011, says that A&E Networks did not fulfill a promise to fully promote his documentary on the Watergate scandal. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARKUS SCHREIBER/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (C4)

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Rachel Maddow; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66M6-HS31-DXY4-X522-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 14273 words

**Highlight:** A conversation with MSNBC anchor Rachel Maddow.

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Rachel Maddow. 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.”

Rachel Maddow’s nightly show on MSNBC debuted on September 8, 2008. You read that date now and it’s clear what a hinge moment that was between political eras. Before that, you have the 9/11 era, the George W. Bush era, the era of politicians constantly wearing and fighting over flag pins on their lapels.

By the time Maddow’s show hits the air, though, Barack Obama is weeks away from winning the presidency. Lehman Brothers is days away from collapsing. American politics is on the cusp of reorganization. Maddow helmed that 9:00 p.m. slot for 14 years. Her show really defined an era of liberal cable news. MSNBC’s whole lineup was reoriented to work around her style, to try to learn her lessons.

And let me risk understatement by saying a hell of a lot happens over the course of that 14 years that Rachel Maddow is in that chair. And she is, that whole time, a pretty serious observer and even, at times, shaper of it. And so I want to talk to her about the ways that American politics and media changed over that time, what she saw, and why she thinks it happened.

And now as she steps back — she’s taken her show to once a week. She signed up to do a lot of other kinds of content, including a new podcast about a really remarkable moment in our history, called “Ultra,” that we talk about here. I wanted to get a sense of why she’s become so interested now in what the past can tell us about the present and particularly about the future.

As always, my email for guest suggestions, for thoughts on the episode, for things we should read, or watch, or hear, or just not miss, [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

[MUSIC]

Rachel Maddow, welcome to the show.

RACHEL MADDOW: Ezra, it’s great to see you, my friend.

EZRA KLEIN: You were the very first guest on this show in its original version back in — I just looked at this — February of 2016.

RACHEL MADDOW: We were such children then. We were so naive.

EZRA KLEIN: We were young. What we didn’t know. What we didn’t know. How are you?

RACHEL MADDOW: I’m good. I am — I have a different job now. I mean, I have some of the same job. But my job has changed. And the thing that I’m crashing on right now is this podcast that I’ve been working on for a few months. And I’m absolutely insane.

I’ve pulled multiple all-nighters. It’s all I can think about. I’m totally crazed. I feel like I’m learning something for the first time, even though I’ve done this kind of thing before. I feel like I’m in a universe that is completely pulling me over.

EZRA KLEIN: I mean, I know you’ve dominated nightly cable news for roughly 15 years.

But congratulations, I mean, podcasts are a whole different league. It’s really hard. It’s a whole different thing.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yeah, the word dominated there has just been redefined in an interesting way, too.

EZRA KLEIN: So that’s a great bridge, because I want to talk about how the world changed over the course of “The Rachel Maddow Show.” So you began that show in September of ’08. And I wanted to talk through how some of the events and actors that when we go in the Wayback Machine to then, that were dominating things then — to stick with that word — have changed politics and affect us now.

And I want to begin with the Iraq War. What role do you think the Iraq War plays in our politics now? How does it shape what we’re still in?

RACHEL MADDOW: I think that the Iraq War has already settled into a universally acknowledged cautionary tale. That certainly it had a partisan divide and it had a lot of emotion behind it, but the folks who argued for the Iraq War, I think, would almost universally be acknowledged in U.S. politics, left, right and center, that those people were wrong. And enough of them have publicly repented that I think that even if you polled them, they would admit that the country believes it was wrong. Certainly there are still some “die-hards,” to coin a phrase.

But because of that, the way that works, I think, in general, in politics, is when you’ve got something that people really advocated for, that turned out terribly, and then everybody acknowledged after the fact that was a bad idea, that ought to be a cause for a little bit of a realignment.

It ought to be a cause for looking back at the premises that were wrong that led the people who earnestly advocated for that war to advocate for it. And I don’t think that we’ve had that kind of course correction. But I do think that we’ve laid the groundwork for it by at least all agreeing that we shouldn’t have done it.

EZRA KLEIN: In a way, though, you make me wonder, saying that, if we did have the realignment. And I’d offer two thoughts on that. One, do you think Donald Trump takes over the Republican Party from the Bush family without the Iraq War being this wedge he uses?

And, two, thinking about Joe Biden pulling out of Afghanistan. I mean, Joe Biden who voted for the Iraq War and was understood in that period as a Democratic hawk. In certain ways, I wonder if more realignment has happened than sometimes we even give credit for.

RACHEL MADDOW: I think with the Trump side of it, he was sticking his finger in the wind and realizing, oh, that could be used. I mean, you look back at his record of comments about the Iraq War and it’s not like he had been a Cassandra on that, right? He had —

EZRA KLEIN: Right. totally.

RACHEL MADDOW: — always just gone along with whatever everybody already feels. And so I sort of feel like his using that issue against establishment Republicans and the Bush era Republicans is just another example of him finding something in the wild that he could use for his own purposes. It helps us diagnose that problem more than he does catalyze it.

On the Biden side of it, it’s interesting because Biden’s history on Iraq is nuanced, right? So he’s for the Iraq War for sure, is definitely seen, as you said, as a bit of a Democratic hawk. But then is also seen as an expert on the Iraq conflict, and spends lots and lots and lots of time in Iraq, and gets very invested, in part, through his son Beau, but gets very invested in Iraq War veterans issues as well.

And so he ends up sort of being deeply steeped in the factual record of what happened in a way that I think gives him credibility to, essentially, acknowledge that it was wrong, that we shouldn’t have done it, and to take steps to end the war in Afghanistan so that it doesn’t trail indefinitely into the future.

So it’s interesting. I mean, I think Biden — the thing that is encouraging to me about Biden is that I feel like he earnestly engaged with the issue, including what were the mistakes of it. And that as poorly as the withdrawal from Afghanistan went, I think his determination to get out of Afghanistan was informed by how much work he did around Iraq.

EZRA KLEIN: So your show began on September 8. We were looking back at this. Lehman Brothers collapsed on September 15.

RACHEL MADDOW: Thank you very much.

EZRA KLEIN: I forgot how close those two epochal events in American history were.

RACHEL MADDOW: It was really a lot of work that first week.

EZRA KLEIN: I can imagine.

RACHEL MADDOW: I had to collapse Lehman Brothers, launch the show.

EZRA KLEIN: So a lot of sabotaging of the U.S. housing market. How do you think about the role that the financial crisis played in shaping American politics after that?

RACHEL MADDOW: I feel like we’ve never gotten out of it. I mean, we have, plainly, in factual terms. But I feel like mindset-wise, we’ll never trust the economy. People of our generation will never trust the economy the way we did before then. It had felt before then, with various financial calamities, that they’d been one-offs, that they’d been historical moments, that the thing sort of worth saving the newspaper from that day for.

And since the collapse in 2008, it just feels like when we’re not in a moment of economic collapse, we’re just in an interregnum. And what’s the next one going to be? Do you feel that way at all? I mean, I —

EZRA KLEIN: The economy is either always about to collapse, collapsing or we just collapsed. We’re just recovering from the collapse. There’s a feeling for me that I don’t know — you mentioned our generation. And I can’t tell if it’s just that I grew up in the ’80s and ’90s and things were a little — that that was unusually calm.

Because I have this feeling that I can’t decide if it’s after 2001 and 9/11 or it’s starting in roughly 2008, but a speeding up of history, a speeding up of the things that — I think about it this way — that the history books won’t skip over. That they will have chapters on. But then I look back at the 20th century and a lot happened then.

It just mostly happened before I was paying attention. So I can’t tell if my sense of normal is what is actually abnormal or this has been an abnormally fast time of economics, and geopolitics, and plagues, and crazy happenings in American politics.

RACHEL MADDOW: I think that — we have a saying in our family. Susan’s father used to say something before he died. He said, as you get older, you realize that it’s basically just shorts, Christmas tree, shorts, Christmas tree, shorts, Christmas tree.

Like as you get older — the number of things that matter and your perception of the passing of time, it adapts mostly to the length of perspective that you get by being an older person. I feel like that perception, that so much of such consequence is happening now and it’s happening so quickly, to me, my cure for that is to spend a lot of time in history.

I unoverwhelm myself with the pace and magnitude of today’s events by spending time in 1940 or spending time in 1973 and thinking about how disorienting, and destabilizing, and scary, and momentous, and fast-moving things must have seemed the people living in big years like those.

EZRA KLEIN: But I want to go back to something you said about the financial crisis and the trust in the economy, because I think that’s really sharp. I do think there is a sense that you cannot trust the economy and also you cannot trust the people running the economy. I do think there is a collapse in trust in the people who are supposed to know what they were doing. That has never changed. It is part of the Bernie Sanders saying. It’s part of the Donald Trump thing. And it just holds.

RACHEL MADDOW: That said, there is a through-line for that that goes all the way back to the beginning of the American economy. I took a long haul train trip as my family vacation this year. We put it off twice for Covid and finally were able to take it this year.

And when we were taking the train out of New Orleans heading to Texas and going over the Huey Long Bridge, I put on — because I’m that jerk in the family vacation — I put on a bunch of Huey Long speeches, just clips that you could play off of YouTube. And it was riveting —

EZRA KLEIN: Really?

RACHEL MADDOW: Yeah, I was terrible. Don’t ever go on vacation with me. This is how I relax.

But I mean hearing Huey Long, everybody got quiet and was listening to it, because, I mean, A, he’s an amazing orator, but B, he was just giving this very modern-sounding riff on distribution of wealth and the people who are running the economy.

And how it is not designed for you, and that there’s no reason that we need to live under an economy like this because it’s supposed to work for us. And there’s the inherited wealth versus the ability to earn wealth and set things up for your family and your kids and their grandkids is an imbalance that is incompatible with American democracy.

I mean, he’s making a great case. I mean, Huey Long is both a great populist and also an incredibly corrupt demagogue. And so it’s uncomfortable to hear it through both of those lenses knowing what kind of dictatorship he was running in Louisiana at the time.

But that criticism that the economy doesn’t work for most people, and it’s because the people running it don’t want it to, don’t need it to, and the real point of politics is to make them need it to because to make them accountable to us, I think that’s a very live sentiment right now. And you can see that over time in all sorts of different economic circumstances over the last 100 years.

EZRA KLEIN: So I was trying to think back to how politics felt in ’08. And I was thinking back a couple of years before that to when Barack Hussein Obama became a figure in politics. And there’s a long time when the idea that he could be — that a skinny Black kid with big ears, with the middle name Hussein and the last name Obama, could be a national figure in American politics was treated as a little ridiculous.

I think people who weren’t in politics in ’04 and didn’t feel the rejection that Bush’s victory that year felt like, and the sense that Republicans had the heartland and Democrats weren’t real Americans, they were these coastal liberals, and then the swing over to Obama who sort of emerges as a liberal and something new in politics.

And now I think it’s treated as a kind of milquetoast dad jokey figure. That shift of what he represents is really interesting to me. And so I’m curious how you see both the rise and the mainstreaming of Obama. How do you think politics is different for him?

RACHEL MADDOW: I wonder if that is the last time a convention speech is going to be a breakthrough moment in a positive way. I mean, I do think that we’ve had convention moments post-2004 that will live on and, as you say, have to be in the history books. Things like “lock her up” at the convention and things like that. Maybe even Ted Cruz’s bizarre speech at the end of the nominating convention for Trump in 2016.

So there’s ways to get things wrong or at least to make scandal and get attention for what happens at conventions. But when he gave the “not red America, not blue America, but the United States of America” speech in 2004, that speech changed the course of history because that speech was so good.

And I remember I was at Air America Radio at the time and I was doing a show — I had a morning show with Chuck D. from Public Enemy and Lizz Winstead who is the co-creator of “The Daily Show.” And we just played that speech and we were all kind of in tears in the room, having heard it live and then playing it the next morning and just saying, I don’t know where this goes, but this is something. This is something.

And then the Democrats lost the election in 2004, and Abu Ghraib, and then Katrina, and everything. The George W. Bush presidency — I think about Cheney’s approval ratings by the time the 2008 election was rolling around. It was clear that a Democrat was going to win.

It may be that the George W. Bush presidency had to collapse and had to crater so profoundly in order for us to get somebody as transformative as Obama. In a year that the race between the Republican and the Democrat might have been closer, maybe we would have had to have a Biden then instead of an Obama. But the moment was right.

EZRA KLEIN: I wonder about the ways in which parts of Obama have now fallen out of favor. I mean, talking about that ’04 speech, I, like you, have gone back to it a number of times for pieces or for trying to think about what happened. And I wonder if you could get that kind of reception for that kind of speech today.

There is a belief that Obama had and has in America, or in some version of America, or in some aspirational version of America, and in Americans, that I think is now seen as a little bit — by many liberals — as a little bit — I don’t want to say out of fashion — a little bit naive is also too far. But you see what I’m getting at here. There’s something about Obama wanted —

RACHEL MADDOW: Twee.

EZRA KLEIN: — to recapture — twee —

RACHEL MADDOW: Yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: Obama wanted to capture a kind of patriotism back for the left. That I always think of as his core project. He was creating a narrative of what it meant to be an American patriot and what America was, that actually drew a circle around the left and the reformers and the progressives and kept a bunch of conservatives and reactionaries on the outside of it.

And now I think there’s more of an appeal towards a politics that says that there’s something more fundamental wrong in America. And so, in some ways, I think what seems radical about Obama then has begun to seem moderate in a way that makes it radical. Once again, it keeps coming around. Does that make any sense to you?

RACHEL MADDOW: Yeah, it does. I mean, I think that there is a universal and timeless appeal to positive unifying appeals to Americans’ patriotism. I mean, I think that there’s something at the core of it that is universal and constant. And it’s not always the best electoral message, right? Or maybe it is in combination.

Maybe you need people who are slashing critics of what’s wrong to galvanize people, to meet people where they are, to meet a frustrated electorate, particularly a economically frustrated electorate, where they are, and to give them some reason to hope that things can change. I mean, I don’t think we’re going to have another American carnage inaugural speech any time in the next 10 or 20 years. I mean, at least I don’t think we’re going to. I hope we don’t.

I do think that even if you get electorally resonant criticism, you do need to tell people some reason why the Republic needs to endure that speaks to most Democrats and to most Republicans and to maybe half of independents. I think the independents maybe less so, just because I think sometimes people are independents because they don’t really believe in electoral politics. They don’t really believe that democracy is the way forward.

It is twee and it is naive. And it does lead to stupid waiting around for Republicans to do constructive things that they’re never going to do. I think we saw that for sure in the Obama years. But there’s also something true and important about it. Positive messages aren’t necessarily galvanizing in bad times, but they are comforting and they are true.

EZRA KLEIN: One of the other things that is always striking to me about that period is that in ’08, Obama is very much to the left of Joe Biden on policy. Biden is still understood as kind of D.L.C. Democrat. He’s got these very incremental plans.

By 2020, Biden’s platform way to the left of anything the Obama administration considered — way, way, way to the left. Just this week, Biden pardoned every federal conviction for a simple marijuana possession, which is just like something the Obama administration never would have considered doing.

How do you see the way the Democratic Party center has changed on policy in the time you’ve been commenting on it?

RACHEL MADDOW: You know, I’m glad you brought up the thing about the marijuana convictions. The thing that I’m really interested in is to see if the Republican Party tries to problematize that. I mean, of course, they will try to problematize it. Joe Biden eating ice cream is a problem for them.

But is there a — do they think there’s an electorally resonant critique of federal convictions for simple marijuana possession that’s going to resonate with people? Can you turn the evil weed into some sort of law and crime message that they think is going to be electorally sound?

I mean, part of me thinks that while they may try that, they know in their heart of hearts it’s not going to work. And what that means is not that the Democratic Party has moved left on this issue, but that the American people and the American culture has moved left. And so the Democratic Party is willing to meet that moment where it is. And the Republican Party has to decide if they’re going to ignore it, or if they, too, are going to go that direction.

The Democrats are a coalition party. The Republican Party is not a coalition party. The Democrats are always going to get yanked in a few different directions. Maybe as you say, the D.L.C. yanked to the right and the progressive yanked to the left. And they’re always going to be calibrating based on those contrary impulses from their various coalition groups.

The Republican Party is always going to tack right. It’s led by the conservative movement, which is outside the Republican Party, which is always pulling it to the right, sometimes in electorally sound terms and sometimes not.

But the basic idea of progressivism is that people want to get more free, and people want the country and the world to get more equitable and for people to have more opportunities and not less. And that that will progress over time and that we should help that progression and abide that progression and not stand athwart it saying, stop. This is one of those moments when the country is moving and the parties have to figure out how to deal.

EZRA KLEIN: I think there’s something really interesting in that that I want to try out on you as a theory. One of the things I used to write about all the time in the Obama era was how far Republicans had moved right on policy, like the Paul Ryan Republicans, and how much Democrats had actually — it was a common thing, I wrote it a bunch of times, that a large number of Obama’s policies looked like things Richard Nixon had pushed in the 1970s, right?

There was a lot where you could just say Obama was a progressive moderate Republican. And then since then, I do think that has changed a bit. And I think the Democratic party has moved left on a lot of policy. And the Republican Party’s policy has gotten fuzzier, but they’ve polarized really hard on democracy and culture, right — democracy and what it means to be an American.

I wrote a book about polarization. I think a lot about polarization, but it’s always what you’re polarizing over. And Democrats have moved more left on policy faster than I think I’ve seen them do before. And Republicans moved kind of right against the system of democracy itself — the elections, the institutions — than I would have thought plausible just a couple of years ago.

RACHEL MADDOW: For structural reasons, right? I mean, when elections stop being the path to you staying in power and you can see that coming, you start trying to turn people against elections, right? It doesn’t — I mean, if you’re looking at it in structural terms, which I know that you’re very good at doing, I feel like that’s the — it’s not just that — what did Biden call it? Semi-fascism came into fashion or the internet made us start thinking darker thoughts.

I really don’t think it’s that. I think it’s structural. And it’s, in part, demographic change. But it’s, in part, because we evolve as a people. Younger people get older and get power. The idea of rights and equity have appeal and progressivism is an attempt to tap into that and not stop it. And conservatism is against that.

And so you end up having to do something about holding power that is either getting people very afraid and rallying them up, or stopping other people from being able to vote, or deciding that votes aren’t how we allocate power. I don’t feel like we need to do psychology about it. I think we just need to count.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: Let’s turn to the Republicans then for a bit, because I do think, in a weird way, the nature of their party has changed. I remember there was this very popular line for a long time about elections that Democrats fall in love and Republicans fall in line. And it seemed that way.

The Republicans, after Reagan, they went with H.W. Bush. After Bush, they went with Dole. After Dole, they went with another Bush. After the other Bush, they went with McCain who’d been the runner up in 2000. Then Romney, the runner up in 2008. And then Trump.

And I think it maybe starts before then. There was a Tea Party period, too. That at some point there, Republicans, who had been pretty predictable in how they ran their processes and who they nominated, became very unpredictable. The Republican Party lost a lot of control. Why do you think that was?

RACHEL MADDOW: Because the Republican Party is a person walking a dog. And they kept getting bigger and bigger dogs. And eventually the dog became bigger than the person. And the person getting older got frailer and now the dog is taking the person for a walk dragging them around the park.

When you are not a coalition party, when you are an electoral project attached to a conservative movement that has its own imperatives and its own ideology and its own theology, and it is demanding that Republican electoral politics follow along and sing its songs, you end up sometimes with a movement that makes internal sense to itself and makes no sense to voters.

I mean, I really — I don’t think that has changed over the course of our lifetimes. I just think that the conservative movement has been a very effective political and social movement in this country. And its hitch with the Republican Party is sometimes problematic.

Like Ronna Romney McDaniel being in charge of the Republican Party right now and Reince Priebus before her — you don’t get the sense that those folks are setting the course for what’s going on with the Republican Party, right? You don’t even necessarily get the sense that presidential candidates in the Republican Party are setting the course.

It’s the Leonard Leos and it’s the conservative movement poobahs that are really running things. And sometimes it works at the ballot box and sometimes it doesn’t. And that incoherence isn’t matched on the Democratic Party. It’s a more unified project on the Democratic Party because nobody’s toeing the Democratic Party around.

EZRA KLEIN: How much do you think this reflects the conservative media infrastructure? There was a line from David Frum who worked for George W. Bush and was a conservative writer and now is more centrist or something. But he said — and I’m doing this from memory, so I might have it slightly wrong — that we thought Fox News and talk radio worked for us and it turned out we worked for them.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yes. I think that’s true. And since Roger Ailes died and Fox has lost its organizational coherence, I would say, in the sense of what is being pushed on the air is no longer as organized and as unified as it used to be, I think you see a little bit of mixed messaging from Fox in a way that you didn’t before. But the principle still holds, right?

Why does some presidential aspirant Republican governor send refugee applicants to a blue state in a cruel human stunt? Well, run the tape. Find out who on Fox News was proposing that on their shows before it actually happened in real life. I mean, you see that over and over again. And that’s still true. That’s not changing.

EZRA KLEIN: I would read an entire book on this one week in politics around the first Republican debate when Fox hosted it. And they had their more mainstream anchors. It was Megyn Kelly. It was Chris Wallace. It was Bret Baier. And it seemed like they wanted to let the air out of the Trump balloon. They really confronted him.

There was this moment where Megyn Kelly confronts him with all these terrible things he said about women, which later leads Trump to saying she had the blood coming out of her wherever. There’s this moment confronting him with all of these non-conservative things he said. And it seemed to me they decided this had gone far enough.

And then Trump didn’t back down. And there was all this reporting that came out around Fox that Trump was now not going to not come on the network. And then eventually Roger Ailes and him had a meeting. And Trump won. He won this confrontation with Fox News. And a year later, Megyn Kelly isn’t there now. Now Chris Wallace isn’t there anymore.

And I think of that standoff between Trump and Fox and Trump actually winning it. And in many ways proving that he was like the more authentic avatar of their own audience. And now I think their line-up in what it says — and we’ll talk about this — looks a lot more like him than it does even the Fox News of that period.

I always think of that as this moment the whole thing turned, where you really saw where the power lied. And Trump understood that in a way others didn’t.

RACHEL MADDOW: Although, you do end up with the Fox versus the other smaller right-wing networks that are more Trumpy.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah.

RACHEL MADDOW: And you end up with Fox not being seen as sufficiently servile to Trump over the course of the Trump administration, to the point where as president he’s denouncing them and telling people not to watch them and criticizing them. I mean, you can see that as him keeping the whip on, continuing to tame them.

But there is something that happens in terms of Trump being seen as bad for conservatism. And Fox is policing conservatism more than they are policing the Republican Party. And so the fact that there’s ongoing tension and that there isn’t just a — even after that week, there isn’t a total capitulation, I think also matters and is also evidence that the conservative media is part of the conservative movement, which is separate from the Republican Party.

And even as Trump has completely taken over the Republican Party, just flattened it, there’s no resistance to Trump in the party structure itself, you do see the conservative movement still doing its own thing to a certain extent somewhat independent of Trump when necessary. And that shows you who’s more powerful.

EZRA KLEIN: You’ve had interesting relationships with some of the people I think of as really useful to look at in the shift. And people probably forget this. Pat Buchanan was an MSNBC analyst, a fixture on the network for a really long time. And for people who aren’t that familiar with Buchanan, he worked for Nixon. He runs as a Republican in primaries. He’s in many ways a proto-Trump. And he’s treated as this kind of crank for a long time. And now it’s clear he was early.

And on your show early on, you had the segment that was called “It’s Pat,” where you talk about — and the point was that you disagreed, but it was also a kind of — it felt like safe disagreement because Pat Buchanan wasn’t that powerful. And then later on, it feels like the whole conservative movement — I’ve gone back and read his old books. He really sounds like the ideology Trump then tries to develop over time. How do you understand Pat Buchanan’s space in the story we should be telling about the Republican Party?

RACHEL MADDOW: It is a great question. And I think that the time is ripe if anybody is right now looking for a modern American political history that ought to be written. And that would be very valuable, writing the history of Pat Buchanan, in Republican politics right now. I mean, there’s definitely — he’s not an obscure figure. It’s not like we don’t know who he is. But writing the history of Buchanan and Buchananism in light of the late development of the Trump era Republican Party, that is a good book. I would —

EZRA KLEIN: You just launched 1,000 book proposals.

RACHEL MADDOW: I would read that book. I mean, listen — I mean, I’ve been fascinated with Buchanan for a long time. I did that podcast, “Bag Man,” about Spiro Agnew, and how he got pushed out of office, and the Justice Department’s really interesting role and how that happened. Getting rid of a sitting vice president, adjacency to Watergate, and all that stuff.

Agnew ended up on the ticket with Nixon because, essentially, Buchanan put him there. And the reason Buchanan put him there is he was like, listen, he’s just the right kind of racist. We had Nixon worried about the influence of Henry Wallace, worried about, essentially, being seen as a squish by the right flank of his party, and needing to calibrate exactly the way he wanted to calibrate in ’68.

And Agnew was seen as being the right kind of, specifically, anti-Black racist border state personality. Pat Buchanan felt like he cooked him in a lab in order to provide him to Nixon, in order to play that role. And then becomes — Agnew following Buchanan’s lead becomes this poison tipped dart that just goes at the media, at the media, at the media, at the media for the whole Nixon administration in a way that actually lets Nixon stay a little softer in his image because Agnew was out there just killing the media, and the elites, and the pointy-headed professors in a way that Nixon then doesn’t have to do. And that’s all from Buchanan.

Buchanan is a paleo-conservative. He is a white nationalist. He is an artist of white racial grievance as a driver of white ***working class*** votes, and white middle class votes, honestly. And he has been calling for revolutionary white nationalist politics on the right consistently and in the same way, without evolving at all himself, from the ’60s until now. I mean, through his most recent books. The far right has figured that out. His books are required reading In the pro-Trump right-wing paramilitary groups, some of which are facing sedition charges now. But he’s the most consistent lyrical Republican racist of the mid-20th century and the start of the 21st. And that will be important for us understanding what happened to the right and to the Republican Party in this century over time. And it’s overdue for a deep look.

EZRA KLEIN: I always think of one of the very strange bits of politics being that period — I want to say it’s the Reform Party, and I think in 2000 — where one of the things Trump is saying then is that there’s no future for a Pat Buchanan-like politics. I mean, he’s very explicit about this.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yeah, he thinks Pat’s too racist.

EZRA KLEIN: And then he later becomes the future of Pat Buchanan’s politics.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yes.

EZRA KLEIN: I mean, you were saying earlier that Trump is very good at sticking his finger in the wind. And I don’t actually think it’s all that useful to think about sincerity and Donald Trump. I mean, my colleague David Brooks had this line about a huge amount of the analytical power of journalism, trying to analyze this guy’s psychology, when it’s just six fireflies beeping around in a jar.

But there is something there about — I have wondered what it is that changed. And I’m curious for your thoughts on this, if you think it is that the media environment changed so that somebody with Pat Buchanan’s politics would have been more shut out at another time, or it’s that Barack Obama became president and so it created an arousal of the white nationalist politics and created a kind of space for backlash that wasn’t nearly as prevalent before, or something else. Why was Buchanan early as opposed to irrelevant?

RACHEL MADDOW: Well, again, I think it helps to look at it from a broad historical perspective and just to realize that these impulses, and these arguments, and these ideas of racial grievance, and racial reorganization, and racial oppression, they don’t go away. And they don’t change very much. I mean, they get articulated with more or less flowery language over time. But when you build the Nixon/Agnew administration on the idea that the Civil Rights Movement is a bunch of communists, and it’s American patriotism to oppose communists and therefore to oppose civil rights. And that’s why anybody who calls you a racist is really a commie. And I mean, when that’s the politics of the ’60 and ’70s, and there is no corrective for it, you just evolve through it.

When the Reagan politics around race and welfare claim and this idea, again, of exploiting racial grievance but with a smile persists through those times, when the deep racial radicalism on the right is kept alive, is continually stoked, those guys are continually fomenting what they foment and they fall in and out of favor depending on what I think the media environment and the electoral environment can tolerate. So even as I was poo-pooing before the idea that we should look to the internet for giving us darker thoughts, there’s a certain dynamic at work in which the internet is an always open lending library. And the things that may be out of fashion or seen as too extreme become just as available as The New York Times, just as available as even mainstream political current commentary. And so you can tap those things whenever you want to. But if we don’t police them and consider some of those things to be wrong, they do just come back up. And if somebody on their way to the White House is willing to play with that and kindle it, it just flares back up immediately. It never goes away.

EZRA KLEIN: Speaking of exploiting racial grievance with a smile, when I think of who is the opposite of Pat Buchanan back then, it was Tucker Carlson, who has this dynamic in that era and is also at MSNBC back then, as kind of a party boy libertarian, the Republicans are no fun, they’re in your business. He has this very funny book of political profiles in that period. You get your start in TV on Tucker Carlson’s show. How do you understand his shift over the years?

RACHEL MADDOW: I don’t think he has shifted over the years. I don’t. I mean, I think he’s gotten older and I think people change as they get older in terms of their inclinations. But I think that while Pat was out there beating this white nationalist drum very aggressively, I don’t think that you’ll find that much difference between his willingness to use race for political advantage and his demagoguery around race. I don’t think you’ll find that much difference substantively between those two men.

And the extent to which you articulate it, whether you articulate it with a smile or with a clenched fist, changes over time depending on how much power you have, what the media environment is like, and what the electorate can stand. But that perception that Tucker has changed over time, I don’t think that’s right. I think he’s always been exactly who he is.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to think about that for a minute. And I think you’re probably right on race. I think the thing that I think about with Tucker is his orientation towards I guess what would get called the elite, which earlier in his career — I mean, he’s born into a media family. He always has huge jobs in media. He’s always very celebrated in media.

He sells himself as this kind of prep school. He’s got his bow tie for a bunch of it. I mean, he was 100 percent a Washington fixture. And he was into it. And I think something that is real about him is his resentment. There is some real resentment he has towards an elite power structure that he was very much part of. He was never the absolute top of, but he was very much part of.

And there are certain ways in which I think Tucker is a truer Donald Trump than Donald Trump is. I think he believes in what looked like Trump’s ideology much more than Trump does. He has a more consistent version of it. And I think they both have this kind of weird relationship. They’re both clearly elites. They’re famous. They’re rich. They were part of the power structures in the cities they represented — New York for Trump, D.C. for Tucker.

And then at some point, something curdles in them in that relationship. And their resentment towards the very people they were having lunch with forever becomes the driving force of their politics.

RACHEL MADDOW: That’s interesting.

EZRA KLEIN: Does that feel like it’s anything to you?

RACHEL MADDOW: I’m terrible at psychology. But I think the way I see the shift that you’re talking about is — you know how Tucker used to wear the bow tie and then stopped wearing the bow tie? And as you said, he had this image — this cultivated image — of prep school kid who knows everybody but doesn’t respect them.

I think that his — I don’t want to say image. I don’t even know — because I don’t even know if it was false. I think the brand of him, the perception that I think people rightfully had, and that he cultivated, was of a gadfly, of somebody who was in on it, and at the right parties but on the outside. Maybe even like a peanut gallery person, kind of a critic, kind of throwing popcorn from the box seats, being a little bit of a troublemaker. So having access, but being outside it.

I think that’s actually also what Trump had as an image. As an accurate perception by outsiders, but also somewhat cultivated. That, yeah, he knows all these people. He can get all these people on the phone. But he doesn’t — he’s not invited to their events.

He’s not in the inner circle. He just has access to it. And so you, the rebel, should understand that he knows these people. He can tell us what’s going on with them. But he’s against them just like you are. And so he’s got access, and he’s rich, and he’s not a common man, but he’s around them and not of them.

And then what happened with both Tucker and Trump is that they both became the boss. They both got to be in charge. They both got to set their own terms. And so now it can no longer be that there’s somebody else in charge and they’re throwing brickbats that they’re criticizing. And once you get to be the one in charge, there’s no more fun in saying the people who are in charge, they’re terrible. You and I know truth.

You can’t do that anymore once you’re the leading person in primetime cable news and once you’re the president who’s actively sitting in the White House and running the federal government. And so then you become less fun. And your message becomes more dark. And the “them” who you are inveighing against becomes shadier and more dangerous. And the whole enterprise has less of a grace note anywhere in it.

EZRA KLEIN: How do you think cable news, as an industry, as a media format that plays a role in politics, how do you think its role has changed since 2008?

RACHEL MADDOW: Not as much as people think. Everybody disagrees with me on this. All media journalists disagree with me on this. Everybody else in cable news disagrees with me on this. But I don’t think that the exact the make up of cable news matters that much.

I mean, Larry King was the end all be all of cable news. And then he wasn’t. And Bill O’Reilly was the end all be all of cable news. And then he wasn’t. And Glenn Beck was the end all be all of cable news. And then he wasn’t. And when I went from five days a week to one day a week, it was like, people who like me at least were like, oh, this is really going to change. It doesn’t change that much. It really doesn’t.

You mentioned the Fox News lineup for that first Republican debate. Chris Wallace went through this thing where he left Fox News. And it was, oh, he left Fox News and left for an interesting reason. And went to CNN+ and now CNN+ isn’t going to happen. And now he’s on CNN. Has our world changed very much? I don’t know. Chris Wallace is still working.

Bret Baier has been a pillar at Fox News all of this time through all the changes that Fox News has been through. And I think that when Glenn Beck was the biggest thing on Fox News at 5 o’clock in the afternoon, when he was at the peak of his radicalism to the point where it even unnerved Fox News, Bret Baier was doing his thing, was doing solid journalism at Fox News. And he was doing it before Glenn Beck, and during Glenn Beck, and thereafter, and is still doing it now.

I just don’t — I think that cable news does — we’re 24-hour cable news. It exists. We’re there. And the people who are able to exert influence through expressing compelling opinion, it’s always going to matter a little bit. But I don’t know that it matters that much. I don’t think we’re that big a deal. Do you disagree?

EZRA KLEIN: I would need to think about it. I don’t — I think you’re right that the precise makeup in any given moment — well, I’d have to go — I go back and forth on this, because in a way, I think you’re actually underselling yourself a bit. I think that after you, the MSNBC lineup begins to have more of your vibe, right? I mean, Chris Hayes. For a period of time, I was part of this. MSNBC gets very interested in smart people with glasses

— which was not the main vibe before that, to just be blunt about it. I think that Tucker over at Fox demonstrates the power of really leaning into a certain form of populist Trumpism. And now the rest of Fox, particularly the primetime lineup, sounds a little bit more like him.

But the place where I’m probably more on your side of this is that I think if it wasn’t those people, it would be someone else. That’s why the individuals don’t matter that much. At some point, the market is going to find the audience. It just is going to take a couple of tries.

And so it’s not like I think if Tucker doesn’t take that Bill O’Reilly slot at Fox News, nobody at Fox figures out how to echo Trump in an effective way. I think that — in a similar way that I think if Donald Trump doesn’t run in 2016, sometime over the next 12 years, someone like Trump finds that part of the Republican Party and speaks to it.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yes, that’s exactly right.

EZRA KLEIN: And so there’s this way in which I think individuals hasten or slow transitions, but I think that we often look at the flowers that grow and don’t look enough at the soil. And I think that a lot of what ends up mattering for cable news for anything is the soil.

RACHEL MADDOW: And I don’t think that there is a singular figure of such importance. I mean, in short-term, sure enough. People can have individual — an impact as an individual who’s powerful in the media. But in the longer-term, I don’t think — people who are individuals and media phenomenon because of the way they present themselves in the media, I don’t think they affect fundamental transformation.

I mean, if you — I’m doing this thing that’s based on a lot of stuff from the ’30s and ’40s right now. And I was shocked to look back at the Father Coughlin thing. I feel like — Charles Coughlin — he’s still a household name. We still think about the idea of a right-wing demagogue in the media and that’s the benchmark that we compare it against.

EZRA KLEIN: And Charles Coughlin, of course, being the Catholic priest, the very anti-Semitic, very conspiratorial Catholic priest with just a huge radio show in the 1930s.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yes. But with Coughlin, at a time when there’s like 123 million people in the country, he’s got between 30 and 40 million people listening to him —

EZRA KLEIN: It’s astonishing.

RACHEL MADDOW: — every week. I mean, a huge cable news audience for a totally dominant primetime hour right now might be 5 million people. The equivalent with our — if you adjust for population, with what Coughlin was doing every week, would have been 80 million people.

We’re never going to have somebody that dominant again. There isn’t going to be that kind of a singular force in our politics. There wasn’t before him and there won’t be since. And that is a product of the way that our media works right now, but I think it’s also a good course corrective to be like, oh, don’t get too wound up about what somebody’s monologue was.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that’s right. Here’s the other side of it that I wonder about, though, which is, I think, particularly since the rise of social media, that while no individual media person or institution is as dominant as a Coughlin could be, as the three big networks were in the ’50s and ’60s, there’s much more herd behavior in the media.

So things emerge on social media and then everybody is covering them, in a way that there was a lot just more geographic and time differentiation between different media outlets 30 years ago, 50 years ago, 80 years ago. I mean, I’m not that old. And I think all the time about how when I grew up. We got the L.A. Times. That’s what we had in my house.

That was the sum total — there was an opinion section. That was the sum total of political opinion I had access to in a given day coming from professional media people. And CNN emerges. It’s later on that cable news becomes more opinionated. There’s some talk radio at that period. I’m not listening to it, so it’s not as central to me.

But now there’s so much more and yet it’s so much more similar. So there’s a strange way in which it is simultaneously way less centralized. But Trump, I think, is a very good example of this. I think that what he ends up doing — he’s in some ways a creation of Twitter. I don’t think you can be Donald Trump in 2016 without Twitter.

But I always think his power is misunderstood. His power on Twitter was that he got every journalistic outlet in the country to follow the lead of his tweets, not that his tweets themselves reached so many people. And so there’s this weird paradox of it, of decentralization, but with everybody having access to the same information and the same social media and audience analytics, much more homogenization.

RACHEL MADDOW: It’s interesting. I think that part of that is the economics of the news industry. What you’re describing where something happens in social media, and then everybody follows it, everybody covers the same stories, I mean, the derogatory way to read that is laziness. I think the more nuanced way to read that is the underfunding of journalism. And so you take what’s easy. You take what’s literally fed to you as free content and you build your stuff around that.

In the day of the big three networks and the L.A. Times being the printed source of material for you and your family and your neighbors in Los Angeles, the profession of journalism, what it meant to become a reporter, to become an editor, to work in that field, it was a more sustainable thing. I mean, now getting a reporting job at a local TV station, I mean, you have to have a couple other jobs. The professional support isn’t there because the business environment isn’t such that we’re supporting enough enterprise and independent journalism.

That said, it’s not like journalism has collapsed. And I do think that the benefit, the other side of that is that beyond the lazy force-fed stuff that everybody’s covering because everybody has access to it, you can, in this media environment, if you’re willing to look — and this is part of what I tried to do at MSNBC — you are able to find well-reported stories everywhere all over the country, even just in politics, that you can platform to a national audience if you’re willing to do the work to make it interesting and to make it resonate, to make clear to people why it’s important.

So the opportunity is still there but the struggle for us in terms of holding onto our democracy and the role of the fourth estate in doing that is to make sure that being a reporter is a good remunerative job and being an editor is a good remunerative job. And that professional journalism done with professional standards is something that not only doesn’t die, but expands and exists everywhere.

And so as frustrating as it is, seeing philanthropic efforts and seeing almost crowdsourced efforts to make sure that local news gathering, local professional newsgathering lives, even in places where chain journalism has rotted out the infrastructure to do that in traditional terms, that’s very practical work towards saving the country.

EZRA KLEIN: There was a period of time when I guest-hosted for a lot of MSNBC’s shows, including yours. And one of the things that always struck me in that time, working with the producers of them, was how much attention you and your team — because I had some insight then into the process — gave to that search, gave to looking through local papers, gave to trying to find the stories that other people weren’t covering.

There was a lot less in the kind of culture you built on your show of what is everybody talking about today and a lot more of what should we be talking about today. Tell me a bit about that orientation and that process, because that is a process you built.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yeah, I mean, it just basically comes from the idea of wanting to be worth people’s time and attention. If you’re going to ask people to sit down, particularly if your name is Rachel Maddow and you’re asking people to sit down for something called “The Rachel Maddow Show,” first of all, that takes a lot of hubris. And second of all, you better —

EZRA KLEIN: Naming a show after yourself is ridiculous, I should say. We’ll be right back on “The Ezra Klein Show.”

RACHEL MADDOW: But it creates — you’re then assigning yourself a responsibility to be worth it. And so the way that our news meeting process runs to this day is that there’s a staff news production note that is circulated among everybody and then I circulate my own competing one.

And then we get on the air and I ask questions — or we get in the meeting, or on the phone, on Zoom together, and I ask questions about what’s in their stack of stuff that I didn’t know about and they ask me questions about what’s in my stack of stuff. And then we come up with basically kind of a filtered what I call the middle column, because that’s how we used to do it on the whiteboard, of stuff that we are considering potentially putting on the show based on the entire universe of news that we’ve been able to put together, both as me and a staff.

And then crucial question. What are they doing at 8 o’clock? What’s Chris doing? And what’s Lawrence doing? And sometimes what’s being discussed all day on dayside, because I don’t always have a — I don’t ever have a TV on. And the reason that I’m asking what else is happening is not because I want to make sure that we’re covering those things. I just want to make sure we’re not covering those things.

I don’t want to do the same thing that everybody is doing. And sometimes you do. I mean, sometimes the story of the day is the story of the day. But then all the more pressure to make sure that you’re bringing something new to it.

And it’s not from any ideological place. It’s just about fear of failure and wanting to be important enough for people to spend time with, wanting to be worth people’s while. And I don’t need to hear more punditry on something that I’ve already heard about all day. And most people, I think, don’t either.

EZRA KLEIN: But how did the literal search work for you? I mean, did you have a list of the 15 metro dailies that you found most useful? Were there aggregators you turn to? I think a lot of people in journalism have the aspiration to be differentiated in what they cover, but people end up spending a lot of time on Twitter. Algorithms are now much more predictable. They kind of give you what they’ve given everybody else.

You don’t have too much social media presence. Not that you’re not literally on Twitter, but you definitely don’t spend a lot of time there, or anywhere else in social media that I can tell. You’re clearly spending your time reading something. How are you deciding what?

RACHEL MADDOW: In terms of producing the show, we’ve been through a few different structural forms to try to keep that process fresh and make sure that we’re not doing what everybody else is doing. There was a time when we used to have producers who were responsible for regions of the country.

OK, we know there’s some interesting stuff going on around — I remember, like, there was a real structurally radicalizing moment in North Carolina Republican politics in the state legislature a few years ago. And so it was like, OK somebody’s got to read the press in the Carolinas every day and just report to us every day what’s going on from there.

The Flint water crisis — people remember us covering that in a way that was new to the way the national media was talking about it. The only reason that we were on to that Flint story I think before other people were is because we were covering what I saw as an interesting radicalizing process that was happening under Governor Rick Snyder in Michigan that was about this emergency management process and getting rid of democracy at the local level and instead having state-imposed managers come in and effectively depose locally-elected officials.

And I thought that was interesting in democracy terms. That’s why we were watching Michigan, which is why we were ears to the ground that allowed us to cotton to what these Flint activists were saying about this disaster that was happening in their town. It also helped us understand how it happened.

So, in part, you need to be curious. You need to be interested in what’s happening around the world. You need to be cognizant of how much time you’re spending kibitzing about things that everybody else knows about. If you’re in the media, your job is to find stuff that’s important and that you understand well enough to be able to convey the importance to other people. And so that requires work. You have to go search stuff out.

I’ll also say that talking about the business structure of journalism, we’re also in this moment right now where papers around the country are rising and falling in terms of their quality. And so knowing what particular paper or sometimes what state media consortium is particularly good, has particularly good reporters right now, that just sometimes — St. Louis has a lot going on in terms of journalism. Sometimes Western New England has a lot going on in terms of journalism.

And sometimes it’s not exactly one paper. It’s a mix of alt weeklies, and the investigative unit at a local TV station that’s got to be in its bonnet, and occasionally it’s bloggers who are alerting you to stuff that traditional journalism formats aren’t. But you just have to put the work in. You have to go read. And there is an opportunity cost to spending too much time in the bubble. The opportunity that you are losing is the opportunity to go find stuff that’s of more interest.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: I think of the recent years on your show, the recent years really of American politics as being very much about this war for democracy, this question of democracy, the big lie and January 6, but before that, just the generalized Donald Trump attack on institutions.

But you all were pretty early — well before Trump — at obsessing over predecessor fights that were happening at the state level. You mentioned North Carolina. But there have been a bunch of them. There have been fights like this in Wisconsin. There’s been fights like this in Michigan.

And I think it’s kind of correct to understand Trump as a continuation of something that had begun with candidates we don’t really think of as Trumpy or figures we don’t really think of as Trumpy. They were there before him. But do you want to talk a bit about that continuity, because I think it actually prepared a lot of the ground for the coverage you now do of both Donald Trump and democracy, but some of the other projects we’re going to talk about that you’re working on around democracy.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yeah, I’m really glad you brought that up, because I feel like that is — it’s an easy concept that for whatever reason it hasn’t caught on. Even when people are willing to talk about Trump being the latest iteration of something that’s been happening for a while on the right, usually what that means is we’ve had demagogic figures in the past.

I think the important thing, the important continuity at least, is that in my lifetime — in the ’70, ’80, ’90s, 2000s and to today — we have seen the Republican Party repeatedly experiment with, and increasingly commit to, minority rule structural changes. Structural changes that are designed to not just allow them to rule without the support of the governed, but to try to discredit majority rule institutions.

And that is playing with fire. It always has been. When it accumulates over time, it gets worse and worse to the point where you’ve so weakened the edifice of democracy that it’s easier to push over. But I think that ought to be held accountable for doing things to try to separate power from the views and votes of the people.

And we haven’t. We’ve seen it all as dirty tricks. We’ve seen it as playing hardball or we’ve seen it as going for short-term advantage. But it’s a project. It’s a project that all leans in the same direction.

And I do think that it’s been toxic. And I don’t think that it has been a mirror image thing where it’s also happened on the left. It is something that has been happening in, particularly state governance, in North Carolina, in Wisconsin, in Michigan, in states where Republicans have power and where they fear that future elections will deprive them of it.

That’s how we got to a place where you’ve got a candidate saying that last election that elected me, that was fraud, there were millions of illegal votes. And no, I’m not going to accept the results of the next election. You can only get there, you can only do that once you’ve been pushing against small d democracy enough that it resonates, that it doesn’t strike people as wrong. It strikes people as a relief.

EZRA KLEIN: If you’re going back into the state houses, the pre-Trump period, for people who weren’t tracking this and think that this anti-democratic sentiment element strategy is something Donald Trump brought to Republican politics, what really stands out to you as the most vivid of these stories?

RACHEL MADDOW: Well, I mean, this isn’t an obscure one, but there’s a president named Barack Obama and there’s an opening on the Supreme Court. And presidents make nominations to the Supreme Court and the Senate gives its advice and consent on that nominee.

When that stopped and then just blatantly saying Amy Coney Barrett can be confirmed on election day, on the — whatever it was — the month before voting — on the other side of it, I mean, the Republicans celebrate that as this great example of hardball. But it’s telling the American people that power doesn’t accrue to those who’ve got the votes. That’s a fundamental thing.

And you can regret what that meant in terms of the makeup of the Supreme Court, but more profoundly that is taking an ax to the roots of a tree that is old and fragile anyway in a way that I think was just really dangerous. And really not just mean-spirited, not just strategic and hardball, but deleterious to our future as a country. So that’s one.

Do you have one in mind that you’re thinking about that you think worth to talk about?

EZRA KLEIN: I mean, I always think that what happened in North Carolina after that election was really remarkable, where they just change everything.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yeah, so North Carolina Republicans decide that if you’re going to have a Democratic governor elected, well, the governor no longer has powers as governor. I mean, that’s — again, the question is, does power accrue to the person who received the votes? And when you separate that, you’re doing something profoundly un-American. You’re doing something that is about removing the basis of how we think of ourselves as a Republic in a democracy. And it’s just — it compounds.

EZRA KLEIN: Here’s something where I think my thinking has changed a lot since 2008. I think before that, I did not appreciate how much of American politics was not running according to its rules but according to its norms. How much that if you really went down to the rules of American politics, they said very, very little. I mean, I think a great example is just simply how the electoral college works. It just turns out you can kind of do almost whatever you want if you’re a state legislature. And we typically don’t.

RACHEL MADDOW: Well, you wouldn’t dare. It would be terrible.

EZRA KLEIN: You wouldn’t do it.

RACHEL MADDOW: People would be so upset.

EZRA KLEIN: It would be awful, right? But then all of a sudden people began to notice you could. And I think about this with McConnell and Garland. There’s no rule that he had to treat an Obama nominee fairly. Just that was how it was done. But he had the votes to not do it.

I mean, I think a lot about polarization as being the key thing that began to erode this. But as the stakes rise, every time people begin to believe that the stakes of American politics are too high for niceties, too high to treat it like the system itself is something that needs to be taken into account, you just have this pressure to not observe norms and to play to as far as the rules can take you.

And it turns out, in American politics, the rules can take you incredibly far. They can allow all kinds of trickery and screwery. And as you say, in a bunch of individual cases, we call that hardball. In a bunch of individual cases, we’re like, oh, what a bare-knuckle strategy from so-and-so. And then systematically, it’s like the system begins to collapse in on itself.

Because if you are using power that way, then you also don’t have the power to rewrite the rules to make the game fair again. And once the gain becomes fair, you get a legitimacy crisis. I mean, to me, it’s like, do I think we’re going to find ourselves in complete crisis in the next 15 years? I wouldn’t give it more than 50 percent, but I wouldn’t give it less than 15 percent, which is higher than I would have done before.

RACHEL MADDOW: Mhm. And there’s also a cost toward hardening the norms into rules. If we take the lesson of the post-2016 era as, oh, the norms are based on shame, and so therefore shamelessness is a get-out-jail-free card for all the norms. And so therefore they can’t be norms anymore. They can’t be based on shame and public rebuke. They have to be based on rules and enforceable orders.

Well, that costs you something, too, in terms of us as a democracy. I’m thinking about Geoffrey Berman’s book. He was the S.D.N.Y. U.S. attorney who wrote the book about how he was interfered with as the U.S. attorney in S.D.N.Y., that he got pressure directly from the White House to let the president’s allies off and to bring politically motivated prosecutions against Democrats.

It’s a terrifying book. It should have gotten more attention, I think, than it did. But first of all, I mean, just in practical terms, the Justice Department needs to contend with Berman’s record of what happened to him in a much more serious way than they have because that happened inside the Justice Department in a way that should never happen again and is likely to happen again now that we know that Trump was able to get away with it with no consequences.

But at the same time, Berman has a final chapter in his book where he presents some potential fixes. And he says things like, if a US attorney has done a detailed and earnest review of the evidence and makes a decision to prosecute or not prosecute, main justice and no other U.S. attorney can take a contrary decision. And that kind of a rule would have solved some of the problems that he describes in terms of what happened to him.

He was told to bring a politically motivated prosecution. His staff, in fact, did a full review of the Democrat who the Trump White House wanted him to prosecute, found that there was no basis for a prosecution. He declined. I mean, it’s troubling enough that they did the review and they didn’t think there was a predicate to do it. But they did the review, they declined, and then the Trump Justice Department shopped it and made another U.S. attorney bring that prosecution.

So he’s saying that shouldn’t be allowed because we did a real review and that should have been the end of it. OK, that’s fine. But if you did have that kind of a rule and it was not Geoffrey Berman, but it was Trump getting reelected in 2024 and he puts Rudy Giuliani in as the U.S. attorney at S.D.N.Y. He gets his old job back.

Well, yeah, in that case, a decision by Rudy Giuliani to do something terrible or a decision by some other bad actor to do something terrible, you would want main justice to be able to throw in some sort of safety net or some sort of stop strip into the road ahead of that racing car.

I mean, the reason there are norms and not rules is because the basic idea is that you want good people in power. And when people are revealed to be bad power, you want there to be a way to take them out. We just have to make sure that’s true.

EZRA KLEIN: In a way, I see the Biden administration, and I guess specifically Merrick Garland right now, as a little paralyzed between this question of norms and rules with Donald Trump, and some other questions around Jan. 6 and maybe around the classified documents we’ll see. But there’s this question, I think, that they are facing and don’t know how to answer between, well, the rule is nobody’s above the rule of law and the norm is, in America, presidents don’t prosecute their predecessors for the most part.

And there’s a feeling that if you open that door, particularly then somebody like Donald Trump gets back in and then it’s seen as something that just gets done. You’ve opened the door to something you see in other countries, very dangerously, where the law becomes a tool that different administrations or regimes wield against each other and their political enemies.

How do you see that tension? Do you think they’re navigating that well? Do you think they’re overly in their heads about it?

RACHEL MADDOW: I think it’s really hard. And I don’t think it’s their fault. I don’t think there is an easy answer. And I think that the thing that we did wrong as a country was put somebody with those kinds of criminal inclinations and stated intentions in a position where we had to decide, as a country, whether or not to let those apparent crimes slide, which is really bad, or become the kind of country where former presidents are prosecuted.

Those are our choices. Those are terrible choices. And those are the only choices that we have. And the reason those are the only choices we have are because that guy got elected. The moral of the story is don’t give bad people lots of power. Because when you do, things break. And in a certain fundamental way — because that is the choice, right?

If Trump is indicted, if Trump did some of the things that he’s credibly accused of doing and it results in prosecution, if he did those things and it results in prosecution, we have fundamentally changed as a country because we are a person who brings those kinds of prosecutions. If he did those things and doesn’t get prosecuted, because we’re scared of being that kind of a country, then we are the kind of country that’s elects people like that and then lets them get away with it because they have power.

Both are terrible. And I have my own opinions as to which is more terrible. It’s not worth my sharing them, I don’t think. But I think it is worth appreciating this at an objective level that we’re in an impossible position. And this is not like choosing between two types of ice cream. This is like choosing between two types of car crashes.

EZRA KLEIN: I do sometimes wonder if the true actor who should be seen as more destructive than he is is Gerald Ford here. That the pardoning of Nixon in retrospect was a quite terrible mistake, particularly by a Republican who would have had credibility to say, look, these were crimes, I mean, and nobody’s above the rule of law. I do think that kind of entrenched an idea that the way America moves on from presidential criminality is by moving on.

And it’s just an interesting alternative history to me what would have happened if in that moment when there was more consensus that wrong had been done — I mean, when the president had actually resigned — we had gone further.

RACHEL MADDOW: There was more consensus, but not as much consensus as we think. The consensus was very recently arrived at. So Nixon had more support — dead-ender support — than you think until the very end when it broke.

And then when it broke, it was the Supreme Court ruling, which not only had a substantive impact of releasing the tapes, but also gave total clarity that the judiciary was going to be no haven for him. Supreme Court ruling, tapes released, the C.I.A. cover-up smoking gun tape, and then the collapse of political support, the resignation, pardon. All happens very, very, very quickly.

And up until that moment, I think it might have been reasonable to think that a prosecution of Nixon would have brought blood in the streets, and might have even, had Ford done it. And that doesn’t mean it’s not a reason to do it, but it does mean that that’s, I think, part of what was being earnestly weighed at the time.

The only lesson is bad people shouldn’t get that much power. But we are — I mean, now that we’ve dealt with it at multiple levels — and we had to deal with — so Spiro Agnew was running a criminal bribery and extortion ring in the White House while Nixon was committing the Watergate crimes. Trump was doing all the things that Trump was doing while he was in the White House and thereafter.

And this now means that we can’t see either of those things as an aberration. We’ve had to confront this multiple times over the course of a single lifetime. And our generation is going to have to be the one that figures out what kind of country we are to deal with this kind of criminality at the highest levels. We’re just going to have to do it. And it’s going to change the country for the worse either way.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that’s a good bridge to your new podcast. Tell me about “Ultra.” Tell me what it’s about.

RACHEL MADDOW: It’s about sedition, at one fundamental level. The centerpiece in the plot of the story is the 1944 great sedition trial where the Justice Department put on trial, at the same time, more than two dozen defendants, charged them with trying to violently overthrow the country and being in cahoots with a hostile foreign power — Germany — to do that. And it was a failed prosecution. It didn’t work, which itself is an amazing story.

But it’s also about authoritarianism and about American support, not just for Germany during World War II, which is an underappreciated story — which is I think there’s a little bit of a moment I think happening where people are starting to talk about Lindbergh and the America First Movement and American pro-fascists during the time. But it is American support for a foreign dictatorship that we were about to go to war with, but also American support for fascism and authoritarianism and a willingness to use violence to get there.

And you get that confrontation between the Justice Department that’s onto it and trying to stop it. And then you get this amazing complication, which is that it turns out there’s a whole bunch of members of Congress and senators who are involved in it and who are connected to this very bad circumstance. And one of the things that goes wrong at the Justice Department is that sitting senators and members of Congress use their political power to shut the Justice Department down, to get prosecutor fired, to get the investigation derailed, and to let the bad guys get away, because they themselves are implicated in it.

And just as I think the Justice Department needs to contend with what happened to Geoffrey Berman at S.D.N.Y. during the Trump administration, this is a history that I think that we need to contend with in terms of thinking about the suitability of the criminal justice system for dealing with crimes — politically motivated crimes by powerful people.

EZRA KLEIN: Who’s a character in the saga who, either as a hero or a villain, you wish were a household name today?

RACHEL MADDOW: Oh, that’s a good question. I’m going to take the easy way out and tell you there’s a few. [LAUGHS]: I’m sorry.

EZRA KLEIN: You can give me a few.

RACHEL MADDOW: I’ll give you a few. One of them is a prosecutor named John Rogge, R-O-G-G-E. And he’s kind of the main focus of the second half of the series. And the thing that’s fascinating about him is he’s this wunderkind prosecutor. I mentioned Huey Long earlier. After Huey Long is assassinated as a U.S. Senator, his effective dictatorship in Louisiana is still operating. They have this — the Huey Long machine in Louisiana is profoundly corrupt and has the state’s politics in a death grip.

And the Justice Department dispatches this young prosecutor to go down there and face the real physical danger of confronting this machine. And this guy John Rogge, this young hot prosecutor, goes down there, and spends a lot of time down there and actually does it. Actually dismantles the Huey Long machine, which is something that has real historical import and for which — it was very unclear, at the outset of that, that he was going to succeed.

Fresh off of that, he then gets dispatched. He gets a big job at main justice. And they put him on a sedition trial in 1940. Now, this is not the great sedition trial of 1944. This is earlier. This is 1940 when 17 members of father Charles Coughlin’s militia, the Christian Front, are all arrested and put on trial for sedition. They were actually arrested 80 years before the Oath Keepers were all arrested, which is bizarre.

But Christian Front militia — you’ll hear about it in the podcast. They were planning something and working on something that was really quite terrifying. They got arrested. It was front page news all across the country. J. Edgar Hoover himself announces the arrests. And they bring in Rogge to prosecute these guys in New York.

And it’s a slam dunk case. They had an informant inside the group. They have their guns. They have their bombs. They have all of their plans. And they get acquitted. And there’s a mistrial. And the whole prosecution is a disaster. And this was Rogge’s second act after he just blew up the Huey Long thing.

So Rogge is kind of licking his wounds. And the administration and the Justice Department is kind of freaked out about the fact that these guys all got off. And in 1944, the great sedition trial is brought. And the members of Congress who are connected to this plot successfully pressured the Justice Department to fire the prosecutor. And the attorney general caves and fires the prosecutor under pressure from members of Congress who are implicated in the plot that’s being tried by this prosecutor. It’s terrible.

And who do they give the ball to after they fire the prosecutor? Same guy, John Rogge. And he is the one who brings the sedition trial to its end. And it ends in disaster. And then he doesn’t give up. Part of this plot is that the accusations that these seditionists are working with the Hitler government to try to mount this violent overthrow attempt of the US government.

And when the trial collapses, he goes to Germany. And he’s like, fine, I’m going to figure it out from the German side. And he interviews the Nazis who are supporting the American seditionists. And gets them to — oh, yeah, we’re working with this guy. We paid this guy.

I mean, he interviews them in their cells at Nuremberg. And he collects all this information. And by then, we’ve won the war. And this prosecution was a disaster. And this is really embarrassing because there’s all these members of Congress and members of the Senate who are involved.

And he comes back with this information and is like, I’ve got it, and we need to tell the American people what happened, and the Justice Department is like, we’re not bringing another prosecution. He’s like, but I’ve got the information. I’ve got it dead to rights. They fire him.

And he goes public with it, which is wrong. The Justice Department should never collect information that it’s going to use anywhere other than in court. The Justice Department should only speak through its actions in court. It should not collect information, not bring an indictment, and then tell the American people what they found, James Comey. It should not do it.

And Rogge did it, which is both wrong and totally understandable and is a really big deal. And I just — people ought to know who he is. I just told you the whole podcast. You don’t have to listen to it now.

EZRA KLEIN: Yea, but — there were some parts in that I’d like to hear more about. But I was waiting for the second character. You’re like, oh, we got a bunch. But you got —

RACHEL MADDOW: We do. There’s another — there’s a guy who’s a big deal in the early part of the podcast, named Leon Lewis. And there’s a great book by a historian named Steven Ross called, “Hitler in Los Angeles.” That tells the story. He gets access to Leon Lewis’s files. Leon Lewis is an activist with the Anti-Defamation League.

And the L.A.P.D. and the L.A. County Sheriff and the F.B.I. in Southern California does not want to hear it when, particularly the Jewish community in Los Angeles is weirded out by the fact that there’s an Aryan bookstore and there’s openly organizing Hitler Brownshirt meetings in L.A. and there’s increasing violence against the Jewish community. I mean, it’s bad. And the cops don’t care.

And Leon Lewis organizes what is effectively a private spying and agent provocateur ring. It’s not actually Jews in the most case who he gets to work for him as spies. He convinces German-Americans and some of his fellow World War I veterans to go join all these groups, and report on what they’re doing and collect actionable evidence intelligence about what they’re doing to feed it to law enforcement.

And then when law enforcement still doesn’t care to use it to disrupt these groups, to expose them, to disrupt them, to complicate their efforts, and he dies in obscurity. And you can tell the story through his files. But when law enforcement, both local and federal, weren’t willing to protect against an active Nazi threat as we were heading toward war against the Nazis in the late ’30s and early ’40s, this guy privately took it upon himself to do it and did an amazing job. And he ought to be a household name.

EZRA KLEIN: I’m not going to make you reveal more of the show, although people can go find it.

RACHEL MADDOW: I could go on. I’m totally obsessed.

EZRA KLEIN: I know, and that’s why people should subscribe and listen to “Ultra.” But let me get a little bit of what the bookcase looks like. Always our final question, which is, what are three books you would recommend to the audience?

RACHEL MADDOW: Ah, well, I should recommend to you “Hitler in Los Angeles,” by Steven Ross. It’s amazing. There’s another book that’s set in Boston, which is around the same time, called “Nazis in Copley Square,” by a Jesuit priest named Charles Gallagher.

EZRA KLEIN: Sort of a headlining trend here.

RACHEL MADDOW: Yeah, I know, I’m just — these are all things — I’m going to give you three for the podcast and then I’ll give you others. There’s another book — it’s similar title — called “Hitler’s American Friends,” by a historian called Bradley Hart. Those are all some primary source documents that we used in “Ultra,” and I can highly, highly recommend all three of those.

If you don’t just want to do homework reading for my podcast, I did put some thought into this. And I have a novel to recommend, which is along the same lines as the storyline because it’s all I can think about.

EZRA KLEIN: “Hitler and Long Beach.”

RACHEL MADDOW: Sorry, close. It’s a book called “The Oppermanns.” It’s a novel written by a guy whose name is Lion Feuchtwanger, which is F-E-U-C-H-T-W-A-N-G-E-R. And the Southern California connection is that he does, as a refugee from Germany, end up living out his days in Los Angeles. And I think his house is now used as like a writer’s retreat. He has this beautiful house in L.A. that’s now used by a foundation. But “The Oppermanns” is one of his novels that was one of the best efforts by anyone writing from inside Germany at the time to tell the story about the rising threat of what the authoritarian takeover in Germany meant for the citizens of Germany. And it’s just beautifully written, super engaging.

It’s one of those stories where you know how it ends, but you also are completely held in suspense the entire time. It’s just a beautifully constructed, beautifully written novel that also reorients your brain to, I think, in a constructive way, in terms of thinking about real people’s lives, real people’s responsibilities and capacities to resist rising authoritarianism. So “The Oppermanns” I would recommend.

A historian named Susan Dunn wrote a book on the 1940 presidential election, which is really, really worth reading. It’s just called “1940,” by Susan Dunne. That’s really, really worth it. And then I have a personal one, which is just a — literally just a thing from my heart today, which is that I have a dear friend who just died. He’s 45 years old. His name was Billy Sothern, S-O-T-H-E-R-N. And I just — I’m sort of dealing with the aftermath of Billy’s death right now and just really appreciating him.

He was a legendary capital defense attorney in New Orleans. He came out of Bryan Stevenson’s Equal Justice Initiative and represented men on death row in New Orleans. And also is just a lyrical, beautiful writer about New Orleans. Did some of the most moving, most illuminating, most deep writing about New Orleans and about Louisiana, particularly in the wake of Katrina. And so I’m just really feeling Billy right now because we just lost him. And he has a book called “Down in New Orleans,” which you should find and buy. And it’s — both as an elegy for my friend, which is why I want to say this, but also just because I reread it just after he died this past week and it’s just as moving as it ever was. So “Down in New Orleans,” Billy Sothern.

EZRA KLEIN: I’m sorry for your loss there.

RACHEL MADDOW: Thanks, Ezra.

EZRA KLEIN: But it’s been wonderful getting to spend some time with you. Rachel Maddow, your new podcast is “Ultra.” Thank you very much.

RACHEL MADDOW: Ezra, thank you so, so much.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: “The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld and Rogé Karma. Our researcher is Emefa Agawu. Fact-checking by Michelle Harris, Mary Marge Locker and Kate Sinclair. Original music by Isaac Jones. Mixing by Jeff Geld. Audience strategy by Shannon Busta. Special thanks to Kristin Lin and Kristina Samulewski.

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[***As Seat Is Vacated, G.O.P. Could Lose A Queens Foothold***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62MM-PKM1-DXY4-X0WJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 9, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 20

**Length:** 1746 words

**Byline:** By Corey Kilgannon

**Body**

The party struggles to hold on in an increasingly diverse borough, even as it fights its own internal battles.

In heavily Democratic Queens, Councilman Eric Ulrich is a political oddity: He's the only Republican elected to public office in the borough, and one of the only ones remaining in New York City outside of Staten Island.

''One is the loneliest number,'' Mr. Ulrich said.

A white moderate, Mr. Ulrich has won four elections over his 12-year term representing District 32 in southern Queens. But because of term limits, he cannot run for re-election, making the race to replace him something of a last stand for Republicans in the borough.

While Queens has long leaned Democratic, its Republican Party has for decades maintained a presence in citywide party politics, and up until less than a decade ago kept a grip on a handful of public offices.

But waves of immigrants have transformed Queens into one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the nation, while a steady progressive shift in the borough's politics has all but banished Republicans from elected office.

The county party still has a base, in absolute terms: There are roughly 140,000 registered Republicans in Queens, the most of any borough in the city and more than in many large American cities. Those voters have helped two Republican mayors win five elections over the last 30 years in a city that is overwhelmingly Democratic.

But the Queens Republican Party has been hampered by long-running feuds that have driven members out and hindered its ability to embrace those waves of immigrant voters, even though many of them espouse conservative values, said Tom Long, chairman of the Queens County Conservative Party, which endorses many Republicans in Queen races.

And the party has suffered a series of public embarrassments, most recently in February when Philip Grillo, a district leader, was arrested for participating in the Jan. 6 Capitol riots in Washington, D.C. Mr. Grillo retains his position while his case is adjudicated.

''The division is killing the Republican Party,'' Mr. Long said. ''The average person gets disgusted and walks away.''

Such discord has provided an opening for Democrats to eliminate Queens Republicans entirely from public office this year. There are several Democratic candidates vying in the June 22 primary for the chance to claim Mr. Ulrich's seat in the November general election.

District 32 is demographically and ideologically split: The northern portion voted heavily for Joseph R. Biden Jr. in 2020 and has seen the kind of influx of immigrants -- including Latino, Indo-Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Punjabi -- that has made Queens a model of diversity.

To the south, Blue Lives Matter flags and bumper stickers are ubiquitous in neighborhoods like the Rockaways and Breezy Point, a gated community at the southwestern tip of the district that is an enclave of white conservatism. It is one of the few areas in the city that voted overwhelmingly for Donald J. Trump in 2020.

Despite the large number of Republicans in Queens, registered Democrats still outnumber them roughly by three to one in District 32, though that difference is much narrower than the seven-to-one edge that Democrats enjoy boroughwide. Democrats say it is time to replace Mr. Ulrich with a leader who better reflects the immigrants and voters of color who have largely replaced white voters in the district's northern stretches.

To win, they have to defeat Joann Ariola, 62, who is both the chairwoman of the Queens Republican Party and its candidate to save the District 32 seat.

''Being the Republican, there's pressure on me,'' she said, ''But I have lot of support in the district.''

Ms. Ariola, a longtime civic leader in Howard Beach, a mostly white, Republican-leaning neighborhood, is running partly on a tough-on-crime platform that she hopes resonates with voters frustrated with liberal city leaders like Mayor Bill de Blasio, who she says has mismanaged the city and implemented policies that have helped lead to a rise in violent crime.

''Right now, the city is off the track,'' she said. ''It is absolutely a derailed train and needs to be brought back to the center.''

She said cuts in police funding and bail-reform measures have helped turn the city into ''a blood-soaked shooting gallery'' that is driving New Yorkers away. She also opposes the mayor's plan to close Rikers Island and build smaller jails across the five boroughs.

Mr. Ulrich said he was supporting Ms. Ariola, and that he believed she could win in November.

''People in this district vote for the person, not the party,'' he said. ''They are willing to vote for a moderate Republican when the Democrat is too liberal.''

But not all Queen Republicans agree. Ms. Ariola's campaign has already been affected by the kind of vitriolic infighting that has divided borough Republicans for years.

The Queens Republican Patriots, a splinter faction within the county party, backed a local businessman, Steve Sirgiovanni, to run against Ms. Ariola in the primary. Her team responded by getting him ousted from the ballot over his petition filings, a ruling his campaign is appealing.

Joe Concannon, who founded the Queens Republican Patriots in 2018, said party leaders have become more fixated on battling fellow Republicans than on battling Democrats. The focus, he said, should be on building the party through fund-raising, enrollment and recruiting moderate Democrats frustrated with the leftward drift of their party.

For decades, handfuls of Queens Republicans managed to win elections in the borough despite its demographic and political shifts. But in 2012, Councilman Peter Koo, a Republican, switched parties to the Democrats, citing excessive Republican infighting. In 2013, Republican Councilman Dan Halloran, whose belief in Paganism had already made him a controversial figure, left office after becoming embroiled in a bribery scheme to sell a spot on the Republican ballot.

Mr. Concannon complained that the county organization has come under the stranglehold of Bart and John Haggerty, two brothers from Forest Hills who are its vice chairman and executive director. (John Haggerty was convicted in 2011 of stealing $1.1 million in funds from Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's campaign. Released in 2015, he has since resumed a leadership role.)

Mr. Concannon said the brothers helped install Ms. Ariola in 2017 as a figurehead, while retaining the real power in the party.

Bart Haggerty denied Mr. Concannon's accusation. ''Joann Ariola runs the Queens Republican Party,'' he said, and referred further questions to Ms. Ariola.

Ms. Ariola likewise pushed back, calling Mr. Concannon and his supporters ''a group of incompetent people'' without standing in the party.

''They're squawking loudly from the sidelines but that's exactly where they are, on the sidelines,'' she said. ''They're not in the game.''

Despite the infighting, Queens Republicans remain largely united behind their ongoing support for Mr. Trump, and county Democratic leaders see the District 32 race as an opportunity for borough voters to effectively rebuke the county's pro-Trump voters, said Representative Gregory Meeks, a Queens congressman who heads the borough's Democratic Party.

Of course, discord is common within political organizations. Queens Democratic Party leaders have been criticized by more progressive members as remaining too moderate. In a Democratic primary for a City Council seat in Flushing, several candidates recently formed a coalition against Sandra Ung, the candidate backed by county party leaders, as a show of force against the party.

Michael Reich, the executive secretary of the Queens Democratic Party, said it would make a ''full court press'' for the primary victor, including campaign volunteers, help from local Democratic clubs and appearances by local elected Democratic officials.

County Democratic leaders opted not to endorse a candidate in the primary because local district leaders could not agree on a favorite and because it was difficult to isolate a front-runner, given the vagaries of the city's new ranked-choice voting rules, which will allow voters to select their top five candidates.

There are several moderate Democrats in the primary, including Kaled Alamarie, 52, a city planner; Helal Sheikh, 41, a former city schoolteacher; Bella Matias, a founder of an education nonprofit; and Mike Scala, 38, a lawyer and activist from Howard Beach who won the Democratic primary for the council seat in 2017 before losing to Mr. Ulrich.

Another candidate, Felicia Singh, 32, a former teacher, hopes to ride a progressive political wave that has swept much of Queens in recent years, most notably with the 2018 election of Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, whose district includes parts of Queens and the Bronx.

Changing demographics are palpable in Ozone Park, a large part of the district's northern section that in the 1990s was still an Italian stronghold where the mobster John Gotti once had his clubhouse and threw mammoth Fourth of July parties. Today, Bengali, Guyanese and Indian immigrants have moved in, Punjabi music blasts from passing cars and cricket games can be seen in schoolyards.

Ms. Singh, campaigning outside the sari and pizza shops along 101st Street in Ozone Park, promised voters a ''revolution of change.''

Some Democrats believe that November could see not just a defeat for the Queens Republicans, but the election of the district's first nonwhite council member.

Thanks to ranked-choice voting, like-minded groups of voters now have a greater chance of electing a candidate who reflects their preferences -- even if he or she is not their first choice -- rather than splitting their vote among multiple candidates, said Evan Stavisky, a Democratic political strategist.

In one scenario, voters of color could split their votes among multiple candidates of color -- as most of the Democratic candidates are -- and wind up essentially ''agreeing'' on a candidate who may not be their top choice.

Ms. Singh said she would tackle issues that affect ***working-class*** immigrants, like her father, a 66-year-old Indian immigrant who became a victim of the taxi medallion crisis after declaring bankruptcy on his loan, leaving him in danger of losing the family's Ozone Park house.

''Now you have candidates of color who are ready to represent a community that has been neglected,'' she said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/nyregion/queens-republicans-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/nyregion/queens-republicans-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Joann Ariola, above, chairwoman of the Queens Republican Party, is running to keep the borough's last red seat. She's up against Felicia Singh, left, and other Democrats. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACKIE MOLLOY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 9, 2021

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[***When Whites Just Don’t Get It, Part 4; Op-Ed Columnist***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:602T-R3W1-JBG3-61BC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 6, 2020 Saturday 15:39 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

**Length:** 1064 words

**Byline:** Nicholas Kristof

**Highlight:** In this installment in a series on race, responding to a common refrain that, where the history of slavery and racism is concerned, it’s time to move on.

**Body**

WHEN I write about racial inequality in America, one common response from whites is eye-rolling and an emphatic: It’s time to move on.

“As whites, are we doomed to an eternity of apology?” Neil tweeted at me. “When does individual responsibility kick in?”

Terry asked on my Facebook page: “Why are we still being held to actions that took place long ago?”

“How long am I supposed to feel guilty about being white? I bust my hump at work and refrain from living a thug life,” Bradley chimed in. “America is about personal responsibility. ... And really, get past the slavery issue.”

This is the fourth installment in [*a series*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html) [*of columns*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html) [*I’ve written*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html) this year, “When Whites Just Don’t Get It,” and plenty of white readers have responded with anger and frustration at what they see as the “blame game” on race. They acknowledge a horrific history of racial discrimination but also say that we should look forward, not backward. The Supreme Court seems to share this view as it dismantles civil-rights-era rulings on voting rights.

As Dina puts it: “I am tired of the race conversation. It has exasperated me. Just stop. In so many industries, the racial ceiling has been shattered. Our president is black. From that moment on, there were no more excuses.”

If only it were so simple!

Of course, personal responsibility is an issue. Orlando Patterson, the eminent black sociologist, notes [*in a forthcoming book*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html) that 92 percent of black youths agree that it is a “big problem” that black males are “not taking education seriously enough.” And 88 percent agree that it’s a big problem that they are “not being responsible fathers.” That’s why President Obama started “[*My Brother’s Keeper*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html),” to cultivate more prudent behavior among men and boys of color.

But we in white society should be equally ready to shoulder responsibility. In past articles in this series, I’ve looked at black/white economic inequality that is greater in America today than it was in apartheid South Africa, at ongoing discrimination against African-Americans in the labor market and at systematic bias in law enforcement. But these conversations run into a wall: the presumption on the part of so many well-meaning white Americans that racism is a historical artifact. They don’t appreciate the overwhelming evidence that centuries of racial subjugation still shape inequity in the 21st century.

Indeed, a wave of research over the last 20 years has documented the lingering effects of slavery in the United States and South America alike. For example, counties in America that had a higher proportion of slaves in 1860 are still more unequal today, [*according to a scholarly paper published in 2010*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html). The authors called this a “persistent effect of slavery.”

One reason seems to be that areas with slave labor were ruled for the benefit of elite plantation owners. Public schools, libraries and legal institutions lagged, holding back ***working-class*** whites as well as blacks.

Whites often don’t realize that slavery didn’t truly end until long after the Civil War. Douglas Blackmon won a Pulitzer Prize for his devastating history, “[*Slavery by Another Name*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html),” that recounted how U.S. Steel and other American corporations used black slave labor well into the 20th century, through “convict leasing.” Blacks would be arrested for made-up offenses such as “vagrancy” and then would be leased to companies as slave laborers.

Job and housing discrimination also systematically prevented blacks from accumulating wealth. The Federal Housing Administration and other initiatives greatly expanded home ownership and the middle class but deliberately excluded blacks.

That’s one reason why black families have, on average, only about 6 percent as much wealth as white households, why only 44 percent of black families [*own a home*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html) compared with 73 percent for white households.

The inequality continues, particularly in education. De jure segregated schools have been replaced in some areas by de facto segregation.

Those of us who are white have a remarkable capacity for delusions. A majority of whites have [*said in opinion polls*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html) that blacks earn as much as whites and are as healthy as whites. In fact, black median household income is $34,598, compared with $58,270 for non-Hispanic whites, [*according to census data*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html). Black life expectancy is four years shorter than that of whites.

Granted, race is just one thread in a tapestry. The daughters of President and Michelle Obama shouldn’t enjoy affirmative action preference ([*as their dad has acknowledged*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html)), while disadvantaged white kids should.

Yet one element of white privilege today is obliviousness to privilege, including a blithe disregard of the way past subjugation shapes present disadvantage.

I’ve been on a book tour lately. By coincidence, so has one of my Times Op-Ed columnist colleagues, Charles Blow, who is African-American and the author of a powerful memoir, “[*Fire Shut Up in My Bones*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html).” I grew up in a solid middle-class household; Charles was primarily raised by a single mom who initially worked plucking poultry in a factory, and also, for a while, by a grandma in a house with no plumbing.

That Charles has become [*a New York Times columnist*](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/opinion/sunday/nicholas-kristof-after-ferguson-race-deserves-more-attention-not-less.html) does not mean that blacks and whites today have equal access to opportunity, just that some talented and driven blacks manage to overcome the long odds against them. Make no mistake: Charles had to climb a higher mountain than I did.

WE all stand on the shoulders of our ancestors. We’re in a relay race, relying on the financial and human capital of our parents and grandparents. Blacks were shackled for the early part of that relay race, and although many of the fetters have come off, whites have developed a huge lead. Do we ignore this long head start — a facet of white privilege — and pretend that the competition is now fair?

Of course not. If we whites are ahead in the relay race of life, shouldn’t we acknowledge that we got this lead in part by generations of oppression? Aren’t we big enough to make amends by trying to spread opportunity, by providing disadvantaged black kids an education as good as the one afforded privileged white kids?

Can’t we at least acknowledge that in the case of race, William Faulkner was right: “The past is never dead. It’s not even past.”

PHOTO: The unrest in Ferguson, Mo., in August showed how divided by race the nation still is today. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT OLSON/GETTY IMAGES) (SR9)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***Bodegas, Now More Than Ever***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YMD-7721-JBG3-61J7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 9, 2020 Thursday 17:00 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 901 words

**Byline:** Aaron Randle

**Highlight:** Supermarkets are sold out of some essentials. But New Yorkers are turning to the corner stores whose owners often know their names, and still have Purell.

**Body**

Supermarkets are sold out of some essentials. But New Yorkers are turning to the corner stores whose owners often know their names, and still have Purell.

When she touched down at La Guardia Airport in mid-March, Rabyaah Althaibani said she could feel the panic taking hold of New York.

Her iPhone pinged with work-from-home mandates and “something about flattening the curve.” The normally bustling N train was eerily empty. Then she saw the grocery store.

“I’ve been through 9/11, I&#39;ve been through Sandy. I know what panic is and I know what fear feels like,” Ms. Althaibani said. “But this was different.”

She, [*like millions of other New Yorkers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/21/business/coronavirus-freezers-sold-out.html), searched for basics: cold medicine, hand sanitizer and toilet paper. But her normally robust neighborhood Key Food store had been gutted. “It was mayhem. I was lucky to get a bag of rice,” she said.

So Ms. Althaibani turned to a trusted neighborhood gem.

“Those essentials I couldn’t find in the grocery store, they were right there at my bodega,” she said.

As business in New York City ground to a halt — with clothing stores, nail salons, barber shops, museums, movie theaters, concert halls and nightclubs closed — [*bodegas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/21/business/coronavirus-freezers-sold-out.html), the [*small, scrappy 24-hour corner stores*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/21/business/coronavirus-freezers-sold-out.html) most often found in ***working-class*** neighborhoods, were open around the city.

And while supplies of necessary items are depleted in grocery stores and chain stores, many New Yorkers are finding bodega shelves fully stocked.

“The bodega isn’t just where you get your egg and cheese sandwich and your coffee,” said City Councilman Justin Brannan, who lives in and represents the Bay Ridge neighborhood. “They become these places that come to represent stability in an otherwise unknown and unstable environment.”

It’s stability that Ms. Althaibani knows too well. Her son, Ahmed, has Type 1 diabetes. “When the supermarket closes at 9 and Ahmed’s sugar drops and he needs orange juice or something, it’s the bodega that I’ve had to turn to,” she said.

More than just a store, bodegas are oftentimes extensions of the home for many of their customers, Mr. Brannan suggests.

“They provide more than your basic necessities,” Mr. Brannan said. “It’s the check-in moment behind your house. It can’t be underestimated, the value the bodega has in providing a sense of calm and a sense of relief to their communities in times like these.”

Green Garden Deli on Malcolm X Boulevard fills that role for some shoppers in Harlem.

Hand sanitizer was nowhere to be found at the CVS Pharmacy on 125th Street and Lenox Boulevard. A shopper in the Rite Aid on Frederick Douglass Boulevard couldn’t find any there, either. “I’ve been everywhere,” she said with a sigh. “Target, Amazon, CVS. No one’s got hand sanitizer.”

But a few blocks away at Green Garden Deli, there was plenty. “But if you don’t shop here,” said Wadie Obeid, the owner of the bodega, “how would you know?”

Online, sellers were[*capitalizing on supply scarcity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/21/business/coronavirus-freezers-sold-out.html), selling rolls of toilet paper for $10 a piece and bottles of hand sanitizer for $60. But at the Green Garden Deli, Mr. Obeid pointed to a tub of Purell bottles selling for two dollars, his normal rate.

Mr. Obeid said he had noticed a slight uptick in sanitizer purchases from his usual customers, but was unaware of the panic buying some stores were experiencing.

Some New Yorkers have [*complained of*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/21/business/coronavirus-freezers-sold-out.html) bodega [*price gouging*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/21/business/coronavirus-freezers-sold-out.html)on social media.

A spokeswoman for the New York attorney general’s office said that more than 5,000 price gouging complaints have been filed in New York State in March alone, the “vast majority” coming from New York City. The complaints were not classified by store type.

When told about the price gouging of other suppliers, Mr. Obeid’s eyes grew wide with surprise. “As long as the wholesaler keeps the price, so will I,” he said.

Ms. Althaibani’s local bodega is the Parkway Deli &amp; Grill Express in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. The owner, Faisal Amari, is friends with her on Facebook. He knows just how to make the pastrami sandwich her son likes.

As fears of contracting the coronavirus grew, Ms. Althaibani made the decision to send her young daughter, Salma, to Michigan as a health precaution. Ms. Althaibani said Mr. Amari noticed and inquired about the girl after not seeing her for a few days.

“These people aren’t just bodega workers,” Ms. Althaibani said. “They’re a part of our community. They are a critical part of our neighborhood.”

They are also considered essential workers and are putting themselves at risk. “They’re on the front lines,” Mr. Brannan said.

Mr. Amari, who estimates he has at least 100 customers each day, requires his workers to wear protective masks and gloves. “We know this virus is no joke,” he said. “We do the best we can.”

When asked if he was worried about contracting the virus and bringing it home to his family (a wife and four children ranging from 4 to 15 years old), Mr. Amari said he had a wider concern.

“I worry about my employees,” he said. “I worry about the workers and the people in my neighborhood. I kind of feel it is my job to support them.”

At Green Garden Deli in Harlem, Mr. Obeid had a similar mind-set.

“I am here for the neighborhood. Whoever that is,” said Mr. Obeid. “We’re here to serve them, to help them out. That’s the bodega way.”

PHOTO: Rabyaah Althaibani counts on her local bodega, Parkway Deli and Grill Express, in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Victor J. Blue for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 15, 2020

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[***Eddie Glaude Jr., an Expert on James Baldwin, Reveals His Favorite Baldwin Book; By the Book***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:636D-07V1-JBG3-63F2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 22, 2021 Thursday 18:32 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1817 words

**Highlight:** Glaude, the author of “Begin Again,” says that “No Name in the Street” (1972) “tries to offer an account of what happened between Little Rock, Dr. King’s assassination and the emergence of Black Power. Trauma and wound saturate his sentences, and his memory fails him in places. It is a masterpiece at the level of form and substance.”

**Body**

Glaude, the author of “Begin Again,” says that “No Name in the Street” (1972) “tries to offer an account of what happened between Little Rock, Dr. King’s assassination and the emergence of Black Power. Trauma and wound saturate his sentences, and his memory fails him in places. It is a masterpiece at the level of form and substance.”

What books are on your night stand?

I tend to read several books at once (returning to one or the other depending on my mood). So right now I have Octavia Butler’s “Patternmaster,” W. Ralph Eubanks, “A Place Like Mississippi: A Journey Through a Real and Imagined Literary Landscape,” Sarah Bakewell, “How to Live: Or, A Life of Montaigne in One Question and Twenty Attempts at an Answer” and Edwidge Danticat, “The Farming of Bones.”

What’s the last great book you read?

Jesmyn Ward’s “Sing, Unburied, Sing.” I keep returning to this book. It is a novel that feels completely of our time and, without strain or pretense, carries forward the power of our literary tradition. I am attracted to the economy of her prose — words never get in the way of the intensity of the emotion. When she writes about home (we are both from the Mississippi Gulf Coast) I feel it in my gut. I am also haunted by the tree of ghosts in the novel, of all of those who didn’t die right and how that baby, Kayla, quieted them, if just for a moment.

Are there any classic novels that you only recently read for the first time?

Last summer, I found myself reading Thomas Hardy’s “Jude the Obscure.” Right before the country shut down, I joined this amazing reading group with some of my closest friends, and we started with this novel. I can’t seem to let go of the character, Arabella Donn. I also read Jan Carew’s “Black Midas.” I love the rhythm of his sentences. And I love seeing these two books as part of one answer.

Describe your ideal reading experience (when, where, what, how).

Reading outside, in a quiet place, with a glass of Irish whiskey and a cigar. There, when a sentence strikes me or a thought grabs hold, I can look up, especially when I am in my backyard and the trees surround me, and see more than just walls.

What’s your favorite book no one else has heard of?

I am sure people have heard of the book, but I would have to say Jose Saramago’s “Seeing.” It is this jaw-dropping allegory about how quickly democracies can turn into something much more sinister — especially when ordinary people dare to make their positions known. Margaret Jull Costa’s translation is exquisite.

In “Begin Again,” you revisit James Baldwin’s work through the lens of today’s racial injustice. What Baldwin books would you recommend to a beginner?

If you are interested in his nonfiction writings, I would urge you to pick up his “Collected Essays,” edited by Toni Morrison, or “The Price of the Ticket.” Start from the beginning and read it straight through. One can see the continuity of theme across his writings and how the changing conditions of the country shift the accents.

Do you have a personal favorite among Baldwin’s books?

“No Name in the Street” is my favorite. Baldwin referred to the book as “mighty.” Published in 1972, he tries to offer an account of what happened between Little Rock, Dr. King’s assassination and the emergence of Black Power. Trauma and wound saturate his sentences, and his memory fails him in places. It is a masterpiece at the level of form and substance. When I first started writing “Begin Again,” I tried to imitate the form of “No Name.” Failed miserably. I am still trying to figure out how to write history presently, if that makes sense.

Your academic specialty is the intersection of race and religion. Who writes especially well on that subject today, and what’s your favorite book to assign to and discuss with your students at Princeton?

There are some brilliant scholars of race and religion in the country. Many of them were on full display in Henry Louis Gates Jr.’s PBS special on the Black church. My colleagues, Judith Weisenfeld and Wallace Best, come to mind. Lerone Martin, Josef Sorett, Anthea Butler, William Hart, Mayra Rivera, Monica Coleman and Keri Day also stand out. I am really excited that the dissertation of the legendary scholar, Hortense Spillers, will be published by Duke University Press. “Fabrics of History: Essays on the Black Sermon” will have an immediate impact on the field.

To be honest, my favorite book to assign, besides “The Fire Next Time,” is Toni Morrison’s novel “Beloved.” I have been teaching both books for over 20 years. At some point, everyone should read Baby Suggs’s sermon in the clearing. And every one of my students must grapple with the question Baldwin asks on Page 104 of the Vintage edition of “The Fire Next Time”: “What will happen to all that beauty?”

Has a book ever brought you closer to another person, or come between you?

Yes! I loved Ralph Ellison. In my first year of graduate school, I wrote every single paper on him. I wrote a general exam on Ellison’s “Invisible Man” and the French theorist Michel de Certeau. I still think that “Shadow and Act” and “Going to the Territory” are extraordinary works of American criticism. But after reading Arnold Rampersad’s biography of Ellison, I despised the man. The way he treated his mother, his betrayal of Albert Murray — monstrous.

Another book comes to mind. I read Orhan Pamuk’s “The Museum of Innocence” with a friend and we found communion in how we were both unsettled by the novel.

What book would you add to the canon, and which would you remove?

Given my love of “No Name in the Street,” I would add it to the canon. The book I would remove would probably be “The Ambassadors,” by Henry James. I know how important the book is to Baldwin, but James defeats me every time I crack open his work. I prefer his brother, William. His sentences dance. Henry’s, not so much.

What’s the most interesting thing you learned from a book recently?

I should have known this, but I didn’t. In W. Ralph Eubanks’s wonderful book “A Place Like Mississippi,” he mentions Gilbert Mason, a local physician in Biloxi who led a series of “wade-ins” at Biloxi beaches. On April 24, 1960, “hundreds of peaceful Black protesters were beaten by a mob of whites carrying pool cues, clubs, chains, blackjacks, lead pipes and baseball bats.”

Which subjects do you wish more authors would write about?

Honestly, I haven’t thought about this much. I am more concerned with figuring out how to get what is going on in my head on the page. Thinking about the relationship between history, memory, wound and democracy, and trying to find a form to write about it all at once.

What moves you most in a work of literature?

I am moved whenever a writer taps the root and reveals something fundamental about what it means to be human, and she does so with beautiful sentences. I love sentences that cast you into deep waters. I remember reading a long, meandering Faulkner sentence in “As I Lay Dying” on a flight to South Africa. I paced up and down an airplane. Or, I read an Edwidge Danticat sentence in “Breath, Eyes, Memory” that carried so much emotion, with so few words, that I screamed an obscenity.

Which genres do you especially enjoy reading? And which do you avoid?

I love novels and essays. I am not good at reading poetry. Whatever that might mean. I try, but I keep missing something.

How do you organize your books?

Organize is a strong word (LOL). I tend to arrange them according to subject matter and then I group authors together. I might have my Baldwin books sitting next to Harold Bloom sitting next to V. S. Naipaul. I stole a practice from Cornel West. I tend to turn around books that are important to me. I want to see the cover of the book or the face of the writer when I walk into my study or my office at Princeton. They are like companions — walking partners. But generally my library and office are a mess. Books are everywhere. The piles may be organic. They grow and move.

What book might people be surprised to find on your shelves?

Probably Samuel Beckett or T. S. Eliot. People might be shocked to see Borges too.

What’s the best book you’ve ever received as a gift?

A first-edition signed copy of James Baldwin’s “Go Tell It on the Mountain.” Now I am obsessed with finding signed first editions of all of his work.

Who is your favorite fictional hero or heroine? Your favorite antihero or villain?

I have never thought about her as a heroine, but Baby Suggs in “Beloved” stands out among my favorites. She offers the wisdom that empowers Denver to step into the world: “Know it, but go on out the yard.” I live by those words.

My favorite antihero is Bazarov in Turgenev’s “Fathers and Sons.” Quintessentially modern character with an abiding faith in science, but love tore him up in the end.

What kind of reader were you as a child? Which childhood books and authors stick with you most?

I grew up in a ***working-class*** household on the coast of Mississippi. Outside of school, books were not a part of my daily life. My dad read the newspaper every day. But, for the most part, my parents were busy trying to keep a roof over our heads and food on the table. Playing Dungeons &amp; Dragons introduced me to fantasy and science fiction literature. I was more interested in the world of elves and dragons. I loved J. R. R. Tolkien’s “The Hobbit” and “The Lord of the Rings.” And I loved Terry Brooks’s “The Sword of Shannara.” I could have burned down the house reading the book by candlelight underneath my bed.

How have your reading tastes changed over time?

They changed as my world expanded. I was introduced to the world of African American literature at Morehouse College. There I discovered Ralph Ellison and Richard Wright, Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Morrison. I also began to read widely in African American history and politics. The seeds of my philosophical interests were planted during those early college years as well as my love of modernist literature. At each stage in my education, my reading habits evolved. One thing remain constant: The books gave me a language to describe the torrent of emotion I was feeling inside.

If you could require the president to read one book, what would it be?

A one-book syllabus?! Well, given the racial reckoning we face now, I would hand him “No Name in the Street” and beg him to learn the lesson of that betrayal.

You’re organizing a literary dinner party. Which three writers, dead or alive, do you invite?

James Baldwin, W. E. B. Du Bois and Toni Morrison. And I would pray that they all behaved.

What do you plan to read next?

Well, I have to finish Anna Burns’s “Milkman.” Octavia Butler’s “Parable of the Sower” is the next book for my reading group. I also have to dive into Ella Baker’s papers at the Schomburg and return to John Dewey’s “Individualism Old and New.” I love that all of these books/papers are part of the same answer too.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rebecca Clarke FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Stacey Abrams Has a Message for You: Get Involved; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:602G-TBB1-JBG3-634Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 4, 2020 Thursday 10:49 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1046 words

**Byline:** Tayari Jones

**Highlight:** She isn’t Georgia’s governor — she will tell you herself — but in “Our Time Is Now” she still has a blueprint for effective leadership.

**Body**

OUR TIME IS NOW

Power, Purpose, and the Fight for a Fair America

By Stacey Abrams

In 2018, a black woman arrived at her polling place to cast her vote for [*Stacey Abrams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/us/politics/stacey-abrams-georgia.html) in the Georgia gubernatorial race. When she arrived, she was refused a ballot because records showed that she had already voted absentee. Such snafus were rampant, and not just in the state of Georgia. Scores of voters were purged from the rolls and others were forced to wait in lines for hours. This woman was educated, prepared and determined to participate in the democratic process. Eventually the situation was sorted and the woman, [*Stacey Abrams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/us/politics/stacey-abrams-georgia.html), cast a historic vote for herself as the first black woman to represent a major political party as a gubernatorial candidate.

“Our Time Is Now” is not a political memoir or a long-form résumé; rather, it is a striking manifesto, a stirring indictment and a straightforward road map to victory. Abrams is not governor of Georgia, and she begins her speeches reminding audiences of this stinging matter of fact. Nevertheless, she considers her campaign to be a success. After all, “winning doesn’t always mean you get the prize.” If the “prize” is the quantifiable electoral majority, the victory she embraces arose from her campaign’s activation of the “New American Majority — that coalition of people of color, young people and moderate to progressive whites.”

Voters of color, the identifiable face of this new power bloc, were targeted on Election Day. Abrams painstakingly details the “toolbox for effective disenfranchisement” that includes such dirty tricks as the policy of “exact match,” which disqualifies voters because of small typographical inconsistencies between their registration card and state ID. (When explaining how newly married women were purged from the voter rolls because of hyphenated names, Abrams uses “Tanisha Hagen-Thomas” as a hypothetical, rather than, say, “Jane Doe-Smith.”) Other tactics include closing of convenient polling places and rollbacks of early voting. The gutting of the Voting Rights Act in 2013 declared open season on likely Democratic voters. These distressing facts are well known to most viewers of MSNBC and perhaps readers of this book.

[ Read an excerpt from [*“Our Time Is Now.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/us/politics/stacey-abrams-georgia.html)]

Every good politician is a storyteller, and Abrams is a novelist with several titles under her belt. She portrays her constituents and their concerns in such a way that they feel more actual than symbolic, more individual than indicative. When she turns her gaze onto her family, her narrative gifts are in full flower. To illustrate the emotional and psychological effects of voter suppression, she draws a vivid, affectionate and insightful portrait of her grandparents, ***working-class*** Mississippians. In 1968, her grandmother was slated to vote for the first time, yet she was choked with fear of violent retribution. She whispered to her husband, “I don’t want to vote.”

[ This book was one of our most anticipated titles of June. [*See the full list*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/us/politics/stacey-abrams-georgia.html). ]

The most profound and revelatory moment in “Our Time Is Now” is Abrams’s unpacking of this incident, positioning her grandmother’s paralysis as the ultimate goal of voter suppression. “I don’t want to vote” is not the same as “I don’t want my voice heard” or “I have no stake in what laws are passed” or “I don’t care who is elected.” Some citizens, like her grandmother, are afraid. For many others there is a feeling that their vote will not change their lives because of a distrust of the voting system or a feeling that those in power are indifferent to them and their communities.

Just by virtue of their numbers, these “unlikely voters” have the potential to change the fate of America. Abrams believes politicians should court the population who form the backbone of the New American Majority — and she uses her own 2018 campaign to demonstrate both the effectiveness of her strategies and the enormity of the obstacles erected by those who envision a “monochromatic American identity” comprising people with “single-strand identities.” She is confident in her ideas, yet she resists the formation of a cult of personality around herself. She shares her experience not to solicit laurels, but to start a movement. “I’m a good candidate,” she acknowledges, “but my point is: Everyone running for office can try this at home.”

Reared in a household of engaged citizens — the type pollsters call “super voters” because they participate in every single election — Abrams takes as gospel that elections matter. When she learned that there would be no runoff for the Georgia race, she cycled through the stages of grief until she replaced “acceptance” with a phase of her own, “plotting.” She launched Fair Fight Action and Fair Fight PAC to combat voter suppression and Fair Count to address the matter of the census. “Agitation is my favorite part of the political process,” she says, and through these organizations, she hit the ground running.

The most basic distillation of Abrams’s philosophy for political change is protest plus participation. Perhaps her unusual position as both a political insider and outsider is best captured in an anecdote shared early in “Our Time Is Now.” The year was 1992 and Abrams was a student at Spelman College. To protest the Confederate battle emblem, she burned the Georgia state flag on the steps of the Capitol. However, she followed the law and secured a permit first.

With refreshing transparency and candor, Stacey Abrams never conceals her ambition and dedication to transforming the system from within. As our democracy faces unprecedented peril, her time is now.

Tayari Jones is the author of “An American Marriage.” She is the Charles Howard Candler professor of English and creative writing at Emory University. The most basic distillation of Abrams’s philosophy for political change is protest plus participation. OUR TIME IS NOW Power, Purpose, and the Fight for a Fair America By Stacey Abrams 304 pp. Henry Holt & Company. $27.

PHOTO: Stacey Abrams PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN D. LILES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Related Articles**

* [*Stacey Abrams Wants More Than the Vice Presidency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/us/politics/stacey-abrams-georgia.html)

1. [*Stacey Abrams Says She’s Open to Being Vice President for Any Democratic Nominee*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/us/politics/stacey-abrams-georgia.html)
2. [*For Stacey Abrams, a Date With History — or at Least the People Who Write It*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/us/politics/stacey-abrams-georgia.html)

**Load-Date:** January 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***And Then There Was One: G.O.P. Defends Its Last Seat in Queens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62M6-68T1-JBG3-653B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 7, 2021 Friday 15:58 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1764 words

**Byline:** Corey Kilgannon

**Highlight:** The party struggles to hold on in an increasingly diverse borough, even as it fights its own internal battles.

**Body**

The party struggles to hold on in an increasingly diverse borough, even as it fights its own internal battles.

In heavily Democratic Queens, Councilman Eric Ulrich is a political oddity: He’s the only Republican elected to public office in the borough, and one of the only ones remaining in New York City outside of Staten Island.

“One is the loneliest number,” Mr. Ulrich said.

A white moderate, Mr. Ulrich has won four elections over his 12-year term representing District 32 in southern Queens. But because of term limits, he cannot run for re-election, making the race to replace him something of a last stand for Republicans in the borough.

While Queens has long leaned Democratic, its [*Republican*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/21/us/politics/republicans-cities-elections-new-york.html) Party has for decades maintained a presence in citywide party politics, and up until less than a decade ago kept a grip on a handful of public offices.

But waves of immigrants have transformed Queens into one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the nation, while a steady progressive shift in the borough’s politics has all but banished Republicans from elected office.

The county party still has a base, in absolute terms: There are roughly 140,000 registered Republicans in Queens, the most of any borough in the city and more than in many large American cities. Those voters have helped two Republican mayors win five elections over the last 30 years in a city that is overwhelmingly Democratic.

But the Queens Republican Party has been hampered by long-running feuds that have driven members out and hindered its ability to embrace those waves of immigrant voters, even though many of them espouse conservative values, said Tom Long, chairman of the Queens County Conservative Party, which endorses many Republicans in Queen races.

And the party has suffered a series of public embarrassments, most recently in February when Philip Grillo, a district leader, was arrested for participating in the Jan. 6 Capitol riots in Washington, D.C. Mr. Grillo retains his position while his case is adjudicated.

“The division is killing the Republican Party,” Mr. Long said. “The average person gets disgusted and walks away.”

Such discord has provided an opening for Democrats to eliminate Queens Republicans entirely from public office this year. There are several Democratic candidates vying in the June 22 primary for the chance to claim Mr. Ulrich’s seat in the November general election.

District 32 is demographically and ideologically split: The northern portion voted heavily for Joseph R. Biden Jr. in 2020 and has seen the kind of influx of immigrants — including Latino, Indo-Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Punjabi — that has made Queens a model of diversity.

To the south, Blue Lives Matter flags and bumper stickers are ubiquitous in neighborhoods like the Rockaways and Breezy Point, a gated community at the southwestern tip of the district that is an enclave of white conservatism. It is one of the few areas in the city that voted overwhelmingly for Donald J. Trump in 2020.

Despite the large number of Republicans in Queens, registered Democrats still outnumber them roughly by three to one in District 32, though that difference is much narrower than the seven-to-one edge that Democrats enjoy boroughwide. Democrats say it is time to replace Mr. Ulrich with a leader who better reflects the immigrants and voters of color who have largely replaced white voters in the district’s northern stretches.

To win, they have to defeat Joann Ariola, 62, who is both the chairwoman of the Queens Republican Party and its candidate to save the District 32 seat.

“Being the Republican, there’s pressure on me,” she said, “But I have lot of support in the district.”

Ms. Ariola, a longtime civic leader in Howard Beach, a mostly white, Republican-leaning neighborhood, is running partly on a tough-on-crime platform that she hopes resonates with voters frustrated with liberal city leaders like Mayor Bill de Blasio, who she says has mismanaged the city and implemented policies that have helped lead to a rise in violent crime.

“Right now, the city is off the track,” she said. “It is absolutely a derailed train and needs to be brought back to the center.”

She said cuts in police funding and bail-reform measures have helped turn the city into “a blood-soaked shooting gallery” that is driving New Yorkers away. She also opposes the mayor’s plan to close Rikers Island and build smaller jails across the five boroughs.

Mr. Ulrich said he was supporting Ms. Ariola, and that he believed she could win in November.

“People in this district vote for the person, not the party,” he said. “They are willing to vote for a moderate Republican when the Democrat is too liberal.”

But not all Queen Republicans agree. Ms. Ariola’s campaign has already been affected by the kind of vitriolic infighting that has divided borough Republicans for years.

The Queens Republican Patriots, a splinter faction within the county party, backed a local businessman, Steve Sirgiovanni, to run against Ms. Ariola in the primary. Her team responded by getting him ousted from the ballot over his petition filings, a ruling his campaign is appealing.

Joe Concannon, who founded the Queens Republican Patriots in 2018, said party leaders have become more fixated on battling fellow Republicans than on battling Democrats. The focus, he said, should be on building the party through fund-raising, enrollment and recruiting moderate Democrats frustrated with the leftward drift of their party.

For decades, handfuls of Queens Republicans managed to win elections in the borough despite its demographic and political shifts. But in 2012, Councilman Peter Koo, a Republican, switched parties to the Democrats, citing excessive Republican infighting. In 2013, Republican Councilman Dan Halloran, whose belief in Paganism had already made him a controversial figure, left office after becoming embroiled in a bribery scheme to sell a spot on the Republican ballot.

Mr. Concannon complained that the county organization has come under the stranglehold of Bart and John Haggerty, two brothers from Forest Hills who are its vice chairman and executive director. (John Haggerty was convicted in 2011 of stealing $1.1 million in funds from Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg’s campaign. Released in 2015, he has since resumed a leadership role.)

Mr. Concannon said the brothers helped install Ms. Ariola in 2017 as a figurehead, while retaining the real power in the party.

Bart Haggerty denied Mr. Concannon’s accusation. “Joann Ariola runs the Queens Republican Party,” he said, and referred further questions to Ms. Ariola.

Ms. Ariola likewise pushed back, calling Mr. Concannon and his supporters “a group of incompetent people” without standing in the party.

“They’re squawking loudly from the sidelines but that’s exactly where they are, on the sidelines,” she said. “They’re not in the game.”

Despite the infighting, Queens Republicans remain largely united behind their ongoing support for Mr. Trump, and county Democratic leaders see the District 32 race as an opportunity for borough voters to effectively rebuke the county’s pro-Trump voters, said Representative Gregory Meeks, a Queens congressman who heads the borough’s Democratic Party.

Of course, discord is common within political organizations. Queens Democratic Party leaders have been criticized by more progressive members as remaining too moderate. In a Democratic primary for a City Council seat in Flushing, several candidates recently [*formed a coalition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/21/us/politics/republicans-cities-elections-new-york.html) against Sandra Ung, the candidate backed by county party leaders, as a show of force against the party.

Michael Reich, the executive secretary of the Queens Democratic Party, said it would make a “full court press” for the primary victor, including campaign volunteers, help from local Democratic clubs and appearances by local elected Democratic officials.

County Democratic leaders opted not to endorse a candidate in the primary because local district leaders could not agree on a favorite and because it was difficult to isolate a front-runner, given the vagaries of the city’s new ranked-choice voting rules, which will allow voters to select their top five candidates.

There are several moderate Democrats in the primary, including Kaled Alamarie, 52, a city planner; Helal Sheikh, 41, a former city schoolteacher; Bella Matias, a founder of an education nonprofit; and Mike Scala, 38, a lawyer and activist from Howard Beach who won the Democratic primary for the council seat in 2017 before losing to Mr. Ulrich.

Another candidate, Felicia Singh, 32, a former teacher, hopes to ride a progressive political wave that has swept much of Queens in recent years, most notably with the 2018 election of Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, whose district includes parts of Queens and the Bronx.

Changing demographics are palpable in Ozone Park, a large part of the district’s northern section that in the 1990s was still an Italian stronghold where the mobster John Gotti once had his clubhouse and threw mammoth Fourth of July parties. Today, Bengali, Guyanese and Indian immigrants have moved in, Punjabi music blasts from passing cars and cricket games can be seen in schoolyards.

Ms. Singh, campaigning outside the sari and pizza shops along 101st Street in Ozone Park, promised voters a “revolution of change.”

Some Democrats believe that November could see not just a defeat for the Queens Republicans, but the election of the district’s first nonwhite council member.

Thanks to ranked-choice voting, like-minded groups of voters now have a greater chance of electing a candidate who reflects their preferences — even if he or she is not their first choice — rather than splitting their vote among multiple candidates, said Evan Stavisky, a Democratic political strategist.

In one scenario, voters of color could split their votes among multiple candidates of color — as most of the Democratic candidates are — and wind up essentially “agreeing” on a candidate who may not be their top choice.

Ms. Singh said she would tackle issues that affect ***working-class*** immigrants, like her father, a 66-year-old Indian immigrant who became a victim of the taxi medallion crisis after declaring bankruptcy on his loan, leaving him in danger of losing the family’s Ozone Park house.

“Now you have candidates of color who are ready to represent a community that has been neglected,” she said.

PHOTOS: Joann Ariola, above, chairwoman of the Queens Republican Party, is running to keep the borough’s last red seat. She’s up against Felicia Singh, left, and other Democrats. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JACKIE MOLLOY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Filmmaker’s Suit Says A&amp;E Networks Suppressed ‘Watergate’ Series***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:628F-MK21-DXY4-X070-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 22, 2021 Monday 11:43 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1648 words

**Byline:** Julia Jacobs and Nicole Sperling

**Highlight:** The director, Charles Ferguson, said in a lawsuit that an executive was concerned about the “negative reaction it would provoke among Trump supporters and the Trump administration.”

**Body**

The director, Charles Ferguson, said in a lawsuit that an executive was concerned about the “negative reaction it would provoke among Trump supporters and the Trump administration.”

“Watergate,” a four-hour documentary examining the scandal that ended Richard Nixon’s presidency, had its world premiere in 2018 at the Telluride Film Festival, an event known to foretell future Oscar nominations. It went on to be shown at the New York Film Festival and several others, collecting positive [*reviews*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html) [*that highlighted*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html) allusions the series made to the Trump presidency.

It aired on the History Channel over three days in early November, just before the 2018 midterm elections. To the filmmaker’s surprise, it was never broadcast on American television again.

The writer and director of the documentary, the award-winning filmmaker Charles Ferguson, is now suing the company that owns the History Channel, [*A&amp;E Networks*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html), asserting it suppressed the dissemination of his mini-series because it was worried about potential backlash to allusions the documentary makes to the Trump White House.

In the lawsuit filed Friday in State Supreme Court in Manhattan, Mr. Ferguson accuses the company of attempting to delay the documentary until after the 2018 midterm elections because a History Channel executive feared it would offend the White House and Trump supporters.

“He was concerned about the impact of ‘Watergate’ upon ratings in ‘red states,’” the lawsuit said of the executive, Eli Lehrer, “as well as the negative reaction it would provoke among Trump supporters and the Trump administration.”

Mr. Ferguson resisted that plan, and the mini-series ultimately aired shortly before Election Day. But the filmmaker contends the documentary was given short shrift, despite acclaim in the film industry and previous assurances that it would receive “extremely prominent treatment.”

The lawsuit describes the treatment of the documentary as part of a “pattern and practice of censorship and suppression of documentary content” at A&amp;E Networks, and cites several others that it says were subject to attempted manipulation for political or economic reasons.

A&amp;E called the lawsuit meritless and the assertion that the documentary was suppressed “absurd,” saying its decision to not rebroadcast it additional times was based on lower than expected ratings.

In a statement, the company said it has routinely given a platform to storytellers “to present their unvarnished vision without regard for partisan politics.” It pointed to its partnership with former President Bill Clinton, formed during the Trump administration, to produce a documentary series about the American presidency and the fact that a subsidiary, Propagate, had produced the four-part docu-series “Hillary,” on the life of Hillary Clinton.

“A&amp;E invested millions of dollars in this project and promoted it extensively,” the company said of “Watergate” in its statement. “Among other efforts, we hired multiple outside PR agencies, provided advance screeners to the press, and submitted it to film festivals and for awards consideration.”

Mr. Ferguson’s “Watergate” is a deep dive into events set off by the 1972 break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters and the cover up by the Nixon administration. It includes interviews with people who were involved in the events — such as John Dean, President Nixon’s White House counsel — as well as reporters who covered them, including Bob Woodward, Carl Bernstein and Lesley Stahl. The New York Times’s co-chief film critic, [*A.O. Scott, wrote*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html) that the documentary tells a story that is “part political thriller and part courtroom drama, with moments of Shakespearean grandeur and swerves into stumblebum comedy,” though other reviews [*panned*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html) the film’s re-creations by actors.

[*Mr. Ferguson*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html), who is best known for his Oscar-winning 2010 documentary “Inside Job,” said that when he started pitching the project in 2015, he imagined it as a straightforward “historical detective story.” But, the suit says, a drumbeat of events involving the Trump administration made him realize the documentary’s renewed political relevance. In 2017, he watched as Mr. Trump [*fired his F.B.I. director*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html), as the Justice Department [*appointed a special counsel*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html) to oversee the investigation into ties between President Trump’s campaign and Russian officials, and as the potential for impeachment loomed.

The series — which Mr. Ferguson said cost about $4.5 million to produce — does not mention Mr. Trump’s name, but the documentary’s subtitle, “How We Learned to Stop an Out of Control President,” was a nod toward his administration.

The lawsuit hinges on a conversation between Mr. Ferguson and A&amp;E executives in June 2018, before the film was released. According to the lawsuit, Mr. Lehrer, executive vice president and head of programming at the History Channel, said at that meeting that he would seek to delay the premiere of “Watergate” and “sharply lower” its publicity profile, expressing concern about its relevance to the politics of the moment and the reaction it would provoke from the Trump administration and Trump supporters.

Mr. Ferguson has worked to collect pieces of evidence to support his contentions, among them an email he provided to The New York Times in which Mr. Lehrer acknowledged discussing the bipartisan nature of the network’s audience. In the email, Mr. Lehrer also denied the network was trying to suppress the documentary, writing that the rationale for exploring different airdates was to avoid the series getting swallowed up by heavy sports programming and election coverage.

Mr. Ferguson’s contract did not specify how many times the network would show the documentary or whether it would receive theatrical distribution, though successful ones are typically broadcast multiple times.

Nielsen ratings from the time show that “Watergate” earned only 529,000 viewers when it aired, including seven days of delayed viewing, compared to History Channel’s other multi-episode documentaries like “Grant” which bowed in May to 4.4 million viewers, or “Washington,” which drew an audience of 3.3 million in February 2020.

Had the ratings been stronger, A&amp;E says, it would have broadcast the series multiple times and it would have had a greater chance of securing additional licenses either with a streaming service or with international distributors.

“The fact is that Watergate, which premiered in prime time on Mr. Ferguson’s desired date, drastically underachieved in the ratings, which was disappointing to all of us,” the company said in its statement.

But the lawsuit says A&amp;E Networks damaged Mr. Ferguson financially by, among other things, failing to make any “meaningful” distribution deals or arrange for advertising outside of the network. It says Mr. Ferguson traded a lower-than-normal director’s fee in his contract for a higher cut of the royalties, believing that if the documentary was successful, the majority of the viewership revenue would stem from sales to streaming services, foreign cable channels and other customers.

One of the A&amp;E executives named as a defendant, Michael Stiller — the vice president of programming and development at the History Channel — had told Mr. Ferguson that there would be rebroadcasts and required him to make slightly shorter versions of the episodes for daytime slots, but those never occurred, according to the lawsuit.

The company noted the documentary is available on several services, which include iTunes, [*Amazon Prime Video*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html) and Google Play, including its own video-on-demand platform, History Vault.

Mr. Ferguson’s lawsuit argues that the company executives interfered with his contract, and defamed him by telling industry executives he was difficult to work with, thereby costing him work. In addition to Mr. Lehrer and Mr. Stiller, the other named defendants include Robert Sharenow, the network’s president of programming, and Molly Thompson, its former head of documentary films. Ms. Thompson declined to comment. Mr. Lehrer, Mr. Stiller and Mr. Sharenow did not respond to requests for comment.

The lawsuit cites several examples where Mr. Ferguson said he learned about conflicts between A&amp;E executives and documentary filmmakers, including a dispute concerning [*“Gretchen Carlson: Breaking the Silence,”*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html) a 2019 documentary on Lifetime about sexual harassment in ***working-class*** industries. The suit says A&amp;E executives questioned including information about McDonald’s, an advertiser. The information was ultimately included after the producers fought for it, but the episode was only aired once, on a Saturday at 10 p.m., the lawsuit said. A spokeswoman for Ms. Carlson declined to comment.

The lawsuit also says Mr. Ferguson learned about a dispute regarding a 2019 A&amp;E documentary called [*“Biography: The Trump Dynasty”*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment/movies/la-et-mn-watergate-review-20181018-story.html) that examines Mr. Trump’s life and family history. According to the lawsuit, A&amp;E executives wanted the production company behind the documentary, Left/Right Productions, to add in the voice of a “Trump apologist” who could “justify” aspects of Mr. Trump’s background, a request that the suit says generated “significant tensions” between the network executives and the production company executives.

Left/Right, which works with The New York Times on some documentary productions, did not respond to requests for comment. The Times did not have a role in any of the programming cited in Mr. Ferguson’s suit.

Jack Begg contributed research.

PHOTOS: A break-in at the Watergate office building led to the end of Richard M. Nixon’s presidency. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, VIA HISTORY CHANNEL) (C1); Charles Ferguson, whose film “Inside Job” won an Oscar in 2011, says that A&amp;E Networks did not fulfill a promise to fully promote his documentary on the Watergate scandal. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARKUS SCHREIBER/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (C4)

**Load-Date:** May 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Bernie Sanders Is Making a Big Mistake***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8N-DCF1-JBG3-605J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 8, 2020 Wednesday 13:07 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1010 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** It has to do with respect.

**Body**

It has to do with respect.

The last four presidents — Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump — are four very different politicians. But they have one crucial similarity: They all tried to appeal to voters who weren’t obvious supporters.

Clinton promised a “third way,” distinct from traditional Democratic or Republican policies. Bush ran on compassionate conservatism. Obama said that red and blue America shared more in common than pundits claimed.

Even Trump, radical as he is, flouted Republican orthodoxy by sounding like a populist Democrat on Social Security, Medicare and trade. Polls showed that voters [*judged*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912) Trump to be more moderate than any Republican nominee since the 1970s.

The art of peeling off voters — those in the middle or those who aren’t ideological — may be the most important skill in politics. It doesn’t require a mushy centrist policy agenda, either. Trump has made that clear. So, in earlier eras, did Ronald Reagan and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

How? By understanding that politics is inescapably performative. Voters respond to signals. They respond to gestures of respect from politicians who are willing to say, in effect: We may not agree on everything, but I see you and understand what matters to you.

The newly energetic American left has largely rejected this approach, choosing instead to believe a comforting myth about swing voters being extinct and turnout being a cure-all. It’s a big mistake.

Before going further, I want to make clear that this is not a column urging Democrats to return to Clintonian centrism. I’m making a different case — that the left is hurting its own ability to win elections and enact sweeping change, by insisting on an orthodox version of progressivism.

To put it another way: Can you think of one way that [*Bernie Sanders*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912) is signaling respect to voters outside of his base?

He has taken a nearly maximalist liberal position on every major issue. It’s especially striking from him, because he has shown over his career that he grasps the importance of building a coalition.

Sanders once won over blue-collar Vermonters with help from a moderate position on guns. “We need a sensible debate about gun control which overcomes the cultural divide that exists in this country,” [*he said*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912) in 2015, “and I think I can play an important role in this.” He was also once an heir to organized labor’s skepticism of large-scale immigration. “At a time when the middle class is shrinking, the last thing we need is to bring over in a period of years, millions of people into this country who are prepared to lower wages for American workers,” [*he said*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912) in 2007.

Now, though, Sanders has evidently decided that progressives will no longer accept impurities — or even much tactical vagueness. He, along with Elizabeth Warren, has embraced policies that are popular on the left [*and nowhere else*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912): a ban on fracking; the decriminalization of border crossings; the provision of federal health benefits to undocumented immigrants; the elimination of private health insurance.

For many progressives, each of these issues has become a moral litmus test. Any restriction of immigration is considered a denial of human rights. Any compromise on guns or health care is an acceptance of preventable deaths.

And I understand the progressive arguments on these issues. But turning every compromise into an existential moral failing is not a smart way to practice politics. It comforts the persuaded while alienating the persuadable.

F.D.R. and Reagan understood this, as did Abraham Lincoln and many great social reformers, including Frederick Douglass, Jane Addams, Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesar Chavez. Strong political movements can accept impurity on individual issues in the service of a larger goal: winning.

The impurities will still produce bitter complaints, of course. F.D.R. and Reagan were both lambasted by their allies at times. But few of those allies abandoned them. Victory is an excellent balm.

Over the past few years, the progressive left has made impressive progress, elevating issues like the $15 minimum wage, expanded Medicare and free college. A central figure in the movement, Sanders, is now the favorite to win the Democratic nomination.

But progressives are still a very long way from achieving the changes they seek. Republicans control the Senate, and a conservative majority runs the Supreme Court. Trump has an excellent chance to win re-election and usher in a dark era for American progressivism.

Faced with the potential of either large gains or historic losses, progressives would be wise to stop believing only what they want to believe. Don’t cherry-pick polls to claim that most Americans actually favor a ban on private insurance. Don’t imagine that millions of heretofore silent progressive supporters will materialize on Election Day. In the 2018 midterms, Sanders-style candidates lost swing districts, while candidates demonstrating respect to swing voters [*won again and again*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912).

Beating Trump in November will be even harder. And uncomfortable compromises will make it more likely.

For Sanders, that may mean walking back his position on fracking, which [*threatens*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912) his chances in must-win Pennsylvania. It could also mean repeating some of his earlier arguments about the need for border security and immigration restrictions. Many ***working-class*** voters, including people of color, [*agree*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912) with that.

Sanders is not an ideal Democratic nominee. But he does have some big strengths. One of them is the passionate support he inspires, which gives him an opportunity to reach out to new voters while holding on to his base.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912).

Listen to [*“The Argument” podcast*](https://twitter.com/ForecasterEnten/status/883742412279078912) every Thursday morning, with Ross Douthat, Michelle Goldberg and David Leonhardt.

PHOTO: Bernie Sanders speaking at a rally in San Antonio on Saturday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Simon Doonan Has Been Keeping Busy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6286-4JP1-JBG3-60SX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 21, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1491 words

**Byline:** By Amanda Fortini

**Body**

While you were tweeting away your quarantine, the former creative director of Barneys published two books. One about self-help. And one about Keith Haring (and self-help).

A little more than a year ago, I visited the Barneys Manhattan flagship store while it was in the final throes of its liquidation sale. It looked like the rapture had just happened. The pale beige carpet and matching velvet sofas were strewn with partnerless shoes and discarded pieces of trash, as though feral shoppers had tossed them on the floor when they lost interest.

I was, admittedly, shocked: The department store had always been, for me, a bastion of '90s-era luxury and sophistication, elegant if mostly unaffordable. In retrospect, its demise was perhaps a harbinger of the bizarre new world to come. Barneys now feels like an artifact of a bygone era.

As does Simon Doonan, who was creative director of Barneys for more than three decades, and the mastermind behind its memorably outré window displays. I mean this as a compliment. Into this tech-heavy, bleakly monotonous moment we are now living through, he arrives with a pragmatic, rather old-fashioned perspective that feels as bracing as an ice bath.

In the first of his two recent books -- he has written 11 -- ''How to Be Yourself: Life-Changing Advice From a Reckless Contrarian'' (Phaidon), Mr. Doonan, who calls himself ''an extremely skeptical self-help guru,'' advises people to step away from the screens and take time to discover, cultivate and express one's authentic inner person.

Social media, he writes, is ''a distraction from the real work, the heavy lifting, the development of your true self'' -- an almost radical opinion at a time when TikTok creators are treated as auteurs.

Mr. Doonan is like your bossy, eccentric uncle with perfect taste and inflexible ideas. ''I do not have kids, but like many aging baby boomer nonparents,'' he writes, ''I am an expert on parenting....''

The book, a fun little trifle that includes numerous photos and large-print quotes from various celebrities (Keith Richards to E.B. White, Andy Warhol to Lizzo) on primary-colored pages, is written in a snappy, entertaining, Diana Vreeland-esque style.

On family: ''I see siblings as functional items.''

On wearing black: ''At one point, it meant you were a radical outlaw; now it means you work at the MAC counter.''

On Prince Harry and Meghan Markle naming their son ''Archie,'' and how it has endeared them to the public: ''It was as if they threw 500 years of encumbering European history out the window and gave him a dachshund name.''

The advice he dispenses is the kind of unvarnished, unapologetic counsel one doesn't often get these days, when people are afraid of offending, well, anybody.

But Mr. Doonan, whose ***working-class*** parents dropped his sister and him off at an orphanage for affordable day care (''Welcome to my Little Dorrit years'') -- and who held multiple factory jobs before landing his luxury department store post -- has guidance that is sensible, useful and refreshing: Pay your bills. Show up to work early. Get your hands dirty. ''Put down your phone, leave the house, and start walking,'' he writes.

But how to be oneself once you've put down your phone?

Like a '50s housewife, Mr. Doonan believes one should start with the exterior. He calls vanity ''a life-affirming force, a gesture of creativity and optimism, an antidepressant with no bad side-effects,'' and he urges readers to put time, effort and imagination into their appearance, an endeavor that can involve tailoring one's clothes, adopting a particular hairstyle, or alighting on a signature flourish -- in Mr. Doonan's case, flower printed button-down dress shirts in Liberty of London fabric.

When it comes to décor, he is similarly unforgiving, asserting that ''not giving a toss about your décor is a crime against humanity, a missed opportunity for you and a source of PTSD for others.''

Are you an ''emperor of camp'' like Liberace, a burlesque queen living in ''a satin upholstered jewelry box'' like Dita von Teese, or so idiosyncratic that you belong among ''the unclassifiables,'' à la Phyllis Diller, who has a room dedicated to her wigs? It doesn't matter, as long as your home is an aria of personal expression. Lack of money, he adds, should not be an obstacle, since, in aesthetic matters, it tends to be inversely proportional to taste.

THE PROBLEM with many self-help books is that they are gauzy and vague, their principles deracinated from any real-life examples. ''How to Be Yourself'' mostly avoids this common pitfall, as Mr. Doonan takes readers on an anthropological tour of people he admires and includes mini-histories of influential mentors.

Still, reading the second book Mr. Doonan recently published, ''Keith Haring,'' about the prolific late artist, underscores an idea I have long held to be true: Biography is the best self-help. The principles of living arise organically from the story of an exemplary life -- or from a life that was not so exemplary. The lessons have not been detached from their origins.

In this slim volume, Mr. Doonan recounts the story of a driven young man from the small town of Kutztown, Pa., who drew compulsively from a young age, dropped out of commercial art school, and moved to New York City in 1978 ''in search of intensity -- sexual, professional, emotional, and artistic.''

Inspired by the graffiti movement, he started defacing public buildings and drawing his now famous cartoon iconography -- the crawling baby, the dog, the flying pyramids, the dancing man -- on vacant ad spaces in the subway. ''Art,'' he wrote in his journal, ''is for everybody.''

In a few short years, he had gained a cult following, and by age 25, he was a world-famous pop artist in the vein of Andy Warhol. Like Mr. Warhol, he treated art as a business, and his Pop Shop, which he opened in 1986 out of an impulse to offer his art in the affordable form of T-shirts and buttons, was one of a kind.

Mr. Haring died from AIDS only a few years later, in 1990, at 31. His meteoric rise and intense, compressed period of productivity and fame -- in 1987 alone, he had six solo exhibits and painted five public murals -- seem to have been awaiting Mr. Doonan's swift, jaunty approach.

Mr. Haring's story is recounted in the present tense, as though the artist is Mr. Doonan's friend or roommate. ''Keith is now living a life of bohemian glamour and loving it. Although he never turns his back on 'the people,''' Mr. Doonan writes, ''his infatuation with fabulosity is undeniable.''

Mr. Doonan is a populist with a love of glamour, and you can see his deep admiration for Mr. Haring, whose path exemplifies certain ideas Mr. Doonan holds dear. Mr. Haring was, for example, impressively determined and resourceful, funding his art and his autodidacticism with a series of menial jobs.

After quitting the Ivy School of Professional Art in Pittsburgh, he found work as a dishwasher at a health food restaurant and as an assistant cook at the Fisher Scientific Corporation, then got a maintenance job at the Pittsburgh Arts and Crafts Center, where he attended classes informally and availed himself of the library there.

His willingness to do whatever it took, Mr. Doonan writes approvingly, ''is a measure of his single-minded, uncomplaining approach to life, his resilience and his inability to accept defeat.''

Mr. Doonan also emphasizes that Mr. Haring had an ''ability to extract ideas, beauty, philosophy and positivity'' from even ''crummy situations,'' and indeed Mr. Haring had his first ''show'' while working at Fisher, on a wall in a cafeteria. It was announced in the weekly menu: ''Keith is employed in our cafeteria.''

''Keith Haring'' is an installment in Lives of the Artists (Laurence King Publishing), a collection of brief artist biographies inspired by Giorgio Vasari's 16th century originals, which aim to discuss the life rather than the work.

But if this delightful book has a weakness, it's that we are left with only a hazy sense of Mr. Haring's art -- the massive scale of his murals, the fluidity of his lines. This is, in part, a function of his process: ''the whole sort of graffiti performance aspect,'' as Mr. Haring himself put it. As with Jackson Pollock, it helped to see him in motion.

Yet Mr. Haring pictograms have also become so ubiquitous -- appearing on posters, T-shirts, socks, Swatches, at Uniqlo -- that it's difficult to remember that the introduction of cartoons and graffiti into the realm of fine art once felt strikingly new. As did his treatment of serious issues, like AIDS and the crack epidemic, in bright, playful images.

The book doesn't include photos of Mr. Haring's drawings or murals, but there are many of the slim, sweet-faced young man who believed art was for the people, but who also really loved being famous -- and didn't see these as contradictory impulses. Neither does Mr. Doonan.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/style/simon-doonan-books-self-help-keith-haring.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/style/simon-doonan-books-self-help-keith-haring.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Simon Doonan, above, recently released a book of advice on lifestyle and aesthetic matters, below and below right, and a slim volume on the brief life of Keith Haring, bottom. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMY LOMBARD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

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LAURENCE KING PUBLISHING)

**Load-Date:** March 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Atlanta Killings Shine a Spotlight on a Bigotry on the Rise***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627R-WXX1-JBG3-63ST-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 19, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1523 words

**Byline:** By John Eligon, Thomas Fuller and Jill Cowan

**Body**

Amid fear, sadness and pain, the shootings in the Atlanta area have generated anger over the country's longstanding failure to address anti-Asian discrimination.

Video clips of disturbing attacks on the street. Insults hurled by politicians. Derogatory graffiti scrawled on businesses.

For most of the last year, Asian-Americans have sounded the alarm over the rising discrimination they have experienced and witnessed, fueled in part by racist language and false claims about the coronavirus by former President Donald J. Trump and other public officials. Celebrities, activists and influencers on social media have implored people to stop the hate against Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Then came the fatal shootings in Georgia of eight people, six of them women of Asian descent.

Amid fear, sadness and pain, the carnage has evoked another emotion among some Asian-Americans: anger over the country's longstanding failure to take discrimination against them seriously.

Some scholars and activists said Tuesday's massacre was unsurprising after public officials and popular culture have for years downplayed the dangers of bias and stereotypes against Asians.

Although Asian-Americans, like other minority groups, have endured a long tradition of deadly violence, the threats and discrimination they continue to face are often trivialized as harmless insults. In many cases, some said, people are reluctant to even acknowledge that attacks against Asian-Americans could be racially motivated, as happened on Wednesday when a law enforcement official in Georgia seemed to dismiss racial animus as a motive in the shootings.

Instead, he said the suspect, Robert Aaron Long, who is white, was having ''a really bad day'' and cited Mr. Long's statement that he was driven by a sex addiction, and not racial bias.

Even when anti-Asian violence is acknowledged, experts say, it is sometimes casually dismissed as an isolated episode, rather than a core part of the Asian-American story.

''There's a tendency to not believe that violence against Asian-Americans is real,'' said Angela Hsu, 52, a lawyer in suburban Atlanta. ''It's almost like you need something really, really jarring to make people believe that there is discrimination against Asian-Americans.''

Without a deeper, widespread understanding of, or belief in, the dangers that Asian-Americans face, it's difficult for activists to marshal a concerted national push -- in law enforcement, the media and the public -- to fight anti-Asian racism, activists say.

Now many are hoping that the tragedy in Georgia ignites a more aggressive and tangible effort to weed out hate against their communities.

Ms. Hsu, the president of the Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association, for example, called for investigators to approach Mr. Long's account, that the shootings were driven by a sex addiction, with skepticism.

''The truth could be much more complicated,'' she said, adding that pinning down the role that race may have played was important. ''It's an opportunity to talk about the larger issue. It isn't discussed enough.''

Perceptions of anti-Asian discrimination are shaped by complex factors. There's the vast diversity of what it means to be Asian-American: The population comprises those whose families have been in the United States for generations and people who have come from dozens of countries under many different circumstances, including as refugees.

They have varying levels of education and English proficiency and can land at different places on the American political spectrum, sometimes depending on the issue. Some, particularly first-generation immigrants, are less inclined to call out racism, while their children might be more willing to speak up.

Many people in America are ignorant of the history of Asian-Americans, which is not taught well enough in schools, said Erika Lee, a professor of history and Asian-American studies at the University of Minnesota. Few people know, for instance, about the lynching of 18 Chinese people in Los Angeles in 1871, or the forcible removal of Chinese people by mobs in Seattle in 1886, she said.

''I can't tell you how many times that I've heard in the classroom, after many, many, many years of teaching, how my students will continuously say, 'I never knew that this happened,''' she said.

There is also the stereotype that all people of Asian descent are economically and educationally successful, which can lead to the incorrect assumption that the discrimination they face can't be that bad.

In fact, some of the Asian-Americans who have been subjected to the most vicious violence have been people living on the socioeconomic margins. They tend to be invisible to much of society, which only furthers a widespread dismissal of anti-Asian violence, said Chris J. Lee, 33, a founder of Plan A Magazine, an online journal focused on Asian-American culture and politics.

''The types of people who get killed, like people who work at massage parlors, elderly Asians picking up cans for a living -- none of us really know these people,'' he said.

The marginalization of Asian-Americans has deep roots.

Chinese immigrants who built railways and mined gold in the 19th century were shunted into Chinatowns in San Francisco and other cities, redlined by financial institutions and often left to fend for themselves.

Further immigration from China was restricted by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the first immigration law targeting ***working-class*** immigrants from a specific country. It was followed in 1917 by the most restrictive immigration law in the nation's history, the Asiatic Barred Zone Act, which blocked immigrants from Istanbul all the way to Jakarta and beyond, nearly eliminating all arrivals from some of the most populous areas of the planet -- the South Asian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

Japanese residents in the United States were for decades kept out of white neighborhoods through covenants written into real estate deeds; tens of thousands of American citizens of Japanese descent were incarcerated in internment camps during World War II.

When immigration laws were liberalized in the 1960s, immigrants from Asia were allowed into the U.S. in unprecedented numbers.

Asian ethnic groups, though distinct from one another, have at times been lumped together under the umbrella of an Asian-American identity. But the anti-Asian violence that has come during the pandemic seems to have solidified a greater sense of solidarity among a group that is diverse in income, religion and culture, said Will Lex Ham, an actor who has helped lead a campaign of awareness of violence against Asians.

''As long as we share the same physical features, we are being treated the same in this country,'' Mr. Ham said.

In the wake of attacks on older people in Asian neighborhoods in California, some community leaders have demanded an increased police presence. Others have said that simply adding law enforcement officers was not a solution.

Some are pushing Gov. Gavin Newsom to appoint an Asian-American to be California's attorney general.

An Asian-American as the state's top law enforcement official is needed to build trust, ''particularly when it comes to what have been strained relationships between law enforcement and immigrant communities and communities of color,'' David Chiu, a member of the California State Assembly, said during a news conference on Wednesday.

In the Atlanta area, where the Asian community has grown in recent years and become more politically influential, the murders have reignited anxieties that may have been subsiding for some people as an end to the pandemic is in sight. When the pandemic began, Ms. Hsu, the lawyer, said she almost expected that people would hurl insults at her because she is Chinese-American. In recent weeks, she had let her guard down, she said.

''We're coming out of the pandemic, there's a new president, we're not hearing 'Kung Flu' and 'China Virus' every other word,'' she said, referring to some of the derogatory terms that Mr. Trump used for the coronavirus. ''I was really lured into thinking it's sort of safe to go outside again.''

Now, she is back on high alert.

Suraiya Sharker, a community organizer with the Atlanta chapter of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, said that after the shootings, she received calls from several members of her organization who were in tears.

Ms. Sharker, 22, is particularly worried about her parents, who moved to the United States from Bangladesh when she was 4, because they are of the demographic particularly vulnerable to attacks. As first generation immigrants, their English is not perfect. They work in a fast-food restaurant in suburban Atlanta, where, Ms. Sharker said, a customer once threatened her father in a disagreement over the bill and customers have refused to be served by her mother because she wears a hijab.

But as much as she and other Asian-Americans are more cautious now, they are also more energized, she said.

''This,'' she said, ''has been an awakening for a lot of folks to say, 'Enough is enough.'''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/asian-bias-atlanta-shooting.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/asian-bias-atlanta-shooting.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ANGELA HSU, president of the Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association (PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18)

WASHINGTON, D.C. PHOTOGRAPH BY SHURAN HUANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

PHILADELPHIA (PHOTOGRAPH BY RACHEL WISNIEWSKI/REUTERS) (A18-A19)

QUEENS, N.Y (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SENG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

BELLEVUE, WASH. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A19)

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***When a Sitcom Wife Gets the Last Laugh***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62X4-2RB1-DXY4-X076-00000-00&context=1519360)

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June 13, 2021 Sunday

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**Length:** 1689 words

**Byline:** By Alexis Soloski

**Body**

Annie Murphy stars in a comedy that spoofs corny family sitcoms while revealing the darkness behind the bright lights and bad jokes.

Shortly after the 2016 presidential election, Valerie Armstrong experienced what she described as ''a feminist fit of rage.'' So she put that rage into a comedy pilot, a pussy hat in script form.

''Writing is never fun,'' she said. ''But this one was fun. It hurt less.''

Armstrong (''Lodge 49'') grew up on reruns of classic multicamera sitcoms -- the Nick at Nite catalog, ''The Cosby Show,'' ''Frasier'' -- watching them obsessively. ''I joke that it was my after school activity,'' she said. ''It must have been a nightmare to my mother.'' But as an adult, she started to see them differently. Especially ''The King of Queens''-style sitcoms, which paired a schlubby husband with a knockout wife.

While writing her pilot, she began to wonder about those wives, women who seemed to exist to set up their husbands' jokes and tote identical plastic laundry baskets around the house. What would it be like to play that woman? What would it be like to be that woman?

The resulting show, ''Kevin Can F\*\*k Himself,'' which debuts on the AMC+ streaming service on Sunday and on AMC a week later, offers one answer. Created by Armstrong, it stars Annie Murphy (''Schitt's Creek'') as Allison, a Worcester, Mass., housewife and part-time package store employee. For about a decade, Allison has been married to Eric Petersen's Kevin and treated his man-child antics with some degree of amused tolerance. But during the first episode, she snaps. (Her secondhand Pottery Barn coffee table snaps, too. Kevin!)

During Allison's scenes with Kevin, the show is shot in the overbright style of a multicam. But as soon as Allison steps away from him, the style switches to that of a gritty single-camera drama. ''King of Queens''? Meet ''Breaking Bad.'' An indictment of white male entitlement, it is both a tribute to and a reassessment of the traditional multicam.

Shot live, more or less continuously and typically in front of an invited audience, multicams emerged in the early 1950s and dominated network schedules for decades. They have cycled in and out of fashion over the years -- ''The Big Bang Theory'' was still one of TV's most popular shows when it signed off in 2019, and ''One Day At a Time'' remained a critical darling until it ended last year -- but they are mostly out of favor now. Which means that ''Kevin'' deconstructs a form that has already done a pretty good job of deconstructing itself. (The title is an apparent riff on ''Kevin Can Wait,'' a Kevin James sitcom that sought to recapture the ratings magic of ''The King of Queens'' and failed.)

Some multicams have skewed surprisingly progressive, taking on subjects like abortion and the AIDS crisis sometimes years before dramas feel ready. (Think Norman Lear's oeuvre and ''Designing Women'' and ''Murphy Brown'' -- or a recent example like ''The Carmichael Show.'') But the marital sitcoms that inspire ''Kevin'' were never especially enlightened. They worked to perpetuate certain social norms while using women, people of color and queer people as fodder for hacky jokes.

According to Alfred Martin, a communication studies professor at the University of Iowa and the author of ''The Generic Closet: Black Gayness and the Black-Cast Sitcom,'' clichés like the spousal attractiveness gap reinforce the cultural capital of white masculinity.

''Like, my white masculinity provides me access to these particular kinds of women,'' he said. (Martin added that in sitcoms that center families of color, husbands and wives are generally more evenly matched.)

In making ''Kevin,'' Armstrong and Craig DiGregorio, the showrunner, wanted to bare this deep structure without belittling or parodying the form of the multicam itself. The multicam portions of each episode of ''Kevin'' are meant to constitute a complete story, and they are written and played pretty much straight.

''In our show, we never have a joke that couldn't be on any CBS sitcom,'' Armstrong said.

''Somebody would say, 'That's too mean' or 'That's too dark,''' she added. ''You would be shocked at what has been laughed at on network sitcoms for years -- we don't reinvent the wheel here.''

Instead, the single-camera segments give that wheel and those laugh-tracked gags a different spin. They encourage viewers to ask who gets to make the jokes and who is the butt of them.

''All we're trying to do is to get people to reconsider what they're watching and how they're watching it,'' DiGregorio said.

Casting began early in 2020. The creators knew they needed a dynamic performer to play Allison so that audiences would root for the character, even as Kevin pushed her to some dark places. (Let's just say that Allison begins to see ''till death do us part'' as a relationship goal.)

''We needed to cast someone who could play frustrated as funny, who can make you laugh even when they are having a terrible time,'' Armstrong said. She thought immediately of Murphy.

Luckily, Murphy wanted a role kilometers away from the sparkling socialite she played on ''Schitt's Creek.'' Allison provided it. ''***Working class***, very angry, not fashionable at all and with a thick Worcester accent -- it really was night and day,'' Murphy said, with obvious enthusiasm, during a recent video call.

Had Covid-19 not intruded, ''Kevin'' would have begun shooting in March 2020, with Lynn Shelton directing. Instead production halted. Then something much worse happened. Shelton, a beloved television and indie film director, died suddenly that May. The pandemic, Armstrong said, gave everyone time to grieve and to ensure that the tone Shelton had already set -- one of commitment and kindness -- would continue. (Sharp-eyed viewers will notice that Kevin and Allison live on Shelton Street, a tribute.)

Production began last fall, on location in Massachusetts. Some days the crew shot multicam scenes, whipping through 20-some pages of dialogue. In an effort to create a pandemic-compliant studio audience, production hired 10 or so people to sit -- masked and socially distanced -- watching a live feed and laughing along. At least in theory.

''It's Boston,'' Armstrong said. ''Just because we paid them to laugh does not mean they always laughed.''

On single-camera days, when completing five pages was cause for celebration, the professional laughers stayed home. The acting became subtler, more naturalistic. ''If you were doing the same thing with your face and body in single cam it would look certifiably insane,'' Murphy said.

The costumes didn't change between formats, and neither, for the most part, did the sets. But the world looks different seen through a single lens, and the people look different, too. At first Murphy and Mary Hollis Inboden, who plays Allison's neighbor Patty, enjoyed the down-market jeans and the utter lack of glam. Then they saw how the single-camera shots found every rip and pore and wrinkle, revealing what the bright lights of the multicam hide.

''When you step outside in the harsh sunlight, you can see all of those mistakes,'' Inboden said.

She used to cheer Murphy up by telling her that they were being very brave. ''She was like, 'You know what, bravery gets you? Awards,''' Murphy recalled.

In most multicam scenes, the actresses had little to do. ''We had a line here and a line there and an arm cross here and a disapproving look there,'' Murphy said. She described a day spent mostly flinching as Petersen spat gobs of steak at her. At the end of that day, the crew gave Petersen a standing ovation. Murphy took it a little hard.

''Why can't I do the funny stuff?'' she recalled thinking. ''Let me spit steak at somebody -- I can do that, too.'' She and Inboden channeled that frustration into the single-camera scenes. Feeling overlooked and ignored mirrored their characters' emotional lives.

It also helped them develop feelings of solidarity. If the show begins as a story of a woman's awakening to a murderous anger, it continues as a celebration of female friendship. ''Kevin'' initially posits Allison and Patty as antagonists, mostly because Patty lives to down brews with the boys and Allison exists to recycle the cans. But over the course of a few episodes, the women develop a deep bond.

''They're the only people who truly understand what it's like to revolve around this group of men who don't need to have any real consideration for them,'' Inboden said.

Not that it was easy for the male actors. Petersen, a veteran of multicams like TV Land's ''Kirstie,'' knew he had to play the character without judgment. But he quailed at certain lines, like this one from the pilot, delivered when Allison cuts her hand: ''Is that blood? It doesn't mean you get to be moody. You already used that excuse once this month.'' The studio audience had been laughing along with him all day, but when he said that line, he heard them moan.

''It was like, yeah, I feel the same,'' Petersen said.

Not every viewer will absorb the show's meta-commentary; not every viewer will want to. ''There are people who are going to be willing to dig a little deeper and really think about what we're getting at,'' Murphy said. ''Then there are going to be the people who just [expletive] love a sitcom.''

And no one on ''Kevin'' wants to see multicams disappear -- they just want to nudge creators to make smarter ones. ''I just want the jokes to be better,'' Inboden said.

Petersen has watched a few episodes of old sitcoms since the show wrapped and found he no longer enjoys them as much. ''There's been moments where I'm like, 'Oh, gosh, that is just so wrong,''' he said.

Will ''Kevin'' change the way we see multicams and the norms they maintain? That's a lot of cultural work for any one show to undo. Recently Armstrong found herself watching a ''King of Queens'' compilation, which included a scene in which James's character hires a dog walker to walk his father-in-law around the neighborhood.

''Yes, he did,'' Armstrong said. ''He hired a dog walker to walk a human. Like he's a dog. And I was laughing.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/09/arts/television/kevin-can-f-himself.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/09/arts/television/kevin-can-f-himself.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, in her new sitcom on AMC, Annie Murphy plays the latest in a long line of knockout sitcom wives married to schlubby guys. At right is Murphy with Catherine O'Hara, far right, in ''Schitt's Creek.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUIS MORA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

COMEDY CENTRAL) (AR8)

Murphy as Allison with Eric Petersen, who plays her husband, Kevin. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOJO WHILDEN/AMC) (AR9)

**Load-Date:** June 13, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Gospel of Free Trade Loses Its Luster***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627R-WXX1-JBG3-63NP-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1656 words

**Byline:** By Ana Swanson

**Body**

Like its predecessor, the Biden administration has largely dispensed with the idea of free trade as a goal in and of itself.

WASHINGTON -- For decades, the principle of ''free trade'' inspired a kind of religious reverence among most American politicians. Lawmakers, diplomats and presidents justified their policies through the pursuit of freer trade, which, like the spread of democracy and market capitalism, was presumed to be a universal and worthy goal.

But as the Biden administration establishes itself in Washington, that longstanding gospel is no longer the prevailing view.

Political parties on both the right and left have shifted away from the conventional view that the primary goal of trade policy should be speeding flows of goods and services to lift economic growth. Instead, more politicians have zeroed in on the downsides of past trade deals, which greatly benefited some American workers but stripped others of their jobs.

President Donald J. Trump embraced this rethinking on trade by threatening to scrap old deals that he said had sent jobs overseas and renegotiate new ones. His signature pacts, including with Canada, Mexico and China, ended up raising some barriers to trade rather than lowering them, including leaving hefty tariffs in place on Chinese products and more restrictions on auto imports into North America.

The Biden administration appears poised to adopt a similar approach, with top officials like Katherine Tai, President Biden's nominee to run the Office of the United States Trade Representative, promising to focus more on ensuring that trade deals protect the rights and interests of American workers, rather than exporters or consumers.

Ms. Tai has received broad support from former colleagues in Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, and on Wednesday the Senate confirmed her nomination in a 98-to-0 vote, making her the first of Mr. Biden's nominees to win unanimous support from those voting.

Mr. Biden and his advisers have promised to review the impact that past trade policies have had on economic and racial inequality, and put negotiating new trade deals on the back burner while they focus on improving the domestic economy. And they have not yet made any moves to scale back Mr. Trump's hefty tariffs on foreign products, saying that they are reviewing them but that tariffs are a legitimate trade policy tool.

In her hearing before the Senate Finance Committee on Feb. 25, Ms. Tai emphasized that she would help usher in a break with past policies that would ''pit one of our segments of our workers and our economy against another.''

While Ms. Tai reassured senators that she would work with them to promote exports from their districts, she called for a policy that would focus more on how trade affected Americans as workers and wage earners.

When asked by Senator Patrick J. Toomey, a Republican from Pennsylvania and a noted free trader, whether the goal of a trade agreement between two modern, developed economies should be the elimination of tariffs and trade barriers, Ms. Tai declined to agree, saying she would want to consider such agreements on a case-by-case basis.

''Maybe if you'd asked me this question five or 10 years ago, I would have been inclined to say yes,'' Ms. Tai responded. But after the events of the past few years -- including the pandemic, the Trump administration's trade wars and a failed effort by the Obama administration to negotiate a Pacific trade deal -- ''I think that our trade policies need to be nuanced, and need to take into account all the lessons that we have learned, many of them very painful, from our most recent history,'' she said.

In his first major foreign policy speech on March 3, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken also said the calculus on free trade had changed.

''Some of us previously argued for free trade agreements because we believed Americans would broadly share in the economic gains,'' he said. ''But we didn't do enough to understand who would be negatively affected and what would be needed to adequately offset their pain.''

''Our approach now will be different,'' Mr. Blinken said.

Clyde Prestowitz, a U.S. negotiator in the Reagan administration, called the administration's statements on trade ''a revolution.'' While Robert E. Lighthizer, Mr. Trump's trade representative, also parted with the conventional wisdom on trade, he was seen as an exception, a former steel industry lawyer steeped in protectionism, Mr. Prestowitz said.

''Now here is Ms. Tai, with a mostly government official career behind her, talking without making any of the formerly necessary gestures toward the sanctity and multitudinous bounties of free trade,'' Mr. Prestowitz said. ''The conventional wisdom on trade no longer has an iron grip on policymakers and thinkers.''

Like Ms. Tai and Mr. Lighthizer, many past presidents and trade officials emphasized fair trade and the idea of holding foreign countries accountable for breaking trade rules. But many also paid homage to the conventional wisdom that free trade itself was a worthy goal because it could help lift the economic fortunes of all countries and enhance global stability by linking economies.

That idea reached the height of its popularity under the presidencies of George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, where the United States negotiated the North American Free Trade Agreement, led the talks that gave the World Trade Organization its modern format, granted China permanent normal trading relations, and sealed a series of trade agreements with countries in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East.

President Barack Obama initially put less emphasis on free trade deals, instead focusing on the financial crisis and the Affordable Care Act. But in his second term, his administration pushed to sign the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which came under criticism from progressive Democrats for exposing American workers to foreign competition. The deal never won sufficient support in Congress.

For Democrats, the downfall of that deal was a turning point, propelling them toward their new consensus on trade. Some, like Dani Rodrik, a professor of political economy at Harvard, argue that recent trade deals have largely not been about cutting tariffs or trade barriers at all, and instead were focused on locking in advantages for pharmaceutical companies and international banks.

David Autor, an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said economic theory had never claimed that trade made everybody better off -- it had said trade would raise overall economic output, but lead to gains and losses for different groups.

But economists and politicians alike underestimated how jarring some of those losses could be. Mr. Autor's influential research shows that expanded trade with China led to the loss of 2.4 million American jobs between 1999 and 2011. China's growing dominance of a variety of global industries, often accomplished through hefty government subsidies, also weakened the argument that the United States could succeed through free markets alone.

Today, ''people are much more sensitive to the idea that trade can have very, very disruptive effects,'' Mr. Autor said. ''There's no amount of everyday low prices at Walmart that is going to make up for unemployment.''

But Mr. Autor said that while the old consensus was ''simplistic and harmful,'' turning away from the ideal of free trade held dangers, too. ''Once you open this terrain, lots of terrible policies and expensive subsidies can all march in under the banner of the protection of the American worker,'' he said.

Some have argued that the approach could forgo important economic gains.

William Reinsch, the Scholl chair in international business at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, wrote that Americans had come to understand that the argument that ''a rising tide would lift all boats'' was not always correct.

''A rising tide does not lift all boats; it only lifts some boats, and for a long time, workers' boats have been stuck in the muck while the owners' yachts flow free,'' he wrote. However, Mr. Reinsch added, ''no tide lifts no boats. In economic terms, if we forgo the expansion of trade, we do not get the benefits trade provides, and there is nothing to distribute.''

It remains to be seen how much the Biden administration will adhere to the Trump administration's more protectionist policies -- like keeping the tariffs on foreign metals and products from China.

While the Biden administration has tried to distance its trade policy from that of the previous administration, many former Trump administration officials say the direction appears remarkably similar.

In an interview in January, Mr. Lighthizer said the Trump administration had reoriented trade policy away from the interests of multinational businesses and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and toward ***working-class*** people and manufacturing, goals that Democrats also support. He said the Biden administration would try to make trade policy look like their own, but ultimately ''stay pretty close.''

''The goal is creating communities and families of working people, rather than promoting corporate profits,'' Mr. Lighthizer said. ''I think the outlines of what we've done will stay. They will try to Biden-ize it, make it their own, which they should do, but I'd be surprised if they back away from the great outline of what we've done and how we've changed the policy.''

Ms. Tai has acknowledged some similarities between the Biden and Trump administrations' goals, but emphasized the difference in their tactics.

In her confirmation hearing, she said that she shared the Trump administration's goal of bringing supply chains back to America, but that its policies had created ''a lot of disruption and consternation.''

''I'd want to accomplish similar goals in a more effective, process-driven manner,'' she said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/17/business/economy/free-trade-biden-tai.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/17/business/economy/free-trade-biden-tai.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Shipping containers at the Port of Oakland. Biden trade officials have promised to continue seeking export opportunities for American companies, but they say they have shifted their focus to protect workers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Justin Sullivan/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2021

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[***After Georgia Attacks, Asian-Americans Demand Serious Action on Bias***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627K-W4T1-DXY4-X2FX-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Amid fear, sadness and pain, the shootings in the Atlanta area have generated anger over the country’s longstanding failure to address anti-Asian discrimination.

**Body**

Amid fear, sadness and pain, the shootings in the Atlanta area have generated anger over the country’s longstanding failure to address anti-Asian discrimination.

Video clips of disturbing attacks on the street. Insults hurled by politicians. Derogatory graffiti scrawled on businesses.

For most of the last year, Asian-Americans have sounded the alarm over the rising discrimination they have experienced and witnessed, fueled in part by racist language and false claims about the coronavirus by former President Donald J. Trump and other public officials. Celebrities, activists and influencers on social media have implored people to stop the hate against Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Then came the fatal shootings in Georgia of eight people, six of them women of Asian descent.

Amid fear, sadness and pain, the carnage has evoked another emotion among some Asian-Americans: anger over the country’s longstanding failure to take discrimination against them seriously.

Some scholars and activists said Tuesday’s massacre was unsurprising after public officials and popular culture have for years downplayed the dangers of bias and stereotypes against Asians.

Although Asian-Americans, like other minority groups, have endured a long tradition of deadly violence, the threats and discrimination they continue to face are often trivialized as harmless insults. In many cases, some said, people are reluctant to even acknowledge that attacks against Asian-Americans could be racially motivated, as happened on Wednesday when a law enforcement official in Georgia seemed to dismiss racial animus as a motive in the shootings.

Instead, he said the suspect, Robert Aaron Long, who is white, was having “a really bad day” and cited Mr. Long’s statement that he was driven by a sex addiction, and not racial bias.

Even when anti-Asian violence is acknowledged, experts say, it is sometimes casually dismissed as an isolated episode, rather than a core part of the Asian-American story.

“There’s a tendency to not believe that violence against Asian-Americans is real,” said Angela Hsu, 52, a lawyer in suburban Atlanta. “It’s almost like you need something really, really jarring to make people believe that there is discrimination against Asian-Americans.”

Without a deeper, widespread understanding of, or belief in, the dangers that Asian-Americans face, it’s difficult for activists to marshal a concerted national push — in law enforcement, the media and the public — to fight anti-Asian racism, activists say.

Now many are hoping that the tragedy in Georgia ignites a more aggressive and tangible effort to weed out hate against their communities.

Ms. Hsu, the president of the Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association, for example, called for investigators to approach Mr. Long’s account, that the shootings were driven by a sex addiction, with skepticism.

“The truth could be much more complicated,” she said, adding that pinning down the role that race may have played was important. “It’s an opportunity to talk about the larger issue. It isn’t discussed enough.”

Perceptions of anti-Asian discrimination are shaped by complex factors. There’s the vast diversity of what it means to be Asian-American: The population comprises those whose families have been in the United States for generations and people who have come from dozens of countries under many different circumstances, including as refugees.

They have varying levels of education and English proficiency and can land at different places on the American political spectrum, sometimes depending on the issue. Some, particularly first-generation immigrants, are less inclined to call out racism, while their children might be more willing to speak up.

Many people in America are ignorant of the history of Asian-Americans, which is not taught well enough in schools, said Erika Lee, a professor of history and Asian-American studies at the University of Minnesota. Few people know, for instance, about [*the lynching of 18 Chinese people*](https://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/blogs/lapl/chinese-massacre-1871) in Los Angeles in 1871, or the [*forcible removal of Chinese people by mobs in Seattle*](https://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/blogs/lapl/chinese-massacre-1871) in 1886, she said.

“I can’t tell you how many times that I’ve heard in the classroom, after many, many, many years of teaching, how my students will continuously say, ‘I never knew that this happened,’” she said.

There is also the stereotype that all people of Asian descent are economically and educationally successful, which can lead to the incorrect assumption that the discrimination they face can’t be that bad.

In fact, some of the Asian-Americans who have been subjected to the most vicious violence have been people living on the socioeconomic margins. They tend to be invisible to much of society, which only furthers a widespread dismissal of anti-Asian violence, said Chris J. Lee, 33, a founder of [*Plan A Magazine*](https://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/blogs/lapl/chinese-massacre-1871), an online journal focused on Asian-American culture and politics.

“The types of people who get killed, like people who work at massage parlors, elderly Asians picking up cans for a living — none of us really know these people,” he said.

The marginalization of Asian-Americans has deep roots.

Chinese immigrants who built railways and mined gold in the 19th century were shunted into Chinatowns in San Francisco and other cities, redlined by financial institutions and often left to fend for themselves.

Further immigration from China was restricted by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the first immigration law targeting ***working-class*** immigrants from a specific country. It was followed in 1917 by the most restrictive immigration law in the nation’s history, the Asiatic Barred Zone Act, which blocked immigrants from Istanbul all the way to Jakarta and beyond, nearly eliminating all arrivals from some of the most populous areas of the planet — the South Asian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.

Japanese residents in the United States were for decades kept out of white neighborhoods through covenants written into real estate deeds; tens of thousands of American citizens of Japanese descent were incarcerated in internment camps during World War II.

When immigration laws were liberalized in the 1960s, immigrants from Asia were allowed into the U.S. in unprecedented numbers.

Asian ethnic groups, though distinct from one another, have at times been lumped together under the umbrella of an Asian-American identity. But the anti-Asian violence that has come during the pandemic seems to have solidified a greater sense of solidarity among a group that is diverse in income, religion and culture, said Will Lex Ham, an actor who has helped lead a campaign of awareness of violence against Asians.

“As long as we share the same physical features, we are being treated the same in this country,” Mr. Ham said.

In the wake of [*attacks on older people in Asian neighborhoods in California*](https://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/blogs/lapl/chinese-massacre-1871), some community leaders have demanded an increased police presence. Others have said that simply adding law enforcement officers was not a solution.

Some are pushing Gov. Gavin Newsom to appoint an Asian-American to be California’s attorney general.

An Asian-American as the state’s top law enforcement official is needed to build trust, “particularly when it comes to what have been strained relationships between law enforcement and immigrant communities and communities of color,” David Chiu, a member of the California State Assembly, said during a news conference on Wednesday.

In the Atlanta area, where the Asian community has grown in recent years and become more politically influential, the murders have reignited anxieties that may have been subsiding for some people as an end to the pandemic is in sight. When the pandemic began, Ms. Hsu, the lawyer, said she almost expected that people would hurl insults at her because she is Chinese-American. In recent weeks, she had let her guard down, she said.

“We’re coming out of the pandemic, there’s a new president, we’re not hearing ‘Kung Flu’ and ‘China Virus’ every other word,” she said, referring to some of the derogatory terms that Mr. Trump used for the coronavirus. “I was really lured into thinking it’s sort of safe to go outside again.”

Now, she is back on high alert.

Suraiya Sharker, a community organizer with the Atlanta chapter of the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum, said that after the shootings, she received calls from several members of her organization who were in tears.

Ms. Sharker, 22, is particularly worried about her parents, who moved to the United States from Bangladesh when she was 4, because they are of the demographic particularly vulnerable to attacks. As first generation immigrants, their English is not perfect. They work in a fast-food restaurant in suburban Atlanta, where, Ms. Sharker said, a customer once threatened her father in a disagreement over the bill and customers have refused to be served by her mother because she wears a hijab.

But as much as she and other Asian-Americans are more cautious now, they are also more energized, she said.

“This,” she said, “has been an awakening for a lot of folks to say, ‘Enough is enough.’”

PHOTOS: ANGELA HSU, president of the Georgia Asian Pacific American Bar Association (PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18); WASHINGTON, D.C. PHOTOGRAPH BY SHURAN HUANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); PHILADELPHIA (PHOTOGRAPH BY RACHEL WISNIEWSKI/REUTERS) (A18-A19); QUEENS, N.Y (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SENG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); BELLEVUE, WASH. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A19)

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2021

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[***Trump Runs Red Light. Almost Kills Lady Liberty.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:619Y-DH81-JBG3-6002-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Thomas L. Friedman

**Body**

With Biden's election, American democracy narrowly escaped disaster.

So how do I feel two weeks after our election? Awed and terrified. I am in awe at the expression of democracy that took place in America. It was our most impressive election since 1864 and maybe our most important since 1800. And yet, I am still terrified that, but for a few thousand votes in key states, how easily it could have been our last election.

To put my feelings in image form: It's like Lady Liberty was walking across Fifth Avenue on Nov. 3 when out of nowhere a crazy guy driving a bus ran the red light. Lady Liberty leapt out of the way barely in time, and she's now sitting on the curb, her heart pounding, just glad to be alive. But she knows -- she knows -- how narrowly she escaped, that this reckless driver never stops at red lights and is still out there, and, oh my God, lots of his passengers are still applauding the thrilling ride, even though deep down many know he's a menace to the whole city.

Let's unpack all of this. Stop for a second and think about how awesome this election was. In the middle of an accelerating pandemic substantially more Americans voted than ever before in our history -- Republicans, Democrats and independents. And it was their fellow citizens who operated the polling stations and conducted the count -- many of them older Americans who volunteered for that duty knowing they could contract the coronavirus, as some did.

That's why this was our greatest expression of American democratic vitality since Abraham Lincoln defeated Gen. George B. McClellan in 1864 -- in the midst of a civil war. And that's why Donald Trump's efforts to soil this election, with his fraudulent claims of voting fraud, are so vile.

If Trump and his enablers had resisted for only a day or two, OK, no big deal. But the fact that they continue to do so, flailing for ways to overturn the will of the people, egged on by their media toadies -- Lou Dobbs actually said on Fox Business that the G.O.P. should refuse to accept the election results that deny Trump ''what is rightfully his'' -- raises this question:

How do you trust this version of the Republican Party to ever hold the White House again?

Its members have sat mute while Trump, rather than using the federal bureaucracy to launch a war against our surging pandemic, has launched a war against his perceived enemies inside that federal bureaucracy -- including the defense secretary, the head of the National Nuclear Security Administration and, on Tuesday, the most senior cybersecurity official responsible for protecting the presidential election -- weakening it when we need it most.

Engineering Trump's internal purge is 30-year-old Johnny McEntee, ''a former college quarterback who was hustled out of the White House two years ago after a security clearance check turned up a prolific habit for online gambling,'' but Trump later welcomed him back and installed him as personnel director for the entire U.S. government, The Washington Post reported.

A political party that will not speak up against such a reckless leader is not a party any longer. It is some kind of populist cult of personality.

That's been obvious ever since this G.O.P. was the first party to conclude its presidential nominating convention without offering any platform. It declared that its platform was whatever its Dear Leader said it was. That is cultlike.

Are we just supposed to forget this G.O.P.'s behavior as soon as Trump leaves and let its leaders say: ''Hey fellow Americans, Trump tried to overturn the election with baseless claims -- and we went along for the ride -- but he's gone now, so you can trust us to do the right things again.''

That is why we are so very lucky that this election broke for Joe Biden. If this is how this Republican Party behaves when Trump loses, imagine how willing to tolerate his excesses it would have been had he won? Trump wouldn't have stopped at any red lights ever again.

And the people who understood that best were democrats all over the world -- particularly in Europe. Because they've watched Trump-like, right-wing populists in Turkey, Hungary, Poland, Russia and Belarus, as well as the Philippines, get themselves elected and then take control of their courts, media, internet and security institutions and use them to try to cripple their opponents and lock themselves into office indefinitely.

Democrats abroad feared that this same political virus would overtake America if Trump were re-elected and have a devastating effect.

They feared that the core democratic concept that America gifted to the world in 1800 -- when John Adams lost his election to Thomas Jefferson and peacefully handed over the reins of power -- was going to wither, undermining democracy movements across the globe. Every autocrat would have been emboldened to ignore red lights.

Seeing an American president actually try to undermine the results of a free and fair election ''is a warning to democrats all over the world: Don't play lightly with populists, they will not leave power easily the way Adams did when he lost to Jefferson,'' the French foreign policy expert Dominique Moïsi remarked to me.

That is why Biden's mission -- and the mission of all decent conservatives -- is not just to repair America. It is to marginalize this Trumpian version of the G.O.P. and help to nurture a healthy conservative party -- one that brings conservative approaches to economic growth, infrastructure, social policy, education, regulation and climate change, but also cares about governing and therefore accepts compromises.

Democrats can't summon a principled conservative party. That requires courageous conservatives. But Democrats do need to ask themselves why Trump remains so strong among white ***working-class*** voters without college degrees, and, in this last election, drew greater support from Black, Latino and white women voters.

There is a warning light flashing for Democrats from this election: They can't rely on demographics. They need to make sure that every voter believes that the Democratic Party is a ''both/and'' party, not an ''either/or'' party. And they need to do it before a smarter, less crude Trump comes along to advance Trumpism.

They need every American to believe that Democrats are for BOTH redividing the pie AND growing the pie, for both reforming police departments and strengthening law and order, for both saving lives in a pandemic and saving jobs, for both demanding equity in education and demanding excellence, for both strengthening safety nets and strengthening capitalism, for both celebrating diversity and celebrating patriotism, for both making college cheaper and making the work of noncollege-educated Americans more respected, for both building a high border wall and incorporating a big gate, for both high-fiving the people who start companies and supporting the people who regulate them.

And they need to demand less political correctness and offer more tolerance for those who want to change with the times but need to get there their own ways -- without feeling shamed into it.

We need our next presidential election to be fought between a principled center-right Republican Party and a ''both/and'' Democratic Party. Great countries are led from a healthy center. Weak countries don't have one.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/17/opinion/trump-democracy-republican-party.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/17/opinion/trump-democracy-republican-party.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 18, 2020

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[***How Can We Trust This G.O.P. in Power Again?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:619W-PY51-DXY4-X353-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 17, 2020 Tuesday 20:15 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1274 words

**Byline:** Thomas L. Friedman

**Highlight:** With Biden’s election, American democracy narrowly escaped disaster.

**Body**

With Biden’s election, American democracy narrowly escaped disaster.

So how do I feel two weeks after our election? Awed and terrified. I am in awe at the expression of democracy that took place in America. It was our most impressive election since 1864 and maybe our most important since 1800. And yet, I am still terrified that, but for a few thousand votes in key states, how easily it could have been our last election.

To put my feelings in image form: It’s like Lady Liberty was walking across Fifth Avenue on Nov. 3 when out of nowhere a crazy guy driving a bus ran the red light. Lady Liberty leapt out of the way barely in time, and she’s now sitting on the curb, her heart pounding, just glad to be alive. But she knows — she knows — how narrowly she escaped, that this reckless driver never stops at red lights and is still out there, and, oh my God, lots of his passengers are still applauding the thrilling ride, even though deep down many know he’s a menace to the whole city.

Let’s unpack all of this. Stop for a second and think about how awesome this election was. In the middle of an accelerating pandemic substantially more Americans voted than ever before in our history — Republicans, Democrats and independents. And it was their fellow citizens who operated the polling stations and conducted the count — many of them older Americans who volunteered for that duty knowing they could contract the coronavirus, as some did.

That’s why this was our greatest expression of American democratic vitality since Abraham Lincoln defeated Gen. George B. McClellan in 1864 — in the midst of a civil war. And that’s why Donald Trump’s efforts to soil this election, with his fraudulent claims of voting fraud, are so vile.

If Trump and his enablers had resisted for only a day or two, OK, no big deal. But the fact that they continue to do so, flailing for ways to overturn the will of the people, egged on by their media toadies — Lou Dobbs actually [*said on Fox Business*](https://twitter.com/loudobbs/status/1327660246089801735) that the G.O.P. should refuse to accept the election results that deny Trump “what is rightfully his” — raises this question:

How do you trust this version of the Republican Party to ever hold the White House again?

Its members have sat mute while Trump, rather than using the federal bureaucracy to launch a war against our surging pandemic, has launched a war against his perceived enemies inside that federal bureaucracy — including the defense secretary, the head of the National Nuclear Security Administration and, [*on Tuesday*](https://twitter.com/loudobbs/status/1327660246089801735), the most senior cybersecurity official responsible for protecting the presidential election — weakening it when we need it most.

Engineering Trump’s internal purge is 30-year-old Johnny McEntee, “a former college quarterback who was hustled out of the White House two years ago after a security clearance check turned up a prolific habit for online gambling,” but Trump later welcomed him back and installed him as personnel director for the entire U.S. government, [*The Washington Post reported*](https://twitter.com/loudobbs/status/1327660246089801735).

A political party that will not speak up against such a reckless leader is not a party any longer. It is some kind of populist cult of personality.

That’s been obvious ever since this G.O.P. was the first party to conclude its presidential nominating convention without offering any platform. It declared that its platform was [*whatever its Dear Leader said it was*](https://twitter.com/loudobbs/status/1327660246089801735). That is cultlike.

Are we just supposed to forget this G.O.P.’s behavior as soon as Trump leaves and let its leaders say: “Hey fellow Americans, Trump tried to overturn the election with baseless claims — and we went along for the ride — but he’s gone now, so you can trust us to do the right things again.”

That is why we are so very lucky that this election broke for Joe Biden. If this is how this Republican Party behaves when Trump loses, imagine how willing to tolerate his excesses it would have been had he won? Trump wouldn’t have stopped at any red lights ever again.

And the people who understood that best were democrats all over the world — particularly in Europe. Because they’ve watched Trump-like, right-wing populists in Turkey, Hungary, Poland, Russia and Belarus, as well as the Philippines, get themselves elected and then take control of their courts, media, internet and security institutions and use them to try to cripple their opponents and lock themselves into office indefinitely.

Democrats abroad feared that this same political virus would overtake America if Trump were re-elected and have a devastating effect.

They feared that the core democratic concept that America gifted to the world in 1800 — when John Adams lost his election to Thomas Jefferson and peacefully handed over the reins of power — was going to wither, undermining democracy movements across the globe. Every autocrat would have been emboldened to ignore red lights.

Seeing an American president actually try to undermine the results of a free and fair election “is a warning to democrats all over the world: Don’t play lightly with populists, they will not leave power easily the way Adams did when he lost to Jefferson,” the French foreign policy expert Dominique Moïsi remarked to me.

That is why Biden’s mission — and the mission of all decent conservatives — is not just to repair America. It is to marginalize this Trumpian version of the G.O.P. and help to nurture a healthy conservative party — one that brings conservative approaches to economic growth, infrastructure, social policy, education, regulation and climate change, but also cares about governing and therefore accepts compromises.

Democrats can’t summon a principled conservative party. That requires courageous conservatives. But Democrats do need to ask themselves why Trump remains so strong among white ***working-class*** voters without college degrees, and, in this last election, drew greater support from Black, Latino and white women voters.

There is a warning light flashing for Democrats from this election: They can’t rely on demographics. They need to make sure that every voter believes that the Democratic Party is a “both/and” party, not an “either/or” party. And they need to do it before a smarter, less crude Trump comes along to advance Trumpism.

They need every American to believe that Democrats are for BOTH redividing the pie AND growing the pie, for both reforming police departments and strengthening law and order, for both saving lives in a pandemic and saving jobs, for both demanding equity in education and demanding excellence, for both strengthening safety nets and strengthening capitalism, for both celebrating diversity and celebrating patriotism, for both making college cheaper and making the work of noncollege-educated Americans more respected, for both building a high border wall and incorporating a big gate, for both high-fiving the people who start companies and supporting the people who regulate them.

And they need to demand less political correctness and offer more tolerance for those who want to change with the times but need to get there their own ways — without feeling shamed into it.

We need our next presidential election to be fought between a principled center-right Republican Party and a “both/and” Democratic Party. Great countries are led from a healthy center. Weak countries don’t have one.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 18, 2020

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[***Leaving Office To Face Future Of Fiscal Peril***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61TC-H5P1-DXY4-X3GS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 20, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1471 words

**Byline:** By Russ Buettner and Susanne Craig

**Body**

Baseless election fraud claims and the Capitol riot have compounded already-looming threats to his bottom line. And the cash lifelines he once relied on are gone.

Not long after he strides across the White House grounds Wednesday morning for the last time as president, Donald J. Trump will step into a financial minefield that appears to be unlike anything he has faced since his earlier brushes with collapse.

The tax records that he has long fought to keep hidden, revealed in a New York Times investigation last September, detailed his financial challenges:

Many of his resorts were losing millions of dollars a year even before the pandemic struck. Hundreds of millions of dollars in loans, which he personally guaranteed, must be repaid within a few years. He has burned through much of his cash and easy-to-sell assets. And a decade-old I.R.S. audit threatens to cost him more than $100 million to resolve.

In his earlier dark moments, Mr. Trump was able to rescue businesses he runs with multimillion-dollar infusions from his father or licensing deals borne of his television celebrity. Those lifelines are gone. And his divisive presidency has steadily eroded the mainstream marketability of the brand that is at the heart of his business.

That trend has only accelerated with his evidence-free campaign to subvert the outcome of the presidential election, which culminated in the Jan. 6 assault on the Capitol. In its wake, his last-ditch lender vowed to cut him off. The P.G.A. canceled an upcoming championship at a Trump golf course, and New York City moved to strip him of contracts to run several venues.

Mr. Trump's family has portrayed his departure from office as opening new opportunities that were closed off while he was president. His son Eric, who has helped run the Trump Organization, recently told The Times that the company expected significant demand for overseas branding deals involving Mr. Trump. The family has also considered starting a media company to connect with his supporters.

''There has never been a political figure with more support or energy behind them than my father,'' Eric Trump said in a statement. ''There will be no shortage of incredible opportunities in real estate and beyond.''

But without a new lender, or a new line of revenue that does not require a large investment of time and money, the soon-to-be-former president is likely to face hard choices, including possibly being pinched into selling underperforming golf courses or his hotel in the Old Post Office Building in Washington.

''Trump is so reputationally toxic that a lot of financial institutions won't want to do business with him,'' said Adam J. Levitin, a law professor at Georgetown University who focuses on finance and bankruptcy.

And while Mr. Trump maintains a vast and devoted following among ***working-class*** supporters, they are not, for the most part, the future clientele of the resorts that became magnets for suitors seeking to rub shoulders, or win favors, from a sitting president.

Even in defeat, Mr. Trump has raised more than $250 million in political donations since the election. Yet while some of that money could be spent in ways that artfully, or aggressively, intermingle expenses on political work with personal and business costs, campaign finance laws would not allow Mr. Trump to use the entire amount to buttress his businesses.

After prior challenges, Mr. Trump portrayed himself as a comeback kid, someone who independently rose above financial adversity by striking fabulous new deals. What he hid from view was the degree to which his father's fortune and a second fortune of entertainment money -- the combined equivalent today of nearly $1 billion -- provided a reservoir of cash that could cover repeated failures.

In the late 1980s, as his hodgepodge empire of casinos, hotels, an airline and a football team began to collapse under the weight of excessive debt and high expenses, Mr. Trump's father secretly stepped in, covering a $3 million interest payment here, a $15 million loss on a new apartment building there.

Later, after the financial crisis that began in 2008, Mr. Trump defaulted on huge loans on his Chicago tower, much of his commercial space went empty and his casinos neared another bankruptcy. Though disaster loomed for the businesses he was running, Mr. Trump collected more than $154 million from 2008 through 2011 from ''The Apprentice'' and licensing his name for use on projects run by other people.

He received the last multimillion-dollar share of his inheritance about two years ago. And the wellspring of entertainment riches had nearly dried up by the time he entered politics, falling from profits in excess of $50 million during peak years to below $3 million in 2018. (Of course, not paying his debts also played a significant role in both turnarounds.)

The Times obtained tax-return data for Mr. Trump spanning more than two decades, including information from his personal returns through 2017, and from his business returns through 2018. The records show that many of his businesses have rarely, if ever, stood on their own.

His three golf resorts in Scotland and Ireland, for example, recorded steep and consistent cash losses. Through 2018, Mr. Trump pumped an additional $66 million of cash into the three resorts in the years since they had reopened, helping keep them afloat.

The Trump International Hotel in Washington, which opened in 2016, posted cash losses each year through 2018. Mr. Trump put $17.6 million more into the hotel during those years, on top of his original investment. And the situation likely grew more bleak last year. Since the pandemic struck, the hotel has opened for overnight guests, but the bar, a popular meeting spot for government officials and Trump supporters, remains closed.

As his entertainment fortunes faded, Mr. Trump filled part of the resulting gap with a $100 million mortgage on Trump Tower's commercial space, and by selling off nearly all of his stocks and bonds, a total of more than $270 million for 2014 through 2016.

But now he faces loans coming due: $100 million on Trump Tower next year; $125 million on his Doral golf resort in Florida in 2023; and $170 million on the Washington hotel in 2024. Mr. Trump personally guaranteed most of that debt, which means the lenders could pursue his other assets if he cannot pay or refinance.

His prospects grew more dire after the violence at the Capitol, when Deutsche Bank -- the last mainstream bank willing to do business with Mr. Trump in recent years and his lender on Doral and the Washington hotel -- said it would no longer lend to him.

Phillip Braun, a finance professor at Northwestern University, expects that Mr. Trump will find another lender, but at a price.

''He will be able to find credit if he is willing to pay higher rates,'' Mr. Braun said.

The president's greatest long-term money producer appears to be one of his first projects: the retail and commercial spaces in and around Trump Tower, in Manhattan, which for years reliably delivered more than $20 million a year in profits. But the downturn in brick-and-mortar retail before the pandemic, combined with the economic effects of the virus, have put even that key piece of his financial success in question.

And though Mr. Trump still has assets he could sell to generate cash, he does not have the authority to unilaterally sell what is perhaps the most valuable: a 30 percent stake in two office buildings controlled by Vornado Realty Trust. The investment, which Mr. Trump practically stumbled into and does not manage, has proved to be one of his greatest and most reliable sources of income, but Mr. Trump cannot sell it without Vornado's consent.

The decade-old I.R.S. audit poses an additional risk. According to records obtained by The Times, it appears to have begun after Mr. Trump claimed that giving up his stake in his casino business for nothing entitled him to a refund of $72.9 million -- all the federal income tax he had paid (plus interest) for 2005 through 2008, when his television celebrity exposed him to large income tax bills for the first time in years.

The refund automatically set off an audit, which remained active at least into last spring. Records suggest that the matter was put on hold while he was in office, but it may resume after he leaves. An unfavorable ruling could cost Mr. Trump more than $100 million, with interest and penalties.

Mr. Trump also faces legal threats that could deepen any financial hardship, including investigations into potential tax fraud being pursued by the Manhattan district attorney and the New York attorney general, as well as civil suits for his role in promoting a multilevel marketing scheme.

Mike McIntire contributed reporting.Mike McIntire contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/us/trump-finances.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/us/trump-finances.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Trump's options for raising needed money after he leaves office could include selling his hotel in Washington. (POOL PHOTO BY OLIVER CONTRERAS) (A22)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Simon Doonan Has Been Keeping Busy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626W-RK11-DXY4-X4BK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 15, 2021 Monday 22:30 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1513 words

**Byline:** Amanda Fortini

**Highlight:** While you were tweeting away your quarantine, the former creative director of Barneys published two books. One about self-help. And one about Keith Haring (and self-help).

**Body**

While you were tweeting away your quarantine, the former creative director of Barneys published two books. One about self-help. And one about Keith Haring (and self-help).

A little more than a year ago, I visited the Barneys Manhattan flagship store while it was in the final throes of its liquidation sale. It looked like the rapture had just happened. The pale beige carpet and matching velvet sofas were strewn with partnerless shoes and discarded pieces of trash, as though feral shoppers had tossed them on the floor when they lost interest.

I was, admittedly, shocked: The department store had always been, for me, a bastion of ’90s-era luxury and sophistication, elegant if mostly unaffordable. In retrospect, its demise was perhaps a harbinger of the bizarre new world to come. Barneys now feels like an artifact of a bygone era.

As does Simon Doonan, who was creative director of Barneys for more than three decades, and the mastermind behind its memorably outré window displays. I mean this as a compliment. Into this tech-heavy, bleakly monotonous moment we are now living through, he arrives with a pragmatic, rather old-fashioned perspective that feels as bracing as an ice bath.

In the first of his two recent books — he has written 11 — “How to Be Yourself: Life-Changing Advice From a Reckless Contrarian” (Phaidon), Mr. Doonan, who calls himself “an extremely skeptical self-help guru,” advises people to step away from the screens and take time to discover, cultivate and express one’s authentic inner person.

Social media, he writes, is “a distraction from the real work, the heavy lifting, the development of your true self” — an almost radical opinion at a time when TikTok creators are treated as auteurs.

Mr. Doonan is like your bossy, eccentric uncle with perfect taste and inflexible ideas. “I do not have kids, but like many aging baby boomer nonparents,” he writes, “I am an expert on parenting.…”

The book, a fun little trifle that includes numerous photos and large-print quotes from various celebrities (Keith Richards to E.B. White, Andy Warhol to Lizzo) on primary-colored pages, is written in a snappy, entertaining, Diana Vreeland-esque style.

On family: “I see siblings as functional items.”

On wearing black: “At one point, it meant you were a radical outlaw; now it means you work at the MAC counter.”

On Prince Harry and Meghan Markle naming their son “Archie,” and how it has endeared them to the public: “It was as if they threw 500 years of encumbering European history out the window and gave him a dachshund name.”

The advice he dispenses is the kind of unvarnished, unapologetic counsel one doesn’t often get these days, when people are afraid of offending, well, anybody.

But Mr. Doonan, whose ***working-class*** parents dropped his sister and him off at an orphanage for affordable day care (“Welcome to my Little Dorrit years”) — and who held multiple factory jobs before landing his luxury department store post — has guidance that is sensible, useful and refreshing: Pay your bills. Show up to work early. Get your hands dirty. “Put down your phone, leave the house, and start walking,” he writes.

But how to be oneself once you’ve put down your phone?

Like a ’50s housewife, Mr. Doonan believes one should start with the exterior. He calls vanity “a life-affirming force, a gesture of creativity and optimism, an antidepressant with no bad side-effects,” and he urges readers to put time, effort and imagination into their appearance, an endeavor that can involve tailoring one’s clothes, adopting a particular hairstyle, or alighting on a signature flourish — in Mr. Doonan’s case, flower printed button-down dress shirts in Liberty of London fabric.

When it comes to décor, he is similarly unforgiving, asserting that “not giving a toss about your décor is a crime against humanity, a missed opportunity for you and a source of PTSD for others.”

Are you an “emperor of camp” like Liberace, a burlesque queen living in “a satin upholstered jewelry box” like Dita von Teese, or so idiosyncratic that you belong among “the unclassifiables,” à la Phyllis Diller, who has a room dedicated to her wigs? It doesn’t matter, as long as your home is an aria of personal expression. Lack of money, he adds, should not be an obstacle, since, in aesthetic matters, it tends to be inversely proportional to taste.

THE PROBLEM with many self-help books is that they are gauzy and vague, their principles deracinated from any real-life examples. “How to Be Yourself” mostly avoids this common pitfall, as Mr. Doonan takes readers on an anthropological tour of people he admires and includes mini-histories of influential mentors.

Still, reading the second book Mr. Doonan recently published, “Keith Haring,” about the prolific late artist, underscores an idea I have long held to be true: Biography is the best self-help. The principles of living arise organically from the story of an exemplary life — or from a life that was not so exemplary. The lessons have not been detached from their origins.

In this slim volume, Mr. Doonan recounts the story of a driven young man from the small town of Kutztown, Pa., who drew compulsively from a young age, dropped out of commercial art school, and moved to New York City in 1978 “in search of intensity — sexual, professional, emotional, and artistic.”

Inspired by the graffiti movement, he started defacing public buildings and drawing his now famous cartoon iconography — the crawling baby, the dog, the flying pyramids, the dancing man — on vacant ad spaces in the subway. “Art,” he wrote in his journal, “is for everybody.”

In a few short years, he had gained a cult following, and by age 25, he was a world-famous pop artist in the vein of Andy Warhol. Like Mr. Warhol, he treated art as a business, and his Pop Shop, which he opened in 1986 out of an impulse to offer his art in the affordable form of T-shirts and buttons, was one of a kind.

Mr. Haring died from AIDS only a few years later, in 1990, at 31. His meteoric rise and intense, compressed period of productivity and fame — in 1987 alone, he had six solo exhibits and painted five public murals — seem to have been awaiting Mr. Doonan’s swift, jaunty approach.

Mr. Haring’s story is recounted in the present tense, as though the artist is Mr. Doonan’s friend or roommate. “Keith is now living a life of bohemian glamour and loving it. Although he never turns his back on ‘the people,’” Mr. Doonan writes, “his infatuation with fabulosity is undeniable.”

Mr. Doonan is a populist with a love of glamour, and you can see his deep admiration for Mr. Haring, whose path exemplifies certain ideas Mr. Doonan holds dear. Mr. Haring was, for example, impressively determined and resourceful, funding his art and his autodidacticism with a series of menial jobs.

After quitting the Ivy School of Professional Art in Pittsburgh, he found work as a dishwasher at a health food restaurant and as an assistant cook at the Fisher Scientific Corporation, then got a maintenance job at the Pittsburgh Arts and Crafts Center, where he attended classes informally and availed himself of the library there.

His willingness to do whatever it took, Mr. Doonan writes approvingly, “is a measure of his single-minded, uncomplaining approach to life, his resilience and his inability to accept defeat.”

Mr. Doonan also emphasizes that Mr. Haring had an “ability to extract ideas, beauty, philosophy and positivity” from even “crummy situations,” and indeed Mr. Haring had his first “show” while working at Fisher, on a wall in a cafeteria. It was announced in the weekly menu: “Keith is employed in our cafeteria.”

“Keith Haring” is an installment in Lives of the Artists (Laurence King Publishing), a collection of brief artist biographies inspired by Giorgio Vasari’s 16th century originals, which aim to discuss the life rather than the work.

But if this delightful book has a weakness, it’s that we are left with only a hazy sense of Mr. Haring’s art — the massive scale of his murals, the fluidity of his lines. This is, in part, a function of his process: “the whole sort of graffiti performance aspect,” as Mr. Haring himself put it. As with Jackson Pollock, it helped to see him in motion.

Yet Mr. Haring pictograms have also become so ubiquitous — appearing on posters, T-shirts, socks, Swatches, at Uniqlo — that it’s difficult to remember that the introduction of cartoons and graffiti into the realm of fine art once felt strikingly new. As did his treatment of serious issues, like AIDS and the crack epidemic, in bright, playful images.

The book doesn’t include photos of Mr. Haring’s drawings or murals, but there are many of the slim, sweet-faced young man who believed art was for the people, but who also really loved being famous — and didn’t see these as contradictory impulses. Neither does Mr. Doonan.

PHOTOS: Simon Doonan, above, recently released a book of advice on lifestyle and aesthetic matters, below and below right, and a slim volume on the brief life of Keith Haring, bottom. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMY LOMBARD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; PHAIDON; LAURENCE KING PUBLISHING)

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Bringing On New Leaders For Diversity In the Arts***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61SY-6GC1-JBG3-6433-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 18, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1462 words

**Byline:** By Robin Pogrebin

**Body**

Cultural institutions are recruiting people of color to direct their transformation efforts. But bringing in one manager doesn't mean the work is done.

Growing up in a ***working class*** family in Lawrence, Mass., Rosa Rodriguez-Williams said ''museums were not part of my experience.''

It is this outsider understanding that Rodriguez-Williams, who is Puerto Rican, said she brings to her new position as the first senior director of belonging and inclusion at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where she aims to reach ''folks who felt sort of like I felt.''

Amid a heightened sense of urgency amid the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and in the wake of the killing of George Floyd, cultural institutions around the country are hiring their own diversity officers to increase the number of people of color on the staff and board, broaden their programming and address a widely acknowledged pattern of systemic racism.

''We no longer have to persuade each other that we should be doing this at the expense of something else,'' said Daniel H. Weiss, the president and chief executive of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which recently appointed Lavita McMath Turner, an assistant dean at the City University of New York, as its first chief diversity officer.

''Now is the time for us here in our own little world to address these issues,'' Weiss added, ''which have been plaguing our nation for more than two centuries.''

At the same time, experts warn, longstanding challenges remain -- antiracism goals that are hard to measure; finding funds to pay for these efforts; and assuming that the hiring of one dedicated advocate means the work is done.

''The principles of diversity, equity and inclusion are everyone's responsibility,'' said Ms. McMath Turner, adding that she did not feel the burden ''to single-handedly change the Met's 150-year history.''

The new generation of executives are coming in with a range of titles -- the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles hired Russell Davis as ''chief of human resources, equity and engagement''; the Art Institute of Chicago is searching for a ''senior vice president of people and culture'' -- but they have a broad mandate that ranges from recruiting more trustees of color to changing the internal culture.

''She is an agent for institutional transformation,'' Dorothy M. Kosinski, the director of the Phillips Collection in Washington, said of Makeba Clay, the museum's first chief diversity officer, who previously worked on similar efforts at the Smithsonian and the College of Southern Maryland. ''She is leading us on a profound journey of introspection, change, accountability.''

That Clay was brought on board two years ago speaks to how these issues have been building at cultural institutions, though many say the process has been too slow.

The Los Angeles Philharmonic in July established a diversity, equity and inclusion task force, which includes members of the board, orchestra and staff. Its Resident Fellows program, started in 2018, is now preparing symphonic musicians from underrepresented populations for positions in major professional orchestras.

In some cases it has taken internal investigations to hasten concrete reforms. After seventh graders and a teacher said they had been subjected to racist remarks by staff and other visitors at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston during a 2019 field trip, the institution apologized, studied the group's three-hour visit on security footage and interviewed dozens of people who interacted with the students.

After completing this investigation, the museum publicly committed to ''changing protocols and procedures for frontline staff and guards, articulating our expectations for visitor, staff and volunteer behavior, and enhancing ongoing training for all staff and volunteers.''

''Until there is some sunlight that shines on these moments,'' said Makeeba McCreary, the MFA's chief of learning and community engagement, ''it's really easy to act like they don't happen.''

In October, the museum also announced that Edward E. Greene had been promoted to president of the board -- the first African-American person to hold that position in the MFA's 150-year history.

''Who's in the room influences who is on the wall,'' said Greene, who is part of a new coalition of Black trustees seeking to make their art museums more diverse. ''And we are working hard to ensure that broader voices are at the table -- specifically Black and brown voices, which have largely been ignored.''

The events of the past summer raised consciousness to a new level and accelerated diversity efforts. At the Met in June, staff members in a letter urged the museum's leadership to acknowledge ''what we see as the expression of a deeply rooted logic of white supremacy and culture of systemic racism at our institution.''

That same month, at the Guggenheim Museum, a letter signed ''The Curatorial Department'' demanded wholesale changes to ''an inequitable work environment.''

The Guggenheim has just chosen Naomi Beckwith, a veteran senior curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, who is Black, to succeed its longtime chief curator, Nancy Spector, who is white. ''This is not the first time in history that museums have been pushed to think more critically about the artists they show and who they hire,'' said Beckwith, who, starting in June, becomes deputy director and chief curator. ''The difference this time is you are seeing people of color coming into leadership positions.''

Last July, the Met issued a list of 13 commitments, including, ''Hire a Chief Diversity Officer within four months.''

''Our goal in the first year is by next summer to have accomplished most of those goals,'' Mr. Weiss said.

To be sure, there are those who question the sincerity of these efforts in much the same way they criticized as inadequate the statements that cultural organizations put out in the wake of George Floyd's killing.

''I've been doing this work for over 22 years,'' said Rodriguez-Williams of the MFA, ''and I can honestly tell you that is literally always the question that I ask myself: 'Is this performative or is this real?'''

She and other diversity officers say the answer will come from changes both quantifiable and subjective: increasing the number of people of color on staffs and boards; providing paid internships for people of color; making visitors of color feel like they belong.

Cultural leaders say they are well aware that diversity efforts could be viewed as tokenism or a passing trend. ''You build credibility through your progress and that's why we created that list of commitments,'' Weiss said. ''If we're doing them, then we're moving the institution in the right direction, and if we're not doing them, then we should be replaced.''

McCreary, who in 2018 became the first person of color on the MFA's leadership team, said institutions need to evaluate managers based on clear criteria. When managers argue they can't find candidates of color, for example, organizations should say, ''you don't get to hire anybody until you find someone, or you don't get a merit increase,'' McCreary said. ''We have to have consequences.''

In the past, relying on a new hire might have checked the box on diversity efforts. Now, institutions are insisting on the involvement of the full staff. ''I see the entire organization as my team,'' said Clay, who is working on setting benchmarks for progress at the Phillips. ''Hiring me is the first step of you all saying, 'We're ready to roll up our sleeves together.'''

Strapped nonprofit cultural organizations have had difficulty raising the funds to pay for dedicated diversity officers, especially when the pandemic's economic toll has forced layoffs and furloughs. Now they have recognized the importance of raising money specifically to hire these specialists (the Phillips Collection's chief diversity officer position, for example, was funded by the Sherman Fairchild Foundation).

''People realize there needs to be a professional,'' said Sarah James, who specializes in cultural executive searches at the firm Phillips Oppenheim. ''They're finding the money for it.''

What will make these hires more meaningful, experts say, is if diversity officers are overseen by institutions' top managers, not just the human resources department. ''If it does not come from the top, it's not going to work,'' said Nancy Huckaba, a vice president at EFL Associates, an executive search firm.

Above all, experts agree, arts executives need to keep hammering away at entrenched institutional inequities -- and holding themselves accountable. ''It's about intentionality and purpose,'' said Greene, ''and having the perseverance to keep pushing it -- one trustee, one employee at a time.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/17/arts/design/diversity-directors-arts-hiring.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/17/arts/design/diversity-directors-arts-hiring.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Lavita McMath Turner was named the Metropolitan Museum of Art's first chief diversity officer. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C5)

**Load-Date:** January 18, 2021

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[***Why Millions Think It Is Trump Who Cannot Tell a Lie; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64K0-W2W1-JBG3-61FH-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3084 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. EdsallThomas B. Edsall&amp;#160;has been a contributor to the Times Opinion section since 2011. His column on strategic and demographic trends in American politics appears every Wednesday. He previously covered politics for The Washington Post.

**Highlight:** “What perhaps looks like collective derangement to many outside the party ranks is really just raw political calculation.”

**Body**

Why is Donald Trump’s big lie so hard to discredit?

This has been a live question for more than a year, but inside it lies another: Do Republican officials and voters actually believe Trump’s claim that Joe Biden stole the 2020 election by corrupting ballots — [*the same ballots*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f) that put so many Republicans in office — and if they do believe it, what are their motives?

A December 2021 [*University of Massachusetts-Amherst*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f) survey found striking links between attitudes on race and immigration and disbelief in the integrity of the 2020 election.

According to the poll, two-thirds of Republicans, 66 percent, agreed that “the growth of the number of immigrants to the U.S. means that America is in danger of losing its culture and identity,” and the same percentage of Republicans were convinced that “the Democratic Party is trying to replace the current electorate with voters from poorer countries around the world.”

Following up on the UMass survey, four political scientists — [*Jesse Rhodes*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), [*Raymond La Raja*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), [*Tatishe Nteta*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f) and [*Alexander Theodoridis*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f) — wrote in an essay posted on The Washington Post’s [*Monkey Cage*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f):

Divisions over racial equality were closely related to perceptions of the 2020 presidential election and the Capitol attack. For example, among those who agreed that white people in the United States have advantages based on the color of their skin, 87 percent believed that Joe Biden’s victory was legitimate; among neutrals, 44 percent believed it was legitimate; and among those who disagreed, only 21 percent believed it was legitimate. Seventy percent of people who agreed that white people enjoy advantages considered the events of Jan. 6 to be an insurrection; 26 percent of neutrals described it that way; and only 10 percent who disagreed did so, while 80 percent of this last group called it a protest. And while 70 percent of those who agreed that white people enjoy advantages blamed Trump for the events of Jan. 6, only 34 percent of neutrals did, and a mere 9 percent of those who disagreed did.

According to experts I asked, Republican elected officials who either affirm Donald Trump’s claim that the 2020 election was corrupt or refuse to call Trump out base their stance on a sequence of rationales.

[*Mike McCurry*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), President Bill Clinton’s press secretary, saw the origin of one rationale in demographic trends:

I believe much of the polarization and discord in national politics comes from changing demographics. [*Robert Jones of P.R.R.I*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f). writes about this in “The End of White Christian America,” and I think this is a source of many politico-cultural divisions and plays out in electoral politics. There is an America (“American dream”) that many whites were privileged to know growing up, and it now seems to be evaporating or at least becoming subservient to other cultural ideals and norms. So that spurs anxiety, and it is translated to the language and posture of politics.

McCurry went on:

I think otherwise well-meaning G.O.P. senators who flinch when it comes to common sense and serving the common good do so because they have no vocabulary or perspective which allows them to deal with the underlying changes in society. They feel the changes, they know constituents whom they otherwise like who feel the changes, but they cannot figure out how to lower the level of angst.

Some maintain that another rationale underpinning submission to the lie is that it signals loyalty to the larger conservative cause.

Musa al-Gharbi, a sociologist at Columbia, pointed out in an email that acceptance of Trump’s false claims gives Republican politicians a way of bridging the gap between a powerful network of donors and elites who back free trade capitalism and the crucial bloc of white ***working-class*** voters seeking trade protectionism and continued government funding of Social Security and Medicare:

Embracing the big lie is an empty approach to populism for a lot of these politicians. It allows them to cast their rivals, and the system itself, as corrupt — to cash in on that widespread sentiment — and to cast themselves as exceptions to the rule. It allows them to portray themselves as allies of the people but without actually changing anything in terms of the policies they advocate for, in terms of how they do business.

For those Republican leaders, al-Gharbi continued, “who are the swamp, or could be reasonably construed as such, it is important to create an apparent distance from the establishment. Flirting with the big lie is a good way of doing so.”

[*Sarah Binder*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a political scientist at George Washington University and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, noted in an email that “fear of electoral retribution from Trump — and from Republican voters — drives Senate G.O.P. reluctance to break with Trump.”

The former president, she continued,

has succeeded in reshaping the G.O.P. as his party. This electoral dynamic applies in spades to Republicans’ unwillingness to challenge Trump over the Jan. 6 insurrection — or, like Kevin McCarthy and Mitch McConnell, to back down from their initial criticisms. It seems as if fealty to Trump’s alternative version of the events of Jan. 6 is the litmus test for Republicans.

The underlying policy agreements between Republican incumbents and Trump reinforces these straightforward concerns over re-election, in Binder’s view:

For all of Trump’s nativist immigration, trade, and “America First” views, he was lock step with Republicans on cutting taxes and regulations and stacking the courts with young conservatives. In that light, certainly while Trump was in office, Senate Republicans held their noses on any antidemocratic behavior and stuck with Trump to secure the policies they craved.

Along similar lines, [*Bruce Cain*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a political scientist at Stanford, observes that Republican elected officials make their calculations based on the goal of political survival:

What perhaps looks like collective derangement to many outside the party ranks is really just raw political calculation. The best strategy for regaining congressional control is to keep Trump and his supporters inside the party tent, and the only way to do that is to go along with his myths in order to get along with him.

This approach, Cain continued, “is the path of least political resistance. Trump in 2016 demonstrated that he could win the presidency” while rejecting calls to reach out to minorities, by targeting a constituency that is “predominantly white and 80 percent conservative.” Because of its homogeneity, Cain continued, “the Republican Party is much more unified than the Democrats at the moment.”

While there was considerable agreement among the scholars and strategists whom I contacted that Republican politicians consciously develop strategies to deal with what many privately recognize is a lie, there is less agreement on the thinking of Republican voters.

[*Lane Cuthbert*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), along with his UMass colleague Alex Theodoridis, asked in an [*op-ed*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f) in The Washington Post:

How could the “big lie” campaign convince so many Republicans that Trump won an election he so clearly lost? Some observers wonder whether these beliefs are genuine or just an example of “expressive responding,” a term social scientists use to mean respondents are using a survey item to register a feeling rather than express a real belief.

In their own analysis of poll data, Cuthbert and Theodoridis concluded that most Republicans are true believers in Trump’s lie:

Apparently, Republicans are reporting a genuine belief that Biden’s election was illegitimate. If anything, a few Republicans may, for social desirability reasons, be using the “I’m not sure” option to hide their true belief that the election was stolen.

Al-Gharbi sharply disputed this conclusion:

Most Republican voters likely don’t believe in the big lie. But many would nonetheless profess to believe it in polls and surveys and would support politicians who make similar professions because these professions serve as a sign of defiance against the prevailing elites. They serve as signs of group solidarity and commitment.

Poll respondents, he continued,

often give the factually wrong answer about empirical matters not because they don’t know the empirically correct answer but because they don’t want to give political fodder to their opponents with respect to their preferred policies. And when one takes down the temperature on these political stakes, again, often the differences on the facts also disappear.

One way to test how much people actually believe something, al-Gharbi wrote, “is to look out for yawning gaps between rhetoric and behaviors.” The fact that roughly 2,500 people participated in the Jan. 6 insurrection suggests that an overwhelming majority of Republicans do not believe the election was stolen, no matter what they tell pollsters, in al-Gharbi’s view. He continued:

If huge shares of the country, 68 percent of G.O.P. voters, plus fair numbers of independents and nonvoters, literally believed that we were in a moment of existential crisis and the election had been stolen and the future was at stake, why is it that only a couple thousand could muster the enthusiasm to show up and protest at the Capitol? In a world where 74 million voted for Trump and more than two-thirds of these (i.e., more than 50 million people, roughly one out of every five adults in the U.S.) actually believed that the other party had illegally seized power and plan to use that power to harm people like themselves, the events of Jan. 6 would likely have played out much, much differently.

Whatever the motivation, [*Isabel V. Sawhill*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a Brookings senior fellow, warned that Republican leaders and voters could be caught in a vicious cycle:

There may be a dynamic at work here in which an opportunistic strategy to please the Trump base has solidified that base, making it all the more difficult to take a stance in opposition to “whatever Trump wants.” It’s a Catch-22. To change the direction of the country requires staying in power, but staying in power requires satisfying a public, a large share of whom has lost faith in our institutions, including the mainstream media and the democratic process.

[*Jake Grumbach*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a political scientist at the University of Washington, noted in an email that the big lie fits into a larger Republican strategy: “In an economically unequal society, it is important for the conservative economic party to use culture war politics to win elections because they are unlikely to win based on their economic agenda.”

“There are a number of reasons why some Republican elites who were once anti-Trump became loyal to Trump,” Grumbach said. He continued:

First is the threat of being primaried for failing to sufficiently oppose immigration or the Democratic Party, a process that ramped up first in the Gingrich era and then more so during the Tea Party era of the early 2010s. Second is that Republican elites who were once anti-Trump learned that the Republican-aligned network of interest groups and donors — Fox News, titans of extractive and low-wage industry, the N.R.A., evangelical organizations, etc. — would mostly remain intact despite sometimes initially signaling that they would withhold campaign contributions or leave the coalition in opposition to Trump.

[*Frances Lee*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a political scientist at Princeton, took a different tack, arguing that Republican members of Congress, especially those in the Senate, would like nothing better than to have the big lie excised from the contemporary political landscape:

I disagree with the premise that many senators buy into the big lie. Congressional Republicans’ stance toward the events of Jan. 6 is to move on beyond them. They do not spend time rebuking activists who question the 2020 outcome, but they also do not endorse such views, either. With rare exception, congressional Republicans do not give floor speeches questioning the 2020 elections. They do not demand hearings to investigate election fraud.

Instead, Lee argued, “Many Republican voters still support and love Donald Trump, and Republican elected officials want to be able to continue to represent these voters in Washington.” The bottom line, she continued, is that

Republican elected officials want and need to hold the Republican Party together. In the U.S. two-party system, they see the Republican Party as the only realistic vehicle for contesting Democrats’ control of political offices and for opposing the Biden agenda. They see a focus on the 2020 elections as a distraction from the most important issues of the present: fighting Democrats’ “tax and spend” initiatives and winning back Republican control of Congress in the 2022 midterms.

[*Paul Begala*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a Democratic strategist, argued that

Trump lives by Machiavelli’s famous maxim that fear is a better foundation for loyalty than love. G.O.P. senators don’t fear Trump personally; they fear his followers. Republican politicians are so cowed by Trump’s supporters, you can almost hear them moo.

Trumpism, Begala wrote in an email, “is more of a cult of personality, which makes fealty to the Dear Leader even more important. How else do you explain 16 G.O.P. senators who voted to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act in 2006 all refusing to even allow it to be debated in 2022?”

Begala compares Senator Mitch McConnell’s views of the [*Voting Rights Act*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f) in 2006 (“America’s history is a story of ever-increasing freedom, hope and opportunity for all. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 represents one of this country’s greatest steps forward in that story. Today I am pleased the Senate reaffirmed that our country must continue its progress towards becoming a society in which every person, of every background, can realize the American dream”) with McConnell’s [*stance*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f) now: “This is not a federal issue; it ought to be left to the states.”

Republican politicians, in Begala’s assessment,

have deluded themselves into thinking that Trump and the big lie can work for them. The reality is the opposite: Republican politicians work for Trump and the big lie. And they may be powerless to stop it if and when Trump uses it to undermine the 2024 presidential results.

It is at this point, Begala continued, “where leadership matters. Trump stokes bigotry, he sows division, he promotes racism, and when other G.O.P. politicians fail to disavow Trump’s divisiveness, they abet it. What a contrast to other Republican leaders in my lifetime.”

Like Begala, [*Charles Stewart III*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a political scientist at M.I.T., was blunt in his analysis:

There’s generally a lack of nuance in considering why Republican senators fail to abandon Trump. Whereas Reagan spoke of the [*11th Commandment*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), Trump destroyed it, along with many of the first 10. He is mean and vindictive and speaks to a set of supporters who are willing to take their energy and animus to the polling place in the primaries — or at least, that’s the worry. They are also motivated by racial animus and by Christian millennialism.

These voters, according to Stewart,

are not a majority of the Republican Party, but they are motivated by fear, and fear is the greatest motivator. Even if a senator doesn’t share those views — and I don’t think most do — they feel they can’t alienate these folks without stoking a fight. Why stoke a fight? Few politicians enter politics looking to be a martyr. Mainstream Republican senators may be overestimating their ability to keep the extremist genie in the bottle, but they have no choice right now if they intend to continue in office.

[*Philip Bobbitt*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a professor of law at Columbia and the University of Texas, argued in an email that Republican acceptance of Trump’s falsehoods is a reflection of the power Trump has over members of the party:

It’s the very fact that they know Trump’s claims are ludicrous — that is the point: Like other bullies, he amuses himself and solidifies his authority by humiliating people, and what can be more humiliating than compelling people to publicly announce their endorsements of something they know and everyone else knows to be false?

[*Thomas Mann*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a Brookings senior fellow, made the case in an email that Trump has transformed the Republican Party so that membership now precludes having “a moral sense: honesty, empathy, respect for one’s colleagues, wisdom, institutional loyalty, a willingness to put country ahead of party on existential matters, an openness to changing conditions.”

Instead, Mann wrote:

the current, Trump-led Republican Party allows no room for such considerations. Representative Liz Cheney’s honest patriotism would be no more welcome among Senate Republicans than House Republicans. Even those current Republican senators whose earlier careers indicated a moral sense — Mitt Romney, Susan Collins, Richard Burr, Roy Blunt, Lisa Murkowski, Robert Portman, Ben Sasse, Richard Shelby — have felt obliged to pull their punches in the face of the big lie and attempted coup.

[*Bart Bonikowski*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f), a sociologist at N.Y.U., described the danger of this political dynamic:

In capturing the party, Trump perfectly embodied its ethnonationalist and authoritarian tendencies and delivered it concrete results — even if his policy stances were not always perfectly aligned with party orthodoxy. As a result, the Republican Party and Trumpism have become fused into a single entity — one that poses serious threats to the stability of the United States.

The unwillingness of Republican leaders to challenge Trump’s relentless lies, for whatever reason — for political survival, for mobilization of whites opposed to minorities, to curry favor, to feign populist sympathies — is as consequential as or more so than actually believing the lie.

If Republican officials and their voters are willing to swallow an enormous and highly consequential untruth for political gain, they have taken a first step toward becoming willing allies in the corrupt manipulation of future elections.

In that sense, the big lie is a precursor to more dangerous threats — threats that are plausible in ways that less than a decade ago seemed inconceivable. The capitulation to and appeasement of Trump by Republican leaders is actually setting up even worse possibilities than what we’ve lived through so far.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***For Diversity Leaders in the Arts, Getting Hired Is Just the First Step***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61ST-8WK1-DXY4-X0F6-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Cultural institutions are recruiting people of color to direct their transformation efforts. But bringing in one manager doesn’t mean the work is done.

**Body**

Cultural institutions are recruiting people of color to direct their transformation efforts. But bringing in one manager doesn’t mean the work is done.

Growing up in a ***working class*** family in Lawrence, Mass., Rosa Rodriguez-Williams said “museums were not part of my experience.”

It is this outsider understanding that Rodriguez-Williams, who is Puerto Rican, said she brings to her new position as the first senior director of belonging and inclusion at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, where she aims to reach “folks who felt sort of like I felt.”

Amid a heightened sense of urgency amid the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and in the wake of the killing of George Floyd, cultural institutions around the country are hiring their own diversity officers to increase the number of people of color on the staff and board, broaden their programming and address a widely acknowledged pattern of systemic racism.

“We no longer have to persuade each other that we should be doing this at the expense of something else,” said Daniel H. Weiss, the president and chief executive of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which recently [*appointed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/23/arts/design/met-museum-diversity-officer.html) Lavita McMath Turner, an assistant dean at the City University of New York, as its first chief diversity officer.

“Now is the time for us here in our own little world to address these issues,” Weiss added, “which have been plaguing our nation for more than two centuries.”

At the same time, experts warn, longstanding challenges remain — antiracism goals that are hard to measure; finding funds to pay for these efforts; and assuming that the hiring of one dedicated advocate means the work is done.

“The principles of diversity, equity and inclusion are everyone’s responsibility,” said Ms. McMath Turner, adding that she did not feel the burden “to single-handedly change the Met’s 150-year history.”

The new generation of executives are coming in with a range of titles — the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles hired Russell Davis as “chief of human resources, equity and engagement”; the Art Institute of Chicago is searching for a “senior vice president of people and culture” — but they have a broad mandate that ranges from [*recruiting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/magazine/diversity-recruitment-ethics.html) more trustees of color to changing the internal culture.

“She is an agent for institutional transformation,” Dorothy M. Kosinski, the director of the Phillips Collection in Washington, said of Makeba Clay, the museum’s first chief diversity officer, who previously worked on similar efforts at the Smithsonian and the College of Southern Maryland. “She is leading us on a profound journey of introspection, change, accountability.”

That Clay was brought on board two years ago speaks to how these issues have been building at cultural institutions, though many say the process has been too slow.

The Los Angeles Philharmonic in July established a diversity, equity and inclusion task force, which includes members of the board, orchestra and staff. Its Resident Fellows program, started in 2018, is now preparing symphonic musicians from underrepresented populations for positions in major professional orchestras.

In some cases it has taken internal investigations to hasten concrete reforms. After seventh graders and a teacher said they had been [*subjected to racist remarks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/05/arts/museum-of-fine-arts-boston-racism-settlement.html) by staff and other visitors at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston during a 2019 field trip, [*the institution apologized*](https://www.mfa.org/news/update-may-2019), studied the group’s three-hour visit on security footage and interviewed dozens of people who interacted with the students.

After completing this investigation, the museum publicly committed to “changing protocols and procedures for frontline staff and guards, articulating our expectations for visitor, staff and volunteer behavior, and enhancing ongoing training for all staff and volunteers.”

“Until there is some sunlight that shines on these moments,” said Makeeba McCreary, the MFA’s chief of learning and community engagement, “it’s really easy to act like they don’t happen.”

In October, the museum also [*announced*](https://www.mfa.org/press-release/new-leadership-of-boards-of-trustees-and-advisors-2020) that Edward E. Greene had been promoted to president of the board — the first African-American person to hold that position in the MFA’s 150-year history.

“Who’s in the room influences who is on the wall,” said Greene, who is part of [*a new coalition of Black trustees*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/09/arts/design/black-trustees-art-museums-diversity.html) seeking to make their art museums more diverse. “And we are working hard to ensure that broader voices are at the table — specifically Black and brown voices, which have largely been ignored.”

The events of the past summer raised consciousness to a new level and accelerated diversity efforts. At the Met in June, staff members [*in a letter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/24/arts/design/met-museum-staff-letter-racism.html) urged the museum’s leadership to acknowledge “what we see as the expression of a deeply rooted logic of white supremacy and culture of systemic racism at our institution.”

That same month, at the Guggenheim Museum, [*a letter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/22/arts/design/guggenheim-curators-racism-sexism.html) signed “The Curatorial Department” demanded wholesale changes to “an inequitable work environment.”

The Guggenheim has just chosen [*Naomi Beckwith*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/14/arts/design/guggenheim-curator-beckwith.html), a veteran senior curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, who is Black, to succeed its longtime chief curator, Nancy Spector, who is white. “This is not the first time in history that museums have been pushed to think more critically about the artists they show and who they hire,” said Beckwith, who, starting in June, becomes deputy director and chief curator. “The difference this time is you are seeing people of color coming into leadership positions.”

Last July, the Met issued [*a list of 13 commitments*](https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/now-at-the-met/2020/the-mets-plans-for-anti-racism), including, “Hire a Chief Diversity Officer within four months.”

“Our goal in the first year is by next summer to have accomplished most of those goals,” Mr. Weiss said.

To be sure, there are those who question the sincerity of these efforts in much the same way they criticized as inadequate [*the statements that cultural organizations put out in the wake of George Floyd’s killing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/07/arts/museums-theaters-protests.html).

“I’ve been doing this work for over 22 years,” said Rodriguez-Williams of the MFA, “and I can honestly tell you that is literally always the question that I ask myself: ‘Is this performative or is this real?’”

She and other diversity officers say the answer will come from changes both quantifiable and subjective: increasing the number of people of color on staffs and boards; providing paid internships for people of color; making visitors of color feel like they belong.

Cultural leaders say they are well aware that diversity efforts could be viewed as tokenism or a passing trend. “You build credibility through your progress and that’s why we created that list of commitments,” Weiss said. “If we’re doing them, then we’re moving the institution in the right direction, and if we’re not doing them, then we should be replaced.”

McCreary, who in 2018 became the first person of color on the MFA’s leadership team, said institutions need to evaluate managers based on clear criteria. When managers argue they can’t find candidates of color, for example, organizations should say, “you don’t get to hire anybody until you find someone, or you don’t get a merit increase,” McCreary said. “We have to have consequences.”

In the past, relying on a new hire might have checked the box on diversity efforts. Now, institutions are insisting on the involvement of the full staff. “I see the entire organization as my team,” said Clay, who is working on setting benchmarks for progress at the Phillips. “Hiring me is the first step of you all saying, ‘We’re ready to roll up our sleeves together.’”

Strapped nonprofit cultural organizations have had difficulty raising the funds to pay for dedicated diversity officers, especially when the pandemic’s economic toll has forced layoffs and furloughs. Now they have recognized the importance of raising money specifically to hire these specialists (the Phillips Collection’s chief diversity officer position, for example, was funded by the Sherman Fairchild Foundation).

“People realize there needs to be a professional,” said Sarah James, who specializes in cultural executive searches at the firm Phillips Oppenheim. “They’re finding the money for it.”

What will make these hires more meaningful, experts say, is if diversity officers are overseen by institutions’ top managers, not just the human resources department. “If it does not come from the top, it’s not going to work,” said Nancy Huckaba, a vice president at EFL Associates, an executive search firm.

Above all, experts agree, arts executives need to keep hammering away at entrenched institutional inequities — and holding themselves accountable. “It’s about intentionality and purpose,” said Greene, “and having the perseverance to keep pushing it — one trustee, one employee at a time.”

PHOTO: Lavita McMath Turner was named the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s first chief diversity officer. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C5)

**Load-Date:** October 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The G.O.P. Swaps Libertarianism for Bloat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60P1-WJ61-DXY4-X3G0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 26, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 27

**Length:** 1259 words

**Byline:** By Stephanie Slade

**Body**

Why are libertarian friends and free-market thinkers being purged from the coalition?

In 1975, the future president Ronald Reagan said, ''I believe the very heart and soul of conservatism is libertarianism.''

Today, many leaders of the Republican Party have coalesced around a desire to purge libertarians, with our pesky commitments to economic liberty and international trade, from their midst. If Mr. Reagan's agenda was a three-legged stool of religious traditionalism, a strong national defense and free-market economics, they hope the latter leg can be reduced to sawdust and scattered to the winds.

The Republican Party seems to become more comfortable with top-down economic interventionism by the day. Rising stars denounce the global market integration that has defined the postwar era. Last year in a speech calling for a national pivot to ''common-good capitalism,'' Senator Marco Rubio of Florida declared, ''Our challenge is an economic order that is bad for America.'' Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri insists, ''It's time we ended the cosmopolitan experiment.''

Should these big-government conservatives get their way, libertarians believe -- like a majority of Republicans once did -- that the result will be slower growth, less dynamism and fewer opportunities for all. We insist the solution to most problems starts with removing the market distortions that government interference created in the first place.

Top-down economic planning, whether it comes from the left or the right, inevitably leads to sclerosis, incompetence and cronyism.

Global capitalism remains the greatest engine of prosperity. In the past five years, according to the World Bank, the percentage of the world's population living in extreme poverty dropped into single digits for the first time. President Trump's trade war, though, has shown us that ''managing'' the economy nearly always backfires. In December, a Federal Reserve study found that the 2018 tariffs were ''associated with relative reductions in manufacturing employment and relative increases in producer prices.''

The economic agendas of big-government conservatives could easily be confused for proposals from the left. Consider Oren Cass, a former adviser to Senator Mitt Romney. At last summer's National Conservatism Conference, Mr. Cass argued for a robust ''industrial policy'' for the United States. That would include a federal program of research-and-development subsidies, infrastructure investments, ''bias[ing] the tax code'' in favor of producers of ''physical things,'' aggressive retaliation against countries that don't abide by our trade rules and more.

More recently, Mr. Cass has begun arguing for a new model of corporate governance that would privilege worker well-being over corporate profits -- in other words, over a company's ability to operate and employ people. It is meant as an alternative to both the conventional corporate mentality, in which shareholders' bottom lines come first, and the modern push for progressively inflected corporate social responsibility. Regulatory constraints to impose his new model are justified, he says, because neither of those approaches has produced sufficient investment by companies into their workforces and communities. What constitutes optimal corporate investment is apparently for bureaucrats in Washington to decide.

Advocates like Mr. Cass see this shift as a political necessity for the Republican Party. They believe the shocking outcome of the 2016 election proves that the Republican base is looking for a hand up; the rest of the field was busy mouthing platitudes about liberty, but only Mr. Trump spoke to their concerns.

This may be a bigger political gamble than conservatives appreciate. Survey research strongly suggests that Americans still support open markets. In July 2019, the Pew Research Center found a solid 65 percent of Americans saying that free-trade agreements ''have been a good thing for the United States,'' up from 45 percent just before the 2016 election. So during President Trump's protectionist first term, support for international commerce has robustly increased.

Last September, Gallup found that 87 percent of Americans have a positive view of ''free enterprise'' and 70 percent think ''business can do things more efficiently than government can.'' These results hold regardless of party affiliation, but they're stronger on the political right. Only 7 percent of Republicans said there was too little government regulation of business and industry, for example, compared with 46 percent of Democrats.

Could it be that the 2016 upset was attributable to something other than a wholesale rejection of limited-government principles among the Republican base?

To be clear, I am not predicting that the libertarian moment has finally arrived. One 2017 study suggested that people who want the government to stay out of your bedroom as well as your pocketbook (as the saying goes) make up an almost vanishingly small share of the voting population. But within the Republican coalition, there is a genuine constituency for economic freedom.

Proponents of big-government conservatism point to a crisis of ''stagnant wages, a labor-force exodus, too many unstable families and crumbling communities'' caused, they believe, by the unwillingness of American elites to protect ***working-class*** jobs from foreign competition. The dream of a family supported by a single breadwinner is increasingly out of reach, they say, especially for men without college degrees.

Yet some scholars have questioned the data underpinning this narrative. Michael Strain of the American Enterprise Institute, for example, notes that the wages of nonsupervisory workers have increased by 33 percent, accounting for inflation, since 1990; when taxes and transfers as well as inflation are considered, incomes in the lowest quintile of households rose by 66 percent over the same period.

To the extent that the cost of living can seem to be spiraling out of control, the phenomenon is overwhelmingly driven by health care, higher education and housing -- three sectors that have long been heavily regulated and wildly subsidized. And thanks to global capitalism, even the least among us today have access to an ever-improving array of food, medicine, technology, entertainment and more.

This is why libertarians highlight market distortions. Instead of spending ever more on rental assistance for low-income families who must then compete with one another and their wealthier peers, increase the housing stock and drive down prices by getting rid of zoning and land-use restrictions; instead of using tax dollars to prop up dying manufacturers, accept the affordability and abundance that imports offer and unleash America's productive capacity to tackle other problems (including things like climate change) and create new jobs.

In trying to direct the economy from Washington, conservatives would be doubling down on progressives' mistakes. And in trying to duplicate their political success from 2016, Republicans may be tearing out their movement's heart and soul.

Stephanie Slade (@sladesr) is the managing editor of Reason magazine.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/opinion/republicans-libertarians-economics.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/opinion/republicans-libertarians-economics.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Nabaum FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 26, 2020

**End of Document**



[***China Puts Idle Hands to Work To Support Blue-Collar Boom***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61SH-T8C1-DXY4-X386-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 16, 2021 Saturday

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**Length:** 1391 words

**Byline:** By Keith Bradsher

**Body**

Officials pushed factories to reopen the same way they forced the country to shut down. In one small town, it led to a chili-sauce-fueled revival.

CHANGMINGZHEN, China -- The smell, salty and pungent, wafts through the freshly paved streets near the gleaming new factory.

The factory is owned by a company called Laoganma, which makes a piquant chili-and-soybean sauce famous across China for its power to set mouths watering. In a time of global pandemic, when the jobs of working people around the world hang in the balance, the factory's scents signal opportunity.

Since it opened in March, when China was still in the grip of Covid-19, the factory has struggled to find enough machinery operators or quality control technicians. Now workers are flocking to Changmingzhen, a once-quiet farming town ringed with green mountains and rice paddies, from which young people once fled for better jobs elsewhere.

Changmingzhen stands as a testament to China's stunning post-coronavirus revival -- one powered by the callused hands of the country's factory and construction workers. With few exceptions, the rest of the world remains in a pandemic-driven malaise. But when China reports economic figures for 2020 on Monday, they are expected to show its economy grew despite losing early weeks to the lockdown.

On a recent evening, workers flush with money left the factory at shift's end and flooded nearby market stalls looking for hand-cut noodles, bananas and mandarin oranges. The family-owned company pays its production workers up to $1,200 a month. ''Not bad for workers our age,'' said Wang Mingyan, an employee leaving her shift.

The slight 50-year-old said she received a rent-free apartment, free cafeteria meals and other benefits, as Laoganma competes with other companies for workers. The menu isn't always to her liking, but that's a small price to pay.

''When you're away from home,'' said Ms. Wang, who moved from her hometown more than two hours away, ''you just fill your stomach.''

China froze a $15 trillion economy last February. It used brute force to isolate cities and provinces and drag people into quarantine.

Beijing turned to the same set of blunt tools to get the economy going again. It ordered factories to reopen and state-run banks to lend. It told state-run companies to restart.

Now the economy is charging ahead. Government subsidies are fueling new rail lines and factories. One state-owned company, a would-be competitor to Boeing and Airbus, says it will invest $3 billion in 22 big construction projects.

The government's role makes China's revival distinctly blue collar. The state's levers are most effective when it comes to restarting big factories or big construction projects. It has long focused on keeping the ***working class*** happy for fear of the sorts of upheavals that have upended politics in the United States and Europe.

Beijing has a harder time fixing other problems. Shoppers remain skittish, and may become more so as the virus has resurfaced in several cities lately. Its economy still relies less on innovation and services than on making stuff. Legions of college graduates still find satisfying jobs in short supply.

About 50 miles up the highway from Changmingzhen, in the provincial capital, Guiyang, Laoganma advertised positions with three-foot-high signs at a local job fair. But the work holds little appeal for young people looking for jobs.

''You can find one if you look, but it will just not be the kind you imagined,'' said Grace Cai, a senior majoring in tourism management at a Guiyang university, ''and not the kind that meets the demand in your heart, or reaches your goal.''

Ms. Cai had an internship last autumn working as a waitress in a hotel restaurant. She dreads finding a full-time job.

''There are too many students now,'' she said, ''and because of the epidemic, it is actually not easy to find a job.''

The villagers in Changmingzhen may not agree. It is in southwestern China's Guizhou Province, in a county that was so poor five years ago that it became a target for China's antipoverty campaign.

Even before the coronavirus, officials strove to put idle hands to work. The national government just built a modern expressway and a bullet train connecting Guizhou to a neighboring province. Laoganma and other companies soon followed. The town buzzes with construction laborers throwing up apartments for new workers.

''Every factory is short of workers -- the local ones have all been recruited,'' said Zhou Xin, a former farmer who gave up his rice paddies so that Laoganma could build its factory. ''It's too toilsome and local people are not willing to do it.''

His own daughter studied in Shanghai and stayed to work for an industrial design company. He now runs a small eatery across the street from the factory and still fishes in an adjacent river. He resents just one thing: the factory's constant low rumble and hiss.

''It doesn't matter if you get used to that sound,'' he said. ''There are billions of renminbi invested here.''

The factory was supposed to have opened in February. Then the pandemic struck.

Streets emptied. Residents set up barricades at town entrances, checking everyone's temperature. A mix of fear and camaraderie kept practically everyone at home for six weeks, living on corn, potatoes and greens from backyard gardens.

Yang Xiaozhen runs a Changmingzhen diner with her parents, charging $1.50 for a plate of dumplings. They closed. Her parents stayed indoors. Ms. Yang scarcely ventured out either.

''We tried to be mindful,'' she said, ''because we Chinese are certainly very united and very mindful.''

But the virus never struck Changmingzhen. By late February, with the economy still halted, local officials and Laoganma's managers sprang into action. (Laoganma did not respond to requests for comment.)

Neighborhood officials all over the county were ordered to find unemployed workers for the factory. Municipal workers put in long hours to complete nearby roads. Even the gardeners rushed to plant rows of saplings inside the factory fence.

Wen Wei was one of the first workers. She carries spices to the production line and earns $620 a month. Her husband, who fries hot peppers, earns $1,200 a month.

Laoganma's package deal lured them to Changmingzhen. It offered a free apartment for them and their two children and free meals at the company cafeteria. They pay only for water and electricity.

''You can't find such a high salary in other places,'' she said.

A few blocks to the south of the Laoganma factory, Zhu Haihua drives trucks for a steel factory that makes towers for wind turbines. His monthly paycheck of $2,300 does not include food or housing.

That is barely half of what the average American truck driver earns. But the money goes much farther in a Chinese mountain village. Frenetic construction over the past few years and permissive zoning regulations have produced a glut of recently built apartments. That allows Mr. Zhu to lease a three-bedroom apartment for just $175 a month.

''Renting here is very cheap,'' he said.

For now, the sounds of machinery and construction often drown out the sounds of the birds in the Chinese maples surrounding the town. But signs of weakness aren't far away. Business at Ms. Yang's diner has never completely recovered.

While the Laoganma factory continues to pump its spices into the air, the government-aided construction projects may not last. The high-speed rail construction crews are moving beyond the village. They come back less often to spend money.

Cai Liuzhong, the owner of a drilling supplies store next door to Ms. Yang's diner, is preparing to follow the work to the next boom town.

''We just follow where it goes,'' he said.

Yang Faxue, a diner regular, feels a quiet confidence that he will always have work. The 36-year-old construction worker has been on the road most of the past two decades, leaving his home about two hours' drive from Changmingzhen to work initially in the big city of Nanjing. His wife -- and, eventually, three children -- stayed home.

Mr. Yang was pleased to find a job opening in Changmingzhen, closer to home. And work barely stopped during the pandemic.

''The houses still need to be built,'' he said. ''Work is work.''

Claire Fu contributed research.Claire Fu contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/15/business/china-gdp-growth.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/15/business/china-gdp-growth.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Farmers tending their gardens in Changmingzhen, a farming town that has boomed along with the rest of post-coronavirus China. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Keith Bradsher/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Britain’s Soap Operas Offer Escape From Coronavirus. For Now.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YH7-MYT1-JBG3-604C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 25, 2020 Wednesday 22:31 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 954 words

**Byline:** Alex Marshall

**Highlight:** Filming has stopped on shows like ‘EastEnders’ and ‘Coronation Street,’ and episodes will air less frequently. Some fans are worried they’ll run out.

**Body**

Filming has stopped on shows like ‘EastEnders’ and ‘Coronation Street,’ and episodes will air less frequently. Some fans are worried they’ll run out.

LONDON — Last week, Joe Simnett, 19, a college student who lives in Derbyshire, northern England, received some shocking news.

The producers of “EastEnders,” the BBC soap opera he had watched most week nights since he was a two-year-old, [*announced they would stop filming*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-51943592) “until further notice,” because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Worse, the BBC was also starting to ration the episodes it had already filmed, only airing two a week, instead of four.

The following night, Simnett sat down to watch the show with his mom, then remembered it wasn’t on.

“We just had nothing to do,” he recalled, in a telephone interview. “I was like, ‘What do people who don’t watch soaps actually do in an evening?’”

Simnett made his [*feelings known on Twitter*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-51943592):

Britain’s soaps, some of which have broadcast continuously for decades and whose melodramatic story lines often center on ***working class*** families, are watched by millions every night. They were the last stalwarts of the country’s cultural life to be shut down by the coronavirus: Days after Britain’s [*music venues, theaters and museums closed*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-51943592), the soaps were still in production.

In recent days, with Britons at home in [*virtual lockdown*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-51943592), viewing figures for at least one of the shows soared: 8.9 million viewers watched “EastEnders” on Monday, according to the ratings service Overnights.tv, compared with around 5.5 million the previous week, before the lockdown.

That week, several major soaps, including “Coronation Street,” which has been running on the ITV network since 1960, insisted they were taking steps to protect staff as they continued shooting.

But nothing could stop the inevitable. On Sunday, “Hollyoaks,” a soap aimed at younger viewers, followed “EastEnders” and [*announced it would stop filming*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-51943592). On Monday, ITV said “Coronation Street” would, too.

Three episodes of “Coronation Street” would be aired a week, rather than the usual six, so it could stay on air until July, a spokeswoman for ITV said in a telephone interview. This would mean the show would fall out of sync with real life, she said. For instance, episodes that reference Easter would air after the holiday, she added, but she hoped viewers would understand.

“It is absolutely unprecedented,” said Lisa Holdsworth, a TV scriptwriter who is the chair of the Writer’s Guild of Great Britain. In the early 2000s, during [*an outbreak of*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-51943592)foot-and-mouth disease among cattle, one rural soap, “Emmerdale,” was forced to change its story lines and stop shooting outside, she said. “But they still didn’t shut down.”

This time, though, it was obviously the right thing to do, she added.

Fans on social media almost unanimously agreed with the broadcasters’ decisions to stop filming, and many expressed concern about the shows’ older stars.

“Coronavirus felt quite removed from real life until this happened,” said Ana Guerra-Moore, 25, a fan of “Coronation Street,” in a telephone interview. “After ‘EastEnders’ stopped production, I was, like, ‘God, is it going to happen to ‘Corrie’?’” she added, using a nickname for “Coronation Street.” “And a big part of me was hoping it wouldn’t, because I wanted it to still be here, to be that comfort and help everyone through.”

For now, the soaps are one of the few shows on British TV with no mention of the coronavirus: Instead, their story lines focus on the troubles of everyday life, with some dramatic plot twists thrown in. In the past week, “Hollyoaks” fans have seen characters confront each other over an affair without any hint of social distancing. On “EastEnders,” the Queen Vic pub has been filled with drinkers, even after Prime Minister Boris Johnson last week [*ordered pubs, cafes and restaurants to close*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-51943592).

Producers and fans are now asking whether the shows should reference the coronavirus when they eventually return. “I think people are wanting a bit of escapism,” said Steven Murphy, the editor of the weekly Inside Soap magazine. “So I think the soaps will just continue in their soap bubble world.”

But Phil Redmond, the TV producer who created “Hollyoaks,” said in a telephone interview that he felt soap operas should always engage in the issues of the day. “Soaps are more trusted than regular media or politicians,” he said, adding that they could bring in pandemic story lines without being boring. Online romance could blossom during self-isolation, he said, or a restaurant’s delivery driver could become a major character.

Helen Broom, an American fan who produces a “[*Coronation Street” podcast*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-51943592) with her Scottish husband from their home in Michigan, said it had been nice to see characters acting normally when she watched the show via BritBox, a streaming service. But she said there had also been “a couple of cringey moments where we’ve seen people on the show shake hands or cluster together in the pub, and I’ve kind of wanted to scream at the screen, ‘Back off! Don’t touch hands!’”

Simnett, the fan from Derbyshire, said he would not mind a jokey reference to the virus, but felt months of isolation stories wouldn’t work. “People will be so sick of hearing about it constantly, they’ll want something normal that reminds them of when it wasn’t so serious,” he said.

For now, he was more concerned that episodes of “EastEnders” might run out entirely. “I don’t know how I’d go on if it did stop,” he said, with a laugh. “There are more pressing issues, but I’d be distraught in a way.”

PHOTO: Kellie Bright and Danny Dyer in an episode of “EastEnders” last month. The British soap opera will now air only two nights a week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kieron McCarron and Jack Barnes/BBC FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 25, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Caucus Chair Prepares For the Party's Future***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6187-6VC1-JBG3-60S4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Nicholas Fandos

**Body**

The No. 5 House Democrat is running for another term in his post, as he and a new generation of leaders look to a future after Speaker Nancy Pelosi is gone.

Most ways you slice it, House Democrats have had a turbulent few days. Swelling expectations that they would grow their majority in last week's election crashed amid painful losses, and public blame-trading from some of the chamber's most outspoken progressives and moderates has added a bitter note to President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s win.

Unbowed by the disappointment and division, Representative Hakeem Jeffries, a Brooklynite who as chairman of the unruly Democratic Caucus helps plot his party's policy and legislative strategy in the House, who announced Monday that he would seek re-election to that post. If he wins, as expected in a race in which he is unlikely to face a challenger, he would be positioned to be a crucial voice as the party figures out how to govern with an ally in the White House, but a slimmer majority on Capitol Hill.

As other Democrats compete to climb the ranks and secure a spot in the future of the party's House leadership, Mr. Jeffries, 50, is also a top contender to succeed Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who has led the party in the House since 2003, whenever she steps aside.

But while he represents a different generation of leadership from Ms. Pelosi, he sees little need to upend the approach that Democrats put in place after the 2016 election, either by veering further to the left or tacking to the center. He has no problem with a hard ''family conversation'' about what went wrong in last week's elections, Mr. Jeffries said in an interview, but his pitch to fellow Democrats is that their strategy -- focusing on policies that affect Americans' wallets and broadly popular issues, like gun safety -- is sound and their message is resonating. He has encouraged his colleagues to set aside the lure of ''irrationally exuberant expectations,'' take a deep breath, and stay focused on economic and social justice.

''Democrats won the White House, kept the majority in the House and are on the midnight train to Georgia to take the Senate,'' Mr. Jeffries said. ''That's a good day as far as I am concerned.''

Mr. Jeffries has already burnished an impressive profile for a House member in only his fourth term, having served as an impeachment manager in the Senate trial of President Trump. But how he navigates the coming weeks and months, when Democratic infighting is only likely to blossom in the absence of a common enemy in Mr. Trump, could go a long way in determining how high he climbs.

Moderates who narrowly held onto their seats are already laying blame squarely at the feet of the left for pushing unrealistic and sweeping ideas that open the party to charges of socialism and being anti-police. Leading progressives say the losses are moderates' fault, and are already warning Mr. Biden and Democratic leaders that shying away from liberal policies on climate, health care, jobs and education will backfire.

Other leaders, most notably Representative James Clyburn of South Carolina, the party's No. 3, have shown they are willing to be active combatants. Mr. Jeffries, for stylistic and political reasons, appears more comfortable as a peacemaker.

Mr. Jeffries's own theory of the case is that Democrats' ''For the People'' message is the right one. The best way to win back traditionally Democratic voters peeled away by the millions by Mr. Trump and to bridge the divisions within his party's own ranks, he argued, is to relentlessly focus on kitchen-table issues like health care costs, prescription drug pricing, defeating Covid-19, creating jobs and addressing racial inequality.

''It is unlikely, absent the bully pulpit of the presidency, that someone who has mastered the art of grievance politics can have a same hold of on a significant part of the country that Donald Trump demonstrated,'' he said. ''So as we move forward, Democrats have a real chance to win back some of these ***working-class*** voters by making clear our implemented ideas will fix the broken American contract and improve their quality of life.''

That begins, he said, by ''crushing the virus'' and sending ''direct relief'' to American workers and business owners still reeling from the pandemic-battered economy.

''That should be our priority, and will be on Day 1,'' he said.

Facing the likelihood of a Republican Senate, it will not be easy. Mr. Jeffries said Democrats believed there would be opportunities for them to partner with Mr. Biden and Republicans in the Senate to pass laws related to prescription drug pricing, infrastructure spending, and changes to sentencing and prison laws.

Party leaders have promised a ''deep dive'' into Tuesday's results to better understand how they lost five seats and counting and failed in nearly every pickup opportunity they believed was in reach.

Mr. Jeffries said he was most concerned about why the public opinion polling that guides campaigns at nearly every level systematically failed to capture the extent of support not only for Mr. Trump, but other Republicans on the ballot.

''One of the things that we should take a look at is, is the polling broken, or is the polling only broken when Donald Trump is on the ballot,'' Mr. Jeffries said, noting that public opinion surveys had much more accurately predicted the 2018 midterm results. ''Because if it is the latter, then there are not too many adjustments to be made going forward because Trump will be nowhere to be found electorally in 2022.''

Mr. Jeffries is among a handful of younger Democratic leaders emerging as potential heirs to Ms. Pelosi, 80, and her longtime top deputies, Steny H. Hoyer, 81, and Mr. Clyburn, 80, who are all seeking another term when Democrats choose their leaders later this month.

Two Democrats are currently competing for the party's No. 4 House leadership post, assistant speaker, after Ben Ray LujÃ¡n won a seat in the Senate last week. They are Representative Katherine Clark, 57, a Massachusetts progressive who currently is vice chairwoman of the party caucus under Mr. Jeffries, and Representative David Cicilline, 59, a progressive from Rhode Island and the first openly gay member of House leadership.

Representative Cheri Bustos of Illinois, 59, the chairwoman of House Democrats' campaign arm, had been considered another contender, but after last week's results -- in which her offensive strategy fell flat and she only barely won re-election herself -- her future was less certain. She told colleagues on Monday that she would not seek another term in that position and would focus on legislating instead, a sign that she did not intend to pursue a leadership role.

After Ms. Bustos stepped aside, a third candidate for assistant speaker, Representative Tony CaÌrdenas of California, 57, said he would now run to replace her. Representative Sean Patrick Maloney of New York had also entered the race.

This being Washington, Mr. Jeffries would not speak openly about aspirations for leading his party, and he has played squarely within the lines of Ms. Pelosi's top-down leadership structure, keeping any public disagreements to a minimum and prizing consensus-building.

He said in the interview that there was ''one speaker at a time,'' and that he decided to remain in his own position, which has clearer responsibilities than the relatively new assistant speaker post, to provide ''continuity'' in a time of national crisis.

But allies note with enthusiasm that he would be the first Black representative to be speaker. And Mr. Jeffries's actions indicate he has higher leadership ambitions in the House. He raised almost $9 million for Democrats this election cycle, clocking hours at about 150 events for candidates.

''There will be a time to focus on where we go as a party into the future, but in order to do that, we have to focus on being as successful as we can in the moment,'' Mr. Jeffries said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/09/us/politics/hakeem-jeffries-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/09/us/politics/hakeem-jeffries-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Representative Hakeem Jeffries, center, was an impeachment manager in the Senate trial of President Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Republicans Are Ripping Out ‘the Very Heart and Soul’ of Their Party***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60NX-11S1-JBG3-634D-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Why are libertarian friends and free-market thinkers being purged from the coalition?

**Body**

Why are libertarian friends and free-market thinkers being purged from the coalition?

In 1975, the future president Ronald Reagan [*said*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/), “I believe the very heart and soul of conservatism is libertarianism.”

Today, many leaders of the Republican Party have coalesced around a desire to purge libertarians, with our pesky commitments to economic liberty and international trade, from their midst. If Mr. Reagan’s agenda was a three-legged stool of religious traditionalism, a strong national defense and free-market economics, they hope the latter leg can be reduced to sawdust and scattered to the winds.

The Republican Party seems to become more comfortable with top-down economic interventionism by the day. Rising stars denounce the global market integration that has defined the postwar era. Last year in a speech calling for a national pivot to “common-good capitalism,” Senator Marco Rubio of Florida [*declared*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/), “Our challenge is an economic order that is bad for America.” Senator Josh Hawley of Missouri [*insists*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/), “It’s time we ended the cosmopolitan experiment.”

Should these big-government conservatives get their way, libertarians believe — like a majority of Republicans once did — that the result will be slower growth, less dynamism and fewer opportunities for all. We insist the solution to most problems starts with removing the market distortions that government interference [*created*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) in the first place.

Top-down economic planning, whether it comes from the left or the right, inevitably leads to sclerosis, incompetence and cronyism.

Global capitalism remains the greatest engine of prosperity. In the past five years, according to the World Bank, the percentage of the world’s population living in extreme poverty dropped into single digits for the [*first time*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/). President Trump’s trade war, though, has shown us that “managing” the economy nearly always [*backfires*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/). In December, a Federal Reserve study [*found*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) that the 2018 tariffs were “associated with relative reductions in manufacturing employment and relative increases in producer prices.”

The economic agendas of big-government conservatives could easily be confused for proposals from the left. Consider Oren Cass, a former adviser to Senator Mitt Romney. At last summer’s National Conservatism Conference, Mr. Cass [*argued*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) for a robust “industrial policy” for the United States. That would include a federal program of research-and-development subsidies, infrastructure investments, “bias[ing] the tax code” in favor of producers of “physical things,” aggressive retaliation against countries that don’t abide by our trade rules and more.

More recently, Mr. Cass has begun [*arguing*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) for a new model of corporate governance that would privilege worker well-being over corporate profits — in other words, over a company’s ability to operate and employ people. It is meant as an alternative to both the conventional corporate mentality, in which shareholders’ bottom lines come first, and the modern push for progressively inflected corporate social responsibility. Regulatory constraints to impose his new model are justified, he says, because neither of those approaches has produced sufficient investment by companies into their workforces and communities. What constitutes optimal corporate investment is apparently for bureaucrats in Washington to decide.

Advocates like Mr. Cass see this shift as a political necessity for the Republican Party. They believe the shocking outcome of the 2016 election proves that the Republican base is looking for a hand up; the rest of the field was busy mouthing platitudes about liberty, but only Mr. Trump spoke to their concerns.

This may be a bigger political gamble than conservatives appreciate. Survey research strongly suggests that Americans still support open markets. In July 2019, the Pew Research Center [*found*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) a solid 65 percent of Americans saying that free-trade agreements “have been a good thing for the United States,” up from 45 percent just before the 2016 election. So during President Trump’s protectionist first term, support for international commerce has robustly increased.

Last September, Gallup [*found*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) that 87 percent of Americans have a positive view of “free enterprise” and 70 percent think “business can do things more efficiently than government can.” These results hold regardless of party affiliation, but they’re stronger on the political right. Only 7 percent of Republicans said there was too little government regulation of business and industry, for example, compared with 46 percent of Democrats.

Could it be that the 2016 upset was attributable to something other than a wholesale rejection of limited-government principles among the Republican base?

To be clear, I am not predicting that the libertarian moment has [*finally arrived*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/). One 2017 [*study*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) suggested that people who want the government to stay out of your bedroom as well as your pocketbook (as the saying goes) make up an almost vanishingly small share of the voting population. But within the Republican coalition, there is a genuine constituency for economic freedom.

Proponents of big-government conservatism [*point to*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) a crisis of “stagnant wages, a labor-force exodus, too many unstable families and crumbling communities” caused, they believe, by the unwillingness of American elites to protect ***working-class*** jobs from foreign competition. The dream of a family supported by a single breadwinner is increasingly out of reach, they say, especially for men without college degrees.

Yet some scholars have questioned the data underpinning this narrative. Michael Strain of the American Enterprise Institute, for example, [*notes*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) that the wages of nonsupervisory workers have increased by 33 percent, accounting for inflation, since 1990; when taxes and transfers as well as inflation are considered, incomes in the lowest quintile of households rose by 66 percent over the same period.

To the extent that the cost of living can seem to be spiraling out of control, the phenomenon is overwhelmingly [*driven*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) by health care, higher education and housing — three sectors that have long been heavily regulated and wildly subsidized. And thanks to global capitalism, even the least among us today have access to an ever-improving array of food, medicine, technology, entertainment and more.

This is why libertarians highlight market distortions. Instead of spending ever more on rental assistance for low-income families who must then compete with one another and their wealthier peers, increase the housing stock and drive down prices by getting rid of zoning and land-use restrictions; instead of using tax dollars to prop up dying manufacturers, accept the affordability and abundance that imports offer and unleash America’s productive capacity to tackle other problems (including things like climate change) and create new jobs.

In trying to direct the economy from Washington, conservatives would be doubling down on progressives’ mistakes. And in trying to duplicate their political success from 2016, Republicans may be tearing out their movement’s heart and soul.

Stephanie Slade ([*@sladesr*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/)) is the managing editor of Reason magazine.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://reason.com/1975/07/01/inside-ronald-reagan/).

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Stephanie Slade (@sladesr) is the managing editor of Reason magazine.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Nabaum FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Sanders, a Teflon Candidate, Faces New Tests as He Leads the Pack***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8K-R1K1-DXY4-X1KF-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Lisa Lerer

**Body**

The Vermont senator has long brushed off political vulnerabilities and evaded attacks from rivals. But the spotlight on his front-runner status and possible Russian interference could pose challenges.

In the early years, there was his commentary on gender relations featuring a rape fantasy, his support for the Sandinistas and his honeymoon in the Soviet Union.

Once he entered Congress, there were votes to shield gun manufacturers, a commitment to remaining uncommitted to the Democratic Party, and secret plans to mount a 2012 primary challenge against President Obama.

And more recently: the F.B.I. investigation into his family, the heart attack, the resistance to detailing the costs of his signature policy proposal, ''Medicare for all.''

Senator Bernie Sanders has the kind of vulnerabilities that make political opponents salivate. Yet throughout his congressional campaigns, the 2016 primaries, and now his second White House bid, one rule has defined the senator's political rise: Nothing sticks.

Now that durability is about to be tested in ways that Mr. Sanders has never experienced in his 50-year electoral career. The disclosure on Friday that intelligence officials believe Russia has been interfering in the 2020 race to help his candidacy may distract from his campaign message and force him to contend with questions, worries and disinformation about the Russian efforts.

He is also no longer a quixotic junior senator from the idiosyncratic state of Vermont. He is now the Democratic presidential front-runner, and if he captures the nomination, can expect to face a tidal wave of negative advertising. President Trump and the Republican Party would likely spend millions branding him as a socialist.

Mr. Sanders has long seen himself as an underestimated figure and a political revolutionary, allies say, and he has confidence in his extraordinary ability to shrug off attacks. His 2020 rivals -- a former vice president, multiple fellow senators, two brainy former mayors, and billionaire businessmen -- have failed to halt his momentum, or never fully tried in the first place, after concluding that attacks only fan the passions of his liberal base.

If Mr. Sanders's rivals have been giving him a pass in debates and over policy issues, it is because they see no clear way to dent his Trump-like Teflon image. It is too early to know if the Russia news or any burgeoning anti-Sanders effort among Democrats will change that. And like Mr. Trump, it may soon be too late for opponents to stop Mr. Sanders if he is the big winner in the delegate-rich Super Tuesday primaries on March 3.

''Any attempt to derail Bernie that I've ever seen has always blown up in the face of the derailer,'' said Howard Dean, the former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, who clashed with Mr. Sanders occasionally during Mr. Dean's time as governor of Vermont. ''It's an amazing phenomenon. I do not know what the magic is, but there is some.''

With Mr. Sanders favored to claim another victory in the Nevada caucuses on Saturday, some Democrats are frantically searching for a piece of kryptonite.

A Democratic group aimed at promoting moderates began airing digital ads this week that attack the costs of Mr. Sanders's proposals. The group's efforts follow a similar advertising campaign, bankrolled by a different Democratic organization, that questions whether Mr. Sanders can beat Mr. Trump in November.

In recent days, Michael R. Bloomberg's team has shifted its strategy from largely ignoring Mr. Sanders in favor of focusing on Mr. Trump to targeting their primary rival more aggressively than anyone else in the field. At Wednesday night's debate in Las Vegas, rivals hit him harder than ever before on his policies, the vitriolic tone of some of his supporters, his defense of socialism, and his health. There's also some speculation among Democratic officials about stopping Mr. Sanders at the party convention in July.

For a party obsessed with learning from the mistakes of 2016, when the sheer improbability of Mr. Trump's winning the White House dominated the discourse, the disbelief in the potential of Mr. Sanders to win the nomination and the reluctance of candidates to challenge him mystifies some Democrats -- even those working for him. And the revelation that Russia may be trying to help him, four years after it helped Mr. Trump, only confuses matters more, because it is far from clear how that foreign interference will affect the race.

For months, top Sanders aides feared that a rival, perhaps Mr. Bloomberg, would start an anti-Sanders super PAC. That kind of broad, well-funded effort has not materialized. And of all the candidates, only Tom Steyer has released an ad attacking Mr. Sanders, targeting his failure to put a price tag on his Medicare for All Plan.

''A lot of it is the same thing you saw happening in the Republican establishment four years ago,'' said Matt Bennett, a founder of the moderate think tank Third Way and a vocal critic of Mr. Sanders. ''Suddenly in April they woke up and realized that Donald Trump could actually win.''

Throughout the primary race, as soon as someone has risen to the top of the pack, attacks have piled on. Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts faced a barrage of questions about her ''Medicare for all'' plan after a summer surge in the polls. Former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., was the subject of attacks after his poll numbers rose in Iowa.

The same has not happened for Mr. Sanders.

It's not as if he has neutralized his vulnerabilities. He has recanted his 1972 article about male and female sexual fantasies, which briefly imagined women fantasizing about rape, but such a piece of writing would still usually damage a candidate. His history of making supportive comments about Communist regimes, and visiting Nicaragua and the Soviet Union in 1980s, could reinforce the socialist labeling. And federal investigators examined a college real estate deal that involved Mr. Sanders's wife, Jane; the couple was not interviewed, indicating a lack of significant evidence of a crime, but some opponents talk it up privately as a possible issue.

Yet other candidates have been more likely to face attacks. At Wednesday's debate, Mr. Bloomberg, the billionaire former mayor of New York City, faced a tough assault, with the pile-on serving to keep the focus away from the higher-polling Mr. Sanders.

Jonathan Kott, head of the Big Tent Project, which began airing the digital ads on Tuesday, said that part of the reason Mr. Sanders had escaped serious attacks from his rivals until the most recent debate was disbelief that Democratic voters would support him. An NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll released Tuesday found that the most unpopular qualities for a candidate were being a socialist, having a heart attack in the last year and being older than 75.

The same poll also showed Mr. Sanders opening up a double-digit national lead in the race.

''He has not faced the same vetting and scrutiny that other front-runners have faced,'' Mr. Kott said. ''A lot of that may have to do with the fact that nobody thought a socialist with these radical views would be the front-runner.''

Aides to Mr. Sanders say he is able to evade attacks because voters trust him, arguing that his proposals for a single-payer health care system, free public college and a Green New Deal are backed by a wide majority of Democratic voters.

''We felt strongly from the beginning that the primary would be decided on two questions: who do voters trust to carry out the change they want and who do they believe can beat Donald Trump?'' said Faiz Shakir, Mr. Sanders's campaign manager. ''Bernie's consistent record of standing with the ***working class*** is the strongest answer.''

Analysis of Mr. Sanders's turnout in Iowa and New Hampshire gives scant indication that he has expanded his base, despite his argument that he is building a movement that will motivate ***working-class*** voters and young people -- both groups that typically do not vote in large numbers.

Yet with the moderate wing of the party unable to coalesce around a single candidate, Mr. Sanders could win a near-majority of delegates with less than a third of the vote. That could give him a delegate lead that would be difficult -- if not impossible -- for his rivals to overcome.

Yet some Democratic strategists see real risks in going after Mr. Sanders over policy, personal issues or matters beyond his control, like the Russian interference, fearing it could alienate some of his supporters -- largely younger voters and staunch liberals who will be central to any Democratic nominee's ability to win the White House. Others working on rival campaigns argue that such attacks only backfire, and are quickly weaponized into fund-raising appeals that flood the Sanders campaign with donations.

Days before the Iowa caucuses, Democratic Majority for Israel released an ad attacking Mr. Sanders, the first time a Democratic group had run a negative campaign spot targeting Mr. Sanders by name in his two primary bids.

In about a day, the Sanders campaign raised $1.3 million off the spot.

''He's been like the quarterback in the football scrimmage who wears the jersey and no one is allowed to tackle,'' said David Axelrod, a former top strategist for Mr. Obama. ''There was a reluctance to take on Trump because there was a fear of antagonizing his base, and I think Bernie has benefited from that within the Democratic Party.''

Some backers of Ms. Warren argue that Mr. Sanders has also benefited from less media scrutiny, despite his campaign's frequent broadsides against the agenda of ''corporate media.''

While Ms. Warren has been pushed, repeatedly, to unveil the costs of her Medicare for all plan, Mr. Sanders has brushed off questions about his own similar proposal, saying the costs are ''impossible to predict.''

When Ms. Warren accused Mr. Sanders of lying about whether he had told her a woman could not defeat Mr. Trump, perhaps the toughest moment he's faced in the race so far, his supporters attacked her online and referred to her with snake emojis.

''It is hard to say why she's been treated much more harshly,'' said Adam Jentleson, a Democratic strategist who is close to the Warren team. ''At a certain point you're only left with gender as an explanation.''

Voters say they appreciate Mr. Sanders's consistent message, arguing that they know who he is and what he represents. Many of those who backed Mr. Sanders in 2016 say the past four years have only strengthened their support.

''He has the most progressive agenda,'' said Paul Wetzonis, 29, of Nashua, N.H., who voted for Mr. Sanders in both of his primary bids. ''Everybody else is basically a modern corporatist Democrat.''

Unlike Mr. Trump, who took over his party by sheer force, Mr. Sanders has spent the past four years working to make his liberal brand more mainstream, both by changing the Democratic Party and by casting himself as a loyal soldier of it.

Less than a year after a primary race in which his team accused the Democratic National Committee of ''rigging'' the election, Mr. Sanders flew around the country with the party's chairman, Tom Perez, for an eight-state ''come together, fight back'' tour in 2017. Through the pro-Sanders political nonprofit Our Revolution, supporters of the senator packed the obscure party meetings that select state leaders, putting loyalists into key party posts.

And Mr. Sanders promised, again and again, to be a good Democrat, pushing back on a narrative of the 2016 race that he was not a ''true'' member of the party. In March, Mr. Sanders signed the Democratic National Committee's loyalty pledge. In an ad that ran in Iowa, Mr. Sanders placed himself in a line of Democratic icons, splicing his words with images of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Lyndon B. Johnson and John F. Kennedy.

Even some Democrats who don't agree with Mr. Sanders say they appreciate his voice in the race.

As she waited to hear former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., address a crowd in Marshalltown, Iowa, Carrie Barr said she wasn't considering supporting Mr. Sanders but appreciated his policies.

''He's too extreme. He's a socialist and he's not been a supporter of Democratic politics,'' said Ms. Barr, 64, a retired teacher. ''But everyone loves his ideas. I love his ideas.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/22/us/politics/bernie-sanders.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/22/us/politics/bernie-sanders.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders attended a rally at the Cowboys Dancehall in San Antonio after he won the Nevada caucuses on Saturday. His 2020 rivals have failed to halt his momentum. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A20-A21)

**Load-Date:** February 23, 2020

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[***Adams Has Plans for City Beyond Secure Streets and Subways***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6342-W6G1-DXY4-X173-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1927 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Dana Rubinstein and Jeffery C. Mays

**Body**

Mr. Adams, the Democratic mayoral nominee, has stances on policing, transportation and education that suggest a shift from Mayor Bill de Blasio.

In the afterglow of winning the Democratic nomination for mayor of New York City, Eric Adams began to set out his mission if elected in November.

''Safety, safety, safety,'' Mr. Adams said in one interview. ''Making our city safe,'' he said in another.

On Thursday, as a torrential storm flooded the city's subway stations, Mr. Adams offered another priority: Fast-track the city's congestion pricing plan, which would charge fees to motorists entering Manhattan's core, so that the money could be used to make critical improvements to the aging system.

The two initiatives encapsulate Mr. Adams's self-characterization as a blue-collar candidate: Make the streets and the subway safe and reliable for New York's ***working-class*** residents.

But they also hint at the challenges that await the city's next mayor.

To increase public safety, Mr. Adams has said he would bring back a contentious plainclothes anti-crime unit that focused on getting guns off the streets. The unit was effective, but it was disbanded last year amid criticism of its reputation for using excessive force, and for its negative impact on the relationship between police officers and the communities they serve.

Congestion pricing was opposed by some state lawmakers, who wanted to protect the interests of constituents who needed to drive into Manhattan. But even though state officials approved the plan two years ago, it has yet to be introduced: A key review board that would guide the tolling structure has yet to be named; its six members are to be appointed by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which is controlled by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo.

Mr. Adams, who would be the city's second Black mayor, would face other steep challenges: steering the city out of the pandemic; navigating the possibility of a new City Council trying to push him to the left; grappling with significant budget deficits once federal recovery aid is spent.

How he intends to accomplish it all is still somewhat theoretical, but he has offered a few concrete proposals -- some costly, and with no set ways to pay for them -- mixed in with broader ideas.

Some of New York City's mayoral transitions have reflected wild swings from one ideology to another. The current mayor, Bill de Blasio, ran on a promise to end the city's vast inequities, which he said had worsened under his billionaire predecessor, Michael R. Bloomberg. The gentle and consensus-building David N. Dinkins was succeeded by Rudolph W. Giuliani, a hard-charging former federal prosecutor.

Privately, Mr. de Blasio supported Mr. Adams in the competitive primary, believing that he was the person best suited to carry on Mr. de Blasio's progressive legacy, and if Mr. Adams defeats the Republican nominee, Curtis Sliwa, an abrupt change in the city's direction is unlikely.

But in some ways, Mr. Adams has staked out positions on issues like affordable housing, transportation and education that suggest a shift from Mr. de Blasio's approach.

On policing, Mr. Adams, who has pledged to name the city's first female police commissioner, has already spoken to three potential candidates, and is believed to favor Juanita Holmes, a top official who was lured out of retirement by the current police commissioner, Dermot F. Shea. Mr. Adams has also vowed to work with federal officials to crack down on the flow of handguns into the city, and he has expressed concerns about how bail reform laws, approved by state lawmakers in 2019, may be contributing to a recent rise in violent crime.

On education, Mr. Adams is viewed as friendly toward charter schools and he does not want to get rid of the specialized admissions test that has kept many Black and Latino students out of the city's elite high schools, a departure from Mr. de Blasio's stance. He has also proposed opening schools year-round and expanding the universal prekindergarten program by offering reduced-cost child care for children under 3.

Transportation and safety advocates hope that Mr. Adams, an avid cyclist, will have a more intuitive understanding of their calls for better infrastructure. He has promised to build 150 new miles of bus lanes and busways in his first term, and 300 new miles of protected bike lanes, a significant expansion of Mr. de Blasio's efforts.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing was a central goal of Mr. de Blasio's administration, and Mr. Adams supports the mayor's highly debated plan to rezone Manhattan's trendy SoHo neighborhood to allow for hundreds of affordable units.

Mr. Adams also supports a proposal to convert hotels and some of the city's own office buildings to affordable housing units. The proposal originated with real estate industry leaders, who have watched their office buildings empty out during the pandemic.

Mr. Adams favors selling the air rights above New York City Housing Authority properties to developers, an idea the de Blasio administration floated in 2018. Mr. Adams has said the sales might yield $8 billion, which the authority could use to pay for improvements at the more than 315 buildings it manages.

Mr. Adams is viewed as pro-development -- he supported a deal for an Amazon headquarters in Queens and a rezoning of Industry City in Brooklyn, both abandoned after criticism from progressive activists -- and he was supported in the primary by real estate executives and wealthy donors.

During his campaign, Mr. Adams met three times with the Partnership for New York City, a Wall Street-backed business nonprofit, according to Kathryn Wylde, the group's president. Ms. Wylde expressed appreciation for Mr. Adams's focus on public safety -- a matter of great importance to her members -- and confidence that he would be more of a check on the City Council, which she said was constantly interfering with business operations.

''I think with Adams, we'll have a shot that he will provide some discipline,'' Ms. Wylde said. ''Why? Because he's not afraid of the political left.''

Some of Mr. Adams's stances have drawn criticism from progressive leaders like Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who endorsed Maya Wiley in the Democratic primary.

Alyssa Aguilera, an executive director of VOCAL-NY Action Fund, said that ''having a former N.Y.P.D. captain in Gracie Mansion'' only means ''further protections and funding for failed law enforcement tactics.''

''With that framework, it's hard to believe he's going to make any substantial changes to the size and scope of the N.Y.P.D. and that's what many of us are hoping for,'' Ms. Aguilera said.

Mr. Adams insists that even though he has been characterized as a centrist, he views himself as a true progressive who can meld left-leaning concepts with practical policies.

To address poverty, for example, Mr. Adams has proposed $3,000 tax credits for poor families -- an idea he said was superior to his primary rival Andrew Yang's local version of universal basic income.

''There's a permanent group of people that are living in systemic poverty,'' Mr. Adams said recently on ''CBS This Morning.'' ''You and I, we go to the restaurant, we eat well, we take our Uber, but that's not the reality for America and New York. And so when we turn this city around, we're going to end those inequalities.''

To deal with the homelessness crisis, Mr. Adams has proposed integrating housing assistance into hospital stays for indigent and homeless people, and increasing the number of facilities for mentally ill homeless people, especially those who are not sick enough to stay in a hospital but are too unwell for a shelter.

Mr. Adams did not emphasize climate change or environmental issues on the campaign trail. But in his Twitter post about the subway flooding on Thursday, he called for using congestion pricing funds to ''add green infrastructure to absorb flash storm runoff.''

His campaign has pointed to initiatives from his tenure as borough president: helping to expand the Brooklyn Greenway, a coastal bike and walking corridor, not only for recreation but for flood mitigation; and improving accountability for the post-Hurricane Sandy reconstruction process.

Those actions are dwarfed by the sweeping change he will be called on to oversee as mayor -- particularly by a City Council with many new members who campaigned on a commitment to mitigate and prepare for the effects of rising seas and extreme weather on a port city with a 520-mile coastline.

Mr. Adams expresses confidence that he can reinstate the plainclothes police squad and use stop-and-frisk tactics without violating people's rights, contending that his administration can effectively monitor data related to police interactions in real time, and intervene if there are abuses.

''We are not going back to the days where you are going to stop, frisk, search and abuse every person based on their ethnicity and based on the demographics or based on the communities they're in,'' Mr. Adams said on MSNBC last week. ''You can have precision policing without heavy-handed abusive policing.''

Mr. Adams seems most likely to differ from Mr. de Blasio on matters of tone and governing style.

He is known for working round-the-clock, while Mr. de Blasio has been pilloried for arriving late to work and appearing apathetic about his job. Mr. de Blasio is a Red Sox fan who grew up in the Boston area and lives in brownstone Brooklyn; Mr. Adams, a lifelong New Yorker, was raised in Jamaica, Queens, by a single mother who cleaned homes. He roots for the Mets.

Mr. Adams will come into office in a powerful position because of the diverse coalition he assembled of Black, Latino and white voters outside Manhattan.

''De Blasio spoke about those communities; Eric speaks to the communities,'' said Mitchell Moss, a professor of urban planning at New York University. ''There's a real difference. De Blasio was talented as a campaigner. Eric is going to be a doer.''

Where Mr. de Blasio rode into City Hall as a critic of the police and a proponent of reform, he will end his term buried in criticism that he ultimately pandered to the department -- a shift that many attribute to a moment, early in his tenure, when members of the Police Department turned their backs on him at an officer's funeral.

Officers were upset that Mr. de Blasio spoke about talking to his biracial son about how to safely interact with the police, a conversation that the parents of most Black children have. As mayor, Mr. Adams said he would gather with officers around the city for a different version of ''the conversation.''

''I'm your mayor,'' Mr. Adams said he would tell officers. ''What you feel in those cruisers, I felt. I've been there. But let me tell you something else. I also know how it feels to be arrested and lying on the floor of the precinct and have someone kick you in your groin over and over again and urinate blood for a week.''

Mr. Adams will most likely be different from Mr. de Blasio in another way: He mischievously told reporters last week that he would be fun to cover. Indeed, he was photographed on Wednesday getting an ear pierced; the next day, he was seen dining at Rao's, an exclusive Italian restaurant in Harlem, with the billionaire Republican John Catsimatidis.

''He got his ear pierced and went to Rao's,'' Mr. Moss said. ''He's going to enjoy being a public personality.''

Reporting was contributed by Anne Barnard, Matthew Haag, Winnie Hu, Andy Newman and Ali Watkins.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/nyregion/eric-adams-issues-mayor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/nyregion/eric-adams-issues-mayor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Eric L. Adams may revive a contentious plainclothes anti-crime unit that was disbanded last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH BLESENER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Adam Tooze.; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66JN-NHJ1-JBG3-61HK-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** A conversation with economic historian Adam Tooze.

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, [*like today’s episode with Adam Tooze*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/opinion/ezra-klein-podcast-adam-tooze.html). Listen [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html).

Transcripts of our episodes are made available as soon as possible. They are not fully edited for grammar or spelling.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein. This is “The Ezra Klein Show.”

How do you describe Adam Tooze? Adam Tooze is an economic historian at Columbia University. He’s the author of the excellent must-read newsletter, “Chartbook.” And he’s become, I think, a key interpreter and describer of the way the international finance system works. He’s become a historian of our financial present — also, I should note, a repeat guest on the show. But for the past few months, Tooze has been taking the global view of this economic moment, rather than the U.S.-centric one that a lot of us are used to. Right now, we are seeing around the world a convergence of forces.

We have high inflation. We have central banks hiking interest rates. We have governments cutting spending and raising taxes. We have very high levels of dollar-denominated debt. And we have droughts and floods that have been quite a bit worsened by climate change. Some countries amidst all this have already tipped into ecological or political or economic crisis. Many more are fragile. It’s easy to imagine them tipping there. And what’s happening now is that richer countries — most importantly, the U.S. — are tightening the economic screws. We’re doing it, we think, we intend, on ourselves, in order to curb inflation.

But the way we’re doing it is putting tremendous stress on the global financial system and on these other countries that are highly exposed to us. We are, in a sense, exporting our own economic pain and our own economic policy elsewhere. And we’re doing so with very little discussion, very little awareness, of the consequences. I will say, listening to Tooze spin out the way the financial system works, and the way everything feeds back into itself and connects to each other, and how a problem here that nobody noticed can flap its butterfly wings and create a crisis over there — it is dizzying. And that, to me, is very much the point. The complexity and connectedness of the global economic system is dizzying, and no one — no one — truly understands or holds the information to understand all of it. We sometimes act as if our economic policy is a purely domestic matter. But if that was ever true, it’s not now. As always, my email — [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

Adam Tooze, welcome back to the show.

ADAM TOOZE: Great to be here.

EZRA KLEIN: For people who haven’t been following this all that closely, tell me about, just to start here, what’s been happening in the U.K. financial markets in the last few weeks.

ADAM TOOZE: Well, we saw the spasm, basically. I mean, the U.K. has been a little bit on the suicide watch, you might say, for a while. You know, the fundamentals don’t look too healthy. The economy has a huge trade deficit. There’s Brexit in the background. The Tory party is a little bit AWOL, we would say, and has been for a while. The Boris Johnson prime ministership collapsed. But then, in a kind of spasm of what appears to be, really, just downright but rather naive ideological commitment, the mutual government, with Liz Truss and Kwasi Kwarteng as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Treasury Secretary, announced that they were doing a mini budget.

Now, in the U.K. — because it’s parliamentary system — they’ve got the majority built in. So when they decide to do this, it actually happens. It isn’t like they have to negotiate with anyone. And this mini — what they call the fiscal event — they didn’t want to call it a budget, so they didn’t have to go through the rigmarole of a proper budget — also evaded any kind of assessment by the Office of Budget Responsibility, which does the kind of assessment of British fiscal policy. This decision to do a tax cut for principally better-off people to the tune of about 45 billion pounds, which, in modern money, given the exchange rate of the pound, is about $45 billion — on top of a decision before to do 150 billion pounds in energy price stabilization subsidy to deal with the energy crisis, which is rocking all of Europe — the combination of the two things together unleashed an almighty panic, kind of temper tantrum-type thing in the British — well, currency markets first — the pound sold off very hard — but then, much more importantly, in the bond market.

The British government bond market is the kind of granddaddy of government bond markets. It originates in the late 1600s, so at the time of the so-called Glorious Revolution, the parliamentary constitutional settlement that set Britain on its trajectory to being the preeminent parliamentary power. And so when the gilt market tremors, it’s really quite big news, even though it’s modest in size by global standards now. And it went into full-on spasm. We didn’t quite understand why, but Treasury bonds, especially the long-dated ones — 30-year gilts — sold off spectacularly. And that seems to have then unleashed some nasty derivative action, a little bit too familiar from 2008. This involved pension funds who’d hedged against interest rate movements. They were then stuck. They then had to offload more portfolios of debt, which threatened to generate a firesale kind of run dynamic.

And before you know it, the Bank of England, which had previously was in the process of tightening — so selling debt it had on its portfolio — all of a sudden, ended up having to buy a bunch. Where we are now is the storm is stabilized. The pound is back to where it was before the crisis began, and the Treasury yield as well, which is the inverse of the price for a bond. So people don’t want bonds, they sell them, the price goes down, the yield goes up. So the yield is now back to where it was before the crisis as well, which means the Bank of England’s buying has stabilized the gilt market as well, but that we could have gotten as close as we did to a full on financial heart attack — and this did have the feel of 2008 about it — shows you how fragile these systems are, and in particular, how precarious the situation in the U.K. is. And the future, really, of the Tory government from here on in is very uncertain. In the opinion polls, they now lag Labor by 20 to 30 points. So I think they really — they’re a flailing government at this point.

EZRA KLEIN: So there are two ways of reading this. One is that you had some dumb policy mistakes, some weird economic idiosyncrasies, the way the pension funds were hedged, and that wasn’t very well understood. But it all worked out, as you say, that the pound is back to where it was. Everything is totally fine. No big deal here. And then, there’s this other argument, which is more the argument you’ve been making, which is what we saw there — is a signal of where we are, but more to the point, what’s coming globally. You write, quote, that “We are reaching the point in the monetary tightening cycle, in which things begin to break,” end quote. And so the idea is that we are now in this context of fragility, and we are changing things, and the changes are having knock-on effects we don’t anticipate. Can you tell me more about that view that this is an example of something that is now becoming a reality?

ADAM TOOZE: Yeah, so there are two different risks in the current moment, I mean, which is worth distinguishing. One is a recession risk, which you might think of as the kind of more familiar, serious, almost tragic trade-off — but nevertheless, as it were, one that you can contemplate with a degree of calm in dealing with inflation. So you raise interest rates. You take the pressure out of the labor market. You induce some, quote, “labor market slack,” which is really a euphemism for unemployment. And —

EZRA KLEIN: I really hate the term, “labor market slack,” for the exact reason you put it. It’s very, like, Orwell, “Politics and the English Language” kind of thing.

ADAM TOOZE: It is. I mean, it creates this sort of image of a mechanism, right? That is, somehow, we’re going to add a bit more play there. Anyway, so yes, so that’s one vision. What’s implied by that is a sort of managerial sense, though, that we’ve got a clear choice to make, a trade-off, you know — on the famous Phillips curve, we can pick our point, and then we steer towards it. However you imagine the Phillips curve, whatever shape you think, you at least are positing there that you have a degree of freedom. That’s one way of looking at our current situation, and that’s serious enough, right? Because if you think globally, the destinies of tens, if not hundreds of millions, of people are at stake.

And the generation that was hit by Covid now has to face the prospect of labor markets closing on them as well — I mean, the young people whose education was so severely disrupted. So that’s one side of this story. Then, there’s another side, which is, in a sense, even more alarming, but a little more obscure, which is that as we raise interest rates, what we’re doing is putting pressure on every single joint in the financial system. Because all of the contracts, which were negotiated over debt and credit over the last decade or more, were done on the basis of assumptions about inflation. Namely, that inflation was low, and that interest rates would be low as well — that no longer obtain, right?

We’re now in a world in which inflation across the developed-economy world, with the exception of Japan, is around 10 percent, and central banks are responding by hiking interest rates. And so what we’re doing is shaking this entire system — a system which also extends to the poorer countries of the world, the emerging markets, low-income countries, which have also borrowed in dollars. And so what we’re doing is pressuring this entire system by raising interest rates. And we honestly don’t know. We’ve never done as comprehensive an interest rate increase as this before. We’ve never done this with this level of dollar debt out there. We hear creaking already in this system, right? People are already under strain. What we saw in the U.K. gilt market last week — in time warp, because the pace of the increase in interest rates driven by the sell-off of bonds was savage.

But we saw there, in time warp, what is happening across the entire global economy slightly more slowly. And if there are other mechanisms like that, one of the eerie things about this pension fund-derivative hedging strategy is that it just wasn’t top of stack for anyone in the financial stability community, apparently. In Britain, it’s really striking. You would have given the scale, relative to the size of the U.K. bond market. This was a big event. 1.5 trillion pounds’ worth of debt were hanging on these derivatives contracts. We have to worry at this point also about, as it were, the adequacy of the regulators, the central bankers, to the task of shepherding the system through this historic tightening that we’re going through. And when it breaks, then we’re in a different world. Then, all of a sudden, the pace of events speeds up. We’re in a situation of, you know, it’s a little bit more like the pandemic all of a sudden. The chronology is not that of a rolling program of tightening over months, but all of a sudden, hours and days begin to really count.

EZRA KLEIN: Ooh, there’s a lot here. So I want to put a pin, because we’re going to come right back to this question of the adequacy of our knowledge of how the financial systems work, of what’s happening in other countries. But I want to hold for a minute on something you said — that we’ve never raised interest rates this comprehensively before.

We raised them, at least domestically, higher in the ’70s. So tell me what you mean by that. And I’d also like to throw in this question that you’ve been attentive to, of there also being not just co-ordinated interest rate rises, but across the world, coordinated tightening of government budgets, where you’re seeing spending cuts, tax increases. So can you talk a bit about how that plays into it as well?

ADAM TOOZE: Yeah. So the epic historical benchmark of monetary policy tightening is Paul Volcker’s tightening after 1979 when interest rates went above 15 percent. And we’re not in that zone, but the change is considerable — so the change that’s been initiated since the beginning of the year.

And what’s even more impressive is that it’s so comprehensive. So the World Bank, the IMF, have been collecting data on this. And really, at no point in the history of the modern international financial system, which we could say date to the early 1970s — and we use that marker, because that’s the moment in which the dollar was unhitched from gold in ’71 by Mixon. And so we enter our modern regime of money, which is a fiat money regime — so money anchored only really by the authority of the state and the monetary actors associated with the state.

So in that modern period, which is half a century old, we have never seen as comprehensive a tightening as this. This process did not start, remember, with the U.S. The Fed was relatively late to the party.

The E.C.B. is even later to the party. The Bank of Japan still isn’t tightening. The tightening this time round actually began in the emerging markets. I mean, it would be, I think, misleading to call them the periphery.

But I mean, it began with Brazil, which began tightening quite hard last summer, in the summer of 2021, and has swept from there across many of the emerging markets, and eventually enrolled the Fed from the beginning of this year. And when the Fed moves — because the dollar is so much the dominant currency — everyone else has to follow.

So we’re really talking about a global bandwagon, which, at this point, leaves only the Bank of Japan and the People’s Bank of China as central banks which are loosening policy, if you exempt the British emergency action, which really had nothing to do with macroeconomic policy. It was about keeping the financial markets afloat.

And the effect of this tightening, which is unprecedented in its breadth, is compounded by the fact that, yes, at the same time, fiscal policy is tightening. Now, it’s important not to misread this. There is some — which is deliberate, like the Inflation Reduction Act negotiated over this summer between Congress and the Biden administration — that actually sets out to tighten the deficit by raising taxes more than it spends.

But from a macroeconomic point of view, you don’t need to have deliberate policy decisions to produce a tightening of fiscal policy. You just run off the stimulus programs of 2020 and 2021. And unless you replace them with new stimulus, which is an implausible idea at this point, you end up with a negative net effect, a so-called fiscal shock.

And that’s very large in the U.S. So in the second quarter of this year, it was as large as 4.5 percent of G.D.P. In the third quarter, it’s down to about 3.5 percent of G.D.P. This isn’t a deliberate policy decision. Or rather, it’s a decision not to pile in on the stimulus of 2021.

Another way of thinking about it is, this is what happens when your Build Back Better $3 trillion program stalls, and you end up with the Inflation Reduction Act instead. Under the circumstances, massive fiscal stimulus is no longer called for in America — investment, perhaps, but not fiscal stimulus.

But overall, this produces a very negative drag. And this fiscal effect is not confined to the United States. So again, we’re seeing a de facto tightening across the world at this moment. So when you add monetary and fiscal policy together, this produces an enhanced effect, right?

The sum is greater than the parts when you do this combined pressure. Further effect, which is rather important, is the adjustment in exchange rates. So as the Fed tightens monetary policy in the United States, what we’ve seen is that the dollar has surged.

And the effect of that is to produce a contractionary effect on everyone who’s borrowed in dollars, because effectively, their debts are increased in value, in local currency terms. And that effect then ripples throughout the world economy, because it’s about $22 trillion plus in dollar-denominated credit, non-Americans outstanding. So these three different mechanisms — the contraction of monetary policy, the hit to fiscal policy, and the exchange rate adjustment — are very negative, you might say euphemistically, for the economic outlook.

EZRA KLEIN: Let’s get to that third one. Because I think the first two are more familiar to people. When the central banks tighten, they’re making it harder to borrow money, so economies slow down. When the fiscal authorities and governments cut back, they are — they were taking the amount of support or stimulus they’re putting into the economy, and turning it negative.

Instead of putting as many dollars in, they’re taking dollars out from wherever they were, or pounds, or whatever it might be. But this idea that interest rates have this other international effect — that they create currency dynamics, and they create races for other countries to tighten — you’ve been focusing a lot on this, and I don’t think this is very well understood.

Honestly, from talking to people, I don’t even think it’s that well understood by policymakers, not to mention by me. So can you talk more about that intersection between interest rate increases and their international spillovers?

ADAM TOOZE: Yeah. I mean, I think it’s fair to say that this is something of a puzzle. Because we’re supposed to live in a world that’s emerged bit by bit since the 1970s, in which exchange rates were flexible. And one of the effects of that is it’s supposed to render the economic development of the individual countries, relatively autonomous of each other, in the sense that the exchange rate adjusts in-between them.

What we see is that in fact, the dollar functions as something like a currency for the entire world, to the extent that if the U.S. tightens monetary policy, it’s as though everyone else did tighten, too. And it slows the global economy down.

Now, in practice, because if you do not tighten along with the Fed, your domestic monetary policy, your exchange rate depreciates very dramatically, everyone does tend to track the Fed. So essentially, what these statistical correlations are capturing is the reality of a world, which is not just interdependent, but more hierarchically dependent on the United States than the cover of the magazine would suggest.

The cover of the magazine says, new global monetary system since the 1970s, independent exchange rates, degrees of national autonomy they didn’t have before — de facto, what we see is a system which tracks the dollar very, very closely. One mechanism for this is that central banks actually track the Fed’s policy. Because otherwise, you tend to get depreciation.

If your currency devalues against the dollar, then you tend to get import inflation, because the goods that you buy from abroad, many of which are denominated in dollars, become more expensive. And the other reason you’d be leery about doing this, especially if you’re an emerging market or low-income country, is that many of your businesses, big businesses, will have borrowed in dollars.

Why? Because your local capital markets aren’t big, deep, or sophisticated enough. And the U.S. market is there. And hitherto, borrowing on U.S. markets has been cheap, relatively speaking.

And so what big corporates in the emerging market will do is issue debt with the help of investment banks in New York and in Europe onto global dollar markets and borrow there. Now, if your currency severely depreciates against the dollar — and this is a big company, which is earning revenue locally — its problem all of a sudden is that it has liabilities in dollars, which are worth more in assets or as stream of income, which is in a depreciated local currency.

And that’s a recipe for financial crisis in big corporations. So those effects — between them, there’s also an effect by way of major commodities. So oil, for instance, is denominated in dollars. The price of oil tends, however, to vary inversely with the value of the dollar.

As the dollar goes strong, oil tends to sell off. That helps, to a degree. But overall, a strengthening of the dollar will often put pretty severe pressure on commodity importers in the short run, because they then say, Pakistan this year, or Bangladesh or India, the entire South Asian continent, which is heavily dependent on imported energy, has been facing a double whammy, or even a triple whammy.

Where interest rates have gone up, the price of commodities has gone up. And they’re paying for those commodities in American currency, which also has gone up. And so that triple effect exerts a very painful squeeze on the bits of the world economy which are integrated enough to actually be entangled with the dollar system, but not sufficiently strong and resilient to be able to ride this out.

And so this crash test that we’re applying here, this very severe shaking of the system, is in a sense going to reveal who is on what side of that crucial divide. Who can handle the stress, and who can’t?

EZRA KLEIN: So I want to slow down on one part of this, which is sort of implicit here. Why, when the US raises interest rates, does it cause the currencies of countries that have not raised interest rates to depreciate? Why should making it more expensive to borrow in America create a problem in the currencies of Brazil or Bangladesh or Chile?

ADAM TOOZE: Yeah. So this is a crucial point, and it axes on the difference between the trade element of the balance of payments and the capital account element. Because as America increases interest rates, it becomes more expensive to borrow, as you say, in the United, but it becomes extremely interesting to lend in the United States.

Because when you lend, you’re going to get a better interest rate for lending. And the way you lend in big markets is not with a bank loan, but by buying or selling bonds. So when you sell a bond as a business, you’re borrowing, and the person buying the bond is lending you the money — the face value of the bond or whatever you actually buy and sell it for.

And so as interest rates go up, in the United States, it becomes more attractive for foreign investors to own American assets, because they attract this higher interest rate. And so as people buy those assets, essentially, America is exporting assets, if you like.

Foreigners buy them, and that produces an appreciation of the dollar. The flip side of that is a depreciation of everyone else’s currencies. Because if you’re a global investor, and you’ve got a portfolio, you’ve got a giant trillion-dollar portfolio, and you’ve got to put that money somewhere, you spread it across the entire world.

And as interest rates adjust, you reallocate your portfolio away from the now relatively low interest countries and towards the relatively high interest countries. And that, in this case, would now suddenly be the United States. So you see these big reallocations in portfolios, which drive exchange rate movements.

EZRA KLEIN: So now, I want to go back to something you had said a few minutes ago, which is that there were these dynamics in U.K. financial markets that were just not the top of anybody’s mind, not something that a lot of people understood very well. And to connect that to something more broadly, certainly, my read from covering 2008 and the financial crisis then and doing more research into past financial crises, is that the really dangerous thing in financial markets is when one of two things happens.

One is that information everybody took as settled and known and made decisions about — like housing prices are going up, and these bonds are safe — if that information changes all at once, and as such, everybody now has to live in a new informational world, where their old assumptions don’t hold, that often can create a financial crisis.

But the other piece of it is that when something like that happens, when there is a rapid effort to respond to new information or changes, it turns out there’s a lot of parts of the financial markets that we don’t understand — dependencies, vulnerabilities, exposures, counterparty risk. And so you were saying a few minutes ago that you wonder if our central banks and our regulators have what they need to track all this.

And it seems to me the answer is, of course, no. This really comes through in your work, oftentimes, to me — that the complexity of international domestic markets is now so far beyond the capacity of any individual, or even any agency, or any kind of informational structure, that any kind of rapid change is going to expose things nobody was prepared for.

And so that creates just, like, an underlying vulnerability to big explosions. Is that a kind of fair way of talking through the risk now?

ADAM TOOZE: Certainly, I would wholeheartedly agree on the first point, which is that indeed, we build institutions to deal with, and we make strategic choices of a large size, to deal with scenarios and futures as we, within reasonable boundaries, think are reasonable and are likely to emerge. And the scenario which British pensions were hedging against is a scenario in which interest rates went down.

And that was a historically warranted assumption to make. And so the irony of the current situation is that the strategies that blew up were strategies that were needed in a world, which we no longer currently inhabit, where we’re suddenly seeing huge interest rate increases. And that is what they were not prepared for.

I don’t think you can really blame them for having adopted these strategies in the first place, because they were highly exposed, largely private pension funds with open — with large commitments in the future. I think the question has got to be, in the U.K. case, why the bank, the Treasury, the financial regulators, knowing that we were heading into an interest rate increase cycle, were not more attendant to this risk.

And it’s a reasonable question to ask. Because we know how anguished the communication between the financial sector and the bank was on Monday and Tuesday before they had to make the decision on Wednesday. And by all accounts, the bank took a long time to really get it, for the penny to drop.

And that’s not what you would really want in this situation. You would have wanted the central bankers to be on this risk from the very beginning, carefully monitoring it before things got as toxic as they were by the end of Tuesday, and as dangerous as they were at that point.

To your point about whether or not this stuff can be foreseen, I think I’m less — I mean, I would characterize your description there as sort of conservative liberal. There’s a kind of almost a shade of Hayek about it, right? The world is too complex for us, fundamentally, to grasp.

We have therefore to face, in a kind of rather resigned way, the prospect that we are going to be overwhelmed by things that we can’t see coming. And so then, presumably, we either adopt a very conservative stance, which says that we should potentially avoid certain risks as far as possible.

Or, I don’t know, I think we sort of have to shrug and say, well, bad things are going to happen. And we just have to roll with that. I’m not sure I’m willing to settle for that. I think, especially with regard to the global financial system, there is persistent evidence, recurring examples, of cases where the bank and the British regulators were, in fact, warned, year in, year out, for several years, by people who were knowledgeable about the pension system, of how dangerous this strategy was.

It’s not rocket science to look at the major holders of U.K. treasuries of gilts and figure out where the risks are to work your way down the tree. My take would be more, kind of, left-progressive radical take, which is to say there are systematic reasons as to why we’re blindsided by these kind of events.

People are actually not trying hard enough, or the folks that are in these positions are not competent, and for good reason, not competent — in other words, folks who are making money don’t want competent, aggressive regulators in those jobs, and make damn-well sure that they’re not in those jobs. Information is deliberately not shared — and that would be my approach.

And until we saw somewhere that it made a very concerted effort to crack down on this kind of behavior, I wouldn’t be willing to concede that modernity is just too complex for us. I think, on balance, right now, my guess is simply that this is exactly the kind of crisis you’d expect in the system shot through with conflicts of interest as it is. And it’s the conflicts of interest, which are the driver here.

I mean, part of the contrast here — and it’s a disconcerting comparison, but it’s one we’ve talked about before, so it’s on the table already. The contrast with a place like China, which, this year and last year, is going through what is unprecedented in global financial history — the deliberate effort to deflate the bubble to end all bubbles, which is the Chinese real estate bubble — now, that is being deflated with complete deliberateness.

They don’t know exactly how all of the thing — you know, how the Jenga tower is going to fall. They’re having a hard time containing Evergrande. They’ve got problems at the local level. But they brought that thing down deliberately, because they thought there was too much risk in that system.

And until we see a determined effort by a Western regulator to do something like that, I wouldn’t be, I think, willing to concede that this is a problem which surpasses us on grounds of complexity, per se. I think it’s more likely to be that there just isn’t the will out there, and there aren’t the interests, in other words, that would drive us towards really firm-handed, intelligent, aggressive regulation of these sectors.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, I’m going to cop to half of that. I think I do have some of the view that these systems are now more complicated than human minds can fully grasp, although I don’t think I’m as fatalistic as where you would take that.

But I want to be clear here that I’m talking not so much about the specific thing we just saw in the U.K., but of what we saw in the U.K. as more of a metaphor for the other side of what we’re talking about, which is this now-global system of pressure coming from global inflation, coming from U.S. interest rate increases, and now, spreading out into a lot of economies that we don’t understand that well, that we don’t watch that closely, that have uncertain relationships to their own political systems or the political systems of their neighbors.

And as such, that, to me, is where this gets a little bit frightening — that we are playing with systems I don’t even think that we truly pretend to understand, which is maybe a good bridge into what you’ve been calling the South Asian polycrisis Do you want to talk a bit about what you’ve been tracking there?

ADAM TOOZE: Yeah. So this polycrisis is this notion which I picked up when I wrote this book, “Shutdown,” about the 2020 crisis. And it’s a term originally used — well, coined, and put into somewhat wider circulation — by Jean-Claude Juncker, the president of the European Commission at the time of Europe’s troubles between 2014 and 2016.

And the term, it turns out, has an interesting genealogy, which goes back to 1970s complexity theory. Basically, it’s the idea that you can have a crisis, and then you can have a polycrisis. And a polycrisis is when you have a whole series of interconnected fires, which then turn into a general firestorm, a conflagration, which is larger than the sum of its parts.

So the situation is worse, even, than a diagnosis of each individual one of its components would suggest. Because those components are powerfully interacting with each other — moving fast as well, which makes it difficult to track. And so at that level, yes, complexity theory — you’re right, Ezra — would point towards the kind of idea which says there are constraints to what we’re able to do and understand, more importantly, about the world.

I guess my invocation of the term is trying to at least point to the fog we need to be navigating through, even if we can’t necessarily clear all the fog away. So — and I find this a useful way of thinking about interactions of crisis. So deciphering the polycrisis a little bit one way is to understand the regional connections between crises.

Maybe this comes out of my background thinking about the E.U. and the eurozone, which you could describe as, sort of, a classic regional polycrisis. So you can see interactions like that between Turkey, Syria, Lebanon — that entire complex of regional issues.

You could refer to that as the West Asian polycrisis, but there was, and there is ongoing, I think, a question about the stability of several of the states within what you might broadly think of as the shatter zone of the British-Indian empire, which took in, at its height, Burma, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and much of the border region to Afghanistan, which, in modern parlance, is South Asia.

And out of that emerged a series of more or less successful post-colonial states — of course, building on long, long historical lineages. And as of this summer, we had a manifest total crisis in Sri Lanka, an ongoing disaster now compounded by this gigantic climate shock in Pakistan, and very severe pressure on Bangladesh.

And that’s strategic, because Bangladesh — in the global development narrative, Bangladesh is one of the truly bright spots, right? So this is a model student, if I may use that language, in the development game, coming under very severe pressure.

And what connected all of those — they all have very distinct political histories interacting, of course, through a geopolitical force field that connects Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, for instance, or India and China around Sri Lanka. But all of them were under the pressure of this triple whammy of rising interest rates, accelerating commodity prices, which, early in the year, were very dramatic, and in energy, persist — and also, the strong dollar.

And those three forces were acting on this cluster of states. And we’re talking about huge slice of humanity in a rather concerted way. And —

EZRA KLEIN: Just to say, about a quarter of humanity.

ADAM TOOZE: Yeah, this South Asia — I mean, South Asia and East Asia — between them, if you monitor those two regions, you’re covering close to half of humanity’s experience at any given moment. Of course, it’s hugely asymmetric, because India entirely dominates this.

But Pakistan and Bangladesh are very, very big countries by any standards. Pakistan, I think, is number five, in terms of population. Bangladesh — number eight. So these are hugely significant pieces of the global jigsaw puzzle.

And they were all simultaneously being rocked, even India, by this triple shock. And the energy component is particularly dramatic. Because Bangladesh and Pakistan had been tempted in the glut days of global energy when LNG, in particular, was dirt-cheap, because there was a —

EZRA KLEIN: Liquid natural gas.

ADAM TOOZE: Yeah, liquid natural gas. In global parlance right now, that’s a key variable. I know it doesn’t figure very much in American politics right now, because America has an abundance of gas. But L.N.G. is crucial, because it’s shoppable.

You don’t have to have a pipeline. You can put it in a very, very sophisticated tanker. And Bangladesh and Pakistan — in Bangladesh’s case, at least, rapidly developing low-income countries had fixed on to L.N.G. as a cheap source of relatively clean energy as well, because the alternative is either burning diesel or burning coal.

And they were therefore blindsided — I mean, hit really hard — by this spasm that we’ve seen in the global L.N.G. market — shippable, transportable gas, as East Asia, the giants to the East, and Europe to the West, compete for these cargoes, which literally will just turn course in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

If the Europeans outbid Bangladesh, and that’s not hard for the Europeans to do, the tanker just turns around, and it goes to Spain, rather than going to Bangladesh. So Bangladesh — this extraordinary example of rapid economic development under the sign of globalization in the last 20 years — because they have this incredible boom in their garment sector, this state — which was for the first time really also offering its citizens regular electricity supply, keeping the lights on all the time, so there was an emerging IT sector as well — suddenly faced rolling blackouts and all the symptoms of dysfunctional emerging-market and low-income countries.

And then, looking out down the Indian Ocean to Sri Lanka, there is this terrifying prospect of complete state failure, which would be, obviously, a great disaster. Anyway, so this is one way of trying to think of this region as being shaken by this global tension.

EZRA KLEIN: How do you think about the strength or vulnerability of the Indian economy right now?

ADAM TOOZE: One of the things that India has going for it is that it’s a relatively closed economy. So it is not as exposed to global dynamics as a Thailand, for instance, or a Malaysia, which are true workshop economies in the current global economy. India’s huge, poor and relatively less exposed.

It doesn’t borrow very much. It doesn’t have a bond market to speak of. So there isn’t much international involvement in Indian debt. It’s now rich enough to be able to afford what is its crucial import, which is energy.

It’s heavily dependent on imported oil — increasingly, also on coal. But it also has a currency reserve — much of it borrowed, but nevertheless on stable terms of over $500 billion. So India can ride out any of the shocks.

The last time that India was in really manifest crisis, financial crisis, was in the early 1990s. So India has moved itself well out of what you might think of as the danger zone for low-income countries. But it is nevertheless subject to buffeting from the outside.

And what I think is more important is the question of how dynamic its growth engine really is. Because India is sustained right now by a dramatic story of rapid economic growth that came out of the 1990s and really hit its stride in the early 2000. Growth was up 7 percent, 8 percent, 9 percent. At various points recently as well, India has outpaced China.

But I think there are deep concerns at the structural level about the adequacy of India’s infrastructure, the adequacy of its education system to providing the skills that hundreds of millions of young India needs — India has a huge youth bulge coming in its way — and increasing signs of what you might call a kind of crony capitalism, where Prime Minister Modi and the BJPs collect around them pivotal players in the Indian oligarchy, in a sense, almost as a substitute for the absent state.

So those oligarchs and their giant business empires will do the job of building the infrastructure that India needs, rather than working away, over the long run, at building the state capacity — this is the term you hear again and again in India — that would allow it to emulate the sort of things that China has done. The big questions are all about the longer run in India, and whether or not there is a growth model that there can be sustained over the next two generations, which is what India would need to rise comfortably into the zone of higher middle-income countries.

EZRA KLEIN: We’ve talked about the role that interest rate increases and economic policy in the U.S. might be playing in adding tension here. You’ve touched on the weather events, to use a very bloodless term, in South Asia recently. Obviously, we are a main driver of climate change over the century.

These weather events are related. Can you talk a bit more about the role the floods and the rains have been playing in the problems in South Asia, and also what that perhaps implies for the U.S. or Western responsibility?

ADAM TOOZE: Yeah. I mean, we’re seeing it around the world, but South Asia is perhaps the most vulnerable. Certainly, when you put it in proportion to population that’s exposed, South Asia really is at the absolute crosshairs of climate change.

And it works in a double way there. So on the one hand, you have terrible heat waves and drought, which have been affecting crops in Northern India. And then, on the other hand, you have the appalling, epic flooding in Pakistan, which has inundated a third of the country.

And this isn’t the first time this kind of mega flood has happened in Pakistan. And for the entire northern region of India that’s in the Ganges and the runoff from the Himalayas, one really has to fear for the possibility of this kind of mega flooding.

So those are, as it were, the two types of exposure — extreme heat, on the one hand, and drought and the prospect of inundation through the monsoon, if the monsoon is even more extreme than normal.

The immediate effect on Pakistan is devastating. And I don’t think there’s any real doubt that Pakistan is going to have to fundamentally renegotiate its international debt. There’s no way, I think, that it can continue in what was already a very fragile I.M.F. program.

And so there is there an immediate linkage to financial crisis. I think, more broadly, what this does is to put India in particular in a really severe dilemma with regard to its climate policy in the upcoming COP in Egypt. And it’s caught in something of a cleft stick.

Because on the one hand, with its developmental ambitions, India could try and do a China and run up a huge fossil fuel-intensive industrialization program. I mean, if it could get the infrastructure sorted, that would be an option for India. The problem is that by doing so, it would exacerbate a problem to which it is more vulnerable than practically any other really large state in the world.

And on the other hand, it also alienates the most vulnerable small island nations, which could be India’s allies. And so add that to the list of challenges, which India has facing it in this current moment. I mean, not just, as it were, the issues of political economy and the huge backlog of infrastructure investment and human capital of education, in other words, that needs to be delivered, but also the fact that going forward, its 20 - to 30-year time horizon is shaped by this climate crisis.

And stand back far enough from this, and you really begin to get a sense of the tragic dilemmas facing the large, emerging, and low-income countries in the world. And India is perhaps the most dramatic, in the sense that much of Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, has not really embarked on rapid economic growth at all — in patches, in individual countries, but not for the continent as a whole.

India really has, and it sees the door to the classic development path slamming in its face. It’s like one of those action movies, where the bad guy’s hurtling towards some sort of door, which the heroes are trying to shut before the villain can get their fingernails around the edge of the door.

And they’re desperately trying to keep this door closed, and India finds itself a little bit in that position, but the reverse, right? Where the door to the development future is swinging closed in front of it, and it now has to conceive of an entirely different strategy to go forward.

Because the path to fossil development, even if it embarked on it, A, it would be disastrous for the planet, and B, it would find itself most likely outflanked by the supercharged green development that China’s now embarked on. So it comes into its own — and the Indians speak a lot about this as being India’s moment.

It comes into its own at a moment where we’re at some sort of a fork in the road or in this polycrisis, in which the way forward is completely opaque. And you and I can argue back and forth about whether complexity is the issue, but what is certainly clear is that the path forward from here, in most respects — political, scientific, economic — is unclear.

That’s precisely the moment in which Delhi feels that history has arrived. So it’s really a tragic — I don’t think is too strong a word for this situation — and it demands huge creativity. And that is another question that, certainly, liberals that meet in Delhi put to you, is that, can you really imagine Modi and the BJP rising to this challenge?

Because it’s as big as, if you like, the non-aligned movement in the ’50s and ’60s that was trying to shape an alternative for humanity beyond the Cold War. In terms of climate, nothing less than that is what’s on India’s plate.

EZRA KLEIN: Then, let me add another dimension of vulnerability here, which has been, I think, something we’re talking about less here in the West, which is the amount of indebtedness, particularly in emerging markets.

ADAM TOOZE: Yes. I mean, the amount of indebtedness is, in and of itself, not that huge. Because almost the definition of being poor is that you can’t borrow as much as you would like. So the total quantities are not that impressive in many cases.

And I think the worry is that the debt levels were — this goes back to your diagnosis, as it were, of the parameters changing. The debt levels were contracted in a world for low-interest rates. And the question is whether any of them are sustainable as interest rates become significantly positive.

And maybe we’re talking about long-run interest rate in the United States of 3 percent to 4 percent, which means that an emerging-market and low-income borrower is paying 8 percent, 9 percent, 10 percent generally, whereas right now, those are the kind of rates paid by true frontier market borrowers. So in that kind of world, what kind of debt is sustainable?

And this is indeed a huge question for a whole list of countries. The question is whether any of them are big enough to cause a systemic crisis. If you think of the Indias, the Brazils, the indonesias of this world, all of them are robust enough at this point to handle the shock that’s coming their way.

So they have done an enormous amount of work, in terms of building institutions, accumulating foreign exchange reserves — have just been developmental success stories over the last generation, such that they’re robust to this kind of shock. The real question is about the Angolas, the Sri Lankas, the Pakistans, which are in a much, much more fragile position.

The question, however, from their point of view, is also, are they too big to fail? And in the case of Sri Lanka or Angola, they’re almost certainly not too big to fail. These are states which would be regional crises, perhaps, certainly local disasters.

But it’s very unclear whether this thing we euphemistically call the global community or the international financial institutions would really muster the wherewithal to mount major support actions in their favor. I mean, one of the things that complicates the current debt situation is not just the level and the poverty of some of the borrowers, but the structure of the debt as well, which has undergone a really dramatic shift in the last 15 years.

So the early 2000s began with a debt jubilee, which meant that the lowest-income countries had their debts cut. And that debt was largely owed to a group of governments known as the Paris Club, which is basically Europe, the United States, and Japan, who used to do government-to-government development lending. Almost all of that debt was written off. So what the developing and emerging market countries now do to access funds is they borrow from things like the World Bank, which is a major source of development funding.

They borrow from bilateral lending by new lenders — notably, the Chinese, who emerged in the one-belt one-road period in the last 10 years as a lender on a scale of the World Bank. And then, they borrow from private markets. And so part of the problem in dealing with the current debt overhang will be that if things do break — in other words, if a state becomes unable to continue repaying its debts, the question of renegotiating those debts is complicated in a way it’s not been before.

Because there’s more private debt, and because the Chinese have a much bigger stake, and because the classic Paris Club lenders — the Europeans, the Americans, the Japanese — have precious little influence over the situation. And this complicates the situation, because the Chinese have a bunch of public private policy banks, which they insist are simply banks, and everyone else insists are extended arms of the Chinese government, which the Chinese will or will not, depending on the circumstances, allow to be incorporated into government-to-government negotiations.

In any case, this is a situation of complexity. It’s not inherent. This isn’t like a four-body problem. This is not immensely, overwhelmingly complex. But it’s just that interests on the part of the private lenders and the Chinese and everyone else mean that it’s very difficult to assemble a clear-cut structure for restructuring all of this debt. So this gives us further reason to be anxious about a world in which interest rates are going up.

EZRA KLEIN: One of the things I think about sometimes when I read descriptions of polycrises or I look at some of these numbers is that there’s this interesting shadow side to it or light side to it. And I’m almost nervous making this argument, because it can sound like you’re downplaying what could become — what will become a lot of human suffering.

But I want to at least open up this question of polybulwarks. Because by the same token, that we have a lot of financial and governmental and economic interconnection that creates a lot of vulnerability and climate interconnection and communication interconnection and political interconnection, some of that ends up being a force in the other direction.

I mean, you’ve talked a bunch of different times here, for a bunch of these big countries, about the support they might be able to get from the international community, which might buffer shocks that at another time would have overwhelmed the country. We’ve talked a lot about how much richer India and China, and for that matter, Bangladesh have gotten.

And that, among other things, has also helped them a lot when dealing with things like very rough weather. We’re seeing unbelievably bad disasters now, but the death tolls of them, thankfully, for now, from what we can tell, compared to what we’ve seen from not even quite as bad weather shocks in the past — it’s better than it once was. I mean, it’s a really big deal that Bangladesh has something near — or it says, actually, 100 percent — electricity.

And so one of the things I sometimes read when I read your descriptions of polycrises is a sort of narrative of vulnerability. There is so much more now that every country in the world, including us for that matter, feels vulnerable to. But there’s also more support, more technology, more money, more kind of possible multilateral coalitions.

You can get help from China now, which really wasn’t on the table 20 years ago. Is there something to be said, not just for a rise in vulnerability and exposure, but particularly when you’re speaking outside of the climate context, to a rise in reinforcement that comes from some of these same dynamics having a positive side?

ADAM TOOZE: I wouldn’t disagree with you at all. I mean, I think that was very visible in 2020 — I mean, in two different dimensions. One is that in early 2020, many of us were on the warpath, you know, warning, in a sense, already then, of the sort of crisis that we’re warning again about now. In other words, interest rates were going up.

Many, many low-income countries were shut out of global financial markets. There was, it seemed, the prospect of a kind of rolling disaster. And it didn’t happen. Nor did debt restructuring, however.

But the mega crisis that we anticipated did not arise, and many of the emerging market countries actually showed considerable resilience in coping with the crisis. And if you go from the 30,000 feet discussion of government debt to situation on the ground in India, I mean, many people will remember the extraordinary images of the tens of millions of Indian migrant workers driven out of the cities where they were living in informal housing, desperately seeking refuge in their home villages as the lockdown was put in.

It was a movement of people that India and the subcontinent hasn’t seen since the partition after independence, when Pakistan and India violently separated. But the astonishing thing — and talking to experts in India recently — the astonishing thing that even critics of the Modi regime admit — even critics of his lockdown policy admit — is that very few people starved, if any.

There was malnutrition. There was misery. But in the end, the government and the local authorities and the villages along the way were sufficiently competent, sufficiently capable, and in the case of the villages, sufficiently rich, to be able to feed people. So there was not a humanitarian catastrophe.

And this has to do with overall higher levels of income, and it also has to do with technologies, which a state like India, in a pioneering way, has put in place for personal identification, electronic identification, direct delivery of benefits. The Indian state has a higher degree of capacity by way of electronic accounts to deliver income — of course, small amounts — to its citizens than the United States does or most European states do.

And this was the deliberate effort through a leapfrogging, if you like, of the development of various administrative stages of the state to enable Delhi and provincial government in India at the state level, because India is a federation, to target benefits at very low-income people by means of electronic tagging and biometric identification. Now, this is problematic in all sorts of ways — data protection and so on.

But it does provide a resilient capacity for the delivery of support that hasn’t been there before. And Bangladesh does far better in typhoons now, because it has world-class typhoon forecasting. So yes, there is that resilience there.

The question that smart folks in India ask themselves is, is this the platform for a progressive narrative of development from here on in, which, of course, is the side the boosters take — that once you equip people with these kind of means of identification, the means of payment, and so on, you enable a program of bottom-up-led development. And we’ve seen some elements of that in East Africa as well — in Tanzania and Kenya, where cell phone-based payment systems are much more common than they are in the West.

The question is whether that’s the future, which will be a full-blown progressive kind of reading of the situation, or whether it could be something rather grimmer, which would be the avoidance of existential disaster. It would be a kind of adaptation, if you like, to a world of greater danger — successful adaptation, up to a certain point — but would also leave you trapped in a kind of technopopulist equilibrium, which my friends in India describe as cheap rice and cell phones.

You basically have an endless stream of electronic entertainment on your cell phone. You know you’re not going to starve. But beyond that, neither the national or the personal level, is the much prospect for development in a society with hundreds of millions of poorly educated young men and women entering the labor market without, really, the prospect of dramatic economic growth.

So we could be in a kind of warehousing bread-and-circuses kind of model of stabilization. I mean, I think one way of looking at India is that it is precisely the most grand — I mean, the most dramatic, spectacular, world-historic-in-scale project of social stabilization, first and foremost, in the current moment, which may offer growth prospects, but that’s yet to be tested as a proposition.

EZRA KLEIN: But I want to think about this more on the side of vulnerability. Because this goes to where I was saying earlier. I cop to half of the Hayekian description, which is, I have this experience — versus somebody who’s covered now. I mean, I feel like my whole life as a journalist was just one crisis after another.

And now, I look back, and I think of the ’90s as this very anomalous period, not of — no crises. I mean, there are obviously debt crises in Asian markets and Latin America — but is more relative stability than I have experienced in my political adulthood. But nevertheless, I do often have this sense that I read, on any given week, about five things that could plausibly become a gigantic international financial, economic, or humanitarian crisis.

And most of them don’t. And that’s not to say none of them do. I mean, we’ve lived through 2008. Obviously, the pandemic was and is a catastrophic scenario. But that our tools for response do seem somewhat more effective than they have been at other times.

Our ability to blunt things that could, through complexity, overwhelm the whole world also seem somehow to be matched by an ability to form coalitions, and even with the very, very weak methods of international governance we have, take on coordinated actions that keep a lot of things from rising as far as they do. And I’m asking this of you very particularly, because your work very much focuses on these questions of crisis, and the ways in which these crises could build on each other, interconnect to each other, and become more than the sum of their parts.

And when I read it, there’s such a sense of deep vulnerability, in that I sometimes step back and I wonder, well, is it actually matched? Is it potentially, at this point, more than matched, looking historically, by somehow the opposite — I don’t exactly want to call it coordination, but that I wonder if our tools have not become somewhat better than we often appreciate.

I do think the system is too complex for people to understand. And yet, by the same token, it seems to mostly be working — not morally, not as well as it could be, not the utopia. But as you say, India is a lot better off than it used to be.

China’s a lot better off than it used to be. We’re seeing — we didn’t see 2020 become the kind of crisis we worried it would become in financial markets. Is there may be more room for optimism here than an average reader of the news would assume?

ADAM TOOZE: I think this is a very valid point. And if you go back to the 20th-century reference points, you could say we’ve avoided another Great Depression. And we could have had one in 2008, and arguably, in 2020 as well. We’ve avoided another World War I, World War II-style total war.

And we’ve avoided revolution in the catastrophic, overwhelming sense of — there were a wave of revolutions after 1917, and notably, the Russian Revolution — for better or worse, some people would say. We’ve also avoided outright modern versions of fascism, which have an apocalyptic politics about them. The do-or-die genocidal violence of that type has remained rare, if — there hadn’t really been a straightforward repetition of that kind of politics.

It comes out of massive economic and dislocation and the logic of total war. So at that level, yes, those nightmares, I think, we have, to a degree, learned to contain more or less effectively. And especially on the macroeconomic side, yes, I think we’ve gotten pretty good at avoiding great depressions.

That doesn’t mean, however, that the risks won’t repeatedly arise, so that our efforts to contain them becomes larger and larger. And this is the lesson of 2020, as opposed to 2008. The stuff we had to do in 2020 to contain the fallout from the lockdown shock was not an order of magnitude, but several times larger than what we had to do in 2008.

So I think the reasonable question to ask is, are we at a moment at which the culmination and accumulation of a series of challenges, which are not unprecedented individually, and which we have some track record of managing in the past — whether those could be accumulating in a way that becomes increasingly difficult to cope with. And I think tensions over Taiwan and Ukraine in the last six months should give us serious pause.

I think people who study the logic of nuclear deterrence, which was well-established, a really formalistic and expert system in the Cold War, feel that the current situation with regard to U.S.-China-Russia relations is much, much more precarious. And also, I think we have to reckon with the possibility that the climate crisis — let’s use that as a cipher for environmental stress more generally — may be reaching a point — may be reaching a whole series of tipping points, indeed, where it poses challenges to us of a type which our societies have never faced, right?

Because that relative success in managing crises, which you quite rightly alluded to — the worry is surely that it took place within an environmental envelope not yet so stressed, that it became impossible for us to cope. But we have never lived on a planet as stressed as the one currently, and as stressed as it will become in the next decades as population, shall we say, crests, and global growth continues, and the accumulation of CO2 and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere continues, and the attrition of ecotopes and pollution piles up.

We simply don’t know how that system works. But I think, as it were, that is the question — whether or not these coping techniques of the 20th century will continue to work, A, in a genuinely multipolar world, in which we have many more empowered regional actors, of which China is just one, but there are a whole series of regional systems, which are all nuclear-capable, push comes to shove, which could escalate into global catastrophes.

Because a medium-sized exchange of nuclear weapons will have — we should be clear about this — would have devastating impacts environmentally. At least, all our science tells us that. And on top of that, then, as it were, this issue of the environment. But stepping even one step further back than that, let’s grant that we do live in a world that’s continuously excitable.

Part of the price we pay for this higher crisis management is continuous crisis awareness. So I wouldn’t — I take your point that the news is continuously full of crisis talk. And there’s a famous historian of political thought, Istvan Hont, who thought that crisis was, as it were, the idiom in which modernity expresses itself, all the way back to the 18th century.

But that doesn’t mean that in some sense, it’s not necessary. Sometimes the fact that I’m paranoid doesn’t mean that they aren’t out to get me. In this case, the fact that we are continuously haunted by crisis doesn’t mean that some of those risks aren’t, at this point, on a reasonable assessment, accumulating to the point at which we should become extremely concerned about our ability to go on winning as often as we are right now. I think that’s the wager of our generations.

EZRA KLEIN: I think the idea there that there is also a dynamic relationship, that the very fact of worrying about things is sometimes what puts us in a position to do enough, that the worries then later seem hyped up, is a very, very important one. I think sometimes that if we ultimately are relatively successful on climate change, we will learn almost exactly the wrong lesson of it — that people will look back and say, oh, the worst didn’t happen.

All those environmentalists were overstating things. But a lot of the reason the worst may not happen, if you look at current trends, is because enough alarm was put into the system, that our technological forces change direction, or policy change direction, our cultures change direction. There is, on some level, like, an almost all-of-the-planet effort.

It is not the only thing happening, but it is a very real thing happening, to change our climatic directio. And on some level, too, it’s working. And if it works, I think people will not realize sometimes that it worked.

They will instead say, oh, look, the things that people worried about at four and a half degrees didn’t happen. And so we don’t need to take these kinds of warnings seriously in the future. But that also brings up a place where I want to look at another historical analogy that we are using quite a lot right now, and the way maybe there’s another side to it.

So in America, the dominant historical analogy of this economic moment is the ’70s and ’80s — is the stagflation period, is the Paul Volcker disinflation, where he jacks up interest rates incredibly high, he causes 10 percent — even more — unemployment. That does do enough to break inflation. And central bankers, including Jerome Powell, look back on Volcker as, like, the central banker, right?

And Powell has been referencing him quite explicitly. But an overlooked dimension of that era is what Volcker’s interest-rate increases did to emerging economies. And I want to quote here the Harvard historian, Jaime Martin, who writes, “in developing countries, the debt crisis that followed the so-called Volcker shock was profoundly traumatic.

Across Latin America, it led to a collapse in G.D.P., rising unemployment, and skyrocketing levels of poverty, from which the region made a slow and imperfect recovery over the last decade that followed. Even those who claim Mr. Volcker made the right decision admit that he precipitated what may have been the worst financial disaster the world had ever seen in Latin America, the consequences of which were even worse than those of the Great Depression.

Elsewhere, Volcker himself later said, “Africa was not even on my radar screen.” I don’t think the Fed right now, somewhat understandably, is thinking too much about its effect on emerging economies. It is obsessed with what its statutory mandate is, which is managing employment and inflation in the American economy.

But if there is reason to fear that big interest-rate increases could trigger the kinds of crisis that the Fed triggered in the 1970s elsewhere, how do you think they should take that into account? How do they balance their responsibility to the United States and our moral responsibility not to throw the rest of the world into, or many countries elsewhere in the world, into depression-like conditions?

ADAM TOOZE: I think, right now, on the broader system and the broader concerns of the Fed — I mean, the Fed has a mandate for the American economy. It does not have a mandate as a global hegemon. And you can scratch a Fed person as deep as you like, and all you’ll ever see is fundamentally a concern for the stability and health of the U.S. economy.

And that’s their job. And I don’t think that’s merely a legal technicality. That’s their main concern. When and where the Fed acts globally, it does so because it believes that there is a serious possibility of blowback to the U.S. economy from global events.

This goes back to the point I was making, about which crises in the emerging and low-income-market world will matter to the system, and which not. And a Pakistan crisis matters to the State Department, to the N.S.C., to the Pentagon, right? A financial crisis in Pakistan does not matter to the Fed, does not matter to the Treasury.

It does not matter to Wall Street. Even a major financial crisis in India probably doesn’t. And when India’s central banker, Rajan, who was at the helm in India in 2013, made this case to Ben Bernanke against Ben Bernanke’s proposition of tightening American interest rates at the time, which unleashed a cycle taper tantrum, again, the American central bankers shrug, right?

The countries that enter into their calculus are ones which threaten global financial stability. And you can tell the ones which they take seriously in this respect, from the degrees of support they’ll extend to them. And the critical indicator here is the so-called swapline system. And the swapline network, which extends to Singapore, South Korea, to Brazil, to Mexico, is there because those are members of the financial system about which the Fed is concerned in a crisis.

Because potentially, the scale of the disaster there could have ramifications for systemic players in the American financial system. That those support actions tend to support the stability of the local banking system — notably, in Europe, for instance, after 2008 — is a side effect, which is welcome, but it’s not the ultimate justification for the Fed’s actions.

And there is here a systemic issue. There is a huge tension between the de facto role of the Fed and its constitutional — indeed, its sociology, its entire purpose, right? I mean, there is a tension.

The overlap is created by the de facto vulnerability of the American financial system. So the more vulnerable the American financial system is to these kind of shocks, the more those other bits of the global system become too big to fail. And to that extent, they become extended and incorporated into the system. Again, to take your point about resilience, though, these networks are spread, right?

So the Bank of Japan has a swapline network with a whole bunch of other economies in Asia, which de facto, therefore indirectly, become part of the U.S. system. Though the United States was not willing to extend a swap line to Indonesia, for instance, it did create a facility, a standing repo facility, which is a facility where you can essentially trade good assets for cash, to take account of China and Indonesia.

So there is, as it were, tacitly, and in quite a deliberately, I think, low-key, below-the-radar kind of way, the construction of a series of networks which give resilience to this system, which helped to bridge the gap somewhat, if you like, between the almost logical contradiction between a globalized economy running on the national currency of the United States.

EZRA KLEIN: Let me then bring things to the Fed, and what it believes it needs to do here. Because we’ve been talking about vulnerability elsewhere, but particularly if we’re going to be talking about the 1970s and Volcker, the question there that seems to dominate thinking is this question of credibility.

And when the Fed has credibility, and people believe prices are not going to rise, they act as if prices don’t rise, and so prices don’t rise. And when Fed loses credibility, they need not only to change the demand curve in the economy. They need to not only slow the economy down, so people aren’t buying as much, but they need, or they believe they need to do it, with such violence, that they also change people’s beliefs about the economy.

I mean, it’s an act of not just economic policymaking, but economic-psychological intimidation. They’re trying to cow people into acting with different beliefs about the future. The view at the Fed — the view of quite a few quite loud economic observers right now — is that the really dangerous thing is the Fed losing credibility, and that they need to act with a lot of force.

Because if they do, they’re going to have to do everything even worse in the future. Say what you will about how bad it is if interest rates go up to 5 percent, but it will be even worse if they go to 10 percent or 15 percent, as it did under Volcker. How do you understand the task here? How do you understand what it takes for the Fed to maintain — and not just bring inflation under control, but maintain that slightly ineffable quality that seems to be so crucial to economic action of credibility?

ADAM TOOZE: Yeah. I mean, I think the idea in and of itself is fairly intuitive. Anyone who’s been involved in the difficult business of parenting or received parenting will be aware of threats and sanctions regimes and the credibility of such regimes. There’s a big difference between your parents saying, do this or else, and them saying it and doing it in a way which means the punishment will be forthcoming.

And once that credibility is established, then they really only have to start counting to three or something. And that by itself will already induce the adjustment in the child’s behavior that the parent is looking for. That’s the kind of logic that we’re talking about here.

And with regard to big financial markets, there is a way in which psychology does seem to be the most apt way of talking about it. In a sense, because you’re dealing with a relatively small number of actors who are all relatively similar to each other. And so we are really talking about a sort of social psychological phenomenon where — mediated by news outlets and news sources, and you can do these sort of quantitative studies of nice-sounding, optimistic-sounding words and pessimistic-sounding words, as they ripple through the chatter of the financial markets.

At that level, this sort of talk makes sense, it seems, to me. And if you’re dealing with bond traders, what you want to convince them of is that if you raise interest rates a little bit, you mean to move them a lot, and so then, the markets will adjust in a way, which means that you don’t need to move them too much. You can rapidly get caught up in a whole series of really opaque psychological dynamics in doing this, right?

Because once you’ve said you’re going to do it, and they believe you, and then they anticipate you, then you never actually have to do it. And so is it really a credible threat? And so on and so forth.

When it comes to broader society, I think this entire social psychological talk about credibility and confidence and expectations and so on actually is quite misleading. Because when we talk about the willingness and capacity of market actors — in other words, employers and, well, workers, and maybe, in some cases historically, their representatives, trade unions — to set wages and prices, when we ask how credible is the Fed, and if the Fed is credible, then people will not raise wages and prices — the question you have to ask is, who sets wages and prices?

What empowers them to do so? And what are the circumstances under which they make those choices? And in the 1970s, it wasn’t so much a matter of psychology as, so much, bargaining power between capital on the one hand and organized labor on the other.

And what you were really trying to do was adjust the behavior of distinctly identifiable groups of major trade unions and employers, both in the United States and Europe and in Japan, so as to get buy-in on an adjustment path that would lead to lower inflation. And originally, those conversations took place behind closed doors, or sometimes, in fact, in public, between the government and the key decision-makers in the economy.

And it was, in a sense, when that structure — what was called liberal corporatism — was abandoned in the course of the neoliberal market revolution, that we ended up in this world, in which the Fed acts on some nebulous thing called psychology and expectations to establish its credibility, whereas previously, what it was about was Jimmy Carter trying to negotiate a deal with the A.F.L.-C.I.O. on — or the United Auto Workers — on what they expected, and expected as reasonable, in terms of a wage adjustment in relation to price changes.

And they would literally bargain over whether or not they could anchor a wage increase if, and only if, the government agreed to fix gas prices in a way which was acceptable to the members of the United Auto Workers. This was part of the negotiation over whether or not to liberalize gas prices in the United States. So it’s the shredding of that world, the destruction of that world, which really pushes us into this new era of very kind of vague psychologistic talk.

And that, for me, is also the fundamental element of implausibility about the extension of the 1970s analogy to the present moment. Because what it ignores is the fact that, not the psychological dynamics, sort of human nature, sort of eternal factors like that, but the concrete political institutions, the historically given circumstances under which decisions about pricing are made, have fundamentally changed.

I mean, we are seeing, in the United States, wage adjustment in line with prices, and that’s what really freaks the Fed out. Because that tells you that the inflationary pressure is broadening. But that isn’t because of an empowerment of the organized ***working class*** in the United States — though, of course, there have been these dramatic breakthroughs, in terms of the organization of high-profile employers like Starbucks or whatever. But that does not make a wage push.

The wage push in the United States has been on an entirely atomistic, individual basis, driven by the surge out of the labor market of workers during Covid, and then back into the labor market. Of course, many people just lost their jobs and had to shuffle back in to new jobs. And that sorting process generates a tumultuous adjustment in wages in the United States, ultimately.

In Europe, where we’ve also had very high levels of inflation by recent standards — 10 percent or so — we’re seeing systematic attrition of real wages. The same was true in the United States early on in the inflationary push. And that just shows that even in the Europe, where you have higher levels of unionization, there isn’t that dynamic push, that so-called wage-price spiral, which is the real nightmare that lurks behind all of this talk about expectations.

We are, in a sense, sort of shadowboxing here around the actual question of what the political economy of price and wage setting is. And until we engage with that seriously, to my mind, we’re really not — we’re not actually grasping the nature of this inflationary situation, which is quite different from that in its underlying logic from the 1970s.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, let’s end by trying to grapple with that seriously. But I want to do it less as a philosophical question and more as a policy one. What would you tell Jerome Powell to do differently than he is currently doing?

What does your sense of how the situation has changed since the ’70s imply for how he should treat the situation differently than the analogy to the ’70s, which is that the interest rate pain will continue until morale declines? How would that advice change?

ADAM TOOZE: I mean, I like the Powell of the beginning of 2021, who came flat out and said, we don’t think, basically, that the inflations of my youth will return. He’s on record of saying, we can bury the 1970s.

And he’s right. He was right that time round. I think he’s been bullied into the sort of hawkishness that he’s adopted more recently by the just relentless drumbeat of the inflation hawks, by the fact that inflation has remained relatively high, by the fact that it’s spread to a wider range of sectors, that it’s now quite deeply entrenched above all in the cost of housing, which is the big driver most recently.

It spread from energy and supply bottlenecks to a much wider circumference. Broadly speaking, I’m not a critic of the Fed and the way it’s handled this situation. I think that the argument that they should have hiked sooner is misplaced.

I think they erred on the right side in being slow. I don’t think we should regard this inflation shock as a disaster. It’s a reasonable tradeoff. That isn’t to say that we should downplay the distributional consequences.

It’s been very tough for the real living standards of certain parts of the American population. And there was a need for policy to adjust to that. Fiscal policy should be doing that work.

I don’t actually think that the Fed is wildly off-beam here. I think the questions are, going forward, how long do they tighten for, and/or what are the costs? And the solution for emerging-market and low-income countries is not necessarily for the Fed to stop its movement, but for other agency — notably, the international financial institutions — to step in to provide the support that they need.

So the questions about the Fed are really, how long are they going to continue this tightening cycle for? They’ve been slow enough to get there. The interest rate increases so far have been, I mean, large in historic terms, because they’re doing 75 percent, 75 basis points at a time.

But nevertheless, we’re still quite a long way away from having positive real interest rates. So this is not a savage tightening cycle in those terms. The question really is whether the current system, with the huge levels of leverage we’ve got in it, and the global ramifications can manage that.

And if the Fed needs to do interest-rate increases, it may not need to do very more, because I think the American economy — the steam is rapidly coming out of the system. And at that point, they should be flexible enough and brave enough to take their foot off the brake as soon as possible.

But if there are wider problems in the global economy, you need other instruments to deal with that. You cannot target multiple problems with one instrument. If you do, you’ll end up in horrible trade-off situation.

So what we need to do is multiply the means with which we fight this crisis. There could be another issuance of S.D.R.s, or there could be a more generous policy in reallocating the synthetic currency that was created within the balance sheets of the I.M.F. — that’s what S.D.R.s are — to face the crisis.

We should ensure that the World Bank and the I.M.F. can move rapidly to address country crises. The United States and other Western states should be proactive in pushing for debt restructuring options at this point. So that would be the range of policies that I would advocate.

They should be moving also towards cooperation with other central banks and should do so publicly. It’s not that they’re going to make a major adjustment to American interest rate policy, but they need to signal that the central banks of the world are cognizant of the blowback, the interaction between the policies that they’re adopting on a national basis.

Because otherwise, we really are going to be dealing with the first truly global inflationary shock of the new era of globalization since the 1990s on a nation-by-nation basis. And that, I think, is behind the curve of what the current moment demands.

EZRA KLEIN: What is your explanation, then, for why the month-on-month and now-year-on-year inflation data has been so defiant to the protections of those — including me, I should say — who felt this is different than ’70s, it’s localized — the way the inflation has kept spreading, spreading out of localized sectors into a general dynamic, the way you’re beginning to see wage adjustment, the way it has been persistent in the face of the stimulus running out of the economy, the way it has been persistent in the face of the economy sort of coming out of the pandemic, the way it just keeps going beyond what I think people who are a little bit more dovish said was the cause, and ending up kind of somewhere else or somewhat more broad.

I think there is something where Powell would say, hey, look, my rhetoric certainly has changed, because the facts changed. You still seem a little bit more bullish on the view that this would wring out of the system, that we’re looking at an adjustment, not a problem of expectations.

But I think you also would have expected it to end earlier. So what, if anything, has the sort of ongoing persistence of the inflation done to your model of the situation?

ADAM TOOZE: Well, I think the situation is more complicated and dangerous than I thought. I mean, particularly thinking about the European side, the persistence of the energy price shock linked to Putin’s wars was a huge aggravation of the problem. You could say the same about global food markets, which were also shocked earlier in the year.

Then, I think it’s very interesting to see the recovery dynamics in the U.S. — notably, the labor market recovery dynamic. So the fact that there was such a wave of unemployment of people made redundant, who lost their jobs during Covid, did shift labor market dynamics in a way which I don’t think we quite anticipated.

Why? Because as people got back into work individually, they had a degree of bargaining power and were more choosy about the sort of jobs that they went back into, for good reason, and Furthermore, demanded adjustment in relation to prices and got it, largely from employers who thought they could probably afford to pay those wages. And so that’s why we’ve seen those adjustments.

I think the element of this, which is probably most troubling is the housing sector. And I don’t think there’s much reason to doubt that in quite a number of the major real estate markets of the United States, there were some pretty serious structural issues, which mean that they are sensitive to price pushes like this.

I’m thinking notably of the discrepancy between the coast and the other parts of the United States, where we don’t see the same level of escalation in real estate and rental prices, which is now one of the key elements driving this. So as that real estate boom, I think, grinds to a halt and goes into reverse, I still expect the transitory hypothesis to be confirmed.

Of course, at this point, you could say, well, this has been — this is a semantic argument. But in any case, I expect a downturn in the real estate market to become quite a big driver of the slowdown over the course of the rest of this year and into next year, by which point, I think, many people expect the U.S. housing market to be going into a quite serious recessionary phase.

I mean, it would be astonishing if that were not the case, given how rapidly mortgage rates have moved up to 6 percent. So this would be a huge shock to the cost of buying houses. That, too, may be something that ripples around the world — to Canada, Australia, where there’s very, very overheated real estate markets.

So I think that’s the broad logic — is there was the energy and commodity price shock. There was then a widening of that to labor and to the service sector. And now, the inflation is, to a considerable extent, in the real estate sector.

And I expect that to ebb away in the next six to 12 months, so that by next year, most forecasts still see inflation coming down very dramatically, which, again, is a reason why, on the whole, I don’t think that we are going to see anything even remotely like Volcker-style interest-rate shocks — that we know what Powell and his colleagues are doing aren’t going to add up to that.

But there’s a way in which they need to summon the ghost, the spirit of Volcker, to refight the 1970s apart from anything else to demonstrate that they’re serious. I mean, amongst central bankers and in finance wonk, finance Twitter world, invoking those kind of analogies are what you do when you want to signal purpose.

I mean, in the speech that Volcker gave at Jackson Hole, the gathering of central bankers and economists this summer — the whole speech was an exercise in kind of retro chic, if you like, a kind of invocation of the stylistics of the 1970s and ’80s, to kind of reassure everyone that they were now wide awake, had smelled the coffee, and were ready to do what was necessary.

In practice, I don’t think they’re going to have to do anything even remotely as dramatic as what Volcker did, because the underlying dynamics are different. Because you do not have that sociology of distributional struggle working its way through the American system and expressing itself in prices and wages in the way that it did 40 years ago.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that is a good place to end. It’s always our final question. What are the three books that have been on your mind of late that you would recommend to the audience?

ADAM TOOZE: So I’ve been reading the Elena Ferrante, Neapolitan Quartet series, which are stunning. Another book that I read recently that rocked my world was Edward Paice’s book, “Youthquake: Why African Demography Should Matter to the World.”

And though I read it and reviewed it quite critically, I think if you want to follow the conversation right now on global economic history, you should check out Brad DeLong’s “Slouching Towards Utopia,” which came out recently and has been very widely reviewed, and make up your own mind.

EZRA KLEIN: Adam Tooze, thank you very much.

ADAM TOOZE: Great pleasure to be here.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: “The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Annie Galvin, Jeff Geld and Rogé Karma; fact-checking by Michelle Harris, Rollin Hu, Mary Marge Locker and Kate Sinclair; original music by Isaac Jones, mixing by Jeff Geld; audience strategy by Shannon Busta; special thanks to Kristin Lin, Kristina Samulewski, Jason Furman, Mike Konczal and Maurice Obstfeld.

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[***Champion of the Middle Class Comes to the Aid of the Poor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6262-49R1-DXY4-X0P9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**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 was eying a $1.3 trillion rescue plan aimed squarely at the middle class he has always championed, but pared down to attract some Republican support.

In a private conversation, Senator Chuck Schumer, 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, 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 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 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, 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 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 over the weekend. ''I want to emphasize that: through no fault of their own. Food bank lines 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 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 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 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 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 for ordering the killing of a Washington Post journalist and imposing only modest sanctions on Russia for the poisoning and jailing of Aleksei A. Navalny, 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.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/11/us/politics/biden-stimulus.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/11/us/politics/biden-stimulus.html)

**Graphic**

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)

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[***Blue-Collar Boom: How China Bounced Back From the Virus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61SB-F8D1-JBG3-655X-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Officials pushed factories to reopen the same way they forced the country to shut down. In one small town, it led to a chili-sauce-fueled revival.

CHANGMINGZHEN, China — The smell, salty and pungent, wafts through the freshly paved streets near the gleaming new factory.

The factory is owned by a company called Laoganma, which makes a piquant chili-and-soybean sauce famous across [*China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/business/chinas-economy-cooling.html) for its power to set mouths watering. In a time of global pandemic, when the jobs of working people around the world hang in the balance, the factory’s scents signal opportunity.

Since it opened in March, when China was still in the grip of Covid-19, the factory has struggled to find enough machinery operators or quality control technicians. Now workers are flocking to Changmingzhen, a once-quiet farming town ringed with green mountains and rice paddies, from which young people once fled for better jobs elsewhere.

Changmingzhen stands as a testament to China’s stunning post-coronavirus revival — one powered by the callused hands of the country’s factory and construction workers. With few exceptions, the rest of the world remains in a pandemic-driven malaise. But when China reports economic figures for 2020 on Monday, they are expected to show its economy grew despite losing early weeks to the lockdown.

On a recent evening, workers flush with money left the factory at shift’s end and flooded nearby market stalls looking for hand-cut noodles, bananas and mandarin oranges. The family-owned company pays its production workers up to $1,200 a month. “Not bad for workers our age,” said Wang Mingyan, an employee leaving her shift.

The slight 50-year-old said she received a rent-free apartment, free cafeteria meals and other benefits, as Laoganma competes with other companies for workers. The menu isn’t always to her liking, but that’s a small price to pay.

“When you’re away from home,” said Ms. Wang, who moved from her hometown more than two hours away, “you just fill your stomach.”

China froze a $15 trillion economy last February. It used brute force to isolate cities and provinces and drag people into quarantine.

Beijing turned to the same set of blunt tools to get the economy going again. It ordered factories to reopen and state-run banks to lend. It told state-run companies to restart.

Now the economy is charging ahead. Government subsidies are fueling new rail lines and factories. One state-owned company, a would-be competitor to [*Boeing and Airbus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/business/chinas-economy-cooling.html), says it will invest $3 billion in 22 big construction projects.

The government’s role makes China’s revival distinctly blue collar. The state’s levers are most effective when it comes to restarting big factories or big construction projects. It has long focused on keeping the ***working class*** happy for fear of the sorts of upheavals that have upended politics in the United States and Europe.

Beijing has a harder time fixing other problems. Shoppers remain skittish, and may become more so as [*the virus has resurfaced*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/business/chinas-economy-cooling.html) in several cities lately. Its economy still relies less on innovation and services than on making stuff. Legions of college graduates still find satisfying jobs in short supply.

About 50 miles up the highway from Changmingzhen, in the provincial capital, Guiyang, Laoganma advertised positions with three-foot-high signs at a local job fair. But the work holds little appeal for young people looking for jobs.

“You can find one if you look, but it will just not be the kind you imagined,” said Grace Cai, a senior majoring in tourism management at a Guiyang university, “and not the kind that meets the demand in your heart, or reaches your goal.”

Ms. Cai had an internship last autumn working as a waitress in a hotel restaurant. She dreads finding a full-time job.

“There are too many students now,” she said, “and because of the epidemic, it is actually not easy to find a job.”

The villagers in Changmingzhen may not agree. It is in southwestern China’s Guizhou Province, in a county that was so poor five years ago that it became a target for China’s [*antipoverty campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/business/chinas-economy-cooling.html).

Even before the coronavirus, officials strove to put idle hands to work. The national government just built a modern expressway and a bullet train connecting Guizhou to a neighboring province. Laoganma and other companies soon followed. The town buzzes with construction laborers throwing up apartments for new workers.

“Every factory is short of workers — the local ones have all been recruited,” said Zhou Xin, a former farmer who gave up his rice paddies so that Laoganma could build its factory. “It’s too toilsome and local people are not willing to do it.”

His own daughter studied in Shanghai and stayed to work for an industrial design company. He now runs a small eatery across the street from the factory and still fishes in an adjacent river. He resents just one thing: the factory’s constant low rumble and hiss.

“It doesn’t matter if you get used to that sound,” he said. “There are billions of renminbi invested here.”

The factory was supposed to have opened in February. Then the pandemic struck.

Streets emptied. Residents set up barricades at town entrances, checking everyone’s temperature. A mix of fear and camaraderie kept practically everyone at home for six weeks, living on corn, potatoes and greens from backyard gardens.

Yang Xiaozhen runs a Changmingzhen diner with her parents, charging $1.50 for a plate of dumplings. They closed. Her parents stayed indoors. Ms. Yang scarcely ventured out either.

“We tried to be mindful,” she said, “because we Chinese are certainly very united and very mindful.”

But the virus never struck Changmingzhen. By late February, with the economy still halted, local officials and Laoganma’s managers sprang into action. (Laoganma did not respond to requests for comment.)

Neighborhood officials all over the county were ordered to find unemployed workers for the factory. Municipal workers put in long hours to complete nearby roads. Even the gardeners rushed to plant rows of saplings inside the factory fence.

Wen Wei was one of the first workers. She carries spices to the production line and earns $620 a month. Her husband, who fries hot peppers, earns $1,200 a month.

Laoganma’s package deal lured them to Changmingzhen. It offered a free apartment for them and their two children and free meals at the company cafeteria. They pay only for water and electricity.

“You can’t find such a high salary in other places,” she said.

A few blocks to the south of the Laoganma factory, Zhu Haihua drives trucks for a steel factory that makes towers for wind turbines. His monthly paycheck of $2,300 does not include food or housing.

That is barely half of what the [*average American truck driver earns*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/business/chinas-economy-cooling.html). But the money goes much farther in a Chinese mountain village. Frenetic construction over the past few years and permissive zoning regulations have produced a glut of recently built apartments. That allows Mr. Zhu to lease a three-bedroom apartment for just $175 a month.

“Renting here is very cheap,” he said.

For now, the sounds of machinery and construction often drown out the sounds of the birds in the Chinese maples surrounding the town. But signs of weakness aren’t far away. Business at Ms. Yang’s diner has never completely recovered.

While the Laoganma factory continues to pump its spices into the air, the government-aided construction projects may not last. The high-speed rail construction crews are moving beyond the village. They come back less often to spend money.

Cai Liuzhong, the owner of a drilling supplies store next door to Ms. Yang’s diner, is preparing to follow the work to the next boom town.

“We just follow where it goes,” he said.

Yang Faxue, a diner regular, feels a quiet confidence that he will always have work. The 36-year-old construction worker has been on the road most of the past two decades, leaving his home about two hours’ drive from Changmingzhen to work initially in the big city of Nanjing. His wife — and, eventually, three children — stayed home.

Mr. Yang was pleased to find a job opening in Changmingzhen, closer to home. And work barely stopped during the pandemic.

“The houses still need to be built,” he said. “Work is work.”

Claire Fu contributed research.

Claire Fu contributed research.

PHOTO: Farmers tending their gardens in Changmingzhen, a farming town that has boomed along with the rest of post-coronavirus China. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Keith Bradsher/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 15, 2021

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[***The One-Man Show Begins; On Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60NP-1VS1-DXY4-X0P0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 24, 2020 Monday 10:38 EST

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**Length:** 1122 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** President Trump takes center stage at the R.N.C.

**Body**

President Trump takes center stage at the R.N.C.

Hi. Welcome to [*On Politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), your guide to the day in national politics. I’m Giovanni Russonello, typically the morning newsletter writer, covering the evening shift during the conventions.

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In his acceptance speech at the 2016 Republican National Convention, Donald J. Trump stood before a bitterly fractured Republican Party and sought to unite it around a single touchstone: himself. He painted a dark picture of a country’s values (read: [*its white identity*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics)) under siege and a political establishment impervious to the needs of ***working-class*** people.

“I alone can fix it,” he declared.

Almost four years into his presidency, the party is no longer divided. About eight in 10 Republicans tend to tell pollsters that they approve of the job he’s doing, and close to all Republican voters say they’ll support him in November.

Yes, he remains broadly unpopular with the country at large. His response to the coronavirus pandemic has drawn [*increasingly negative reviews*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) — and his marks on handling issues around racial injustice [*were never positive*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) in the first place. In head-to-head polls against Joe Biden, he’s trailing by a nearly double-digit average.

Yet at this week’s convention, that old 2016 mantra is still in effect. It is Mr. Trump alone, apparently, who can fix things for himself and his party.

He already [*gave one address today*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) — surprising the Republican delegates gathered at the Charlotte convention center after they had voted to officially renominate him. He’ll speak again tonight during the nationally televised broadcast, and every night of the four-day convention. (Typically, candidates only give a single acceptance speech.)

This morning, stepping to the podium to chants of “four more years,” Mr. Trump encouraged the crowd to go bigger than that: “If you want to really drive them crazy, you say, ‘Twelve more years,’” he said. A few audience members [*took him up on it*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).

The G.O.P.’s singular adherence to Mr. Trump was also evident over the weekend when, in an extraordinary move, [*the party announced that it would not adopt a policy platform*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) at this year’s convention. Instead, it wrote in a [*resolution*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) that “the Republican Party has and will continue to enthusiastically support the President’s America-first agenda,” even though Mr. Trump’s policies have often veered from Republican orthodoxy.

After the announcement about the platform, William Kristol, a prominent Republican critic of the president, wrote on Twitter: “It’s no longer the Republican party. It’s a Trump cult.” The Biden campaign has been aggressively courting the votes of moderates put off by Mr. Trump, and it [*released a list*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) today of 27 Republican former members of Congress who had rejected Mr. Trump and endorsed the former vice president.

Throughout Mr. Trump’s term, Vice President Mike Pence has played the role of quiet liaison between the chief executive and the party establishment. In a speech accepting his own renomination today, Mr. Pence sought to ensure the party faithful that backing Mr. Trump was tantamount to supporting key G.O.P. policy positions.

He rattled off core Republican issues that he said Mr. Trump stood for, including free-market economics, “secure borders” and opposition to abortion. “Four more years means more judges,” Mr. Pence said. “Four more years means more support for our troops and our cops. It’s going to take at least four more years to drain that swamp.”

Who else is speaking tonight

[*The convention’s official proceedings begin at 9 p.m. tonight*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics). You can watch at [*nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), where [*our reporters will be online to offer live analysis*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics). CNN, MSNBC and PBS will show the full two-hour broadcast, but the major broadcast TV networks will air only the event’s second half. Fox News may air some of the first hour, depending on how Sean Hannity handles his 9 p.m. show.

Among the evening’s notable speakers are Nikki Haley, Mr. Trump’s former United Nations ambassador, who is widely regarded as a possible 2024 candidate for president; Representative Jim Jordan of Ohio, one of the president’s key allies in Congress; and Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, the only Black Republican in the Senate.

Among the nonpoliticians slated to speak are Mark and Patricia McCloskey, a couple who became a cause célèbre on the right after they were filmed holding guns to threaten peaceful Black protesters outside their St. Louis home, and Andrew Pollack, the father of a girl who was killed in the 2018 mass shooting in Parkland, Fla.

In other news …

* An [*ABC News/Ipsos poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) is among the first surveys to take a read on the impact of the Democratic National Convention last week. The poll, released yesterday, found that Mr. Biden’s favorability rating had risen by five points, to 45 percent. That was driven in particular by Democrats; 86 percent of them expressed a positive opinion of him, up from 79 percent in Ipsos’s previous poll.

1. Three in 10 Americans reported having watched at least some of the Democratic convention, according to the poll. Among independents who had watched at least a glimpse of it, two-thirds said they liked what they had heard.
2. A Florida judge today struck down Gov. Ron DeSantis’s order [*requiring public schools to reopen*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) for in-person classes.
3. In his decision, Judge Charles W. Dodson of the Leon County Circuit Court wrote that the order, which threatened to withhold funding from school districts that did not give students the option of returning in person, violated the state Constitution because it “arbitrarily disregards safety.”
4. The ruling was a win for the American Federation of Teachers, which, along with one of its affiliates, the Florida Education Association, had filed suit to stop the order.
5. LeBron James’s recently formed collective of athlete-activists, which is fighting voter suppression, will [*launch a multimillion-dollar program*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) to deploy poll workers to voting locations in Black communities across the country ahead of the November vote.
6. The collective, More than a Vote, is working in collaboration with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. It plans to focus its efforts on Georgia, Michigan, Wisconsin, Florida and Ohio, among other states.

Drop us a line!

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**Load-Date:** August 25, 2020

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[***Bernie Sanders, the Teflon Candidate, Faces Sudden New Tests***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8C-62P1-DXY4-X0JG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Lisa Lerer

**Highlight:** The Vermont senator has long brushed off political vulnerabilities and evaded attacks from rivals. But the spotlight on his front-runner status and possible Russian interference could pose challenges.

**Body**

The Vermont senator has long brushed off political vulnerabilities and evaded attacks from rivals. But the spotlight on his front-runner status and possible Russian interference could pose challenges.

In the early years, there was his commentary on gender relations featuring a rape fantasy, his [*support for the Sandinistas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html) and his honeymoon in the Soviet Union.

Once he entered Congress, there were votes to shield gun manufacturers, a commitment to remaining uncommitted to the Democratic Party, and secret plans to mount a 2012 primary challenge against President Obama.

And more recently: [*the F.B.I. investigation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html) into his family,   [*the heart attack*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html), the resistance to detailing the costs of his signature policy proposal, “Medicare for all.”

Senator [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html) has the kind of vulnerabilities that make political opponents salivate. Yet throughout his congressional campaigns, the 2016 primaries, and now his second White House bid, one rule has defined the senator’s political rise: Nothing sticks.

Now that durability is about to be tested in ways that Mr. Sanders has never experienced in his 50-year electoral career. The disclosure on Friday that intelligence officials believe [*Russia has been interfering*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html) in the 2020 race to help his candidacy may distract from his campaign message and force him to contend with questions, worries and disinformation about the Russian efforts.

He is also no longer a quixotic junior senator from the idiosyncratic state of Vermont. He is now the Democratic presidential front-runner, and if he captures the nomination, can expect to face a tidal wave of negative advertising. President Trump and the Republican Party would likely spend millions branding him as a socialist.

Mr. Sanders has long seen himself as an underestimated figure and a political revolutionary, allies say, and he has confidence in his extraordinary ability to shrug off attacks. His 2020 rivals — a former vice president, multiple fellow senators, two brainy former mayors, and billionaire businessmen — have failed to halt his momentum, or never fully tried in the first place, after concluding that attacks only fan the passions of his liberal base.

If Mr. Sanders’s rivals have been giving him a pass in debates and over policy issues, it is because they see no clear way to dent his Trump-like Teflon image. It is too early to know if the Russia news or any burgeoning anti-Sanders effort among Democrats will change that. And like Mr. Trump, it may soon be too late for opponents to stop Mr. Sanders if he is the big winner in the delegate-rich Super Tuesday primaries on March 3.

“Any attempt to derail Bernie that I’ve ever seen has always blown up in the face of the derailer,” said Howard Dean, the former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, who clashed with Mr. Sanders occasionally during Mr. Dean’s time as governor of Vermont. “It’s an amazing phenomenon. I do not know what the magic is, but there is some.”

With Mr. Sanders favored to claim another [*victory in the Nevada caucuses on Saturday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html), some Democrats are frantically searching for a piece of kryptonite.

A Democratic group aimed at promoting moderates began airing digital ads this week that attack the costs of Mr. Sanders’s proposals. The group’s efforts follow a similar advertising campaign, bankrolled by a different Democratic organization, that questions whether Mr. Sanders can beat Mr. Trump in November.

In recent days, [*Michael R. Bloomberg*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html)’s team has shifted its strategy from largely ignoring Mr. Sanders in favor of focusing on Mr. Trump to targeting their primary rival more aggressively than anyone else in the field. At   [*Wednesday night’s debate in Las Vegas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html), rivals hit him harder than ever before on his policies, the vitriolic tone of some of his supporters, his defense of socialism, and his health. There’s also some speculation among Democratic officials about stopping Mr. Sanders at the party convention in July.

For a party obsessed with learning from the mistakes of 2016, when the sheer improbability of Mr. Trump’s winning the White House dominated the discourse, the disbelief in the potential of Mr. Sanders to win the nomination and the reluctance of candidates to challenge him mystifies some Democrats — even those working for him. And the revelation that Russia may be trying to help him, four years after it helped Mr. Trump, only confuses matters more, because it is far from clear how that foreign interference will affect the race.

For months, top Sanders aides feared that a rival, perhaps Mr. Bloomberg, would start an anti-Sanders super PAC. That kind of broad, well-funded effort has not materialized. And of all the candidates, only Tom Steyer has released an ad attacking Mr. Sanders, targeting his failure to put a price tag on his Medicare for All Plan.

“A lot of it is the same thing you saw happening in the Republican establishment four years ago,” said Matt Bennett, a founder of the moderate think tank Third Way and a vocal critic of Mr. Sanders. “Suddenly in April they woke up and realized that Donald Trump could actually win.”

Throughout the primary race, as soon as someone has risen to the top of the pack, attacks have piled on. Senator [*Elizabeth Warren*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html) of Massachusetts faced a barrage of questions about her “Medicare for all” plan after a summer surge in the polls. Former Mayor   [*Pete Buttigieg*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html) of South Bend, Ind., was the subject of attacks after his poll numbers rose in Iowa.

The same has not happened for Mr. Sanders.

It’s not as if he has neutralized his vulnerabilities. He has [*recanted his 1972 article*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html) about male and female sexual fantasies, which briefly imagined women fantasizing about rape, but such a piece of writing would still usually damage a candidate. His history of making supportive comments about Communist regimes, and visiting Nicaragua and the Soviet Union in 1980s, could reinforce the socialist labeling. And federal investigators examined a college real estate deal that involved Mr. Sanders’s wife, Jane; the couple was not interviewed, indicating a lack of significant evidence of a crime, but some opponents talk it up privately as a possible issue.

Yet other candidates have been more likely to face attacks. At Wednesday’s debate, Mr. Bloomberg, the billionaire former mayor of New York City, [*faced a tough assault*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html), with the pile-on serving to keep the focus away from the higher-polling Mr. Sanders.

Jonathan Kott, head of the Big Tent Project, which began airing the digital ads on Tuesday, said that part of the reason Mr. Sanders had escaped serious attacks from his rivals until the most recent debate was disbelief that Democratic voters would support him. An [*NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html) released Tuesday found that the most unpopular qualities for a candidate were being a socialist, having a heart attack in the last year and being older than 75.

The same poll also showed Mr. Sanders opening up a double-digit national lead in the race.

“He has not faced the same vetting and scrutiny that other front-runners have faced,” Mr. Kott said. “A lot of that may have to do with the fact that nobody thought a socialist with these radical views would be the front-runner.”

Aides to Mr. Sanders say he is able to evade attacks because voters trust him, arguing that his proposals for a [*single-payer health care system*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html), free public college and a Green New Deal are backed by a wide majority of Democratic voters.

“We felt strongly from the beginning that the primary would be decided on two questions: who do voters trust to carry out the change they want and who do they believe can beat Donald Trump?” said Faiz Shakir, Mr. Sanders’s campaign manager. “Bernie’s consistent record of standing with the ***working class*** is the strongest answer.”

Analysis of Mr. Sanders’s turnout in Iowa and New Hampshire gives scant indication that he has expanded his base, despite his argument that he is building a movement that will motivate ***working-class*** voters and young people — both groups that typically do not vote in large numbers.

Yet with the moderate wing of the party unable to coalesce around a single candidate, Mr. Sanders could win a near-majority of delegates with less than a third of the vote. That could give him a delegate lead that would be difficult — if not impossible — for his rivals to overcome.

Yet some Democratic strategists see real risks in going after Mr. Sanders over policy, personal issues or matters beyond his control, like the Russian interference, fearing it could alienate some of his supporters — largely younger voters and staunch liberals who will be central to any Democratic nominee’s ability to win the White House. Others working on rival campaigns argue that such attacks only backfire, and are quickly weaponized into fund-raising appeals that flood the Sanders campaign with donations.

Days before the Iowa caucuses, Democratic Majority for Israel released an ad attacking Mr. Sanders, the first time a Democratic group had run a negative campaign spot targeting Mr. Sanders by name in his two primary bids.

In about a day, the Sanders campaign [*raised $1.3 million off the*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html)spot.

“He’s been like the quarterback in the football scrimmage who wears the jersey and no one is allowed to tackle,” said David Axelrod, a former top strategist for Mr. Obama. “There was a reluctance to take on Trump because there was a fear of antagonizing his base, and I think Bernie has benefited from that within the Democratic Party.”

Some backers of Ms. Warren argue that Mr. Sanders has also benefited from less media scrutiny, despite his campaign’s frequent broadsides against the agenda of “corporate media.”

While Ms. Warren has been pushed, repeatedly, to unveil the costs of her Medicare for all plan, Mr. Sanders has brushed off questions about his own similar proposal, saying the costs are “impossible to predict.”

When Ms. Warren accused Mr. Sanders of lying about whether he had told her a woman could not defeat Mr. Trump, perhaps the toughest moment he’s faced in the race so far, his supporters attacked her online and referred to her with snake emojis.

“It is hard to say why she’s been treated much more harshly,” said Adam Jentleson, a Democratic strategist who is close to the Warren team. “At a certain point you’re only left with gender as an explanation.”

Voters say they appreciate Mr. Sanders’s consistent message, arguing that they know who he is and what he represents. Many of those who backed Mr. Sanders in 2016 say the past four years have only strengthened their support.

“He has the most progressive agenda,” said Paul Wetzonis, 29, of Nashua, N.H., who voted for Mr. Sanders in both of his primary bids. “Everybody else is basically a modern corporatist Democrat.”

Unlike Mr. Trump, who took over his party by sheer force, Mr. Sanders has spent the past four years working to make his liberal brand more mainstream, both by changing the Democratic Party and by casting himself as a loyal soldier of it.

Less than a year after a primary race in which his team accused the Democratic National Committee of “rigging” the election, Mr. Sanders flew around the country with the party’s chairman, Tom Perez, for an eight-state “come together, fight back” tour in 2017. Through the pro-Sanders political nonprofit Our Revolution, supporters of the senator packed the obscure party meetings that select state leaders, putting loyalists into key party posts.

And Mr. Sanders promised, again and again, to be a good Democrat, pushing back on a narrative of the 2016 race that he was not a “true” member of the party. In March, Mr. Sanders signed the Democratic National Committee’s loyalty pledge. In an[*ad that ran in Iowa*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/17/us/bernie-sanders-burlington-mayor.html), Mr. Sanders placed himself in a line of Democratic icons, splicing his words with images of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Lyndon B. Johnson and John F. Kennedy.

Even some Democrats who don’t agree with Mr. Sanders say they appreciate his voice in the race.

As she waited to hear former Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., address a crowd in Marshalltown, Iowa, Carrie Barr said she wasn’t considering supporting Mr. Sanders but appreciated his policies.

“He’s too extreme. He’s a socialist and he’s not been a supporter of Democratic politics,” said Ms. Barr, 64, a retired teacher. “But everyone loves his ideas. I love his ideas.”

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders attended a rally at the Cowboys Dancehall in San Antonio after he won the Nevada caucuses on Saturday. His 2020 rivals have failed to halt his momentum. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A20-A21)

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2020

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[***Could Bernie Sanders Win It All?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y0N-D761-DXY4-X2J1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 16, 2020 Thursday 15:18 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 924 words

**Highlight:** And when did the future get so grim?

**Body**

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Has Bernie Sanders been woefully underestimated? This week on “The Argument,” the columnists discuss his rise in 2020 polling, his spat with his rival progressive Elizabeth Warren and whether Sanders has been given short shrift by Democratic Party insiders and the national news media. Ross Douthat channels the “neoliberal shill” case for Sanders as a party unifier who can keep the Democrats’ leftmost flank on board. David Leonhardt is skeptical of Sanders’s theory of political change. And Michelle Goldberg says that Sanders’s gender gives some of his more radical stances a safety net that female candidates like Warren don’t have.

Then, technology was supposed to solve the world’s problems, but it seems to have created more unsolvable ones. The columnists talk the end of technological wonder and why our future looks so grim.

And finally, Michelle recommends a beach read that comes with a presidential seal of approval.

Background Reading:

* Ross on [*the case for Sanders’s candidacy*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2) and “   [*The Decadent Society: How We Became the Victims of Our Own Success*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2)” (forthcoming from Simon &amp; Schuster)

1. Michelle on [*Warren — not Sanders — as Democrats’ 2020 unity candidate*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2)
2. David on [*Warren’s understanding of how policy can change politics*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2),   [*Warren’s struggle with* ***working-class*** *voters in Massachusetts*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2) and   [*why the pursuit of centrist policies might not be the Democrats’ best path to policy change*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2)
3. [*Bernie Sanders’s interview with The Times’s editorial board*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2)
4. Derek Thompson, “[*The Real Trouble With Silicon Valley*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2)” (The Atlantic)

Meet the Hosts

Ross Douthat

I’ve been an Op-Ed columnist since 2009, and I write about politics, religion, pop culture, sociology and the places where they all intersect. I’m a Catholic and a conservative, in that order, which means that I’m against abortion and critical of the sexual revolution, but I tend to agree with liberals that the Republican Party is too friendly to the rich. I was against Donald Trump in 2016 for reasons specific to Donald Trump, but in general I think the populist movements in Europe and America have legitimate grievances and I often prefer the populists to the “reasonable” elites. I’ve written books about Harvard, the G.O.P., American Christianity and Pope Francis; I’m working on one about decadence. Benedict XVI was my favorite pope. I review movies for National Review and have strong opinions about many prestige television shows. I have three small children, two girls and a boy, and I live in New Haven with my wife.

Michelle Goldberg

I’ve been an Op-Ed columnist at The New York Times since 2017, writing mainly about politics, ideology and gender. These days people on the right and the left both use “liberal” as an epithet, but that’s basically what I am, though the nightmare of Donald Trump’s presidency has radicalized me and pushed me leftward. I’ve written three books, including one, in 2006, about the danger of right-wing populism in its religious fundamentalist guise. (My other two were about the global battle over reproductive rights and, in a brief detour from politics, about an adventurous Russian émigré who helped bring yoga to the West.) I love to travel; a long time ago, after my husband and I eloped, we spent a year backpacking through Asia. Now we live in Brooklyn with our son and daughter.

David Leonhardt

I’ve worked at The Times since 1999 and have been an Op-Ed columnist since 2016. I caught the journalism bug a very long time ago — first as a little kid in the late 1970s who loved reading the Boston Globe sports section and later as a teenager working on my high school and college newspapers. I discovered that when my classmates and I put a complaint in print, for everyone to see, school administrators actually paid attention. I’ve since worked as a metro reporter at The Washington Post and a writer at Businessweek magazine. At The Times, I started as a reporter in the business section and have also been a Times Magazine staff writer, the Washington bureau chief and the founding editor of The Upshot.

My politics are left of center. But I’m also to the right of many Times readers. I think education reform has accomplished a lot. I think two-parent families are good for society. I think progressives should be realistic about the cultural conservatism that dominates much of this country. Most of all, however, I worry deeply about today’s Republican Party, which has become dangerously extreme. This country faces some huge challenges — inequality, climate change, the rise of China — and they’ll be very hard to solve without having both parties committed to the basic functioning of American democracy.

How do I listen?

Tune in on [*iTunes*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2),   [*Google Play*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2),   [*Spotify*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2),   [*Stitcher*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2) or wherever you listen to podcasts. Tell us what you think at   [*argument@nytimes.com.*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2) Follow Michelle Goldberg (   [*@michelleinbklyn*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2)), Ross Douthat (   [*@DouthatNYT*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2)) and David Leonhardt (   [*@DLeonhardt*](https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/the-argument/id1438024613?mt=2)) on Twitter.

This week’s show was produced by Maddy Foley for Transmitter Media and edited by Sara Nics. Our executive producer is Gretta Cohn. We had help from Tyson Evans, Phoebe Lett and Ian Prasad Philbrick. Our theme is composed by Allison Leyton-Brown.

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders at a campaign event in Iowa on Sunday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jordan Gale for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Hakeem Jeffries Wants Democrats to Take a Deep Breath***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6182-G991-DXY4-X042-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 9, 2020 Monday 19:37 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1341 words

**Byline:** Nicholas Fandos

**Highlight:** The No. 5 House Democrat is running for another term in his post, as he and a new generation of leaders look to a future after Speaker Nancy Pelosi is gone.

**Body**

The No. 5 House Democrat is running for another term in his post, as he and a new generation of leaders look to a future after Speaker Nancy Pelosi is gone.

Most ways you slice it, House Democrats have had a turbulent few days. Swelling expectations that they would grow their majority in last week’s election crashed amid painful [*losses*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-house.html), and public blame-trading from some of the chamber’s most outspoken progressives and moderates has added a bitter note to President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s win.

Unbowed by the disappointment and division, Representative Hakeem Jeffries, a Brooklynite who as chairman of the unruly Democratic Caucus helps plot his party’s policy and legislative strategy in the House, who announced Monday that he would seek re-election to that post. If he wins, as expected in a race in which he is unlikely to face a challenger, he would be positioned to be a crucial voice as the party figures out how to govern with an ally in the White House, but a slimmer majority on Capitol Hill.

As other Democrats compete to climb the ranks and secure a spot in the future of the party’s House leadership, Mr. Jeffries, 50, is also a top contender to succeed [*Speaker Nancy Pelosi*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-house.html), who has led the party in the House since 2003, whenever she steps aside.

But while he represents a different generation of leadership from Ms. Pelosi, he sees little need to upend the approach that Democrats put in place after the 2016 election, either by veering further to the left or tacking to the center. He has no problem with a hard “family conversation” about what went wrong in last week’s elections, Mr. Jeffries said in an interview, but his pitch to fellow Democrats is that their strategy — focusing on policies that affect Americans’ wallets and broadly popular issues, like gun safety — is sound and their message is resonating. He has encouraged his colleagues to set aside the lure of “irrationally exuberant expectations,” take a deep breath, and stay focused on economic and social justice.

“Democrats won the White House, kept the majority in the House and are on the midnight train to Georgia to take the Senate,” Mr. Jeffries said. “That’s a good day as far as I am concerned.”

Mr. Jeffries has already burnished an impressive profile for a House member in only his fourth term, having served as an impeachment manager in the Senate trial of President Trump. But how he navigates the coming weeks and months, when Democratic infighting is only likely to blossom in the absence of a common enemy in Mr. Trump, could go a long way in determining how high he climbs.

Moderates who narrowly held onto their seats are already [*laying blame squarely at the feet of the left*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-house.html) for pushing unrealistic and sweeping ideas that open the party to charges of socialism and being anti-police. Leading progressives [*say the losses are moderates’ fault*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-house.html), and are already warning Mr. Biden and Democratic leaders that [*shying away from liberal policies on climate, health care, jobs and education will backfire*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-house.html).

Other leaders, most notably Representative James Clyburn of South Carolina, the party’s No. 3, have shown they are willing to be active combatants. Mr. Jeffries, for stylistic and political reasons, appears more comfortable as a peacemaker.

Mr. Jeffries’s own theory of the case is that Democrats’ “For the People” message is the right one. The best way to win back traditionally Democratic voters peeled away by the millions by Mr. Trump and to bridge the divisions within his party’s own ranks, he argued, is to relentlessly focus on kitchen-table issues like health care costs, prescription drug pricing, defeating [*Covid-19*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-house.html), creating jobs and addressing racial inequality.

“It is unlikely, absent the bully pulpit of the presidency, that someone who has mastered the art of grievance politics can have a same hold of on a significant part of the country that Donald Trump demonstrated,” he said. “So as we move forward, Democrats have a real chance to win back some of these ***working-class*** voters by making clear our implemented ideas will fix the broken American contract and improve their quality of life.”

That begins, he said, by “crushing the virus” and sending “direct relief” to American workers and business owners still reeling from the pandemic-battered economy.

“That should be our priority, and will be on Day 1,” he said.

Facing the [*likelihood of a Republican Senate*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-house.html), it will not be easy. Mr. Jeffries said Democrats believed there would be opportunities for them to partner with Mr. Biden and Republicans in the Senate to pass laws related to prescription drug pricing, infrastructure spending, and changes to sentencing and prison laws.

Party leaders have promised a “deep dive” into Tuesday’s results to better understand how they lost five seats and counting and failed in nearly every pickup opportunity they believed was in reach.

Mr. Jeffries said he was most concerned about why the public opinion polling that guides campaigns at nearly every level systematically failed to capture the extent of support not only for Mr. Trump, but other Republicans on the ballot.

“One of the things that we should take a look at is, is the polling broken, or is the polling only broken when Donald Trump is on the ballot,” Mr. Jeffries said, noting that public opinion surveys had much more accurately predicted the 2018 midterm results. “Because if it is the latter, then there are not too many adjustments to be made going forward because Trump will be nowhere to be found electorally in 2022.”

Mr. Jeffries is among a handful of younger Democratic leaders emerging as potential heirs to Ms. Pelosi, 80, and her longtime top deputies, Steny H. Hoyer, 81, and Mr. Clyburn, 80, who are all seeking another term when Democrats choose their leaders later this month.

Two Democrats are currently competing for the party’s No. 4 House leadership post, assistant speaker, after Ben Ray Luján won a seat in the Senate last week. They are Representative Katherine Clark, 57, a Massachusetts progressive who currently is vice chairwoman of the party caucus under Mr. Jeffries, and Representative David Cicilline, 59, a progressive from Rhode Island and the first openly gay member of House leadership.

Representative Cheri Bustos of Illinois, 59, the chairwoman of House Democrats’ campaign arm, had been considered another contender, but after last week’s results — in which her offensive strategy fell flat and she only barely won re-election herself — her future was less certain. She told colleagues on Monday that she would not seek another term in that position and would focus on legislating instead, a sign that she did not intend to pursue a leadership role.

After Ms. Bustos stepped aside, a third candidate for assistant speaker, Representative Tony Cárdenas of California, 57, said he would now run to replace her. Representative Sean Patrick Maloney of New York had also entered the race.

This being Washington, Mr. Jeffries would not speak openly about aspirations for leading his party, and he has played squarely within the lines of Ms. Pelosi’s top-down leadership structure, keeping any public disagreements to a minimum and prizing consensus-building.

He said in the interview that there was “one speaker at a time,” and that he decided to remain in his own position, which has clearer responsibilities than the relatively new assistant speaker post, to provide “continuity” in a time of national crisis.

But allies note with enthusiasm that he would be the first Black representative to be speaker. And Mr. Jeffries’s actions indicate he has higher leadership ambitions in the House. He raised almost $9 million for Democrats this election cycle, clocking hours at about 150 events for candidates.

“There will be a time to focus on where we go as a party into the future, but in order to do that, we have to focus on being as successful as we can in the moment,” Mr. Jeffries said.

PHOTO: Representative Hakeem Jeffries, center, was an impeachment manager in the Senate trial of President Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 17, 2020

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[***Why the World Needs U.S. To Lead on Climate Issues***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62HD-DB61-DXY4-X2S2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 24, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1648 words

**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

By David Leonhardt

Good morning. If the U.S. leads on climate, will other countries follow?

Leadership matters

When I was last in China, in 2019, I met an entrepreneur named Gao Jifan, who told me a story that I've been reflecting on during President Biden's climate summit this week.

Back in the 1990s, Gao received a letter from an old friend who was living in the United States. The letter included a photo clipped from a newspaper, showing President Bill Clinton as he announced a plan to outfit one million homes with solar power.

''It was like a light bulb,'' Gao recalled, as we were sitting in his office in Changzhou, about 100 miles northwest of Shanghai. Clinton's initiative caused Gao -- a chemist by training -- to think that he should start a company to meet the coming demand for solar equipment. That company, Trina Solar, has since made Gao a billionaire.

For the inspiration, Gao is grateful to the U.S. But he is also befuddled by the American approach to climate change.

''There is really conflicting policy,'' he said. He rattled off the names of recent presidents -- Clinton, Bush, Obama, Trump -- and moved his hand back and forth, to describe the sharp policy changes from one to the next. Those changes, he added, had hurt the solar industry and other clean-energy efforts: If the U.S. took a more consistent approach, the global struggle to slow climate change would be easier.

A 'lost four years'

Many Americans have come to believe a different story -- namely, that U.S. climate policy hardly matters compared with the actions of China, India and other countries that account for a growing share of emissions. As some congressional Republicans have been asking this week, why should the U.S. act to slow climate change unless other countries do so first?

But that view is not consistent with history, either the recent history of climate diplomacy or the broader history of American influence.

''There aren't many other areas of policy where we say, 'Why don't we let everyone else lead, and we'll follow?''' as Nathaniel Keohane of the Environmental Defense Fund says. The U.S., for all its problems, remains the world's most powerful country. When it wants to influence the policies of other countries, it can often do so, especially when those countries see it as being in their own interests to change.

Climate is just such an issue. Leaders of many other countries understand that climate change and extreme weather can cause problems for them. The leaders also see clean energy as a growing industry and want their companies to be leaders.

The U.S. can't simply dictate terms. Both China and India, for example, will remain more reliant on coal than Biden administration officials wish. But the U.S. can often have an effect. Relative to many other issues, in fact, climate diplomacy is sometimes easier: President Xi Jinping has largely rejected U.S. entreaties on Hong Kong, Xinjiang and the South China Sea, but he has been willing to deal on climate change.

President Barack Obama and Xi came to multiple agreements that involved both countries moving to reduce emissions. They started small, with the relatively narrow topic of refrigerants, and expanded from there. As my colleague Brad Plumer says, ''There's a reasonable argument the Obama administration's and China's joint agreement on climate change in 2014 helped set the table for the Paris climate agreement.''

Crucial to these efforts was a U.S. willingness to act at home: It's much easier to agree to take economic risks when your main global competitor is doing the same. And the U.S. still leads the world in per-person emissions, about 75 percent above China, according to recent numbers.

The Trump administration slowed global efforts on climate change by dismissing it as a threat and allowing more pollution at home. A Chinese official last week mocked the U.S. for ''the lost four years.'' The Biden administration is now trying to reverse course, with an emissions-reduction goal that's larger than many advocates expected.

The cynical view -- that the U.S. can only follow, not lead, on climate policy -- has it backward. As Gao told me, one of the biggest obstacles to progress on climate change has been the lack of consistent American leadership.

More on the climate:

â–  Biden, addressing world leaders at the start of the summit, said the planet was at ''a moment of peril, but also a moment of extraordinary possibilities.''

â–  How a ***working-class*** girl from the Boston area became Biden's senior climate adviser: a profile of Gina McCarthy.

â–  ''Rising temperatures are likely to reduce global wealth significantly by 2050, as crop yields fall, disease spreads and rising seas consume coastal cities,'' Christopher Flavelle writes.

â–  And here's an illustrated guide to climate change for children, by Julia Rosen and Yuliya Parshina-Kottas.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

â–  U.S. officials are leaning toward resuming use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine after finding few new cases of rare blood clots.

â–  The Pfizer and Moderna shots appear to work against the variants found in New York, Britain and South Africa.

â–  Women in the U.S. are getting vaccinated at a higher rate than men.

â–  Covid patients who weren't hospitalized had an increased risk of death months later, a study found.

â–  Virus resources: Track cases in every state, with these maps.

Politics

â–  The Senate passed a bill to help law enforcement agencies review hate crimes against Asian-Americans.

â–  Biden wants to raise taxes on the rich and on capital gains to expand child care and education.

â–  Republican senators outlined an infrastructure plan about one-quarter the size of Biden's. It's a starting point for negotiations.

â–  The House voted along party lines to grant statehood to Washington, D.C., a Democratic priority that faces obstacles in the Senate.

Policing

â–  The shooting of Ma'Khia Bryant, 16, this week was the fourth police killing in Columbus, Ohio, in four months.

â–  Democratic candidates for New York City mayor have called for reforming the N.Y.P.D. Here are their plans.

Other Big Stories

â–  Russia ordered some of its troops back from the border with Ukraine, easing fears that a war could be looming in Europe.

â–  A man who detonated a pipe bomb in a subway tunnel near Times Square in 2017 was sentenced to life in prison.

â–  SpaceX launched four astronauts to the International Space Station this morning. (This is what they'll eat in orbit.)

â–  A woman lost a $10,000 flute in 2012. She just got it back.

Opinions

â–  The pandemic shrank our social circles. That's OK, Kate Murphy writes.

â–  David Brooks, Michelle Goldberg and Paul Krugman have columns.

Morning Reads

Threats and secret meetings: How did a European soccer superleague fall apart?

Modern Love: Her mind could rationalize polyamory, but her heart rebelled.

Lives Lived: Gregory Edward Jacobs, known as Shock G, was the frontman of Digital Underground, a hip-hop group that had a string of hits in the early 1990s and introduced its audience to Tupac Shakur. Shock G died at 57.

ARTS AND IDEAS

It's Oscars time

After an awards season of largely virtual events, the Academy Awards are returning this Sunday, with a red carpet and an in-person ceremony. Here's what to watch for:

â–  More diversity. This year's Oscar nominations are the most diverse ever, with 70 women nominated across 23 categories, and nearly half of the acting nominations going to people of color.

â–  A historic Best Director? ChloÃ© Zhao -- the front-runner, who directed ''Nomadland'' -- would be the first woman of color to win, as well as the second woman ever. (The first was Kathryn Bigelow for ''The Hurt Locker'' in 2010.)

â–  A posthumous honor? Chadwick Boseman, who died last year, is up for Best Actor for ''Ma Rainey's Black Bottom.'' In a prediction roundup, The Times's Kyle Buchanan writes: ''It's hard to imagine voters won't seize their only opportunity to give one to Boseman for a flashy role that showcased the late actor's immense range.''

â–  A close race for Best Actress. Viola Davis (''Ma Rainey's Black Bottom''), Frances McDormand (''Nomadland'') and Carey Mulligan (''Promising Young Woman'') are top contenders.

Watch some of the nominated films using this streaming guide. And test your knowledge of Oscars trivia or fill out a 2021 ballot.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

These spicy won tons come close to what you'd find at Cantonese restaurants.

A Good Read

The British singer Marianne Faithfull has had several brushes with death in her 74 years. She opened up about her life and her coming album.

What to Watch

This month's streaming gems include ''Skate Kitchen,'' a coming-of-age story about female skateboarders, and the thriller ''The Wailing.''

Late Night

The hosts celebrated Earth Day.

Take the News Quiz

Take this week's News Quiz -- with new graphics! -- and compete with other Times readers.

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday's Spelling Bee was potbelly. Here is today's puzzle -- or you can play online.

Here's today's Mini Crossword, and a clue: Become clogged (five letters).

If you're in the mood to play more, find all our games here.

\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

P.S. The first U.S. ship passed through the Suez Canal 64 years ago tomorrow. The passage of the 9,000-ton vessel, named the President Jackson, ''created no stir,'' The Times reported.

You can see today's print front page here.

Today's episode of ''The Daily'' is about the Super League. On ''The Ezra Klein Show,'' Noam Chomsky discusses his worldview.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](mailto:themorning@nytimes.com)

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: A commuter train leaving a 'green station' in Shanghai. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX PLAVEVSKI/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

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[***Staff Picks From the Book Review***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:617V-5MF1-JBG3-63N7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 8, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 43

**Length:** 1319 words

**Body**

Books about America's history and national identity are nothing new, but they land with particular impact around Election Day. (Or should I call it Election Week? Election Month? Is it possible to read a book when you're dosed on Xanax?)

This week we recommend four works that get to the heart of the American experiment in all its fits and starts. There's ''Bland Fanatics,'' Pankaj Mishra's essay collection urging a re-evaluation of the country's role in the world. There's ''The Kidnapping Club,'' Jonathan Daniel Wells's history of a gang that sold New Yorkers into slavery in the decades before the Civil War. John O. Brennan's ''Undaunted'' recounts his career at the highest levels of the intelligence community. And from Laila Lalami, ''Conditional Citizens'' traces her path to American citizenship as an Arab Muslim immigrant, and asks what it means to ''belong'' to a country anyway. With notions of civic duty and democratic rule on everybody's minds right now, that might be an especially fitting book for the moment.

But maybe you get all the civic duty you can stand from the front page? In that case, we also bring you pure escapism in the form of Susanna Clarke's new fantasy novel, Xiaolu Guo's Brexit-themed romance and three delightful collections of literary essays by Namwali Serpell, Daniel Mendelsohn and Brian Dillon, who sings the praises of stylish prose in his book ''Suppose a Sentence.'' All those in favor, say ''aye.''

Gregory CowlesSenior Editor, BooksTwitter: @GregoryCowles

THE KIDNAPPING CLUB: Wall Street, Slavery, and Resistance on the Eve of the Civil War, by Jonathan Daniel Wells. (Bold Type Books, $30.) In 1833, Black children began to vanish from the streets of New York City. ''The Kidnapping Club'' describes the circle of slave catchers and police officers who terrorized New York's Black population in the three decades before the Civil War, snatching up children, as well as adults. ''Wells writes, one senses, not to memorialize the missing, but to reopen their cases -- to make a larger argument about recompense,'' our critic Parul Sehgal writes. ''This is history read with a sense of vertigo, suffused with the present: a rash of child abductions met with official complacency, stories about Black men and women attacked while sleeping in their homes and praying at church.''

PIRANESI, by Susanna Clarke. (Bloomsbury, $27.) Clarke's long-awaited second novel is a haunting study of confinement and solitude. Piranesi lives in a house of many halls, filled with statues and flooded periodically by tides; within his meticulous journal entries lies the mystery of his strange and beautiful world, and of the curious figures who inhabit it. ''That Clarke herself has wrestled for years with an elusive illness further illuminates the secluded world of 'Piranesi,' which so thoroughly captures the isolation of this moment,'' Amal El-Mohtar writes in her latest science fiction and fantasy column. ''But I don't want to risk reducing the plenitude of this novel to allegory: It is rich, wondrous, full of aching joy and sweet sorrow.''

BLAND FANATICS: Liberals, Race, and Empire, by Pankaj Mishra. (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, $27.) In a collection of essays written since 2008, Mishra challenges America's conception of itself and urges the country to rethink its place in the world. His goal is to shake up settled liberal assumptions and force a reckoning with capitalism and imperialism. ''There's enough truth in Mishra's alternative history for it to stand as a useful corrective to the Grand Narrative that still maintains a firm grip on the imagination of many in the West,'' Damon Linker writes in his review. ''As a goad to liberal self-criticism, Mishra is well worth reading.''

A LOVER'S DISCOURSE, by Xiaolu Guo. (Grove, $26.) A romance blossoms in London between a Chinese graduate student and an Australian-German landscape architect. Set against the backdrop of the Brexit debate, Guo's novel presents a vivid and mischievous survey of cultural difference and the perplexing questions that love demands. ''What propels the book forward is in part the sense of suspense that hangs over the nascent relationship: Has our heroine made an enormous mistake?'' our reviewer, Marcel Theroux, writes. ''But there's also something compelling about the breadth of the world the narrator inhabits. ... It's capacious enough to touch on moments of real darkness, while somehow managing to be mordant, funny and, ultimately, life-affirming.''

UNDAUNTED: My Fight Against America's Enemies, at Home and Abroad, by John O. Brennan. (Celadon, $30.) The former director of the Central Intelligence Agency recounts his career as America's spy chief while lashing into Donald Trump for disparaging the intelligence community. ''Brennan's memoir presents a rich portrait of his unusual life, which took him from a ***working-class*** New Jersey neighborhood to a position as a Middle East specialist who met with kings and presidents and witnessed the rise of Al Qaeda,'' Charlie Savage writes in his review. His ''reflections on his long and momentous career are a worthy addition to the available history of the post-9/11 era.''

CONDITIONAL CITIZENS: On Belonging in America, by Laila Lalami. (Pantheon, $25.95.) In her deeply felt first nonfiction book, Lalami recounts her disillusionment in the wake of becoming an American citizen 20 years ago. As an immigrant, an Arab and a Muslim, she argues, she understands what it's like ''for a country to embrace you with one arm and push you away with the other.'' Reviewing the book, Sonia Nazario writes that ''conditional citizens, in Lalami's account, are not allowed to dissent or question the choices of their government; if they do, they are viewed with suspicion, their allegiance to their new country questioned. ... Lalami shows how our nation's schizophrenia toward immigrants -- Immigrants built this great country! We are a nation of immigrants! Immigrants bring disease, crime and rob us of our jobs! -- can give conditional citizens whiplash as they are simultaneously regarded as America's best hope and its gravest threat.''

STRANGER FACES, by Namwali Serpell. (Transit, paper, $15.95.) Serpell, the author of an acclaimed novel, ''The Old Drift,'' is also an accomplished literary scholar, as she demonstrates in these ingenious essays on various unusual visages -- from the so-called Elephant Man to emojis -- all dismantling the notion of what she calls the ''Ideal Face.'' The book is ''wise, warm, witty and dizzyingly wide-ranging,'' Becca Rothfeld writes, considering it with two other essay collections. ''Her clear prose unknots a dense tangle of academic concepts along the way.''

THREE RINGS: A Tale of Exile, Narrative, and Fate, by Daniel Mendelsohn. (University of Virginia, $19.95.) Originally composed as a series of lectures, Mendelsohn's latest book is a thrillingly inventive meditation on literary digression (or ''ring composition''), incorporating sources from Homer to the Holocaust. ''Mendelsohn is a trained classicist,'' Becca Rothfeld points out in her review, ''and as he notes, one of the ancient Greek words for 'digression' doubles as the language's term for scholarly commentary. The critic is a digresser par excellence: His task is to wander away from a text in order to devise a richer route of return.''

SUPPOSE A SENTENCE, by Brian Dillon. (New York Review Books, paper, $17.95.) In each chapter of this elegant collection Dillon contemplates a sentence from a writer he admires: Thomas De Quincey, Elizabeth Hardwick, James Baldwin, even Shakespeare's transcription of Hamlet's deathbed moan. ''Dillon's affinities prove eclectic and unexpected,'' Becca Rothfeld writes in her review of three essay collections. ''He loves writers who craft sentences crooked with clauses. ... 'Suppose a Sentence' has many rewards, but its greatest gift is its exuberant style.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/05/books/review/9-new-books-we-recommend-this-week.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/05/books/review/9-new-books-we-recommend-this-week.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

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[***Black Empowerment Outside the Headlines***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:617W-GN41-DXY4-X2W7-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Erin Aubry Kaplan

**Highlight:** A quiet battle over retail space is a modern fight for the soul of Black Los Angeles.

**Body**

A quiet battle over retail space is a modern fight for the soul of Black Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES — Even as the post-George Floyd national focus on the grand battle against systemic racism and all things Black plateaus, ground battles for equity that have been fought for decades continue. One such fight here in Los Angeles is reaching a critical point.

This battle is over redevelopment of the Crenshaw district, one of the last predominantly Black areas of Los Angeles. Crenshaw comprises both ***working-class*** and historic middle-class neighborhoods that sit about halfway between downtown and the ocean. Redevelopment wars date to 1992, when many structures there and in neighboring South Central burned or were damaged during the unrest touched off by the acquittal of four police officers tried for the beating of Rodney G. King.

The structure in question now is the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, a 40-acre mall that has been the center of economic aspirations in Crenshaw since the original 1947 open-air shopping center modernized and reopened as an indoor mall in 1988. The mall was not damaged in ’92 but has more or less struggled since, buffeted by two recessions, the collapse and consolidation of big retail, and general political lethargy around redeveloping Crenshaw in any meaningful way.

It’s set to be [*sold*](https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2020-10-06/baldwin-hills-crenshaw-plaza-shopping-mall-to-be-sold-to-new-york-developers) to DFH Partners and to LIVWRK, New York-based major developers that claim they can help transform the mall into a 21st-century lifestyle and retail center. The interest in the project is no doubt inspired by recent gentrification, which as the Black population of Los Angeles dwindles, has brought white people back to the middle-class Crenshaw neighborhoods they fled some 50 years ago.

Twenty-five years ago, this kind of interest from a big player like LIVWRK would have been good news. But the purchase is facing fierce opposition from Downtown Crenshaw Rising, a community nonprofit that has a plan of its own to buy and redevelop the mall and to stabilize businesses. That plan aims to not just preserve Crenshaw’s economy, but the soul of Black Los Angeles itself.

Essentially the plan — which has the slightly pared-down name of Downtown Crenshaw — is about building and keeping Black wealth within the community. It calls for reinventing the mall as an “urban village” that would build on some things that already exist and include retail, park space, offices, affordable housing, a boutique hotel, a cultural center and production studios. For the project, Downtown Crenshaw Rising has enlisted outfits such as SmithGroup, an architectural firm that helped design the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, and MASS Design Group, a Boston-based firm that helped design the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Alabama.

The driving force behind all of it is Damien Goodmon, a board member of Downtown Crenshaw Rising and the founder of the Crenshaw Subway Coalition, a transportation and racial justice organization that in the last couple of years has turned its attention full time to beating back gentrification. Mr. Goodmon, 38 and a fifth-generation Angeleno, says the Downtown Crenshaw plan is the best way — the only way — to save what’s left of Black Los Angeles from the dead end of traditional top-down development that focuses on short-term profit, not long-term community growth.

“At the end of the day there’s a bucketload of money to be made by gentrification,” says Mr. Goodmon. “The challenge is making sure community isn’t being pushed out. This is not about us getting more sit-down restaurants, it’s about changing a whole system so that we can ensure our future. And it’s all coming to a head.”

Crenshaw Rising submitted its $100 million bid for the mall, complete with proposed financing, in late August. According to Mr. Goodmon, DWS, the asset management firm of Deutsche Bank that has managed the mall since last year, rejected the bid, despite Downtown Crenshaw Rising’s additional offer to pay five percent above the “most credible offer.”

What particularly rankles Mr. Goodmon is that the mall’s fate lies in the hands of a bank known for helping to finance Donald Trump’s businesses. To add insult to injury, LIVWRK itself has a history of partnering with Mr. Trump’s developer son-in-law, Jared Kushner, on its projects in Brooklyn and New York (LIVWRK insists it no longer has ties with Mr. Kushner.) To have this attempt at neighborhood-driven redevelopment thwarted by institutions with ties to an administration that has come to stand in the minds of many Black folks for both racial oppression and capitalist overreach feels particularly painful.

Despite the heated opposition, the sale to LIVWRK is expected to be finalized by the end of the year. Downtown Crenshaw Rising and its advocates are undeterred. Their strategy now is to bypass DWS and appeal directly to the investors who actually own the mall. Recently, the group’s plan was endorsed by several Black elected officials, including the powerful former Los Angeles City Council president, Herb Wesson — a sign that the political reticence around the matter is breaking.

The community’s taking on a complicated development project like this is new and frankly, exciting. As a reporter for The Los Angeles Times in the aftermath of the unrest in 1992, I went to countless community meetings about rebuilding, and what I mostly heard was a clamor for retail justice — getting the same shopping and service amenities in Crenshaw that are taken for granted in whiter, more affluent neighborhoods west of it. Convincing retail chains like Nordstrom, Trader Joe’s and Victoria’s Secret that they could successfully locate in a “urban” neighborhood like Crenshaw was a civil rights fight refashioned for an age of respectability. Unrest was best countered by the stabilizing presence of quality stores and goods that said to the world that a Black place like Crenshaw was normal. We didn’t need to build anything so much as just recruit it.

We’ve moved very far past this modest vision. Unrest, once widely criticized as a hindrance to change, now seems fundamental to it. Black people aspiring to normal or status quo feels out of the question. The ideal Black living space is no longer defined by the presence or absence of big companies and brand-name chains, if it ever was. The new livable space is one forged by self-determination and self-preservation in which the community has a real say and a stake — not merely an advisory role — in what gets built, and for whom. The ideal is major economic development that is also Black empowerment, two things that have been at odds in the real world for a long time.

Mr. Goodmon says he is betting that the momentum around antiracism — and more important, around pro-blackness — will help Downtown Crenshaw Rising prevail, and to establish in Crenshaw a new normal of agency and prosperity. That’s exactly what Black people here have wanted for the last 30 years. We just didn’t know what it looked like.

Erin Aubry Kaplan is a contributing opinion writer.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2020-10-06/baldwin-hills-crenshaw-plaza-shopping-mall-to-be-sold-to-new-york-developers) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2020-10-06/baldwin-hills-crenshaw-plaza-shopping-mall-to-be-sold-to-new-york-developers). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2020-10-06/baldwin-hills-crenshaw-plaza-shopping-mall-to-be-sold-to-new-york-developers).

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PHOTO: Members of Downtown Crenshaw Rising, a community nonprofit whose goal is to build and keep Black wealth within the community. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tara Pixley for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***You Know the Saying: You Are the Product; Kara Swisher***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642B-S6J1-JBG3-61SW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

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**Byline:** Kara Swisher

**Highlight:** This is a good time to think more broadly about Big Tech’s business models.

**Body**

When is free not free?

I’ve been thinking a lot about that, as Twitter this week finally offered its “Blue” subscription to customers in the United States and New Zealand, after testing it in Canada and Australia. Twitter put some real effort into providing news-loving users like me a reason to fork over $3 a month for a service that’s otherwise, well, free (sort of). That includes ad-free articles from media outlets like The Washington Post, BuzzFeed and Rolling Stone, and a feed of the most popular news items in your network over the past day — ensuring you won’t look clueless at tonight’s cocktail party.

There’s also an “undo” feature for preventing oopsie moments by allowing a tweet to be recalled within 30 seconds of sending it. And, I assume, more to come (including inevitable price hikes). Amazon Prime was pretty bare-bones when it debuted for $79 a year in 2005, but it now has some 200 million subscribers worldwide getting speedy shipping, streaming video and other goodies. YouTube’s seven-year-old Premium service, which cuts out ads, has tens of millions of users. Twitter is late to the party, but I am glad to see it getting serious about providing services its most dedicated users might want so much that they’ll pay for them.

With Twitter dipping its toes into paid subscriptions, it’s a good time to think more broadly about tech’s business models, which offer free services by shoveling gobs of data in the direction of marketers to underwrite them. It’s also a good time to think over how to responsibly regulate these mega-corporations.

In recent interviews I’ve had with a diverse set of thinkers such as Aswath Damodaran, professor of finance at New York University; the futurist and computer scientist Jaron Lanier; lawmakers like Senator Amy Klobuchar; and others who know a thing or two about the digital sector, every single one zeroed in on what they said is the main problem with Big Tech: business models that hoover up personal data.

Of course, this is nothing new. Privacy concerns are why lawmakers around the world have in recent years been pushing back against the Googles and Facebooks that are incentivized to collect as much rich digital information as possible from their users. With the explosive growth of online advertising, we’ve been sliced and diced and labeled to help ensure we see only ads and content that we are sure to find “relevant.”

This has left companies like Facebook, er, Meta (ugh, I told you this was going to be hard) with what Damodaran correctly calls an “odious” reputation, because their sales growth ranks higher than any focus on consumer — and societal — protections. Lanier, for his part, calls it a “manipulative business model,” and Klobuchar has noted that we end up paying for anything free somewhere along the line. I applaud the shift in focus on how to build a business model and an economy that encourage better outcomes.

Still, the common excuse from tech leaders — particularly at Google and Meta — is that the “free” internet requires them to sponge up as much about us as possible. But I have long held that it only makes all of us cheap dates to these companies. Sure, we get digital maps or email, but like a craps table in Las Vegas, the house inevitably wins.

I have to hope Twitter’s Blue is a step toward a model that is less reliant on surveilling users. Aligning customer and business incentives ought to be viewed as a good thing, even if so much of the internet has grown up gobbling up data. Of course we have to be careful not to build premium services on the backs of customers who cannot really afford to pay for digital services — any paywall is, well, a wall.

They say there is no such thing as a free lunch; well, that’s never been more true than on today’s internet. But without any real regulatory oversight, why wouldn’t these fabulously profitable companies keep doing what they’re doing?

And while we’re dreaming of a better way … Jack Dorsey: For the love of late-night Twitter indiscretions, I will pay anything for editable tweets.

5 Questions

This week I connected with my colleague Farah Stockman, a member of the Times editorial board, to talk about labor and her recently published book, [*“American Made: What Happens to People When Work Disappears.”*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/591675/american-made-by-farah-stockman/) We’ve edited her answers.

In “American Made” you trace the stories of three workers at a bearing factory in Indiana and how they coped with their jobs moving to Mexico. Why pick this example of the changing work force, and what does it represent?

I picked that factory because it felt like a microcosm of American politics at the time. The factory announced that it was moving to Monterrey, Mexico, in the fall of 2016, just before Donald Trump’s election. A few weeks later, Mexican workers were brought to the Indianapolis plant for training, stoking a wide range of reactions: anger, despair and hope for Trump to swoop in and save the factory. The story of Rexnord, a bearing company, opened my eyes to the role that globalization has played in sowing ***working-class*** distrust of the elite. Blue-collar Americans — once a pillar of the Democratic Party — flocked to cast ballots for a Republican who had promised at rally after rally that he’d save their jobs. It’s not enough to recognize that the work force is changing. We have to recognize who benefits from those changes and who loses out. We have to understand who is being blamed. It’s one thing to lose your job to technological advances — people can understand that. Losing your job because of a free-trade agreement with a low-wage country that was crafted by elected officials in Washington who are supposed to look after your interests is another thing entirely.

Gig workers are another group whose numbers have swelled in recent years with the advancement of the digital economy imposed on the physical one. Can you compare and contrast those changing work forces?

Look up “gig worker” in the dictionary and it is pretty much the polar opposite of everything that unions fought for in the golden age of American manufacturing.

I’m reminded of a story of what it was like to be a steelworker before unions. You had to hang out outside the factory walls, begging the foreman for a chance to work that day. If the foreman didn’t like the looks of you, or bore some other grudge, you didn’t get to work that day, and your children starved. It is because of the labor movement that jobs became predictable in terms of pay and hours. Paid time off, profit-sharing, pensions and health insurance — once luxuries that were only given to management — filtered down to blue-collar factory workers because of strikes.

Today, gig workers seem a little bit like the steelworkers in the old days, looking for a job for the day. They have freedom, but not the predictability and protection that comes from being employed. Rexnord was a place that helped its workers access treatment for alcoholism and drug addiction. It paid for you to go back to school if you wanted a degree. If you got into an accident or had a kid in the hospital, co-workers would pass a hat and collect money for you. For Shannon, a female steelworker I followed for the book, the factory was an anchor in an otherwise chaotic life. She knew exactly what time she had to be at work each day and exactly what to do once she got there. After the factory closed, she had a hard time figuring out what to do with her time. She called up an old mentor from the plant and asked him, “Will you be my boss?” Some people are just not cut out for “gig” work, which strikes me as much more solitary and devoid of the structure, guidance, training and long-term commitments that many people need to thrive.

Due to the pandemic, the work force has changed dramatically again with labor in the leverage seat and companies struggling to staff up. Some people call it the Great Resignation and others the Great Reassessment. How do you see it?

I think there are several things going on all at once. Some people worked harder than ever during Covid, at great personal risk. Nurses, cashiers, bus drivers, care givers for the elderly. I expect those people are burned out and ready to quit just so they can have a rest. Other people in the “knowledge economy” continued their jobs from home. Many of them kept getting their paychecks but reduced their expenses to such an extent that they have money in the bank and time to think about what it is they really want to do with their life and whether they really wanted to spend two hours a day going to and from work.

The habit of going to work has been broken. A lot of blue-collar Americans, like Shannon, worked jobs that couldn’t be done from home. Many got laid off when the economy slowed down. Shannon made more money from unemployment checks during Covid than she had earned working. Many people who had been living hand-to-mouth now have money in the bank that they didn’t have before. According to JPMorgan Chase Institute, the median household’s checking account balance was [*50 percent higher*](https://www.jpmorganchase.com/institute/research/household-income-spending/household-finances-pulse-cash-balances-during-COVID-19) in July of 2021 than in 2019. That means that people actually didn’t have too much financial pressure on them to return to work, even in states that cut off the Covid support. I expect that those people will spend down their savings and eventually return to work.

What are some key trends going on in the workplace that we need to pay attention to that may impact the future work force?

We are entering an era of continuous learning. It’s not enough to have a college degree from a decade ago. People are going to have to continuously master new skills to remain viable in the workplace. I expect to see more people rely on short technical certification classes than on formal college degrees. A younger friend who grew up in public housing chose to focus on obtaining Microsoft certifications rather than attending college, and she’s done well for herself as an office manager and now an entrepreneur. And she has zero regrets about not having a four-year degree. Elite colleges are still going to be a thing, since they are a built-in social network. But many workers and companies are going to continue to find alternatives to traditional college.

What will recent infrastructure commitments and other regulations do to the work economy?

I expect the infrastructure bill recently passed by Congress to produce a lot of good-paying blue-collar jobs, not just in the construction of roads and bridges but also in laying broadband. Bringing broadband to certain parts of the country could be as big a deal as when the New Deal brought electricity to rural America in the 1930s. If people in the “knowledge economy” can do their jobs from places like Morgantown, W.Va.— which is full of mountain-biking trails and beautiful rivers — they might move there instead of paying a gazillion dollars for a house in Oakland, Calif., with no backyard. If well-off employees in the digital economy spread more evenly across the country, then the benefits of that part of the economy could be reaped by blue-collar workers — construction crews, restaurant staff, auto mechanics, maids and babysitters — in the Rust Belt and beyond. That could help cure our political polarization, with is tied to our [*economic and geographic separation*](https://www.wsj.com/graphics/red-economy-blue-economy/).

Tim Cook takes a bite at the crypto Apple

Apple’s chief executive, Tim Cook, outed himself as a crypto dude in an interview with The Times’s Andrew Ross Sorkin at the [*DealBook Online Summit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/business/dealbook/tim-cook-cryptocurrency-apple.html?searchResultPosition=1) this week.

“I think it’s reasonable to own it as part of a diversified portfolio,” he said, quickly clarifying that it’s his own money and that Apple would not be delving into the Bitcoin anytime soon — even though that cryptocurrency [*hit all-time highs*](https://www.reuters.com/technology/bitcoin-hits-new-record-crypto-market-cap-exceeds-3-tln-2021-11-08/) this week. “I don’t think people buy Apple stock to get exposure to crypto.”

Indeed not, but Apple will have to lean into other payment systems. Federal Judge Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers [*ruled against Apple in its motion for a stay*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/technology/apple-epic-games-suit.html) in the continuing case pitting the company against Fortnite-maker Epic Games over Apple’s prohibitions on alternative payment options in the App Store. Apple has argued that external payment links could lead to scams and compromise safety for App Store users. But Rogers wasn’t having any of that. “Apple’s motion is based on a selective reading of this court’s findings and ignores all of the findings which supported the injunction,” she wrote. “Apple has provided no credible reason for the court to believe that the injunction would cause the professed devastation.”

In other words, time to payment up, Apple.

There’s over the top and then there’s this …

Old-money San Francisco finally outdid the newbies of tech with a wedding so over the top that it practically begged to become satire. The luxurious three-day nuptials of Ivy Getty, as in oil money Getty, featured a mod dance party at the Palace of Fine Arts and wrapped up at City Hall, tricked out in wall-to-wall carpeting, with Nancy Pelosi as officiant. Also on the guest list: Gov. Gavin Newsom of California, Mayor London Breed of San Francisco, “Queen’s Gambit” star Anya Taylor-Joy and Olivia Rodrigo, with Earth, Wind &amp; Fire performing.

The event was [*chronicled by Vogue*](https://www.vogue.com/slideshow/inside-ivy-getty-wedding-weekend-in-san-francisco) with exquisite photos and so, so many epic lines.

Like: “The wedding day started with a pajama party. ‘We have the whole mezzanine level,’ Getty explains. ‘There’s a styling room with all of the extra clothes, and there’s two hotel rooms that they removed all of the hotel furniture from and then there are these individual Margiela boxes with all of the bridesmaids’ names engraved on them.’’’

And from the designer John Galliano: “You can’t imagine getting these girls all together at Claridge’s at 4 a.m. in the morning, walking around in peignoirs for 48 hours to do their fittings. They were so lovely and such fun. Some of the dresses have taken on a more bias-cut influence, and some have taken on a double-layering technique played out in pale, thunderous grays and lilacs, with lamés woven to echo those colors.”

I can imagine, John.

To be clear, I am not trying to shame the rich here — though many on Twitter have with great enthusiasm this week (my fave: “[*Yo Ivy: Read the room*](https://twitter.com/dlowther715/status/1458094300223377408)”) — especially since the richer tech folks have had just as many insane parties that have not been covered. I only encourage you to read the piece because, well, just because.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*swisher-newsletter@nytimes.com.*](mailto:swisher-newsletter@nytimes.com)

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by The New York Times; photographs by thomas-bethge and Mensent Photography, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***China and the Climate; The Morning Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62H6-VKT1-DXY4-X227-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1619 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** If the U.S. leads on climate, will other countries follow?

**Body**

If the U.S. leads on climate, will other countries follow?

When I was last [*in China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), in 2019, I met an entrepreneur named Gao Jifan, who told me a story that I’ve been reflecting on during President Biden’s climate summit this week.

Back in the 1990s, Gao received a letter from an old friend who was living in the United States. The letter included a photo clipped from a newspaper, showing President Bill Clinton as he [*announced*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) a plan to outfit one million homes with solar power.

“It was like a light bulb,” Gao recalled, as we were sitting in his office in Changzhou, about 100 miles northwest of Shanghai. Clinton’s initiative caused Gao — a chemist by training — to think that he should start a company to meet the coming demand for solar equipment. That company, [*Trina Solar*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), has since made Gao a billionaire.

For the inspiration, Gao is grateful to the U.S. But he is also befuddled by the American approach to climate change.

“There is really conflicting policy,” he said. He rattled off the names of recent presidents — Clinton, Bush, Obama, Trump — and moved his hand back and forth, to describe [*the sharp policy changes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) from one to the next. Those changes, he added, had hurt the solar industry and other clean-energy efforts: If the U.S. took a more consistent approach, the global struggle to slow climate change would be easier.

A ‘lost four years’

Many Americans have come to believe a different story — namely, that U.S. climate policy hardly matters compared with the actions of China, India and other countries that account for a growing share of emissions. As some congressional Republicans have been asking this week, why should the U.S. act to slow climate change unless other countries do so first?

But that view is not consistent with history, either the recent history of climate diplomacy or the broader history of [*American influence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

“There aren’t many other areas of policy where we say, ‘Why don’t we let everyone else lead, and we’ll follow?’” as Nathaniel Keohane of the Environmental Defense Fund says. The U.S., for all its problems, remains the world’s most powerful country. When it wants to influence the policies of other countries, it can often do so, especially when those countries see it as being in their own interests to change.

Climate is just such an issue. Leaders of many other countries understand that climate change and extreme weather can cause problems for them. The leaders also see clean energy as a growing industry and want their companies to be leaders.

The U.S. can’t simply dictate terms. Both China and India, for example, will remain [*more reliant on coal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) than Biden administration officials wish. But the U.S. can often have an effect. Relative to many other issues, in fact, climate diplomacy is sometimes easier: President Xi Jinping has largely rejected U.S. entreaties on Hong Kong, Xinjiang and the South China Sea, but he has been [*willing to deal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) on climate change.

President Barack Obama and Xi came to multiple agreements that involved both countries moving to reduce emissions. They started small, with the relatively narrow topic of refrigerants, and [*expanded from there*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html). As my colleague Brad Plumer says, “There’s a reasonable argument the Obama administration’s and China’s joint agreement on climate change in 2014 helped set the table for the Paris climate agreement.”

Crucial to these efforts was a U.S. willingness to act at home: It’s much easier to agree to take economic risks when your main global competitor is doing the same. And the U.S. still [*leads the world in per-person emissions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), about 75 percent above China, according to recent numbers.

The Trump administration slowed global efforts on climate change by dismissing it as a threat and allowing more pollution at home. A Chinese official last week mocked the U.S. for “the lost four years.” The Biden administration is now trying to reverse course, with an emissions-reduction goal [*that’s larger than many advocates expected*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

The cynical view — that the U.S. can only follow, not lead, on climate policy — has it backward. As Gao told me, one of the biggest obstacles to progress on climate change has been the lack of consistent American leadership.

More on the climate:

* Biden, addressing world leaders at the [*start of the summit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), said the planet was at “a moment of peril, but also a moment of extraordinary possibilities.”

1. How a ***working-class*** girl from the Boston area became Biden’s senior climate adviser: [*a profile of Gina McCarthy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).
2. “Rising temperatures are likely to reduce global wealth significantly by 2050, as crop yields fall, disease spreads and rising seas consume coastal cities,” [*Christopher Flavelle writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).
3. And here’s [*an illustrated guide to climate change for children*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), by Julia Rosen and Yuliya Parshina-Kottas.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* U.S. officials are [*leaning toward resuming*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) use of the Johnson &amp; Johnson vaccine after finding few new cases of rare blood clots.

1. The Pfizer and Moderna shots [*appear to work against the variants*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) found in New York, Britain and South Africa.
2. Women in the U.S. are getting vaccinated [*at a higher rate than men*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).
3. Covid patients who weren’t hospitalized had [*an increased risk of death*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) months later, a study found.
4. Virus resources: [*Track cases in every state, with these maps*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

Politics

* The Senate passed a bill to help law enforcement agencies [*review hate crimes against Asian-Americans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

1. Biden wants to [*raise taxes on the rich and on capital gains*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) to expand child care and education.
2. Republican senators outlined an infrastructure plan about one-quarter the size of Biden’s. It’s a [*starting point for negotiations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).
3. The House voted along party lines to [*grant statehood to Washington, D.C.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), a Democratic priority that faces obstacles in the Senate.

Policing

* The shooting of Ma’Khia Bryant, 16, this week [*was the fourth police killing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) in Columbus, Ohio, in four months.

1. Democratic candidates for New York City mayor have called for reforming the N.Y.P.D. [*Here are their plans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

Other Big Stories

* Russia [*ordered some of its troops back*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) from the border with Ukraine, easing fears that a war could be looming in Europe.

1. A man who detonated a pipe bomb in a subway tunnel near Times Square in 2017 was [*sentenced to life in prison*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).
2. SpaceX [*launched four astronauts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) to the International Space Station this morning. ([*This is what they’ll eat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) in orbit.)
3. A woman lost a $10,000 flute in 2012. [*She just got it back*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

Opinions

* The pandemic shrank our social circles. [*That’s OK*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), Kate Murphy writes.

1. [*David Brooks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), [*Michelle Goldberg*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) and [*Paul Krugman*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) have columns.

Morning Reads

Threats and secret meetings: How did a European [*soccer superleague fall apart*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html)

Modern Love: Her mind could rationalize polyamory, [*but her heart rebelled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

Lives Lived: Gregory Edward Jacobs, known as Shock G, was the frontman of Digital Underground, a hip-hop group that had a string of hits in the early 1990s and introduced its audience to Tupac Shakur. [*Shock G died at 57*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

It’s Oscars time

After an awards season of largely virtual events, the Academy Awards are returning this Sunday, [*with a red carpet*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) and an in-person ceremony. Here’s what to watch for:

* More diversity. This [*year’s Oscar nominations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) are the most diverse ever, with 70 women nominated across 23 categories, and nearly half of the acting nominations going to people of color.

1. A historic Best Director? Chloé Zhao — the front-runner, who directed “Nomadland” — would be the first woman of color to win, as well as the second woman ever. (The first was Kathryn Bigelow for “The Hurt Locker” in 2010.)
2. A posthumous honor? Chadwick Boseman, who died last year, is up for Best Actor for “Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom.” In [*a prediction roundup*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), The Times’s Kyle Buchanan writes: “It’s hard to imagine voters won’t seize their only opportunity to give one to Boseman for a flashy role that showcased the late actor’s immense range.”
3. A close race for Best Actress. Viola Davis (“Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom”), Frances McDormand (“Nomadland”) and Carey Mulligan (“Promising Young Woman”) are top contenders.

Watch some of the nominated films using [*this streaming guide*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html). And [*test your knowledge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) of Oscars trivia or [*fill out a 2021 ballot*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

These [*spicy won tons*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) come close to what you’d find at Cantonese restaurants.

A Good Read

The British singer Marianne Faithfull has had several brushes with death in her 74 years. She [*opened up about her life*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) and her coming album.

What to Watch

[*This month’s streaming gems include*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) “Skate Kitchen,” a coming-of-age story about female skateboarders, and the thriller “The Wailing.”

Late Night

The hosts [*celebrated Earth Day*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

Take the News Quiz

[*Take this week’s News Quiz*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html) — with new graphics! — and compete with other Times readers.

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was potbelly. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html), and a clue: Become clogged (five letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you Monday. — David

P.S. The first U.S. ship passed through the Suez Canal 64 years ago tomorrow. The passage of the 9,000-ton vessel, named the President Jackson, “created no stir,” [*The Times reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html)” is about the Super League. On “[*The Ezra Klein Show*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html),” Noam Chomsky discusses his worldview.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/opinion/sunday/china-economy-trade.html).

PHOTO: World leaders participating in President Biden’s virtual climate summit yesterday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Al Drago for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 23, 2021

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[***9 New Books We Recommend This Week***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6177-5KR1-JBG3-62V1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 5, 2020 Thursday 21:31 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1305 words

**Highlight:** Suggested reading from critics and editors at The New York Times.

**Body**

Books about America’s history and national identity are nothing new, but they land with particular impact around Election Day. (Or should I call it Election Week? Election Month? Is it possible to read a book when you’re dosed on Xanax?)

This week we recommend four works that get to the heart of the American experiment in all its fits and starts. There’s “Bland Fanatics,” Pankaj Mishra’s essay collection urging a re-evaluation of the country’s role in the world. There’s “The Kidnapping Club,” Jonathan Daniel Wells’s history of a gang that sold New Yorkers into slavery in the decades before the Civil War. John O. Brennan’s “Undaunted” recounts his career at the highest levels of the intelligence community. And from Laila Lalami, “Conditional Citizens” traces her path to American citizenship as an Arab Muslim immigrant, and asks what it means to “belong” to a country anyway. With notions of civic duty and democratic rule on everybody’s minds right now, that might be an especially fitting book for the moment.

But maybe you get all the civic duty you can stand from the front page? In that case, we also bring you pure escapism in the form of Susanna Clarke’s new fantasy novel, Xiaolu Guo’s Brexit-themed romance and three delightful collections of literary essays by Namwali Serpell, Daniel Mendelsohn and Brian Dillon, who sings the praises of stylish prose in his book “Suppose a Sentence.” All those in favor, say “aye.”

Gregory Cowles

Senior Editor, Books

Twitter: @GregoryCowles

[*THE KIDNAPPING CLUB: Wall Street, Slavery, and Resistance on the Eve of the Civil War*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/books/review-kidnapping-club-jonathan-daniel-wells.html), by Jonathan Daniel Wells. (Bold Type Books, $30.) In 1833, Black children began to vanish from the streets of New York City. “The Kidnapping Club” describes the circle of slave catchers and police officers who terrorized New York’s Black population in the three decades before the Civil War, snatching up children, as well as adults. “Wells writes, one senses, not to memorialize the missing, but to reopen their cases — to make a larger argument about recompense,” our critic Parul Sehgal writes. “This is history read with a sense of vertigo, suffused with the present: a rash of child abductions met with official complacency, stories about Black men and women attacked while sleeping in their homes and praying at church.”

[*PIRANESI*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/books/review-kidnapping-club-jonathan-daniel-wells.html), by Susanna Clarke. (Bloomsbury, $27.) Clarke’s long-awaited second novel is a haunting study of confinement and solitude. Piranesi lives in a house of many halls, filled with statues and flooded periodically by tides; within his meticulous journal entries lies the mystery of his strange and beautiful world, and of the curious figures who inhabit it. “That Clarke herself has wrestled for years with an elusive illness further illuminates the secluded world of ‘Piranesi,’ which so thoroughly captures the isolation of this moment,” Amal El-Mohtar writes in her latest science fiction and fantasy column. “But I don’t want to risk reducing the plenitude of this novel to allegory: It is rich, wondrous, full of aching joy and sweet sorrow.”

[*BLAND FANATICS: Liberals, Race, and Empire*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/books/review-kidnapping-club-jonathan-daniel-wells.html), by Pankaj Mishra. (Farrar, Straus &amp; Giroux, $27.) In a collection of essays written since 2008, Mishra challenges America’s conception of itself and urges the country to rethink its place in the world. His goal is to shake up settled liberal assumptions and force a reckoning with capitalism and imperialism. “There’s enough truth in Mishra’s alternative history for it to stand as a useful corrective to the Grand Narrative that still maintains a firm grip on the imagination of many in the West,” Damon Linker writes in his review. “As a goad to liberal self-criticism, Mishra is well worth reading.”

[*A LOVER’S DISCOURSE*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/books/review-kidnapping-club-jonathan-daniel-wells.html), by Xiaolu Guo. (Grove, $26.) A romance blossoms in London between a Chinese graduate student and an Australian-German landscape architect. Set against the backdrop of the Brexit debate, Guo’s novel presents a vivid and mischievous survey of cultural difference and the perplexing questions that love demands. “What propels the book forward is in part the sense of suspense that hangs over the nascent relationship: Has our heroine made an enormous mistake?” our reviewer, Marcel Theroux, writes. “But there’s also something compelling about the breadth of the world the narrator inhabits. … It’s capacious enough to touch on moments of real darkness, while somehow managing to be mordant, funny and, ultimately, life-affirming.”

[*UNDAUNTED: My Fight Against America’s Enemies, at Home and Abroad*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/books/review-kidnapping-club-jonathan-daniel-wells.html), by John O. Brennan. (Celadon, $30.) The former director of the Central Intelligence Agency recounts his career as America’s spy chief while lashing into Donald Trump for disparaging the intelligence community. “Brennan’s memoir presents a rich portrait of his unusual life, which took him from a ***working-class*** New Jersey neighborhood to a position as a Middle East specialist who met with kings and presidents and witnessed the rise of Al Qaeda,” Charlie Savage writes in his review. His “reflections on his long and momentous career are a worthy addition to the available history of the post-9/11 era.”

[*CONDITIONAL CITIZENS: On Belonging in America*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/books/review-kidnapping-club-jonathan-daniel-wells.html), by Laila Lalami. (Pantheon, $25.95.) In her deeply felt first nonfiction book, Lalami recounts her disillusionment in the wake of becoming an American citizen 20 years ago. As an immigrant, an Arab and a Muslim, she argues, she understands what it’s like “for a country to embrace you with one arm and push you away with the other.” Reviewing the book, Sonia Nazario writes that “conditional citizens, in Lalami’s account, are not allowed to dissent or question the choices of their government; if they do, they are viewed with suspicion, their allegiance to their new country questioned. … Lalami shows how our nation’s schizophrenia toward immigrants — Immigrants built this great country! We are a nation of immigrants! Immigrants bring disease, crime and rob us of our jobs! — can give conditional citizens whiplash as they are simultaneously regarded as America’s best hope and its gravest threat.”

[*STRANGER FACES*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/books/review-kidnapping-club-jonathan-daniel-wells.html), by Namwali Serpell. (Transit, paper, $15.95.) Serpell, the author of an acclaimed novel, “The Old Drift,” is also an accomplished literary scholar, as she demonstrates in these ingenious essays on various unusual visages — from the so-called Elephant Man to emojis — all dismantling the notion of what she calls the “Ideal Face.” The book is “wise, warm, witty and dizzyingly wide-ranging,” Becca Rothfeld writes, considering it with two other essay collections. “Her clear prose unknots a dense tangle of academic concepts along the way.”

[*THREE RINGS: A Tale of Exile, Narrative, and Fate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/books/review-kidnapping-club-jonathan-daniel-wells.html), by Daniel Mendelsohn. (University of Virginia, $19.95.) Originally composed as a series of lectures, Mendelsohn’s latest book is a thrillingly inventive meditation on literary digression (or “ring composition”), incorporating sources from Homer to the Holocaust. “Mendelsohn is a trained classicist,” Becca Rothfeld points out in her review, “and as he notes, one of the ancient Greek words for ‘digression’ doubles as the language’s term for scholarly commentary. The critic is a digresser par excellence: His task is to wander away from a text in order to devise a richer route of return.”

[*SUPPOSE A SENTENCE*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/books/review-kidnapping-club-jonathan-daniel-wells.html), by Brian Dillon. (New York Review Books, paper, $17.95.) In each chapter of this elegant collection Dillon contemplates a sentence from a writer he admires: Thomas De Quincey, Elizabeth Hardwick, James Baldwin, even Shakespeare’s transcription of Hamlet’s deathbed moan. “Dillon’s affinities prove eclectic and unexpected,” Becca Rothfeld writes in her review of three essay collections. “He loves writers who craft sentences crooked with clauses. … ‘Suppose a Sentence’ has many rewards, but its greatest gift is its exuberant style.”

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** November 6, 2020

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[***Kansas Democrat, 19, Who Admitted to Revenge Porn, Ekes Out Primary Win***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60MK-TKH1-DXY4-X2X3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 19, 2020 Wednesday 07:47 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1143 words

**Byline:** Maria Cramer Maria Cramer is a Times reporter covering the New York Police Department and crime in the city and surrounding areas.

**Highlight:** Aaron Coleman defeated a seven-term incumbent for a state House seat by 14 votes, alarming Democrats who worry he will hurt other candidates in the general election.

**Body**

Aaron Coleman defeated a seven-term incumbent for a state House seat by 14 votes, alarming Democrats who worry he will hurt other candidates in the general election.

* [*Update: Aaron Coleman reversed his decision to withdraw from the race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html).

Aaron Coleman [*admitted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html) that he harassed girls online when he was in middle school. He called one sixth-grade girl fat and told her she should kill herself.

Seven years ago, he told another girl, who was 13 at the time, that he would circulate a naked photo of her if she didn’t send him more nude images. When she refused, she said, he followed through on his threat.

“They’re accurate,” Mr. Coleman, 19, said of the women’s claims.

On Monday, Mr. Coleman, a dishwasher and community college student, [*was declared the winner*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html) of a Democratic primary for a seat in the Kansas House of Representatives, defeating the incumbent, Stan Frownfelter, by 14 votes. The final count was 823 to 809.

What would have been a [*story about a young upstart taking down a seven-term incumbent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html) during a period of nationwide youth activism has instead alarmed Democratic state leaders, who said they were worried that Mr. Coleman’s acknowledgment of his troubled past and [*other comments he made during the campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html) would hurt their party&#39;s chances in competitive races.

Democrats [*had been making inroads in Kansas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html), a state long dominated by Republicans, and hoped to capture enough seats in the Legislature to break the Republicans’ super majority. Mr. Coleman is not facing a Republican opponent but Democratic leaders, including Gov. Laura Kelly, have said they are supporting Mr. Frownfelter, who announced on Tuesday that he would run as a write-in candidate in the general election against Mr. Coleman.

“Aaron Coleman is not fit to serve in the Legislature,” said Lauren Fitzgerald, a spokeswoman for Ms. Kelly.

Tom Sawyer, the Democratic House minority leader, said he did not believe most voters in the 37th district, in Wyandotte County, knew about Mr. Coleman’s past. The party plans to campaign hard on behalf of Mr. Frownfelter, he said.

“I hope he can pull it out so I don’t have to deal with this kid,” Mr. Sawyer said.

Mr. Coleman, [*who has apologized*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html) for the way he treated the women, [*said the party should accept the will of primary voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html), who supported his platform of a single-payer health care system, fighting climate change and legalizing cannabis.

“We need and we deserve someone who will stand up for those policies and I’m the only one in the race who will do it, and that’s why I’m the only one on the ballot,” he said in an interview. “When you pay so little attention to your district that you lose to a 19-year-old with no political connections, it probably means you should retire.”

Mr. Coleman [*ran for governor as an independent when he was 17*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html), before a law was passed [*setting an age requirement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html) for candidates seeking that office. Candidates running for governor must now be at least 25.

Mr. Coleman declined to comment on the claims of the women and referred to [*statements he gave to The Associated Press*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html) and The Kansas City Star, [*which detailed the women’s accounts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html). The women could not be reached for comment on Mr. Coleman’s behavior or his primary win.

One of the women, who is now 18, said on Facebook that she attempted suicide after Mr. Coleman repeatedly attacked her over her physical appearance when she was in the sixth grade.

Another woman said she was furious when he followed through on a threat to circulate a naked photograph of her after she refused to give him any more nude pictures of herself.

The woman, Kati Hampton, now 20, of Kansas City, Kan., said in an interview that she did not know Mr. Coleman at the time and believed he found her through Snapchat.

“I just don’t think he needs to be in a powerful position considering what he’s done to girls,” Ms. Hampton said.

She added, “It’s good that he admitted to what he did.”

A third woman said on Facebook that Mr. Coleman harassed her and would relentlessly call her at home until she picked up the phone.

Faith Rivera, an activist in Wyandotte County and a member of the county’s parks and recreation board, said she learned of the posts in June through her 19-year-old daughter, who saw them online.

The Aug. 4 primary was less than two months away and Ms. Rivera said she believed voters needed to know about the women’s posts. She said state Democrats were paying little attention to the race, which Mr. Frownfelter was widely expected to win in a reliably Democratic district.

But Ms. Rivera, who saw how hard Mr. Coleman was campaigning, was worried and tried to spread word of the women’s posts on social media.

“We blasted it as much as we could,” she said.

After the polls closed on the day of the primary, Mr. Coleman held a five-vote lead. By Monday, after county officials finished counting provisional and mail-in ballots, his lead had grown to 14 votes.

“His win to me is a setback for these victims,” Ms. Rivera said. “It’s a setback for anybody who stood up and said this is not right.”

Ms. Rivera said she believed voters were impressed by Mr. Coleman’s charisma and his promises to create change in a county where many voters are tired of established politicians. On Facebook, he has touted himself as a progressive candidate who espouses the values of Senator Bernie Sanders, and he has posted pictures and videos of himself at Black Lives Matter rallies.

“He knocked on doors,” Ms. Rivera said. “He canvassed his heart out and Wyandotte County is so ready for a change.”

During the campaign, he mocked Republicans who did not wear masks [*and said he would “giggle”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/us/elections/aaron-coleman-kansas-house.html) if a former Republican legislator died of the coronavirus.

Mr. Sawyer, the state House minority leader, speculated that such comments may have played well with some voters who saw Mr. Coleman as a maverick unafraid to speak his mind.

In a statement, Mr. Frownfelter said voters did not know enough about Mr. Coleman when they cast their ballots for him. The final tally represented roughly 6 percent of registered voters in the district, according to Mr. Frownfelter’s campaign.

“It was easy for him to have quick conversations with voters, trying to get their vote, without revealing this dark side of him that we see now so clearly,” Mr. Frownfelter said. “This is why I encourage every voter to truly educate themselves on the candidates before casting their ballot and to get out there and vote. Every single vote matters.”

Mr. Coleman said he did not foresee himself becoming a career politician. He said his goal was to transfer to the University of Kansas and join the Air Force R.O.T.C. program. For now, he said he planned to continue campaigning through the general election and win the seat.

“If people want to focus on the opera show, they can do that,” he said of his critics. “But I’m focusing on the issues affecting voters and ***working-class*** Kansans.”

Aaron Coleman

**Load-Date:** May 21, 2024

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[***The Ghost Writer: An Author Imagines a Letter From Her Late Grandmother; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YWK-S4N1-DXY4-X33D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 12, 2020 Tuesday 23:28 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1055 words

**Byline:** Miranda Popkey

**Highlight:** “Nobody Will Tell You This but Me,” a memoir by Bess Kalb, traces her family history from the Russian pogroms to the American dream.

**Body**

NOBODY WILL TELL YOU THIS BUT ME

A True (as Told to Me) Story

By Bess Kalb

Bess Kalb’s grandmother Bobby was born on a dining room table in Brooklyn; her mother, Rose, a ***working-class*** Russian immigrant, “didn’t want to ruin the bed linens.” Nine decades later, not long after Bobby’s death, Kalb is wandering through her grandmother’s apartment in Westchester, N.Y., looking for “tchotchkes” to claim as mementos. But the items she chooses — among them a Limoges egg, a Brooks Brothers shirt, lipsticks by Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent — serve also as a measure of how far her grandmother came in her lifetime: from a “tenement in Brooklyn” to the upscale suburbs; from the bottom of the social ladder to its uppermost rungs.

On Bobby’s wedding day, Rose realizes she doesn’t own any dress shoes, so she paints her brown work boots black. (The rabbi’s secretary later sends Bobby’s father a cleaning bill for the stained synagogue carpet.) Two generations later, it’s hard to imagine any hand-painted shoes among the designer labels in Bobby’s closet.

In her author’s note, Kalb calls her debut memoir, “Nobody Will Tell You This but Me,” an “oral history.” Bobby is the ventriloquized “Me” of the title, telling, from beyond the grave, a version of her life story in four sections: “My Mother,” “Your Mother,” “Our Life Together” and “After Me.” Kalb is the “you,” the audience for her no-nonsense grandmother’s family anecdotes, wisecracks and warnings. Throughout Bobby’s conversational but always assertive narration are interspersed photographs, reconstructed conversations and transcribed voice mail messages, which together create a diaristic record of not just her own but also Kalb’s career and love life.

[ Read an excerpt from [*“Nobody Will Tell You This but Me.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/books/review/nobody-will-tell-you-this-but-me-a-true-as-told-to-me-story-by-bess-kalb-an-excerpt.html) ]

I cried twice reading Kalb’s “representation” of Bobby’s life: once at the end of Bobby’s account of Rose’s improbable migration, as an unaccompanied 12-year-old, from Belarus to America in the 1880s, to flee Russian anti-Semitism (“There is no life here, Rose,” her own mother told her, “only death”), and then again during Bobby’s brother’s law school graduation, when she watches Rose, sweating in a jacket so small on her it’s splitting at the seams, smile through tears and repeat, “My son, my son, my son.” If the second half of Kalb’s narrative is less affecting than the first, perhaps that is simply because everything after escape from a probable pogrom must be.

Bobby’s trajectory is the so-called American dream fulfilled, a story of unqualified first-generation success. Born Barbara Dorothy Otis in 1926 to a 40-year-old mother not 30 years removed from the shtetl, Bobby marries an entrepreneur, Harold “Hank” Bell, who makes his first fortune building houses for veterans on “cheap, low-lying land” on Long Island. (“It wasn’t exactly a swamp — he’ll swear up and down it wasn’t a swamp — but it was soggy here and there.”)

Newly moneyed, the couple moves out of Bobby’s parents’ attic in Greenpoint and into a spacious ranch house in Westchester County; they buy a vacation home on Martha’s Vineyard. Bobby’s suburban malaise is cured by six-week vacations around the world. “My mother fled through Europe,” she marvels, “and half a century later I danced through it, Kir Royale in hand. How do you like that?”

Reading, I delighted in Bobby’s joy. I also thought with sorrow of the Jewish migrants who followed her mother and found the gates to what Rose’s neighbor in Belarus called “the Goldene Medinah, the Promised Land,” barred. I thought of the migrants at our southern border today, and of the promises this land will likely fail to keep to them again.

No surprise, then, that even wealth cannot provide Bobby and her husband complete security. “Every hundred years,” Rose tells her daughter, “they find a new reason to hunt the Jews.” According to Bobby, Rose “worked to erase her ethnic heritage,” refusing to keep kosher as she “shuddered at the Hassids in their wigs.” And Bobby chooses to make a few cosmetic “adjustments” at least in part because she wants to “erase … the shtetl” from her own face, which was her mother’s. “I always detested my nose,” she tells Kalb, whose “deviated septum” she has paid to fix. “I looked in the mirror and I saw Russia.”

It’s not the only indication we have that Bobby was more complicated in life than she tends to appear on Kalb’s page. The author’s hints at her grandmother’s failings make Bobby more character and less caricature, but one longs for a still more fully rounded portrait. Some moments of neglect and even cruelty (the “screaming fights” with Kalb’s mother, Robin; when she criticizes Kalb for having gained “a pound on the wrong side of the scale”) sit uneasily alongside Bobby’s quips and potted family histories.

“Nobody Will Tell You This but Me” is an explicitly matrilineal project: “Bessie,” Bobby reminds her granddaughter early in the first section, “you are the only daughter of an only daughter of an only daughter.” But it’s less about the mother-daughter relationship than about the kind that skips a generation.

A mother projects onto her daughter the hopes and fears she has since abandoned or succumbed to. Bobby studies hard and goes to college and ends up a housewife anyway, because the available careers — secretary, teacher, nurse — are even less attractive to her. When Robin gets a bad grade, Bobby yells at her for wasting the opportunities she never had.

A grandmother, on the other hand, projects onto her granddaughter expectations that the younger woman can only achieve or be thwarted in pursuit of. When Kalb publishes an article in Grantland, Bobby prints it out for her friends at the club and makes them read it in front of her. When Kalb is hired as a writer on “Jimmy Kimmel Live!,” Bobby tells her to get a blowout. “The rest,” she assures Kalb, “you can handle.”

Miranda Popkey is the author of “Topics of Conversation.” NOBODY WILL TELL YOU THIS BUT ME A True (as Told to Me) Story By Bess Kalb Illustrated. 206 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $25.95.

PHOTO: Bess Kalb’s grandmother Bobby fixes her makeup at her wedding rehearsal dinner. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA BESS KALB)

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* [*Their Parents Were Holocaust Survivors. That Wasn’t Their Only Secret.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/books/review/nobody-will-tell-you-this-but-me-a-true-as-told-to-me-story-by-bess-kalb-an-excerpt.html)

1. [*My Grandmother Kept Telling Us About the Nazis. Now I Know Why.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/books/review/nobody-will-tell-you-this-but-me-a-true-as-told-to-me-story-by-bess-kalb-an-excerpt.html)
2. [*‘The Survivors’ Unpacks a Family’s Trauma*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/books/review/nobody-will-tell-you-this-but-me-a-true-as-told-to-me-story-by-bess-kalb-an-excerpt.html)

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The New York Times

August 16, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1231 words

**Byline:** By Mike Hale

**Body**

On outlets from Hulu to Peacock to PBS, it's the summer of the trans-Atlantic import.

Among the things the Covid-19 pandemic has taken away from us, at least temporarily, new American-made television series are not the most important. But for those who keep track of these things, the paucity of domestic scripted shows premiering in the next 10 days or so is striking. There's a ''Star Trek'' cartoon, a DreamWorks cartoon, a new season of ''Umbrella Academy'' and -- that's about it.

And yet there are plenty of fresh comedies and dramas arriving during that time, more than 20 of them, scoured from countries around the globe where they were made before the virus struck. The majority are British, continuing a trend that began as a small stream with the launch lineups of HBO Max and Peacock and is turning into a cross-Atlantic tsunami as summer progresses. Here are some highlights of this latest batch of British imports, in chronological order.

'In My Skin'

Hulu

Bethan (Gabrielle Creevy), the Welsh teenager at the center of this gently barbed coming-of-age story, is a full-time fabulist. She feeds her friends and teachers a steady diet of haute-bourgeois lies -- one of her more inspired ad-libs when a friend wants to come over is, ''I can't, we're having a conservatory built'' -- because she's mortified by the sad, even dangerous reality of life with her bipolar mom and drunk, deadbeat dad.

It's part of her larger artistic impulse: While she's spinning her vision of a stable, prosperous home environment as a smoke screen for those around her, she's writing derivative proletarian verses for her high school literary anthology. (The show frequently cuts away from the action to show us flashes of what's going on inside Bethan's head; her poetry is accompanied by heroic black-and-white images of Welsh coal miners.)

The lies begin to catch up with her, of course, partly because she's powerfully distracted by a popular female classmate (Zadeiah Campbell-Davies). But across the five episodes of the initial season -- written by Kayleigh Llewellyn and directed by Lucy Forbes, who directed half of the second season of ''The End of the \_\_\_\_ World,'' and shown on BBC Three in March -- happily smutty dark humor and light melancholy mostly win out over maudlin life lessons. The distinctively British mix of winsome-glum kitchen-sink drama and sitcom beats works in this case, helped by the loose, run-and-gun style of Forbes and her cinematographer, Benedict Spence, and Creevy's alert, understated performance.

'Hitmen'

Peacock, Aug. 6

Imagine Laverne and Shirley as a pair of ***working-class*** contract killers and you've pretty much got the idea of this comedy, whose six-episode first season ran in March on Sky. Mel Giedroyc and Sue Perkins, best known as the original hosts of ''The Great British Bake Off,'' play Jamie and Fran, who approach their violent occupation with the enthusiasm and professionalism of shelf-stockers at a big-box store. (Joe Markham and Joe Parham, the show's creators, previously worked together on the nutty animated series ''The Amazing World of Gumball.'')

The broad humor, largely of the restless-middle-age variety, often takes place while the hit women sit in their van with a trussed-up victim, waiting for instructions from their unseen employer, Mr. K. Much of the fun comes from the actors playing the testy, garrulous targets, including Jason Watkins of ''The Crown'' as a crooked lawyer and Sian Clifford of ''Fleabag'' as a disloyal accountant.

'Endeavour'

PBS, Aug. 9

This prequel series, a fixture of PBS's ''Masterpiece,'' is creeping closer in time to ''Inspector Morse,'' the popular British mystery from which it was spun off: The seventh season of ''Endeavour'' is set in 1970, within hailing distance of the 1987 advent of ''Morse.'' And as the shows converge, the notion that the stern young detective Endeavour Morse played by Shaun Evans in the current series is going to age into the paunchy, sardonic, thoroughly modern misanthrope played by John Thaw in the original is becoming increasingly hard to entertain.

Evans's formal, diffident, awkward Morse is fine in its own right, though, and ITV's ''Endeavour'' shares the original's pensive, almost mournful atmosphere. The new three-episode season (it premiered in February) carries on story lines from Season 6 that find Morse increasingly at odds with his boss and mentor, Fred Thursday (Roger Allam), as the case of the killer haunting the towpaths of Oxford's canals refuses to stay solved. The racism and sexism of the time figure into other homicides, and the indignities of aging and Morse's latest disastrous love affair contribute to the generally downbeat tone. As always, the dolorous goings-on are exquisitely enacted by Evans, Allam and, as their superintendent, Anton Lesser.

'We Hunt Together'

Showtime, Aug. 9

At the far end of the British mystery spectrum from ''Endeavour,'' this rare original series from Alibi -- a channel that exists primarily to show reruns of other channel's crime shows -- is firmly within the camp of lurid melodrama. Everyone is damaged, from the former child soldier to the brainy phone-sex worker to the frighteningly rigid cop.

Eve Myles (''Torchwood'') and Babou Ceesay (''Into the Badlands'') play the latest variation on mismatched partners -- her the all-business sergeant, him the jolly, empathetic, higher-ranking detective just brought in from internal affairs. Myles and Ceesay make the familiar byplay fairly engaging, but they're only half the story: Equal time, and nearly equal sympathy, is given across the six episodes (which debuted in Britain in May) to the Bonnie-and-Clyde killers played by Hermione Corfield and Dipo Ola. The murder-for-love plotline may not hold water, but everyone involved is fun to watch.

'The Other One'

Acorn TV, Aug. 10

This series about two half sisters who discover each other when their father dies belongs to a genre, the life-force comedy, that isn't my favorite. (It often involves weddings, as in ''Muriel's'' and ''My Big Fat Greek.'') But the show's creator, Holly Walsh (''Motherland''), deftly undercuts the inherent sentimentalities of her story, even as the supremely uptight Cathy (Ellie White) and the raucous, free-spirited Cat (Lauren Socha) predictably overcome their differences and form a new family blended from emotional openness and cheap white wine run through a SodaStream.

White, who plays the dire Princess Beatrice in ''The Windsors,'' is entirely convincing as the anxious and controlling but big-hearted Cathy, and she's ably supported in the first season's seven episodes (shown on BBC beginning in June) by Socha and a pair of scene-stealing veterans, Rebecca Front and Siobhan Finneran, as the dead man's furious wife and his dizzy, agoraphobic mistress. Perhaps most important in setting the show's tone is a classic-pop soundtrack centered in the missing father's late-70s sweet spot: Supertramp, Orleans, Hall and Oates, ''The Piña Colada Song.''

More recent and coming British, Australian and Canadian series premieres: ''Maxxx,'' Hulu; ''Ladhood,'' Hulu; ''Frayed,'' HBO Max; ''Brassic,'' Hulu (Friday); ''Get Even,'' Netflix (Friday); ''Wild Bill,'' BritBox (Tuesday); ''Coroner,'' the CW (Wednesday); ''Upright,'' Sundance Now (Aug. 6); ''Being Reuben,'' the CW (Aug. 7); ''Five Bedrooms,'' Peacock (Aug. 13).

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/30/arts/television/in-my-skin-hulu.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/30/arts/television/in-my-skin-hulu.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Babou Ceesay, left, and Eve Myles play mismatched partners in ''We Hunt Together.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUDOVIC ROBERT/BBC STUDIOS/UKTV)

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[***Mayor Hopefuls Vie to Win Over Key Latino Vote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62T9-MB41-JBG3-60HW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 31, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1795 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

The Hispanic vote, which may account for a fifth of voter turnout, is considered to be up for grabs.

Eric Adams was not Representative Adriano Espaillat's original choice to become New York City's next mayor, but now that he had landed the coveted endorsement, Mr. Adams was in a forgiving mood.

It was more of a come-to-Eric moment than a come-to-Jesus moment, but he credited divine intervention with winning over Mr. Espaillat, the first Dominican-American to serve in Congress.

''Today, all of that praying, all of those candles that I've burned, all of those incense that I put in place, all of those Hail Marys that I called up,'' Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, thundered earlier this month. ''Finally, Jesus Christ looked down on me and brought me Congressman Espaillat!''

Less than one month before the Democratic primary that will almost certainly determine the city's next mayor, the battle for Latino voters and endorsers is accelerating, and the fight for that diverse constituency is emerging as one of the most crucial and uncertain elements of the race to lead New York.

All the leading Democratic mayoral candidates sense opportunity. In the race's final weeks, they are pressing their cases through advertising, Spanish-language phone banks and Latino affinity groups, deployment of surrogates and rallies in heavily Hispanic neighborhoods across the city.

Andrew Yang, the former presidential candidate, and Shaun Donovan, a former federal housing secretary, went up with Spanish-language advertising last week. Others, including Mr. Adams and Scott M. Stringer, the city comptroller who lost Mr. Espaillat's initial endorsement, had already released ads in Spanish.

The next major Democratic debate, set for Wednesday night, is being co-hosted by Univision 41 Nueva York and the Hispanic Federation, among other sponsors, and may further focus the candidates' attention on those voters.

''When we look back at the winner of this primary, what put them over the top, even with ranked-choice voting, is their ability to connect late with Hispanic voters,'' said Bruce Gyory, a veteran Democratic strategist who has closely studied the New York City electorate. ''That's what June is going to be about: Who finds a message that resonates, and who backs it up with resources?''

In 2013, the last mayoral primary in New York City without an incumbent in the race, Hispanic voters made up 18 percent of the electorate, according to exit polls, and supported the eventual winner, Mayor Bill de Blasio, making up a vital part of his coalition. Those voters are expected to make up around 20 percent of the electorate again this year, Democratic consultants say, and strategists and lawmakers describe them as motivated by issues including economic opportunity; affordability and support for small businesses; education; public safety; and public health.

''We know that Latinos, more than many other groups, were directly impacted in a very negative way'' by the pandemic, said Representative Nydia M. Velázquez, a New York Democrat who was the first Puerto Rican woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives and is supporting Maya D. Wiley in the mayoral race. ''So people want to know, what are you going to do to address those inequities that were exposed during Covid-19?''

The so-called Latino vote in New York is diverse generationally and geographically, culturally and ideologically. Indeed the political spectrum runs the gamut from young, left-wing Latino New Yorkers typified by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and up-and-coming lawmakers from parts of Queens, to culturally conservative voters across the city who voted for former President Donald J. Trump in surprising numbers last fall.

New York City's immigrant neighborhoods strongly favored President Biden -- but virtually every predominantly Latino precinct shifted significantly to the right compared with the 2016 election results, including heavily Dominican neighborhoods in Manhattan and the Bronx, and in Corona, Queens, where there is a large Latino population.

But without a front-running Hispanic candidate in the race, the political demographic is considered to be mostly up for grabs.

''You have so many candidates running for mayor, and only one is really a Latina,'' said the longtime political strategist, Luis A. Miranda Jr. He was referencing Dianne Morales, a left-wing candidate who identifies as Afro-Latina. (Kathryn Garcia, the former sanitation commissioner, is white, though her ex-husband is of Puerto Rican descent and she has referenced the fact that her children are half Puerto Rican.)

''You really need validators from our community that are telling you, 'So-and-so is good for the Latino community, so-and-so is good for the neighborhood you live in,''' Mr. Miranda said. (Neither Mr. Miranda nor his son, the actor and composer Lin-Manuel Miranda, has endorsed a candidate in the race.)

Mr. Adams may have the most significant institutional support in the field, reflecting his background as a veteran city politician with extensive relationships. He promises to be a ''blue-collar'' mayor who connects in ***working-class*** communities and prioritizes public safety.

Ruben Diaz Jr., the Bronx borough president, stars in ads for Mr. Adams and is supporting him, as is Fernando Ferrer, the 2005 Democratic mayoral nominee who built a formidable coalition of Black and Latino voters in his unsuccessful bid.

''I saw him in the South Bronx on a street corner where I used to shine shoes,'' Mr. Ferrer said of Mr. Adams. ''He's comfortable. And you have to be comfortable with people.''

Still, Mr. Adams has not always smoothly navigated his outreach over the years. In 1993, for instance, his remarks criticizing the Puerto Rican-born comptroller candidate, Herman Badillo, for not marrying a Hispanic woman became such a point of controversy that Mr. Badillo highlighted the issue in an advertising campaign.

Mr. Yang, the former presidential candidate who pledges to be an anti-poverty mayor, has also made a major push for Latino voters.

He has been endorsed by a number of prominent younger Latino leaders, from City Councilman Carlos Menchaca, a left-wing Mexican-American who dropped out of the mayoral contest, to Representative Ritchie Torres of the Bronx, who identifies as Afro-Latino. Mr. Yang spent Thursday in the Bronx, home to the city's largest Latino population, laying out his public safety vision.

''We know the Latino base is the one everyone is going after,'' said Assemblyman Kenny Burgos, a 26-year-old Hispanic Yang supporter who represents the Bronx. ''The youth vote, so to speak, is going to be something heavily in effect here.''

Then there is Ms. Garcia, who has risen in some recent polls. Last Saturday afternoon, she was at a lively outdoor food market in the Bronx, greeting voters and discussing the biggest issues she hears from Hispanic New Yorkers.

''Where's the economy, do they feel safe, and are you educating the kids? Those are at the top of mind, and housing affordability, you hear it over and over again,'' Ms. Garcia said. ''They care about boots on the ground. They care about you showing up.''

In a ranked-choice election in which voters may back up to five candidates in order of preference, Ms. Garcia's surname may help her stand out, Mr. Miranda said.

''The city in which we live, it's pretty tribal,'' he said. ''They'll gravitate to a Spanish name because they'll believe that person will be Latino.''

There is limited public polling available on the mayor's race overall, much less on Hispanic voters specifically. But a new survey out Wednesday from Fontas Advisors and Core Decision Analytics found Mr. Yang virtually tied with Mr. Adams among Hispanic voters, when including voters who leaned in their directions, with roughly a quarter of those voters undecided. Ms. Morales, a former nonprofit executive, came in third place among Hispanic voters in that poll.

Ms. Morales is unlikely to connect with older Latino voters who are leery of calls to defund the police, but she had recently shown promise as a standard-bearer for young, deeply progressive voters from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

''We might see maybe a little bit of a wild card in this election because young people are so energized by her campaign,'' Assemblywoman Jessica González-Rojas of Queens said in an interview last week. ''She's been very intentional about bringing young people into the conversation.''

Later in the week, internal turmoil from the Morales campaign spilled into public view, and it is not yet clear how a late-stage campaign shake-up nearly three weeks before the primary will affect that standing.

Ms. González-Rojas, however, said on Wednesday that she stood by her remarks. She has also said that she had pitched Ms. Morales's candidacy to Ms. Ocasio-Cortez's team.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, who is of Puerto Rican descent, is among the most powerful potential endorsers still remaining on the sidelines of the mayoral race. Ms. Velázquez, who has recorded radio ads on behalf of Ms. Wiley, has spoken with Ms. Ocasio-Cortez directly about the contest, encouraging her to meet with Ms. Wiley, she said.

Other candidates are also ramping up their Latino engagement. Ms. Wiley released an agenda aimed at Latino communities last week. In his new ad, Mr. Donovan narrates in Spanish, and he visited a major Latino church in Queens this weekend. Raymond J. McGuire, a former Citi executive, has Spanish-language radio ads and the support of, among others, Assemblyman Robert J. Rodriguez of East Harlem.

Mr. Stringer, for his part, has long seen opportunities to cement his standing with Latino voters in the final weeks of the race. He lost Mr. Espaillat's backing, among others, following an accusation that he made unwanted sexual advances during a 2001 campaign, which he has denied.

But even lawmakers who retracted their endorsements say that Mr. Stringer remains well known in some of their neighborhoods.

He is planning a rally aimed at Latino voters in Washington Heights, where he grew up, on June 12. His stepfather, Carlos Cuevas, is Puerto Rican and narrates a Spanish-language ad for Mr. Stringer, and Mr. Stringer's extended Puerto Rican family is expected to join him at the rally, his campaign said.

Many Latino voters are just starting to take notice of the race, said Assemblywoman Catalina Cruz of Queens, who pulled her endorsement from Mr. Stringer and has not backed anyone else. ''They don't really start talking about the election until like a month out,'' she said. ''You will see them start paying a lot more attention in the couple weeks leading up to the election itself, unless there's somebody that completely electrifies them.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/30/nyregion/latinos-nyc-mayor-race.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/30/nyregion/latinos-nyc-mayor-race.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Dianne Morales may alienate some older Latino voters because of her calls to defund the police. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, has the support of Representative Adriano Espaillat. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** May 31, 2021

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[***Key Question in Mayoral Race: Who Will Get Latino New Yorkers’ Votes?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62T9-5J21-DXY4-X10X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Highlight:** Hispanic voters, who may account for a fifth of turnout, are considered to be up for grabs.

**Body**

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[Watch the [*NYC mayoral debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/10/nyregion/nyc-mayor-debate) live.]

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He has [*been endorsed*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/10/nyregion/nyc-mayor-debate) by a number of prominent younger Latino leaders, from City Councilman Carlos Menchaca, a left-wing Mexican-American who dropped out of the mayoral contest, to Representative Ritchie Torres of the Bronx, who identifies as Afro-Latino. Mr. Yang spent Thursday in the Bronx, [*home to*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/10/nyregion/nyc-mayor-debate) the city’s largest Latino population, laying out his public safety vision.

“We know the Latino base is the one everyone is going after,” said Assemblyman Kenny Burgos, a 26-year-old Hispanic Yang supporter who represents the Bronx. “The youth vote, so to speak, is going to be something heavily in effect here.”

Then there is Ms. Garcia, who has risen in some recent polls. Last Saturday afternoon, she was at a lively outdoor food market in the Bronx, greeting voters and discussing the biggest issues she hears from Hispanic New Yorkers.

“Where’s the economy, do they feel safe, and are you educating the kids? Those are at the top of mind, and housing affordability, you hear it over and over again,” Ms. Garcia said. “They care about boots on the ground. They care about you showing up.”

In a ranked-choice election in which voters may back up to five candidates in order of preference, Ms. Garcia’s surname may help her stand out, Mr. Miranda said.

“The city in which we live, it’s pretty tribal,” he said. “They’ll gravitate to a Spanish name because they’ll believe that person will be Latino.”

There is limited public polling available on the mayor’s race overall, much less on Hispanic voters specifically. But a new survey out Wednesday from Fontas Advisors and Core Decision Analytics found Mr. Yang virtually tied with Mr. Adams among Hispanic voters, when including voters who leaned in their directions, with roughly a quarter of those voters undecided. Ms. Morales, a former nonprofit executive, came in third place among Hispanic voters in that poll.

Ms. Morales is unlikely to connect with older Latino voters who are leery of calls to defund the police, but she had recently shown promise as a standard-bearer for young, deeply progressive voters from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

“We might see maybe a little bit of a wild card in this election because young people are so energized by her campaign,” Assemblywoman Jessica González-Rojas of Queens said in an interview last week. “She’s been very intentional about bringing young people into the conversation.”

Later in the week, internal turmoil from the Morales campaign [*spilled into public view*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/10/nyregion/nyc-mayor-debate), and it is not yet clear how a late-stage campaign shake-up nearly three weeks before the primary will affect that standing.

Ms. González-Rojas, however, said on Wednesday that she stood by her remarks. She has also said that she had pitched Ms. Morales’s candidacy to Ms. Ocasio-Cortez’s team.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, who is of [*Puerto Rican descent*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/10/nyregion/nyc-mayor-debate), is among the most powerful potential endorsers still remaining on the sidelines of the mayoral race. Ms. Velázquez, who has recorded radio ads on behalf of Ms. Wiley, has spoken with Ms. Ocasio-Cortez directly about the contest, encouraging her to meet with Ms. Wiley, she said.

Other candidates are also ramping up their Latino engagement. Ms. Wiley released an agenda aimed at Latino communities last week. In his new ad, Mr. Donovan narrates in Spanish, and he visited a major Latino church in Queens this weekend. Raymond J. McGuire, a former Citi executive, has Spanish-language radio ads and the support of, among others, Assemblyman Robert J. Rodriguez of East Harlem.

Mr. Stringer, for his part, has long seen opportunities to cement his standing with Latino voters in the final weeks of the race. He lost Mr. Espaillat’s backing, among others, following an accusation that he made unwanted sexual advances during a 2001 campaign, which he has denied.

But even lawmakers who retracted their endorsements say that Mr. Stringer remains well known in some of their neighborhoods.

He is planning a rally aimed at Latino voters in Washington Heights, [*where he grew up*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/10/nyregion/nyc-mayor-debate), on June 12. His stepfather, Carlos Cuevas, is Puerto Rican and narrates a [*Spanish-language ad*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/06/10/nyregion/nyc-mayor-debate) for Mr. Stringer, and Mr. Stringer’s extended Puerto Rican family is expected to join him at the rally, his campaign said.

Many Latino voters are just starting to take notice of the race, said Assemblywoman Catalina Cruz of Queens, who pulled her endorsement from Mr. Stringer and has not backed anyone else. “They don’t really start talking about the election until like a month out,” she said. “You will see them start paying a lot more attention in the couple weeks leading up to the election itself, unless there’s somebody that completely electrifies them.”

PHOTOS: Dianne Morales may alienate some older Latino voters because of her calls to defund the police. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES); Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, has the support of Representative Adriano Espaillat. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

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**Length:** 1235 words

**Byline:** By Sonia Nazario

**Body**

CONDITIONAL CITIZENS On Belonging in AmericaBy Laila Lalami

Laila Lalami begins ''Conditional Citizens'' with the promise of U.S. citizenship: On a steamy day in 2000, she goes to the Pomona Fairplex, a place that also hosts the Los Angeles County Fair, to be sworn in as an American citizen. Moroccan by birth, Lalami came to the United States for graduate studies in linguistics, fully intending to return home. But she met a man, fell in love -- and stayed. She and hundreds of other immigrants who have studied and mastered the grand ideals of this country are handed miniature American flags that day and pledge an oath to the United States, its Constitution and its laws. These ceremonies can be deeply moving, and Lalami, a novelist who often writes about being an outsider, emerges convinced she is now an equal citizen in a country where everyone shares common values.

''I thought, somewhat naïvely, I admit, that I would be treated no differently than other Americans,'' Lalami writes. In joining America's 22 million naturalized citizens, she assumed she had gotten the key to the promised land; she is the bearer of an American passport. It doesn't take long for her -- an immigrant, woman, Arab and Muslim -- to grasp the yawning gap between the ideal taught in civics lessons and reality. In many ways, she argues, she is a ''conditional citizen,'' one who soon understands what it is like ''for a country to embrace you with one arm and push you away with the other.''

Conditional citizens, in Lalami's account, are not allowed to dissent or question the choices of their government; if they do, they are viewed with suspicion, their allegiance to their new country questioned. Conditional citizens also have less freedom of movement. Border patrol agents rely on at least 136 checkpoints (the total number in operation at any given time is not publicly available) that are up to 100 miles inside of U.S. borders to stop and question residents. That territory potentially ensnares two-thirds of this country's population, and each year, hundreds of U.S. citizens are wrongfully held in immigration jails.

[ Read an excerpt from ''Conditional Citizens.'' ]

Lalami shows how our nation's schizophrenia toward immigrants -- Immigrants built this great country! We are a nation of immigrants! Immigrants bring disease, crime and rob us of our jobs! -- can give conditional citizens whiplash as they are simultaneously regarded as America's best hope and its gravest threat, a combination of suspicion and rejection that Asians, Italians and the Irish, among others, have all faced.

Lalami is less insightful when she widens her lens to argue that all minorities in the United States -- including people born here but of a race, faith or gender not shared by the dominant majority -- are discriminated against by their government and others, a heavily worn argument. Black and Latinx people face greater policing and punishment; they are much more likely to be jailed. According to one study, Black people are less than half as likely to be considered for employment as white applicants with similar qualifications. A Black child involved in a school infraction is more likely to get suspended than a white child. Our government keeps conditional citizens from voting, historically through poll taxes, now through voter ID laws passed by Republican-held state legislatures that target the poor and minorities to suppress liberal votes.

Lalami's book lands after analyses of Donald Trump's 2016 victory revealed that it was driven less by angst over losing jobs to immigrants than fear on the part of whites that their group dominance and privileges might slip away as they become a demographic minority. One survey found that white ***working-class*** voters were three and a half times more likely to support Trump if they felt ''like a stranger in their own land.''

''Conditional Citizens'' is best when Lalami turns inward: How has her treatment by our government and fellow citizens been far from the ideal? Her first interaction with the federal government after she becomes a citizen involves a border agent at Los Angeles Airport who asks her husband: ''How many camels did you have to trade in for her?'' After 9/11, a mentality of ''you're either with us or you're against us'' causes even colleagues at her office to treat her with suspicion. When she voices dissent about the country's wars in the Middle East and questions U.S. exceptionalism, her allegiance to America comes under attack.

But I wish Lalami, the author of four novels, including ''The Moor's Account,'' a Pulitzer Prize finalist, had dug much deeper to show in this, her first nonfiction book, how this inequality affects her. I wondered: As an English professor who lives in Santa Monica, Calif., among the nation's wealthier and most liberal enclaves, was she buffered from the worst of the inequalities she describes? You don't have to look far in Los Angeles County, where I also live and where 34 percent of the residents were born in another country, to show how these inequalities play out daily. She could have cast a wider narrative net to tell these stories through friends and acquaintances.

When my white husband and I moved to Manhattan Beach, Calif., 24 years ago, the local cops stopped me three times my first year for not signaling a left turn -- something my German-American husband, who has white hair, fails to do daily but for which he has never been stopped. ''Brown girl can't get no justice in Manhattan Beach!'' I fumed after each police takedown. A Mexican immigrant I know rides his bike along the same route each morning to his factory job, and is stopped and frisked by the same cops several times a week. The unequal treatment can be chilling. In 2010, when I delivered a keynote address at a national convention of the American Bar Association in Phoenix, I kept my U.S. passport in my pocket at all times. This was after Arizona passed S.B. 1070, a controversial law awarding local authorities broad new powers to crack down on undocumented immigrants. At the time, Joe Arpaio, the sheriff of Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix, had a penchant for detaining people who were Latinx, including some American citizens, and turning many over to immigration agents for deportation. As Lalami notes, in the 1930s, the police in the United States rounded up as many as two million people of Mexican heritage and deported them. Half were U.S. citizens.

While her book convincingly lays out the inequalities among citizens, she's woefully short on remedies and specific ideas for achieving change. How do you make voting accessible to all? What are the best approaches locally, statewide or in other countries that we should fight to have enacted wherever we live?

When Donald Trump is elected president, Lalami hears terror in her daughter's question: ''He can't make us leave, right?'' That the question would even occur to a girl born in the United States is infuriating. Lalami asks us to be better, so no American children feel it's a question they ever have to ask.Sonia Nazario, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of ''Enrique's Journey: The Story of a Boy's Dangerous Odyssey to Reunite With His Mother,'' is a board member of Kids in Need of Defense and a contributing opinion writer for The Times.CONDITIONAL CITIZENS On Belonging in AmericaBy Laila Lalami191 pp. Pantheon. $25.95.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/books/review/conditional-citizens-laila-lalami.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/books/review/conditional-citizens-laila-lalami.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Nuha Baharoun, from Yemen, takes part in a naturalization ceremony in Virginia on July 4, 2017. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC THAYER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Detainees at a U.S. Customs and Border Patrol detention center in El Paso, 2019. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ADRIANA ZEHBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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The New York Times

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**Length:** 1362 words

**Byline:** By Charlie Savage

**Body**

Looking back on his youth, John O. Brennan, the former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, recalls having been an earring-wearing, at least one-time hashish-smoking rebel who in the 1976 election cast a ballot for the Communist Party's presidential candidate -- a protest vote spurred by his disgust at ''the partisan politics of both the Democrats and the Republicans,'' he writes in his memoir, ''Undaunted: My Fight Against America's Enemies, at Home and Abroad.'' A few years later, when he applied for a job at the C.I.A., Brennan confessed this vote but was assured that it would not affect his application -- a response ''affirming my rights as a citizen'' that ''dispelled any concerns I had about joining an organization that had been routinely accused over the years of flouting American values and liberties.'' Brennan had found his own group: the permanent national security bureaucracy that President Trump would someday portray as an evil ''deep state.''

Before Donald Trump's rise, Brennan had been something of a nomadic public figure in polarized America. At the start of the Obama administration, many liberals viewed him with suspicion because he had been a C.I.A. official during the time of the agency's post-9/11 torture program, although he was not directly involved and has long maintained that he opposed it; his book for the first time publicly names three officials to whom he says he expressed concerns in 2002. Brennan went on to oversee President Obama's drone strikes targeting terrorism suspects in non-battlefield zones, and publicly claimed in June 2011 that they had caused no civilian casualties over that past year; Brennan writes that he stands by that claim without addressing the reasons many were skeptical: For example, a high-profile March 2011 strike appears to have killed Pakistani tribal elders who had gathered to discuss a chromite mining dispute.

But Republicans have viewed Brennan with suspicion, too. He recounts making enemies in the George W. Bush White House in 2006, during a brief period in the private sector, by writing an op-ed that criticized the president's hyping of purported links between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda; while he never published it, the Bush White House found out about the draft and blocked him from becoming deputy C.I.A. director. That seeming career setback cleared the way for him to become an even more senior official in the Obama administration, during which he often hit back when he thought Republican lawmakers were politicizing national security matters for partisan gain.

Brennan's pugnacious personality hasn't changed since 2017, when he left the C.I.A., but political conditions have. He has lashed into Trump for disparaging the intelligence community and suggested that the president did collude with Russia. Even as some Democrats came to see him as a #Resistance hero, the White House in August 2018 accused him of leveraging his experience and access to information to make unfounded accusations and declared that Trump had revoked Brennan's security clearance. This was false, he writes -- there was no legal basis to strip his clearance and he still has it today. Nevertheless, Trump did apparently instruct the executive branch not to share any classified information with him, and the C.I.A. even denied his request to review his own records as he worked on his memoir, despite having routinely permitted other former directors to do so.

Brennan's memoir presents a rich portrait of his unusual life, which took him from a ***working-class*** New Jersey neighborhood to a position as a Middle East specialist who met with kings and presidents and witnessed the rise of Al Qaeda. But as a reporter who has spent much of the last two decades writing about counterterrorism matters in which Brennan played an important role, I recognized the virtual absence of certain topics -- like his significant support, both internally and in public, for using traditional civilian courts rather than Guantánamo's dysfunctional military commissions system to prosecute terrorism suspects, a topic that led to a great deal of partisan demagoguery during the Obama years. One wonders if his inability to use his files to refresh his memory resulted in such holes.

Still, memoirs by former national security officials always exhibit a certain Swiss cheese quality because so much about their professional experiences remains classified. Brennan sometimes writes around that problem, as when he invents a hypothetical briefing to President Obama about whether to approve a drone strike. And he takes advantage of the large amounts of information that has been declassified about the raid on Osama bin Laden's compound to produce a dramatic chapter on that episode. This is now an oft-told tale, but he adds fresh details, like his firsthand account of his call to a Saudi official who declined to take custody of the Qaeda leader's corpse for burial.

Nevertheless, much else surely remains submerged, as is suggested by a few episodes that involve publicly known but technically still classified information. Regarding a debate over whether to arm Syrian rebels, Brennan writes that he is ''unable to address many important aspects and details of U.S. policy toward Syria during the Obama administration because they remain highly classified.'' One thing he omits is that, as has been widely reported, the C.I.A. covertly funneled arms to certain rebels. And discussing his conversations with a since-assassinated Yemeni president about what he vaguely refers to as ''gaining Yemeni government support for U.S. counterterrorism actions,'' Brennan provides a vivid description of the leader -- a diminutive, mafia don-like figure with restless leg syndrome -- but leaves out the substance of the deal they cut. Leaked diplomatic cables revealed that it permitted strikes on Yemeni soil, so long as the Americans did not publicly acknowledge it.

Brennan also has personal blind spots. He dismisses a 2014 call by two Senate Democrats for him to resign as ''life in the highly partisan waters of Washington.'' The context was that the C.I.A. had objected to findings of the Senate Intelligence Committee about the agency's defunct torture program, but then it turned out that the Senate had obtained an internal C.I.A. review that instead supported those findings; furious, the agency responded by treating Senate staffers like spies, searching their computers and making a criminal referral to the Justice Department.

Brennan suggests the Democratic lawmakers really just wanted to score political points against the Bush administration officials who authorized the torture program. But the Senate report made those Republicans look better because one of its key disputed findings was that the C.I.A. had lied to them to win and maintain that authorization -- so, fair or not, the senators' criticism was not partisan.

But even if Brennan's narrative often cannot stand alone as a one-stop-shopping account of the events it covers, his own reflections on his long and momentous career are a worthy addition to the available history of the post-9/11 era. And his high-profile criticism of Trump since leaving the agency, along with the backlash that has provoked, has only added to his consequential public life. ''Undaunted'' opens and closes with scathing discussions of Trump. There can be little doubt whom the book's subtitle, with its reference to fighting America's enemies ''at home,'' is pointing to.

''I have received many welcome words of encouragement from friends and strangers alike to continue with my public commentary,'' he writes. ''If, after 33 years of public service, I also must endure a steady stream of derisive and offensive comments, false allegations and physical threats from those who are upset with me, so be it. It is a path I have freely and willingly chosen. I remain undaunted.''Charlie Savage is a Washington correspondent for The Times. His most recent book is ''Power Wars: The Relentless Rise of Presidential Authority and Secrecy.''UNDAUNTEDMy Fight Against America's Enemies, at Home and AbroadBy John O. Brennan464 pp. Celadon Books. $30.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/07/books/review/undaunted-john-o-brennan.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/07/books/review/undaunted-john-o-brennan.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The former C.I.A. director John Brennan before a House committee, May 2017. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AL DRAGO/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2020

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[***Why Does Biden Seem So Stuck?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:648X-J2T1-DXY4-X0R0-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 2919 words

**Byline:** By Corey Robin

**Body**

No president since Ronald Reagan has achieved a more ambitious domestic legislative agenda in his first year than Joe Biden. With a razor-thin congressional majority -- far smaller than that of Barack Obama -- President Biden has delivered two enormous spending bills, with another, the Build Back Better act, likely on its way. Elements of these bills will have a lasting effect on the economy into the next decade; they also push the country to the left.

Every president since Reagan has tacked to the rightward winds set in motion by the conservative movement. Even Mr. Obama's stimulus bill and the Affordable Care Act owed as much to conservative nostrums about the market and runaway spending as they did to liberal notions of fairness and equality. Mr. Biden has had to accommodate the demands of Senators Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema, but their intransigence has not had nearly the constraining effect that the voices of austerity and market fetishism had on Bill Clinton or Mr. Obama.

Yet over the past several months, Mr. Biden's presidency has been dogged by a sense of failure. Critics, friendly and not so friendly, point to what he has not delivered -- voting rights, immigration reform, a $15 federal minimum wage, labor law reform and a path to freedom from personal debt and fossil fuels. Democrats fear that Mr. Biden's plummeting approval ratings and the party's losses in the November elections indicate that the Republicans will take back Congress in the midterms.

No president, however, achieves his entire agenda. And presidents have suffered first-term losses greater than those currently anticipated for 2022.

The real cause of the unease about Mr. Biden lies elsewhere. There is a sense that however large his spending bills may be, they come nowhere near to solving the problems they are meant to address. There is also a sense that however much in control of the federal government progressives may be, the right is still calling the shots.

The first point is inarguable, especially when it comes to climate change and inequality. The second point is questionable, but it can find confirmation in everything from a conservative Supreme Court supermajority to the right's ability to unleash one debilitating culture war after another -- and in the growing fear that Republicans will ride back into the halls of power and slam the doors of democracy behind them, maybe forever.

There's a sense of stuckness, in other words, that no amount of social spending or policy innovation can seem to dislodge. The question is: Why?

A prisoner of great expectations

Though it came out in 1993, Stephen Skowronek's ''The Politics Presidents Make'' helps us understand how Mr. Biden has become a prisoner of great expectations.

American politics is punctuated by the rise and fall of political orders or regimes. In each regime, one party, whether in power or not, dominates the field. Its ideas and interests define the landscape, forcing the opposition to accept its terms. Dwight Eisenhower may have been a Republican, but he often spoke in the cadences of the New Deal. Mr. Clinton voiced Reaganite hosannas to the market.

Regimes persist across decades. The Jeffersonian regime lasted from 1800 to 1828; the Jacksonian regime, from 1828 to 1860; the Republican regime, from 1860 to 1932; the New Deal order, from 1932 to 1980.

Reagan's market regime of deference to the white and the wealthy has outlasted two Democratic presidencies and may survive a third. We see its presence in high returns to the rich and low wages for work, continents of the economy cordoned off from democratic control and resegregated neighborhoods and schools. Corporations are viewed, by liberals, as more advanced reformers of structural racism than parties and laws, and tech billionaires are seen as saviors of the planet.

Eventually, however, regimes grow brittle. Their ideology no longer speaks to the questions of the day; important interests lose pride of place; the opposition refuses to accept the leading party and its values.

Every president presides over a regime that is either resilient or vulnerable. That is his situation. When Eisenhower was elected, the New Deal was strong; when Jimmy Carter was elected, it was weak. Every president is affiliated or opposed to the regime. That is his story. James Knox Polk sought to extend the slavocracy, Abraham Lincoln to end it. The situation and the story are the keys to the president's power -- or powerlessness.

When the president is aligned with a strong regime, he has considerable authority, as Lyndon Johnson realized when he expanded the New Deal with the Great Society. When the president is opposed to a strong regime, he has less authority, as Mr. Obama recognized when he tried to get a public option in the Affordable Care Act. When the president is aligned with a weak regime, he has the least authority, as everyone from John Adams to Mr. Carter was forced to confront. When the president is opposed to a weak regime, he has the greatest authority, as Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Lincoln, Roosevelt and Reagan discovered. These presidents, whom Mr. Skowronek calls reconstructive, can reorder the political universe.

All presidents are transformative actors. With each speech and every action, they make or unmake the regime. Sometimes, they do both at the same time: Johnson reportedly declared that with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Democrats had lost the South for a generation, thereby setting the stage for the unraveling of the New Deal.

What distinguishes reconstructive presidents from other presidents, even the most transformative like Johnson, is that their words and deeds have a binding effect on their successors from both parties. They create the language that all serious contestants for power must speak. They construct political institutions and social realities that cannot be easily dismantled. They build coalitions that provide lasting support to the regime. Alexander Hamilton thought every president would ''reverse and undo what has been done by a predecessor.'' Reconstructive presidents do that -- in fact, they reverse and undo the work of many predecessors -- but they also ensure that their heirs cannot.

Politics is not physics. A president opposed to the established order may seek to topple it, only to discover that it is too resilient or that his troops are too feeble and lacking in fight. Where we are in political time -- whether we are in a reconstructive moment, ripe for reordering, or not -- cannot be known in advance. The weakness or strength of a regime, and of the opposition to the regime, is revealed in the contest against it.

What is certain is that the president is both creature and creator of the political world around him. Therein lies Mr. Biden's predicament.

The language of reconstruction

Heading into the 2020 Democratic primaries, many people thought we might be in a reconstructive moment. I was one of them. There was a popular insurgency from the left, heralding the coming of a new New Deal. It culminated in the Nevada caucus, where people of color and young voters -- an emergent multiracial ***working class*** -- put Bernie Sanders over the top, ready to move the political order to the left.

There also were signs that the Reagan regime was vulnerable. Donald Trump's candidacy in 2016 suggested that conservative orthodoxies of slashing Social Security and Medicare and waging imperial warfare no longer compelled voters. Mr. Trump's presidency revealed a congressional G.O.P. that could not unite around a program beyond tax cuts and right-wing judges.

As a candidate, Mr. Biden rejected the transformation Mr. Sanders promised and assured wealthy donors that ''nothing would fundamentally change'' on his watch. Yet there were signs, after he won the nomination and into the early months of his administration, of a new, ''transformational'' Mr. Biden who wanted to be the next F.D.R. The combination of the Covid economy, with its shocking inequalities and market failures, and a summer of fire and flood seemed to authorize a left-leaning politics of permanent cash supports to workers and families, increased taxes on the rich to fund radical expansions of health care, elder care and child care, and comprehensive investments in green energy and infrastructure, with high-paying union jobs.

Most important, the package cohered. Instead of a laundry list of gripes and grievances, it featured the consistent items of an alternative ideology and ascendant set of social interests. It promised to replace a sclerotic order that threatens to bury us all with a new order of common life. This was that rare moment when the most partisan of claims can sound like a reasonable defense of the whole.

Yet while Mr. Biden has delivered nearly $3 trillion in spending, with another $1.5 trillion to $2 trillion likely to pass, he has not created a new order. In addition to a transformation of the economy, such an order would require a spate of democracy reforms -- the elimination of the filibuster and curbing of partisan gerrymandering, the addition of new states to the union, and national protection of voting rights and electoral procedures -- as well as labor law reforms, enabling workers to form unions.

What makes such reforms reconstructive rather than a wish list of good works is that they shift the relations of power and interest, making other regime-building projects possible. Today's progressive agenda is hobbled less by a lack of popular support than by the outsize leverage conservatives possess -- in the Senate, which privileges white voters in sparsely populated, often rural states; in the federal structure of our government, which enables states to make it difficult for Black Americans to vote; and in the courts, whose right-wing composition has been shaped by two Republican presidents elected by a minority of the voters. No progressive agenda can be enacted and maintained unless these deformations are addressed.

The only way to overcome anti-democratic forces is by seeding democracy throughout society, empowering workers to take collective action in the workplace and the polity, and by securing democracy at the level of the state. That is what the great emblems of a reconstructive presidency -- the 14th Amendment, which granted Black Americans citizenship, or the Wagner Act, which liberated workers from the tyranny of employers -- are meant to do. They give popular energy institutional form, turning temporary measures of an insurgent majority into long-term transformations of policy and practice.

It's not clear that Mr. Biden wants such a reconstruction. And even if he did, it's not clear that he could deliver it.

What is stopping Biden?

The forces arrayed against a reconstruction are many.

The first is the Republican Party. Here the party has benefited less from the ''authoritarian'' turn of Mr. Trump than from the fact that the Trump presidency was so constrained. As Mr. Skowronek argues, ''Nothing exposes a hollow consensus faster than the exercise of presidential power.'' At critical moments, exercising power was precisely what Mr. Trump was not able to do.

Confronting the free fall of the New Deal, Mr. Carter unleashed a stunning strike of neoliberal and neoconservative measures: deregulation of entire industries; appointment of the anti-labor Paul Volcker to the Fed; a military buildup; and renewed confrontation with the Soviet Union. These defied his party's orthodoxies and unraveled its coalition. Reagan ended the New Deal regime, but Mr. Carter prepared the way.

For all his talk of opposition to the Republican pooh-bahs, Mr. Trump delivered what they wanted most -- tax cuts, deregulation and judges -- and suffered defeat when he tried to break out of their vise. Republicans repeatedly denied him funds to support his immigration plans. They overrode his veto of their military spending bill, something Congress had not been able to do in the Carter, Reagan, Clinton, George W. Bush and Obama administrations. Mr. Trump's own administration defied his Russia policy. This combination of weakness and deference to the G.O.P. helped keep the Republicans -- and the Reagan regime -- together.

The second obstacle is the Democratic Party. There's a reason party elites, led by Mr. Obama, swiftly closed ranks, when the time came, behind Mr. Biden and against Mr. Sanders. They wanted continuity, not rupture.

Likewise a portion of the base. Many Democrats are older, with long memories and strong fears of what happens when liberals turn left (they lose). Newer recruits, who gave Mr. Biden the edge in some key districts, usually in the suburbs, are what the Princeton historian Matt Karp calls ''Halliburton Democrats,'' wealthy defectors from the Republican Party.

''A regime is only as vulnerable as the political forces challenging it are robust,'' writes Mr. Skowronek. That robustness is yet to be demonstrated. Despite the clarity of the path the Democrats must take if they hope to topple the Reagan order, it's not clear the party wants to take it.

The third obstacle to a Biden reconstruction is what Mr. Skowronek calls the ''institutional thickening'' of American politics. Since the founding era, the American political system has acquired a global economy, with the dollar as the world's currency; a government bureaucracy and imperial military; a dense ecology of media technologies; and armies of party activists. While these forces offer the modern president resources that Jefferson never had, they also empower the modern-day equivalents of Jefferson's opponents to resist a reconstruction. Should Mr. Biden attempt one, could he master the masters of social media? Mr. Trump tried and was banned from Twitter.

The real institutions that get in the way of Mr. Biden and the Democrats, however, are not these latter-day additions of modernity but the most ancient features of the American state.

The power of Senators Manchin and Sinema is an artifact of the constitutional design of the Senate and the narrowness of the Democratic majority, which itself reflects the fact that the institution was created to defend slave states rather than popular majorities. Their power is augmented by the centuries-old filibuster, which has forced Mr. Biden to jam many programs into one vaguely named reconciliation bill. That prevents him from picking off individual Republicans for pieces of legislation they might support (as he did with the infrastructure bill).

Should the Republicans take the House in 2022, it will probably not be because of Tucker Carlson but because of gerrymandering. Should the Republicans take back the White House in 2024, it will probably be because of some combination of the Electoral College and the control that our federalist system grants to states over their electoral procedures.

A polarized electorate divided into red and blue states is not novel; it was a hallmark of the last Gilded Age, which put the brakes on the possibility of a presidential reconstruction for decades. As the political scientist E.E. Schattschneider argued, the division of the country into the Republican North and Democratic South made the entire polity ''extremely conservative because one-party politics tends strongly to vest political power in the hands of people who already have economic power.''

How do we move past Reagan?

Every reconstructive president must confront vestiges of the old regime. The slavocracy evaded Lincoln's grasp by seceding; the Supreme Court repeatedly thwarted F.D.R. Yet they persisted. How?

What each of these presidents had at their back was an independent social movement. Behind Lincoln marched the largest democratic mass movement for abolition in modern history. Alongside F.D.R. stood the unions. Each of these movements had their own institutions. Each of them was disruptive, upending the leadership and orthodoxies of the existing parties. Each of them was prepared to do battle against the old regime. And battle they did.

Social movements deliver votes to friendly politicians and stiffen their backs. More important, they take political arguments out of legislative halls and press them in private spaces of power. They suspend our delicate treaties of social peace, creating turbulence in hierarchical institutions like the workplace and the family. Institutions like these need the submission of subordinate to superior. By withholding their cooperation, subordinates can stop the everyday work of society. They exercise a kind of power that presidents do not possess but that they can use. That is why, after Lincoln's election, Frederick Douglass called the abolitionist masses ''the power behind the throne.''

An independent social movement is what Mr. Biden does not have. Until he or a successor does, we may be waiting on a reconstruction that is ready to be made but insufficiently desired.

Corey Robin is a distinguished professor of political science at Brooklyn College and the City University of New York Graduate Center. He is the author of ''The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism From Edmund Burke to Donald Trump'' and ''The Enigma of Clarence Thomas.''

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**Graphic**

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

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[***Analyzing Technology, and Now Herself***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623X-0361-DXY4-X278-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 1, 2021 Monday

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

**Length:** 1439 words

**Byline:** By Casey Schwartz

**Body**

Sherry Turkle is best known for exploring the dysfunctional relationships between humans and their screens. She takes on a new focus -- herself -- in her memoir, ''The Empathy Diaries.''

In the spring of 1977, when Sherry Turkle was a young professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Steve Jobs came to visit. While he toured the campus and met with her colleagues, Turkle was cleaning her apartment and worrying over the menu for the dinner she had agreed to host.

It took nearly 50 years, when she was writing her memoir, ''The Empathy Diaries,'' for her to realize how angry that incident made her. She was at the beginning of her career chronicling how technology influences our lives, yet wasn't asked to join her colleagues as they spent the day with the co-founder of Apple.

''Why not me?'' she said in a video interview last month. It has taken her decades to come to that question, and it reflects her desire to turn the ethnographer's gaze inward, to examine herself the way she has long studied her subjects. That is central to her new book, she said: ''Here is the practical application of what it means to have a conversation with yourself.''

Turkle, 72, is big on conversation. In her 2015 book, ''Reclaiming Conversation,'' she argues that talking to each other, having an old-fashioned voice-to-voice exchange, is a powerful antidote to life on screens. A licensed clinical psychologist who holds joint doctorates in psychology and sociology from Harvard, she scrutinizes what our relationship with technology reveals about us, about what we feel is missing from our lives, what we fantasize technology can supply.

Her daughter, Rebecca Sherman, said that she and her friends occasionally became the subjects for her mother's roving inquiries. For example, when is it considered acceptable, while dining out, to look at your phone? It was Sherman, 29, and her friends who explained to Turkle the ''rule of three'': As long as at least three other people were engaged in the conversation, it was OK to disappear (temporarily) into a screen.

''The Empathy Diaries,'' which Penguin Press is publishing on March 2, traces Turkle's progression from a ***working-class*** Brooklyn childhood to tenured professor at M.I.T. In the first years of her life, she lived in a one-bedroom apartment with her mother, aunt and grandparents. She slept on a cot between her grandparents' twin beds. Her father was almost entirely absent.

Her family couldn't afford tickets to High Holy Days at the local synagogue, so they instead dressed up and greeted their neighbors on the temple steps, careful to imply they would be attending services somewhere else. But they recognized Turkle's intelligence and didn't ask her to help with the housework, preferring she sat and read. Years later, when she graduated from Radcliffe on scholarship, her grandfather was in attendance.

Turkle also writes about the relationships that shaped her. One of them was with her stepfather, Milton Turkle, whose arrival interrupted Turkle's early living arrangement and whose name her mother instructed her to take as her own -- and never reveal to her classmates or her younger siblings that she had been born the daughter of somebody else. Her own father was rarely spoken of, his very name a taboo.

''I was turned into an outsider, who could see that things were not always what they seemed, because I was not always what I seemed,'' Turkle said.

When Turkle first began to publish and achieve recognition, she was asked personal questions, the kind of questions she had asked of her subjects. But she blanched. She was still carrying her mother's secret, the secret of her real name, years after her mother had died. So when she was in the public eye, she insisted that the personal was off limits, that she would only comment on her work, despite the fact that one of the arguments animating her work is that thought and feeling are inseparable, the work and the person behind the work entwined. She remembers that moment well: shutting down when asked to reveal who she really was.

''That really began my journey and the arc of my beginning that conversation with myself,'' she said.

But Turkle has long had an interest in memoirs, and she teaches a class on the subject at M.I.T. She was struck that scientists, engineers and designers often presented their work in purely intellectual terms, when, in conversation, ''they're impassioned by their lives, impassioned by their childhood, impassioned by a stone they found on the beach that got them thinking,'' she said. ''Everything about my research when I started interviewing scientists showed that their life's work was lit up by the objects, the people, the relationships, that brought them to their work.''

Part of her motivation for teaching the course, she added, was to prompt her students into seeing their work and lives as connected. And she set out specifically to unite the two strands when she sat down to write her own memoir.

In her book, Turkle describes being denied tenure at M.I.T., a decision she fought and successfully reversed. She can laugh about it now (''What does a good woman have to do to get a job around here?''), but she felt marked by the experience.

Her colleague of nearly 50 years, Kenneth Manning, remembers the episode well. Turkle was ''brilliant and creative'' he said, but ''she was bringing a whole new approach to looking at the computer culture, and she was coming from a psychoanalytic background. People didn't quite understand that.'' When he threw her a party to celebrate her tenure, some colleagues didn't attend, he said.

Turkle now functions as a kind of ''in-house critic,'' as she imagines her colleagues might see her, writing about technology and its discontents from within an institution where technology is part of the name. ''As her work has become more critical of the digital, there are certainly many elements at M.I.T. who have been dissatisfied with that, of course,'' said David Thorburn, a literature professor at M.I.T.

The title of her new book reflects one of Turkle's preoccupations. As we disappear into our lives onscreen, spending less time in reflective solitude, and less time in real-life conversation with others, empathy, as Turkle sees it, is one of the casualties. The word, which she defines as ''the ability not only to put yourself in someone else's place, but to put yourself in someone else's problem,'' is not only a concern for Turkle, it is a kind of specialty: She has even been called in as a one-woman emergency empathy squad by a school where teachers had noticed that with the proliferation of screens, their students seemed less and less able to put themselves in another point of view.

One of Turkle's hopes for this particular moment is that the pandemic has afforded us a view of one another's problems and vulnerabilities in a way we might not have had as much access to before. In the first months of lockdown, Turkle moved her M.I.T. classes onto Zoom. ''You could see where everyone lived,'' she said. ''It opened up a conversation about the disparities in what our situations were. Something that a 'college experience' hides.''

In many ways, Turkle believes that the pandemic is a ''liminal'' time, in the phrasing of the writer and anthropologist Victor Turner, a time in which we are ''betwixt and between,'' a catastrophe with a built-in opportunity to reinvent. ''In these liminal periods are these possibilities for change,'' she said. ''I think we are living through a time, both in our social lives but also in how we deal with our technology, where we are willing to think of very different ways of behaving.''

Turkle isn't opposed to technology. She ''proudly'' watches a lot of TV and loves writing on her extra-small MacBook, the kind they don't make anymore. But she resists the lure of internet-enabled rabbit holes. ''I am so aware of how I am being manipulated by the screen, and I am so uninterested in talking to Alexa and Siri,'' she said.

She has spent most of the past year at her house in Provincetown, Mass., and so it is inevitable that Henry David Thoreau comes up. The naturalist and philosopher once famously walked the 25 miles of beach connecting Provincetown to the tip of Cape Cod.

''You know, Thoreau, his big thing wasn't about being alone,'' Turkle said. ''His big thing was: I want to live deliberately. I think we have an opportunity with technology to live deliberately.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/books/sherry-turkle-empathy-diaries.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/books/sherry-turkle-empathy-diaries.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Empathy, as Sherry Turkle thinks of it, is ''the ability not only to put yourself in someone else's place, but to put yourself in someone else's problem.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY JUSTIN KANEPS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C1)

Top, Sherry Turkle and her grandfather during her doctoral graduation in 1976. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA SHERRY TURKLE) (C6)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2021

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[***Feeding Hate With Video***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62FP-J141-DXY4-X3N0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 16, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1639 words

**Byline:** By Cade Metz

**Body**

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In 2018, a far-right activist, Tommy Robinson, posted a video to YouTube claiming he had been attacked by an African migrant in Rome.

The thumbnail image and eight-word title promoting the video indicated Mr. Robinson was assaulted by a Black man outside a train station. Then, in the video, Mr. Robinson punched the man in the jaw, dropping him to the ground.

The video was viewed more than 2.8 million times, and it prompted news stories across the right-wing tabloids in Britain, where Mr. Robinson was rapidly gaining notoriety for his anti-immigrant and anti-Islamic views.

For Caolan Robertson -- a filmmaker who worked for Mr. Robinson and helped create the video -- it was an instructional moment. It showed the key ingredients needed to attract attention on YouTube and other social media services.

The video played into anti-immigrant sentiments in Britain and across Europe. It also focused squarely on conflict, cutting rapidly between shouts and shoves before showing Mr. Robinson's punch. It also misrepresented what had actually happened.

''We would choose the most dramatic moment -- or fake it and make it look more dramatic,'' Mr. Robertson, 25, said in a recent interview. ''We realized that if we wanted a future on YouTube, it had to be driven by confrontation. Every time we did that kind of thing, it would explode well beyond anything else.''

Mr. Robertson would go on to produce videos for a who's who of right-wing YouTube personalities on both sides of the Atlantic, including Lauren Southern, Stefan Molyneux and Alex Jones.

The videos were tailored for the ''echo chamber'' that is often created by social media networks like YouTube. To keep you watching, YouTube serves up videos similar to those you have watched before. But the longer someone watches, the more extreme the videos can become.

''It can create these very radical people who are like gurus,'' said Guillaume Chaslot, a former YouTube engineer who has been critical of the way the company's algorithms pushed people to extreme content. ''In terms of watch time, a guru is wonderful.''

Tech companies, regulators and individuals across the globe are struggling to understand and control the enormous power of YouTube and other social media services. In 2019, YouTube made ''important changes to how we recommend videos and prevent the spread of misinformation and hateful content,'' Farshad Shadloo, a spokesman for the company, said in a statement. It barred Mr. Molyneaux and Mr. Jones. But extreme videos continue to spread.

In time, Mr. Robertson said, he realized that the videos he worked on stoked dangerous hatred. And in 2019, at a conference in Britain run by a left-wing newspaper, The Byline Times, Mr. Robertson distanced himself from his work with the far right. His change of heart was met with some skepticism.

''He was presented as a prodigal son,'' said Louise Raw, an antifascist activist who was onstage for Mr. Robertson's mea culpa. ''But he has not been held to account.''

Now, Mr. Robertson is detailing the ways he and his collaborators searched for confrontations to gain popularity on YouTube.

Efforts to contact Mr. Robinson were unsuccessful, and Mr. Jones did not respond to multiple requests for comment. Ms. Southern said she should not be described as a far-right activist, saying she is merely a conservative. She was not involved in ''some horrible far-right grift that tried to deceive people into watching our content,'' she added. ''We were just doing what any other YouTuber does.''

Raw footage of the episode in Rome, provided by Mr. Robertson and reviewed by The New York Times, shows that the YouTube video was edited to give the false impression that Mr. Robinson was threatened. The full footage shows he was the aggressor.

When the man noticed he was being filmed from across the street, he approached the camera, and Mr. Robinson shoved him into an oncoming car. As the man protested, called Mr. Robinson crazy and told him to live his own life, Mr. Robinson escalated the argument.

''There's one way this is going to go,'' he told the man. ''You're going to end up knocked down unconscious.''

Over the more than two years he helped produce and publish videos for Mr. Robinson and others, Mr. Robertson learned how making clever edits and focusing on confrontation could help draw millions of views on YouTube and other services. He also learned how YouTube's recommendation algorithm often nudged people toward extreme videos.

''It meant that we did more and more extreme videos,'' Mr. Robertson said.

Mr. Robertson grew up in Ireland, and after his parents divorced, he moved with his father to a predominantly ***working-class*** area in the north of England. Realizing from a very young age that he is gay, he often felt like an outsider. But he said he encountered more overt homophobia when he moved to London for college and walked through the largely Muslim neighborhoods at the East End of the city.

After the 2016 shooting at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Fla. -- where a Muslim man pledging loyalty to the Islamic State killed 49 people and wounded 53 more -- Mr. Robertson developed an extreme animosity toward Muslims, particularly immigrants. His anger was fueled in large part, he said, by videos he watched on YouTube.

He began watching videos from mainstream outlets, like an episode of the HBO show ''Real Time With Bill Maher'' in which Sam Harris, an author and a podcast host, advocated greater criticism of Muslim beliefs. YouTube's recommendation algorithm suggested more-extreme videos involving personalities like Mr. Robinson, a former member of the neo-fascist and white nationalist British National Party who was born Stephen Yaxley-Lennon.

In 2017, Mr. Robertson contacted Mr. Robinson and soon began working with him as a video producer. By the end of the year, he was also collaborating with Ms. Southern, an activist from Canada.

Knowing what garnered the most attention on YouTube, Mr. Robertson said, he and Ms. Southern would devise public appearances meant to generate conflict. That December, they attended a women's march in London and, with Ms. Southern playing the part of a television reporter, approached each woman with the same four-word question: ''Women's rights or Islam?''

They often received a confused, measured or polite response, according to Mr. Robertson. They continued to ask the question and sharpened it. Ms. Southern, for example, said it would be difficult for Muslim women to answer the question because their husbands wouldn't let them attend the march. That caused anger to build in the crowd.

''It appears in the videos that we are just trying to figure out what is going on, gather information, understand people,'' Mr. Robertson said. ''But really, we were trying to find the most incendiary way of making them mad.''

The thumbnail image for the YouTube video was indicative of a confrontation: a woman screaming as Ms. Southern walked away. As he often did, Mr. Robertson sharpened the video's visual contrast -- lightening the white colors and darkening the blacks -- to subtly make the scene seem more dramatic.

Ms. Southern described the situation differently. ''We asked the question because we knew it was going to force people to question their own political views and realize the contradiction in being a hard-core feminist but also supporting a religion that, quite frankly, has questionable practices around women,'' she said. And, she added, they used video techniques that any media company would use.

The next year, Mr. Robertson and Ms. Southern traveled as far as South Africa, Australia and New Zealand to create similar videos. Over the lifetime of Ms. Southern's YouTube channel, according to channel statistics reviewed by The Times, her videos were viewed over 63 million times.

More than 71 percent of people who viewed these videos had not subscribed to her YouTube channel. In 2018, at the height of her popularity, at least 30 percent of the views occurred after the videos were automatically recommended to the viewer by YouTube's algorithms.

Mr. Molyneux shied away from the kind of conflict that Ms. Southern embraced. He fashioned himself as an online philosopher. But the material Mr. Robertson edited slipped in ''far-right ideas that appealed to the ethnonationalists -- the extreme right-wing audience,'' he said.

In 2018, the pair traveled to Poland for a video that painted the country as a place free of hardship and strife. The subtext was that it was because Poland is predominantly white. In an email to The Times, Mr. Molyneux said, ''It was nice being in a country wherein I didn't have to hire protective security.'' He added that he felt the same way when he visited Hong Kong.

By early 2019, Mr. Robertson said, he grew disillusioned. There was a noticeable drop in traffic on Ms. Southern's YouTube channel. Around the same time, YouTube began to remove more videos the company thought encouraged violence and spread misinformation.

After an Australian man killed 51 people at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand -- driven in part by anti-immigrant beliefs propagated by YouTube -- Mr. Robertson realized, he said, that the videos he had made led to the same kind of violence in the Orlando nightclub in 2016.

''I felt like I had gone full circle that day,'' he said.

Now, Mr. Robertson oversees Byline TV, a video offshoot of The Byline Times. He also runs a new organization, Future Freedom, which seeks to de-radicalize right-wing extremists. He is still counting YouTube views.

Mr. Robertson recently boasted in a text that in one day a video targeting Mr. Jones, the conspiracy theorist he once worked with, had been viewed over 250,000 times.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Caolan Robertson once produced videos for a who's who of the far right, but he has since come to regret his role in the rise of online extremism. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX INGRAM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B1)

A video showing Tommy Robinson, above, punching a migrant was viewed 2.8 million times. YouTube routinely recommended Lauren Southern's videos. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GUY SMALLMAN/GETTY IMAGES

JOSH EDELSON/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES) (B5)

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[***Social Justice Warrior***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61NS-J0M1-DXY4-X02R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 3, 2021 Sunday

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**Length:** 1495 words

**Byline:** By Francesca Wade

**Body**

SYLVIA PANKHURST Natural Born RebelBy Rachel Holmes

On Jan. 5, 1921, Sylvia Pankhurst stood in the witness stand at London's Guildhall and reminded the court that, as her biographer Rachel Holmes puts it, she had ''faced death many times for her beliefs.'' Arrested at the offices of the newspaper she ran, on suspicion of inciting sedition, Pankhurst, then 38, appeared with a red carnation in her buttonhole, and held the court's attention for 90 minutes as she told the story of her life -- a tale spanning her upbringing in Manchester as the daughter of feminist reformists whose social circle encompassed American abolitionists, Hindu nationalists and founding members of the Labour Party; her early ambition to paint; her winning a scholarship to the Royal College of Art; and her 13 prison sentences as a suffragist, during which she was subjected to force-feeding and solitary confinement in cramped cells infested with vermin.

Reproaching her accusers, Pankhurst insisted that ''it is wrong that people like you should be comfortable and well fed, while all around you people are starving.'' Her appeal was unsuccessful, and she returned to Holloway prison, condemned to cleaning tasks while members of the Women's Suffrage Federation kept her spirits up by gathering to sing outside the prison gates. ''Why,'' wrote her parents' friend George Bernard Shaw somewhat patronizingly, ''didn't you make up your mind to keep out of prison instead of persistently breaking into it?''

Holmes's mammoth biography, ''Sylvia Pankhurst: Natural Born Rebel,'' positions Pankhurst as ''a free spirit and a visionary,'' a modern political thinker deeply attuned to the intersections among oppressions rooted in gender, class and race. Although her mother, Emmeline, became Britain's most famous suffragist, it was from her father, Richard, with whose death Holmes opens her book, that Sylvia derived her lifelong commitment to ''an equalitarian society, in which by mutual aid and service, there should be abundance for all to satisfy material and spiritual needs.''

[ Read an excerpt from ''Sylvia Pankhurst.'' ]

While her mother and sister Christabel supported World War I, never campaigned for universal suffrage and renounced their links with the trade union movement -- Emmeline would (disingenuously) deny that the Women's Social and Political Union, founded in the family's parlor in 1903, had begun in affiliation with the Labour Party -- Sylvia, a socialist and pacifist, always believed ''in the necessary conjoining of the economic and political struggle of women and the ***working class***.'' Her consistent opposition to legislation that would offer the vote to only a limited number of property-owning women caused serious ruptures within the family and led to Sylvia's expulsion from the W.S.P.U. Undeterred, she dedicated herself to work in London's impoverished East End, organizing factory workers and campaigning for maternal health care.

After numerous historical, fictional and cinematic treatments, the story of the suffragist movement is familiar, though always captivating: plucky women smuggling themselves into Westminster in furniture removal vans, chaining themselves to railings and smashing windows. But Sylvia Pankhurst's work for equal rights extended far beyond votes for women. Her life's project lay in a fight against fascism, imperialism and racism, insisting, in Holmes's words, on the value of ''principled and powerful collective protest as the only channel available to those systematically excluded from power.''

Holmes, the author of several other books, including a biography of Eleanor Marx, charts Pankhurst's attempts, following the Russian Revolution of 1917, to transform British socialism and set up a communist party in her own country (a subsequent falling-out with Lenin didn't stop her from being arrested multiple times on suspicion of working for the Soviet government). Of most lasting significance, personally as well as politically, were her staunch opposition to Mussolini -- even when many in Britain were courting his favor -- and, especially, her work on behalf of Ethiopian independence. In her 70s, she emigrated to Addis Ababa with her son, Richard Keir Pethick Pankhurst, and his wife; when she died there in 1960, she received a full state funeral, and a bustling thoroughfare was renamed Sylvia Pankhurst Street. She dedicated her magisterial cultural history of the country to Haile Selassie, her close ally; he assured her that her ''unceasing efforts and support in the just cause of Ethiopia will never be forgotten.''

At more than 900 pages, Holmes's book is packed with detail, but marred by so much repetition that the reader is left with the impression of a vast amount of material not fully marshaled into narrative form. At times, her paragraphs feel like notes hastily compiled and not fully digested; moments of high drama are interrupted by digressions that leave the reader grasping to fillet meaning from a barrage of information. Holmes's writing is prone to sweeping overstatement -- ''in sum, Richard Pankhurst was the living incarnation of every pioneering, radical Victorian cause''; his daughter is ''possessed of almost magical reserves of optimism, hope and the physical and emotional energy required to support them'' -- and replete with clichés: Talents are ''rare,'' storms ''threaten to break,'' speeches are ''barnstorming'' and activists' souls are ''made of such stern stuff.'' The word ''radical'' is so overused as to lose all meaning, applied to everything from the views of W. E. B. Du Bois to an English folk ballad, from Mancunian socialism to a vegetarian restaurant.

Despite its length, Holmes's book tends to skate over opportunities for psychological insight into its subject, in particular her personal relationships. Potentially seismic quarrels tend to be reported then resolved in the space of a few lines, with little attention paid to the erosions and ambivalences that shape dynamics over a lifetime of shared experience. We're tantalized by the promise of ''an intense period of explicit love letters'' exchanged in 1911 between Sylvia and Keir Hardie, the first leader of the Labour Party, but when these are eventually quoted, what Holmes promoted as ''sexually explicit longing, separation anxieties and profound reflection on the nature and quality of their bond'' turns out to consist mostly of opaque dreams and avowals of socialism as ''the cure for all ills.'' Holmes assures us that theirs was ''a fully fledged love affair, passionate, ecstatic and tormented,'' but doesn't really interrogate the effects on Sylvia's self-esteem of a relationship with a man 26 years her senior who seems never to have considered leaving his wife. We learn even less about her ''soul mate,'' Silvio Corio, an exiled Italian anarchist with whom she had her son, beyond the fact that ''their commonality was the desire to try and make the world a better place.''

Tensions with Emmeline and Christabel -- Sylvia's ''personal political tragedy'' -- feel particularly underexplored. Emmeline comes across as formidably capricious, constantly favoring Christabel to the sadness and bewilderment of her younger daughters; when Sylvia, though unmarried, became pregnant, her mother refused to see her, and lamented that she continued to use the family name. A friend of Emmeline's wrote that ''Mrs. Pankhurst died of chagrin -- of pain and horror at the disgrace brought on her name by that disgusting Bolshie daughter of hers.'' In a biography of her mother that she published in 1936, Sylvia omitted to mention how hurt she had felt; Holmes briefly describes the book as ''surprisingly even-toned,'' but it would be fascinating to linger in the mind-set of the biographer daughter, creating in her writing the supportive maternal relationship that she herself had been denied.

Nonetheless, no book on Sylvia Pankhurst could fail to pass on an exhilarating story. Pankhurst took on the 20th century both as participant and observer. She was an indefatigable activist, but also a journalist, who traveled -- often in perilous conditions -- across Europe, America and Africa to report on the dangers of fascism, the suppression of workers' rights, the degradation of women, the folly of any system that imposed difference over commonality. Holmes positions Pankhurst as a spiritual ancestor to ''teen radicals'' of today such as Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg. The continued relevance of her life story needs no such justification. Asked how she might like to be remembered, Pankhurst wrote that she had ''never deserted a cause in its days of adversity. ... When victory for any cause came, she had little leisure to rejoice, none to rest; she had always some other objective in view.''Francesca Wade is the author of ''Square Haunting: Five Writers in London Between the Wars.''SYLVIA PANKHURST Natural Born RebelBy Rachel HolmesIllustrated. 949 pp. Bloomsbury. $40.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/books/review/sylvia-pankhurst-rachel-holmes.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/books/review/sylvia-pankhurst-rachel-holmes.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Sylvia Pankhurst, 1912. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** January 3, 2021

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[***A Ridiculously Optimistic History of the Next Decade***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XWN-TN11-DXY4-X2VV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 2, 2020 Thursday 19:21 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 984 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** A fantasy of what could come true.

**Body**

A fantasy of what could come true.

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Trump cried fraud and tried to whip up his followers, but they turned their backs. He went from idol to scapegoat in an instant. It seemed they could forgive him everything but losing. Many temporarily retreated from political life, the way evangelical Christians did after the ignominy of the Scopes trial.

President Joe Biden faced an interesting dynamic in his party. The political power was with moderates. The intellectual power was with the left. People of color, whose views were largely more moderate, became the crucial swing faction.

As president, Biden resisted the interest groups that wanted him to address health care first. Instead, he did child and earned-income tax credits, infrastructure, expanded early childhood education, expanded prison reform, and so on — what some writers called “reparations by any other name.” He gave regulatory czar Elizabeth Warren a special portfolio to take on Big Tech.

The major events of the decade were cultural, not political. The Trump era had witnessed a crisis of connection at the bottom of society and a crisis of authority at the top. Social repair was the top order of the day once a new president took office.

The first whiff of the cultural restoration was the “Accountability Clubs” that spread across the nation’s campuses. College students realized that America stinks at accountability. Either there is no accountability (Wall Street after the financial crisis) or people have their lives destroyed for a “problematic” tweet.

The Accountability Clubs bore the motto “Truth and Mercy.” Students wanted to restore a culture in which facts mattered. They were also searching for a way to judge others in a graduated and humane manner, allowing for repentance, forgiveness and restoration. Marshall McLuhan once remarked that “moral indignation is a technique used to endow an idiot with dignity.” Suddenly indignation, the keystone emotion of the Trump years, was lame. Empathy made a comeback.

The second cultural trend of the decade was the rise of the urban church. Suburban megachurch attendance fell, because the pastors had disgraced themselves under Trump. But suddenly there was a surge in church plants in places like Brooklyn, Washington, D.C., Chicago and San Francisco, as highly educated people found homes for their spiritual longings.

The churches were liturgically highly charismatic (Bethel music) and highly universalistic and intellectual (Richard Rohr). Their politics were an odd mix — pro-L.G.B.T.Q., pro-life, active on climate change, pro-animal rights (one of the signature moral causes of the decade). The religious left gained on the religious right.

At the same time, the racial justice conversation went intimate. America is involved in a multigenerational process of truth and reconciliation. In the teens, the truth-telling had generally revolved around historic events — slavery, lynching, redlining. In the 2020s, a series of writers, artists and directors gave us vivid descriptions of the subtleties of contemporary black life.

The profusion of video streaming networks allowed a new generation of artists to take audiences inside the psychological lives of people of color. These artists realized that structural change would happen when people learned to see one another whole.

The most important cultural change came to be known as the Civic Renaissance. During the first two decades of the century, hundreds of thousands of new civic organizations came into being — healing political divides, fighting homelessness, promoting social mobility and weaving communities. But these organizations were small. They did not grow into the big national chapter-based structures that had repaired America’s social fabric a century earlier — the Y.M.C.A., the Rotary, the Boy Scouts.

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Meanwhile, the American political system began to work better. The G.O.P. re-emerged under Josh Hawley and Marco Rubio as a better version of a ***working-class*** party — socially right, economically left. Democrats remained dominant through the decade. Their party’s biggest accomplishment was in foreign affairs — the repair of America’s alliances and the restoration of global American leadership.

Americans were more collaborative in the 2020s. And the New York Mets won the World Series every single year.

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PHOTO: People celebrated the beginning of a new decade in Times Square on New Year’s Eve. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ben Hider/Invision, via Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***An Optimistic History of the Next Decade***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XWX-8NP1-DXY4-X11B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 3, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 957 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: People celebrated the beginning of a new decade in Times Square on New Year's Eve. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ben Hider/Invision, via Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Feeding Hate With Video: A Former Alt-Right YouTuber Explains His Methods***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62FJ-0DW1-DXY4-X365-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 15, 2021 Thursday 16:19 EST

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**Section:** TECHNOLOGY

**Length:** 1676 words

**Byline:** Cade Metz

**Highlight:** Focus on conflict. Feed the algorithm. Make sure whatever you produce reinforces a narrative. Don’t worry if it is true.

**Body**

In 2018, a [*far-right activist, Tommy Robinson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/22/world/europe/tommy-robinson-libel-case.html), posted a video to YouTube claiming he had been attacked by an African migrant in Rome.

The thumbnail image and eight-word title promoting the video indicated Mr. Robinson was assaulted by a Black man outside a train station. Then, in the video, Mr. Robinson punched the man in the jaw, dropping him to the ground.

The video was viewed more than 2.8 million times, and it [*prompted news stories*](https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/5787012/shocking-footage-emerges-showing-edl-thug-tommy-robinson-punch-a-migrant-in-the-face-as-he-tours-italian-no-go-zone/) across [*the right-wing tabloids in Britain*](https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/edl-founder-tommy-robinson-filmed-12173898), where Mr. Robinson was rapidly gaining notoriety for his anti-immigrant and anti-Islamic views.

For Caolan Robertson — a filmmaker who worked for Mr. Robinson and helped create the video — it was an instructional moment. It showed the key ingredients needed to attract attention on YouTube and other social media services.

The video played into anti-immigrant sentiments in Britain and across Europe. It also focused squarely on conflict, cutting rapidly between shouts and shoves before showing Mr. Robinson’s punch. It also misrepresented what had actually happened.

“We would choose the most dramatic moment — or fake it and make it look more dramatic,” Mr. Robertson, 25, said in a recent interview. “We realized that if we wanted a future on YouTube, it had to be driven by confrontation. Every time we did that kind of thing, it would explode well beyond anything else.”

Mr. Robertson would go on to produce videos for a who’s who of right-wing YouTube personalities on both sides of the Atlantic, including Lauren Southern, Stefan Molyneux and Alex Jones.

The videos were tailored for the “echo chamber” that is often created by social media networks like YouTube. To keep you watching, YouTube serves up videos similar to those you have watched before. But the longer someone watches, the more extreme the videos can become.

“It can create these very radical people who are like gurus,” said Guillaume Chaslot, a former YouTube engineer who has been critical of the way the company’s algorithms pushed people to extreme content. “In terms of watch time, a guru is wonderful.”

Tech companies, regulators and individuals across the globe are struggling to understand and control the enormous power of YouTube and other social media services. In 2019, YouTube made “important changes to how we recommend videos and prevent the spread of misinformation and hateful content,” Farshad Shadloo, a spokesman for the company, said in a statement. It barred Mr. Molyneaux and Mr. Jones. But [*extreme videos continue to spread*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/2020-election-misinformation-distortions#youtube-clamped-down-on-content-but-researchers-say-qanon-still-spread).

In time, Mr. Robertson said, he realized that the videos he worked on stoked dangerous hatred. And in 2019, at a conference in Britain run by a left-wing newspaper, The Byline Times, Mr. Robertson distanced himself from his work with the far right. His change of heart was met with some skepticism.

“He was presented as a prodigal son,” said Louise Raw, an antifascist activist who was onstage for Mr. Robertson’s mea culpa. “But he has not been held to account.”

Now, Mr. Robertson is detailing the ways he and his collaborators searched for confrontations to gain popularity on YouTube.

Efforts to contact Mr. Robinson were unsuccessful, and Mr. Jones did not respond to multiple requests for comment. Ms. Southern said she should not be described as a far-right activist, saying she is merely a conservative. She was not involved in “some horrible far-right grift that tried to deceive people into watching our content,” she added. “We were just doing what any other YouTuber does.”

Raw footage of the episode in Rome, provided by Mr. Robertson and reviewed by The New York Times, shows that the YouTube video was edited to give the false impression that Mr. Robinson was threatened. The full footage shows he was the aggressor.

When the man noticed he was being filmed from across the street, he approached the camera, and Mr. Robinson shoved him into an oncoming car. As the man protested, called Mr. Robinson crazy and told him to live his own life, Mr. Robinson escalated the argument.

“There’s one way this is going to go,” he told the man. “You’re going to end up knocked down unconscious.”

Over the more than two years he helped produce and publish videos for Mr. Robinson and others, Mr. Robertson learned how making clever edits and focusing on confrontation could help draw millions of views on YouTube and other services. He also learned how YouTube’s recommendation algorithm often nudged people toward extreme videos.

“It meant that we did more and more extreme videos,” Mr. Robertson said.

Mr. Robertson grew up in Ireland, and after his parents divorced, he moved with his father to a predominantly ***working-class*** area in the north of England. Realizing from a very young age that he is gay, he often felt like an outsider. But he said he encountered more overt homophobia when he moved to London for college and walked through the largely Muslim neighborhoods at the East End of the city.

After the [*2016 shooting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/13/us/orlando-nightclub-shooting.html) at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Fla. — where a Muslim man pledging loyalty to the Islamic State killed 49 people and wounded 53 more — Mr. Robertson developed an extreme animosity toward Muslims, particularly immigrants. His anger was fueled in large part, he said, by videos he watched on YouTube.

He began watching videos from mainstream outlets, like an episode of the HBO show “Real Time With Bill Maher” in which Sam Harris, an author and a podcast host, [*advocated greater criticism of Muslim beliefs*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vln9D81eO60). YouTube’s recommendation algorithm suggested more-extreme videos involving personalities like Mr. Robinson, a former member of the neo-fascist and white nationalist British National Party who was born Stephen Yaxley-Lennon.

In 2017, Mr. Robertson contacted Mr. Robinson and soon began working with him as a video producer. By the end of the year, he was also collaborating with Ms. Southern, an activist from Canada.

Knowing what garnered the most attention on YouTube, Mr. Robertson said, he and Ms. Southern would devise public appearances meant to generate conflict. That December, they attended a women’s march in London and, with Ms. Southern playing the part of a television reporter, approached each woman with the same four-word question: “Women’s rights or Islam?”

They often received a confused, measured or polite response, according to Mr. Robertson. They continued to ask the question and sharpened it. Ms. Southern, for example, said it would be difficult for Muslim women to answer the question because their husbands wouldn’t let them attend the march. That caused anger to build in the crowd.

“It appears in the videos that we are just trying to figure out what is going on, gather information, understand people,” Mr. Robertson said. “But really, we were trying to find the most incendiary way of making them mad.”

The thumbnail image for the YouTube video was indicative of a confrontation: a woman screaming as Ms. Southern walked away. As he often did, Mr. Robertson sharpened the video’s visual contrast — lightening the white colors and darkening the blacks — to subtly make the scene seem more dramatic.

Ms. Southern described the situation differently. “We asked the question because we knew it was going to force people to question their own political views and realize the contradiction in being a hard-core feminist but also supporting a religion that, quite frankly, has questionable practices around women,” she said. And, she added, they used video techniques that any media company would use.

The next year, Mr. Robertson and Ms. Southern traveled as far as South Africa, Australia and New Zealand to create similar videos. Over the lifetime of Ms. Southern’s YouTube channel, according to channel statistics reviewed by The Times, her videos were viewed over 63 million times.

More than 71 percent of people who viewed these videos had not subscribed to her YouTube channel. In 2018, at the height of her popularity, at least 30 percent of the views occurred after the videos were automatically recommended to the viewer by YouTube’s algorithms.

Mr. Molyneux shied away from the kind of conflict that Ms. Southern embraced. He fashioned himself as an online philosopher. But the material Mr. Robertson edited slipped in “far-right ideas that appealed to the ethnonationalists — the extreme right-wing audience,” he said.

In 2018, the pair traveled to Poland for a video that painted the country as a place free of hardship and strife. The subtext was that it was because Poland is predominantly white. In an email to The Times, Mr. Molyneux said, “It was nice being in a country wherein I didn’t have to hire protective security.” He added that he felt the same way when he visited Hong Kong.

By early 2019, Mr. Robertson said, he grew disillusioned. There was a noticeable drop in traffic on Ms. Southern’s YouTube channel. Around the same time, YouTube began to remove more videos the company thought encouraged violence and spread misinformation.

After an Australian man killed 51 people at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand — driven in part by anti-immigrant beliefs propagated by YouTube — Mr. Robertson realized, he said, that the videos he had made led to the same kind of violence in the Orlando nightclub in 2016.

“I felt like I had gone full circle that day,” he said.

Now, Mr. Robertson oversees Byline TV, a video offshoot of The Byline Times. He also runs a new organization, Future Freedom, which seeks to de-radicalize right-wing extremists. He is still counting YouTube views.

Mr. Robertson recently boasted in a text that in one day a video targeting Mr. Jones, the conspiracy theorist he once worked with, had been viewed over 250,000 times.

PHOTOS: Caolan Robertson once produced videos for a who’s who of the far right, but he has since come to regret his role in the rise of online extremism. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX INGRAM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B1); A video showing Tommy Robinson, above, punching a migrant was viewed 2.8 million times. YouTube routinely recommended Lauren Southern’s videos. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GUY SMALLMAN/GETTY IMAGES; JOSH EDELSON/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Will There Be a Draft? Young People Worry After Military Strike***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XWW-SVV1-DXY4-X061-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 3, 2020 Friday 08:05 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 883 words

**Byline:** Sarah Mervosh

**Highlight:** Interest in the draft and “World War III” surged online, stalling the government website where young men are required to register. Here’s what you need to know.

**Body**

Interest in the draft and “World War III” surged online, stalling the government website where young men are required to register. Here’s what you need to know.

For decades, American men over the age of 18 have gone through the ritual of registering with the government in case of a [*military draft*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html). In recent years, this action has felt more like going through the motions, simply checking a box.

But on Friday, after a United States drone strike in Iraq [*killed Iran’s top security and intelligence commander*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html), prompting concerns about the [*possibility of a new war*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html) in the Middle East, that oft-forgotten paperwork became a reason for spiking anxiety among many Americans.

“World War III” started trending on social media. Young men suddenly recalled registering after their 18th birthdays, many having done so while applying for college financial aid. One Twitter user posted that he had blocked the account of the United States Army, with the (faulty) reasoning that: “They can’t draft you if they can’t see you.”

Interest was so high that it apparently crashed the website for the [*Selective Service System*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html), the independent government agency that maintains a database of Americans eligible for a potential draft. “Due to the spread of misinformation, our website is experiencing high traffic volumes at this time,” [*the agency said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html) on Twitter, adding, “We appreciate your patience.”

Here is an explanation of the current military system and what it would take to enact a draft in modern times.

Is there going to be a military draft?

The United States first conscripted soldiers during the Civil War, and continued to use the draft in some form on and off through the Vietnam War, said Jennifer Mittelstadt, a professor of history at Rutgers University who has studied the military.

But there has been no conscription since 1973, when the draft was abolished after opposition to fighting in Vietnam. “There was huge support for ending the draft across the political spectrum,” Dr. Mittelstadt said.

The modern-day military is now an all-volunteer force, with about 1.2 million active-duty troops.

To change that, Congress would have to pass a law reinstating the draft, and the president would have to sign it, actions that would likely require broad political support.

What is the draft age?

All men from 18 to 25 years old are required to register with the Selective Service System. Many young men check a box to register when getting a driver’s license. Others sign up when applying for federal student aid to attend college.

But just because you have registered does not mean you will be drafted. “Right now, registering for selective service really means nothing about the likelihood of you serving in the current military,” Dr. Mittelstadt said.

Joe Heck, the chairman of the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service, a committee created by Congress to evaluate the Selective Service System, put it this way: “Registration is ongoing. A draft would require an act of Congress.”

What are the consequences if you don’t register?

If you do not register for Selective Service as a young man, you can be subject to lifetime penalties. For example, men who did not register cannot receive federal financial aid, and they cannot work for the federal government, Dr. Heck said.

To check if you have registered, visit [*the Selective Service System’s website*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html) (once it is up and running again).

Can women be drafted?

No.

Historically, only men have been eligible for the draft. But the question of whether to register women has gained traction in recent years, as women have taken on broader roles within the military.

In 2015, [*the Pentagon opened up all combat jobs to women*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html). Last year, a federal judge in Houston [*ruled that excluding women from the draft was unconstitutional*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html).

As part of its work, the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service is considering whether to expand the registration requirement to include women. The group’s final report, on that and other issues, is expected to be released in March.

Are there arguments for reinstating the draft?

In the 1860s, mobs of mostly foreign-born white workers [*took to the streets in New York City*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html) to protest conscription during the Civil War, burning down buildings and inciting violent attacks against black residents.

A century later, burning draft cards [*became a symbol of protest*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/us/politics/women-military-draft-supreme-court.html) against the war in Vietnam.

“I think it’s fair to say that the draft has never been wildly popular,” Dr. Mittelstadt said.

But she said there were arguments in favor of a modern-day draft, including the potential to make the military more representative of society. The current all-volunteer force is more likely to recruit people from the ***working class***, she said, with higher percentages of nonwhite Americans serving in uniform.

“I don’t know what it means in a democracy that you let some people fight your wars and everybody is not responsible,” she said. “American citizens are not implicated in the consequences — bodily human life, economically — of war, and they should be.”

PHOTO: Army inductees pledged their service in New York City in 1965, while protesters burned draft cards and shouted antiwar slogans outside. The draft was abolished in 1973. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Don Hogan Charles/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Best of the Kennedys?; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615H-WY21-DXY4-X145-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 28, 2020 Wednesday 15:23 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1321 words

**Byline:** Jeff Shesol

**Highlight:** Neal Gabler’s “Catching the Wind” makes clear that Ted Kennedy’s record in the Senate far outshone the legislative accomplishments of his brothers.

**Body**

CATCHING THE WIND

Edward Kennedy and the Liberal Hour

By Neal Gabler

By the time [*Edward Kennedy died*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/27/us/politics/27kennedy.html), in August 2009, he had represented Massachusetts in the United States Senate for nearly 47 years — longer than any of his brothers had lived. He was eulogized as one of the most important legislators in American history, an assessment reflecting not only the affection he enjoyed on both sides of the aisle, but also genuine awe at his achievements. Over the course of five decades, Ted Kennedy had sponsored nearly 700 bills that became law, and left his imprint on scores of others. The Voting Rights Act of 1965; the Immigration and Nationality Act of that same year; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 — all bore his influence or were advanced by his efforts.

None of this was foreordained — or even all that likely. He was a Kennedy, of course, and Kennedys were born to advantage; but as a child and young man, he was seen within the family not merely as the last of the Kennedy brothers, but the least: the least talented, serious, capable, promising. The press, initially, saw him that way, too. During his first campaign for the Senate, at the age of 30 in 1962, he was derided as President John F. Kennedy’s callow kid brother — a man so obviously unqualified that his election, in the view of The New York Times, could only demean “the dignity of the Senate and the democratic process.” Kennedy won that race, and set to work defying expectations. Still, the long, consequential career that followed would to the end remain, in profound ways, a struggle — against the fates, the tides of history and, in no small part, his own failings.

That struggle and its significance are the subjects of “Catching the Wind,” the first installment of a two-volume treatment by [*Neal Gabler*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/27/us/politics/27kennedy.html), the author of well-regarded books on Walt Disney and Walter Winchell. Kennedy’s expansive life has yielded no shortage of biographies, but Gabler’s is on its way toward becoming the most complete and ambitious. As a character study it is rich and insightful, frank in its judgments but deeply sympathetic to the man Gabler regards as “the most complex of the Kennedys.” The story of Ted’s brother Bobby is typically written in two acts: before and after the assassination of President Kennedy in November 1963. Ted’s time at center stage, so much longer than Bobby’s, was more varied, consisting of numerous acts, twists, turns and apparent endings — less a linear progression than, as Gabler describes it, a “cycle of sin and expiation,” loss and renewal.

Within weeks of entering office, Kennedy talked about staying there the rest of his life. He adored the Senate’s traditions; he adapted quickly to its rhythms and norms. And, to the surprise of many, he was willing to work. John Kennedy had served eight years in the Senate without ever investing much of himself in it; he was — often visibly — bored by its slow-moving machinery. But Ted Kennedy relished it: the pressing of levers, the working of gears, the intricate business of cutting a deal. No less important, as Gabler writes, “there was a joy in him, a great love of people.” He drew them in — whether voters back home or the Southern septuagenarians who ran the Senate — won them over, made them willing, even eager, to support him. He was the most natural politician in his family, a close match in temperament to his grandfather [*John “Honey Fitz” Fitzgerald*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/27/us/politics/27kennedy.html), who had taught him, Gabler notes, “what empathy meant.”

“Catching the Wind” lends a cinematic sweep to Kennedy’s legislative crusades — for example, his failed if noble campaign in 1965 to ban use of the poll tax, that old, racist roadblock to the African-American vote, in state elections. (The 24th Amendment, ratified in 1964, had prohibited its use in federal elections. The year after Kennedy’s effort foundered, the Supreme Court ruled the poll tax unconstitutional at the state level.) Gabler makes these battles exciting, though at times he seems intent on making everything exciting; scenes are often over-egged, amped up by incantation: “And then Ted quoted at length, great length, from a speech, a remarkable speech,” reads a typical passage. “Richard Nixon was wounded now, badly wounded, wounded and reeling from his wounds,” begins another.

The reader needs no such prodding; the drama, as it develops, is real enough. The swiftness with which Ted Kennedy went from being teased by Republicans as “Little Brother” to becoming the patriarch of a political dynasty — the bearer, as he himself put it, of his martyred brothers’ “fallen standard” — is unfathomable, however familiar the story remains. In 1968, when Robert was killed in Los Angeles while running for president, Ted was only 36. The pressure upon him to carry forward the campaign was instantaneous: One of Bobby’s aides cornered Ted on the flight that carried his brother’s body back to New York, pleading, “You gotta run.” Kennedy knew himself well enough not to accept a draft — he was deeply depressed, immobilized by grief. But he had lost control over himself and his future. Tragedy begat tragedy, and Los Angeles led, in some indirect but inexorable fashion, to Chappaquiddick in July 1969. The death of Mary Jo Kopechne in Kennedy’s car was, as Gabler writes, “indelible — a stain he bore that no amount of penance could erase.”

And Gabler suggests it was more than that. Because Kennedy, he writes, was “the face and the voice of modern liberalism,” [*Chappaquiddick*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/27/us/politics/27kennedy.html) cost liberalism its moral authority — at a time, the end of the ’60s, when that authority was already waning. “Catching the Wind” is presented as something of a parable — “This book,” Gabler states, “is about political morality” — but the concept never quite coheres. By “political morality,” the author seems to mean, exclusively, a concern for the “voiceless and powerless,” as Kennedy often put it. There is no discussion of its conservative counterpoint, that system of belief that saw abortion and homosexuality, for example, as morally intolerable and the death penalty as defensible. Instead, Kennedy’s foil, in Gabler’s account, is the amoral Nixon and his politics of resentment and racial division. This is accurate enough in itself, but less than the full story that the book aims to tell. The decline of liberalism, in any event, had at least as much to do with economic stagnation as it did with moral authority or the imperfections of liberal apostles.

Kennedy, for his part, felt the winds shifting. In the wake of Bobby’s death and Chappaquiddick, as the book describes, he redoubled his commitment to be “the senator of all those in need.” Yet the book ends with Kennedy on the run from a rock-throwing mob in his own hometown of Boston, which, in 1974, had exploded over [*the busing of Black students*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/27/us/politics/27kennedy.html) into overwhelmingly white school districts. “You’re a disgrace to the Irish!” a protester shouted, one of the milder comments that day. Never mind that Kennedy was not a particularly strong proponent of busing; what the crowd made clear, as Gabler writes in a powerful closing, was that “he was no longer one of them.” To the white ***working class*** from which the Kennedys had risen, Ted was now “just another condescending liberal who favored minority rights over their rights.” As Gabler’s next volume will no doubt describe, Kennedy’s response was not to change course. He would simply sail harder.

Jeff Shesol is the author of “Supreme Power: Franklin Roosevelt vs. the Supreme Court.” His book on John Glenn, John Kennedy and the space race will be published next year. CATCHING THE WIND Edward Kennedy and the Liberal Hour By Neal Gabler 928 pp. Crown. $40.

PHOTO: Edward Kennedy at work, 1968. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE TAMES/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2905 words

**Byline:** Corey Robin

**Highlight:** A theory of political time explains how he has become a prisoner of great expectations.

**Body**

No president since Ronald Reagan has achieved a more ambitious domestic legislative agenda in his first year than Joe Biden. With a razor-thin congressional majority — far smaller than that of Barack Obama — President Biden has delivered two enormous spending bills, with another, the Build Back Better act, likely on its way. Elements of these bills will have a lasting effect on the economy into the next decade; they also push the country to the left.

Every president since Reagan has tacked to the rightward winds set in motion by the conservative movement. Even Mr. Obama’s stimulus bill and the Affordable Care Act owed as much to conservative nostrums about the market and runaway spending as they did to liberal notions of fairness and equality. Mr. Biden has had to accommodate the demands of Senators Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema, but their intransigence has not had nearly the constraining effect that the voices of austerity and market fetishism had on Bill Clinton or Mr. Obama.

Yet over the past several months, Mr. Biden’s presidency has been dogged by a sense of failure. Critics, [*friendly*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/11/joe-biden-agenda.html) and [*not so friendly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/21/us/politics/aoc-democrats.html), point to what he has not delivered — voting rights, immigration reform, a $15 federal minimum wage, labor law reform and a path to freedom from personal debt and fossil fuels. Democrats fear that Mr. Biden’s plummeting approval ratings and the party’s losses in the November elections indicate that the Republicans will take back Congress in the midterms.

No president, however, achieves his entire agenda. And presidents have suffered first-term losses greater than those currently anticipated for 2022.

The real cause of the unease about Mr. Biden lies elsewhere. There is a sense that however large his spending bills may be, they come nowhere near to solving the problems they are meant to address. There is also a sense that however much in control of the federal government progressives may be, the right is still calling the shots.

The first point is inarguable, especially when it comes to climate change and inequality. The second point is questionable, but it can find confirmation in everything from a conservative Supreme Court supermajority to the right’s ability to unleash one debilitating culture war after another — and in the growing fear that Republicans will ride back into the halls of power and slam the doors of democracy behind them, maybe forever.

There’s a sense of stuckness, in other words, that no amount of social spending or policy innovation can seem to dislodge. The question is: Why?

A prisoner of great expectations

Though it came out in 1993, Stephen Skowronek’s “The Politics Presidents Make” helps us understand how Mr. Biden has become a prisoner of great expectations.

American politics is punctuated by the rise and fall of political orders or regimes. In each regime, one party, whether in power or not, dominates the field. Its ideas and interests define the landscape, forcing the opposition to accept its terms. Dwight Eisenhower may have been a Republican, but he often spoke in the cadences of the New Deal. Mr. Clinton voiced Reaganite hosannas to the market.

Regimes persist across decades. The Jeffersonian regime lasted from 1800 to 1828; the Jacksonian regime, from 1828 to 1860; the Republican regime, from 1860 to 1932; the New Deal order, from 1932 to 1980.

Reagan’s market regime of deference to the white and the wealthy has outlasted two Democratic presidencies and may survive a third. We see its presence in high returns to the rich and low wages for work, continents of the economy cordoned off from democratic control and resegregated neighborhoods and schools. Corporations are viewed, by [*liberals*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/19/us/politics/bernie-sanders-protests.html), as more advanced [*reformers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/28/us/politics/2006obamaspeech.html) of structural racism than parties and laws, and [*tech billionaires*](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/04/14/bill-gates-jeff-bezos-elon-musk-fight-climate-issue-in-iron-man-way.html) are seen as saviors of the planet.

Eventually, however, regimes grow brittle. Their ideology no longer speaks to the questions of the day; important interests lose pride of place; the opposition refuses to accept the leading party and its values.

Every president presides over a regime that is either resilient or vulnerable. That is his situation. When Eisenhower was elected, the New Deal was strong; when Jimmy Carter was elected, it was weak. Every president is affiliated or opposed to the regime. That is his story. James Knox Polk sought to extend the slavocracy, Abraham Lincoln to end it. The situation and the story are the keys to the president’s power — or powerlessness.

When the president is aligned with a strong regime, he has considerable authority, as Lyndon Johnson realized when he expanded the New Deal with the Great Society. When the president is opposed to a strong regime, he has less authority, as Mr. Obama recognized when he tried to get a public option in the Affordable Care Act. When the president is aligned with a weak regime, he has the least authority, as everyone from John Adams to Mr. Carter was forced to confront. When the president is opposed to a weak regime, he has the greatest authority, as Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Lincoln, Roosevelt and Reagan discovered. These presidents, whom Mr. Skowronek calls reconstructive, can reorder the political universe.

All presidents are transformative actors. With each speech and every action, they make or unmake the regime. Sometimes, they do both at the same time: Johnson reportedly declared that with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Democrats had lost the South for a generation, thereby setting the stage for the unraveling of the New Deal.

What distinguishes reconstructive presidents from other presidents, even the most transformative like Johnson, is that their words and deeds have a binding effect on their successors from both parties. They create the language that all serious contestants for power must speak. They construct political institutions and social realities that cannot be easily dismantled. They build coalitions that provide lasting support to the regime. Alexander Hamilton [*thought*](https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers/text-71-80) every president would “reverse and undo what has been done by a predecessor.” Reconstructive presidents do that — in fact, they reverse and undo the work of many predecessors — but they also ensure that their heirs cannot.

Politics is not physics. A president opposed to the established order may seek to topple it, only to discover that it is too resilient or that his troops are too feeble and lacking in fight. Where we are in political time — whether we are in a reconstructive moment, ripe for reordering, or not — cannot be known in advance. The weakness or strength of a regime, and of the opposition to the regime, is revealed in the contest against it.

What is certain is that the president is both creature and creator of the political world around him. Therein lies Mr. Biden’s predicament.

The language of reconstruction

Heading into the 2020 Democratic primaries, many people thought we might be in a reconstructive moment. I was one of them. There was a popular insurgency from the left, heralding the coming of a new New Deal. It culminated in the Nevada caucus, where people of color and young voters — an emergent multiracial ***working class*** — put Bernie Sanders over the top, ready to move the political order to the left.

There also were signs that the Reagan regime was vulnerable. Donald Trump’s candidacy in 2016 [*suggested*](https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/11/15941846/trump-moderate-republican) that conservative orthodoxies of slashing Social Security and Medicare and waging imperial warfare no longer compelled voters. Mr. Trump’s presidency [*revealed*](https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/trump-and-the-trapped-country) a congressional G.O.P. that could not unite around a program beyond tax cuts and right-wing judges.

As a candidate, Mr. Biden rejected the transformation Mr. Sanders promised and [*assured*](https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/6/19/18690910/biden-fundraiser-controversy-segregationists-donors) wealthy donors that “nothing would fundamentally change” on his watch. Yet there were signs, [*after*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/05/joe-biden-presidential-plans.html?) he won the nomination and into the [*early*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/12/opinion/biden-fdr-new-deal.html) months of his administration, of a new, “transformational” Mr. Biden who wanted to be the next F.D.R. The combination of the Covid economy, with its shocking inequalities and market failures, and a summer of fire and flood seemed to authorize a left-leaning politics of permanent cash supports to workers and families, increased taxes on the rich to fund radical expansions of health care, elder care and child care, and comprehensive investments in green energy and infrastructure, with high-paying union jobs.

Most important, the package cohered. Instead of a laundry list of gripes and grievances, it featured the consistent items of an alternative ideology and ascendant set of social interests. It promised to replace a sclerotic order that threatens to bury us all with a new order of common life. This was that rare moment when the most partisan of claims can sound like a reasonable defense of the whole.

Yet while Mr. Biden has delivered nearly $3 trillion in spending, with another $1.5 trillion to $2 trillion likely to pass, he has not created a new order. In addition to a transformation of the economy, such an order would require a spate of democracy reforms — the elimination of the filibuster and curbing of partisan gerrymandering, the addition of new states to the union, and national protection of voting rights and electoral procedures — as well as labor law reforms, enabling workers to form unions.

What makes such reforms reconstructive rather than a wish list of good works is that they shift the relations of power and interest, making other regime-building projects possible. Today’s progressive agenda is hobbled less by a lack of popular support than by the outsize leverage conservatives possess — in the Senate, which privileges white voters in sparsely populated, often rural states; in the federal structure of our government, which enables states to make it difficult for Black Americans to vote; and in the courts, whose right-wing composition has been shaped by two Republican presidents elected by a minority of the voters. No progressive agenda can be enacted and maintained unless these deformations are addressed.

The only way to overcome anti-democratic forces is by seeding democracy throughout society, empowering workers to take collective action in the workplace and the polity, and by securing democracy at the level of the state. That is what the great emblems of a reconstructive presidency — the 14th Amendment, which granted Black Americans citizenship, or the Wagner Act, which liberated workers from the tyranny of employers — are meant to do. They give popular energy institutional form, turning temporary measures of an insurgent majority into long-term transformations of policy and practice.

It’s not clear that Mr. Biden wants such a reconstruction. And even if he did, it’s not clear that he could deliver it.

What is stopping Biden?

The forces arrayed against a reconstruction are many.

The first is the Republican Party. Here the party has benefited less from the “authoritarian” turn of Mr. Trump than from the fact that the Trump presidency was so constrained. As Mr. Skowronek argues, “Nothing exposes a hollow consensus faster than the exercise of presidential power.” At critical moments, exercising power was precisely what Mr. Trump was not able to do.

Confronting the free fall of the New Deal, Mr. Carter unleashed a stunning strike of neoliberal and neoconservative measures: deregulation of entire industries; appointment of the anti-labor Paul Volcker to the Fed; a military buildup; and renewed confrontation with the Soviet Union. These defied his party’s orthodoxies and unraveled its coalition. Reagan ended the New Deal regime, but Mr. Carter prepared the way.

For all his talk of opposition to the Republican pooh-bahs, Mr. Trump delivered what they wanted most — tax cuts, deregulation and judges — and suffered defeat when he tried to break out of their vise. Republicans repeatedly [*denied*](https://www.cnn.com/2019/01/30/politics/trump-paul-ryan-border-wall/index.html) him [*funds*](https://www.vox.com/2018/3/22/17151442/omnibus-immigration-wall-trump) to support his [*immigration*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/27/us/politics/trump-immigration-house-vote.html) plans. They [*overrode*](https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-donald-trump-defense-policy-bills-85656704ad9ae1f9cf202ee76d7a14fd) his veto of their military spending bill, something Congress had not been able to do in the Carter, Reagan, Clinton, George W. Bush and Obama administrations. Mr. Trump’s own administration [*defied*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/20/us/politics/trump-national-security-russia.html) his Russia policy. This combination of weakness and deference to the G.O.P. helped keep the Republicans — and the Reagan regime — together.

The second obstacle is the Democratic Party. There’s a reason party elites, led by [*Mr. Obama*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2020-election/looking-obama-s-hidden-hand-candidate-coalescing-around-biden-n1147471), swiftly [*closed ranks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/14/us/politics/obama-biden-democratic-primary.html), when the time came, behind Mr. Biden and against Mr. Sanders. They wanted continuity, not rupture.

Likewise a portion of the base. Many Democrats are older, with long memories and strong fears of what happens when liberals turn left (they lose). Newer recruits, who gave Mr. Biden the edge in some key districts, usually in the suburbs, are what the Princeton historian Matt Karp [*calls*](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2020/08/bernie-sanders-five-year-war) “Halliburton Democrats,” wealthy defectors from the Republican Party.

“A regime is only as vulnerable as the political forces challenging it are robust,” writes Mr. Skowronek. That robustness is yet to be demonstrated. Despite the clarity of [*the path*](https://mailchi.mp/crooked.com/big-tent-18396) the Democrats must take if they hope to topple the Reagan order, it’s not clear the party wants to take it.

The third obstacle to a Biden reconstruction is what Mr. Skowronek calls the “institutional thickening” of American politics. Since the founding era, the American political system has acquired a global economy, with the dollar as the world’s currency; a government bureaucracy and imperial military; a dense ecology of media technologies; and armies of party activists. While these forces offer the modern president resources that Jefferson never had, they also empower the modern-day equivalents of Jefferson’s opponents to resist a reconstruction. Should Mr. Biden attempt one, could he master the masters of social media? Mr. Trump tried and was banned from Twitter.

The real institutions that get in the way of Mr. Biden and the Democrats, however, are not these latter-day additions of modernity but the most ancient features of the American state.

The power of Senators Manchin and Sinema is an artifact of the constitutional design of the Senate and the narrowness of the Democratic majority, which itself reflects the fact that the institution was created to defend slave states rather than popular majorities. Their power is augmented by the centuries-old filibuster, which has forced Mr. Biden to jam many programs into one vaguely named reconciliation bill. That prevents him from picking off individual Republicans for pieces of legislation they might support (as he did with the infrastructure bill).

Should the Republicans take the House in 2022, it will probably not be because of Tucker Carlson but because of gerrymandering. Should the Republicans take back the White House in 2024, it will probably be because of some combination of the Electoral College and the control that our federalist system grants to states over their electoral procedures.

A polarized electorate divided into red and blue states is not novel; it was a hallmark of the last [*Gilded Age*](https://jacobinmag.com/2021/02/the-politics-of-a-second-gilded-age), which put the brakes on the possibility of a presidential reconstruction for decades. As the political scientist E.E. Schattschneider argued, the division of the country into the Republican North and Democratic South made the entire polity “extremely conservative because one-party politics tends strongly to vest political power in the hands of people who already have economic power.”

How do we move past Reagan?

Every reconstructive president must confront vestiges of the old regime. The slavocracy evaded Lincoln’s grasp by seceding; the Supreme Court repeatedly thwarted F.D.R. Yet they persisted. How?

What each of these presidents had at their back was an independent social movement. Behind Lincoln marched the largest democratic mass movement for [*abolition*](https://catalyst-journal.com/2019/10/the-mass-politics-of-antislavery) in modern history. Alongside F.D.R. stood the unions. Each of these movements had their own institutions. Each of them was disruptive, upending the leadership and orthodoxies of the existing parties. Each of them was prepared to do battle against the old regime. And battle they did.

Social movements deliver votes to friendly politicians and stiffen their backs. More important, they take political arguments out of legislative halls and press them in private spaces of power. They suspend our delicate treaties of social peace, creating turbulence in hierarchical institutions like the workplace and the family. Institutions like these need the submission of subordinate to superior. By withholding their cooperation, subordinates can stop the everyday work of society. They exercise a kind of power that presidents do not possess but that they can use. That is why, after Lincoln’s election, Frederick Douglass called the abolitionist masses “the power behind the throne.”

An independent social movement is what Mr. Biden does not have. Until he or a successor does, we may be waiting on a reconstruction that is ready to be made but insufficiently desired.

Corey Robin is a distinguished professor of political science at Brooklyn College and the City University of New York Graduate Center. He is the author of “The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism From Edmund Burke to Donald Trump” and “The Enigma of Clarence Thomas.”

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[***A Critic of Technology Turns Her Gaze Inward***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6238-D2P1-DXY4-X492-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Sherry Turkle is best known for exploring the dysfunctional relationships between humans and their screens. She takes on a new focus — herself — in her memoir, “The Empathy Diaries.”

**Body**

Sherry Turkle is best known for exploring the dysfunctional relationships between humans and their screens. She takes on a new focus — herself — in her memoir, “The Empathy Diaries.”

In the spring of 1977, when Sherry Turkle was a young professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Steve Jobs came to visit. While he toured the campus and met with her colleagues, Turkle was cleaning her apartment and worrying over the menu for the dinner she had agreed to host.

It took nearly 50 years, when she was writing her memoir, “The Empathy Diaries,” for her to realize how angry that incident made her. She was at the beginning of her career chronicling how technology influences our lives, yet wasn’t asked to join her colleagues as they spent the day with the co-founder of Apple.

“Why not me?” she said in a video interview last month. It has taken her decades to come to that question, and it reflects her desire to turn the ethnographer’s gaze inward, to examine herself the way she has long studied her subjects. That is central to her new book, she said: “Here is the practical application of what it means to have a conversation with yourself.”

Turkle, 72, is big on conversation. In her 2015 book, “[*Reclaiming Conversation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/04/books/review/jonathan-franzen-reviews-sherry-turkle-reclaiming-conversation.html),” she argues that talking to each other, having an old-fashioned voice-to-voice exchange, is a powerful antidote to life on screens. A licensed clinical psychologist who holds joint doctorates in psychology and sociology from Harvard, she scrutinizes what our relationship with technology reveals about us, about what we feel is missing from our lives, what we fantasize technology can supply.

[ Read [*Dwight Garner’s review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/04/books/review/jonathan-franzen-reviews-sherry-turkle-reclaiming-conversation.html) of “The Empathy Diaries.” ]

Her daughter, Rebecca Sherman, said that she and her friends occasionally became the subjects for her mother’s roving inquiries. For example, when is it considered acceptable, while dining out, to look at your phone? It was Sherman, 29, and her friends who explained to Turkle the “rule of three”: As long as at least three other people were engaged in the conversation, it was OK to disappear (temporarily) into a screen.

“The Empathy Diaries,” which Penguin Press is publishing on March 2, traces Turkle’s progression from a ***working-class*** Brooklyn childhood to tenured professor at M.I.T. In the first years of her life, she lived in a one-bedroom apartment with her mother, aunt and grandparents. She slept on a cot between her grandparents’ twin beds. Her father was almost entirely absent.

[ “The Empathy Diaries” is one of our most anticipated titles of March. [*See the full list*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/04/books/review/jonathan-franzen-reviews-sherry-turkle-reclaiming-conversation.html). ]

Her family couldn’t afford tickets to High Holy Days at the local synagogue, so they instead dressed up and greeted their neighbors on the temple steps, careful to imply they would be attending services somewhere else. But they recognized Turkle’s intelligence and didn’t ask her to help with the housework, preferring she sat and read. Years later, when she graduated from Radcliffe on scholarship, her grandfather was in attendance.

Turkle also writes about the relationships that shaped her. One of them was with her stepfather, Milton Turkle, whose arrival interrupted Turkle’s early living arrangement and whose name her mother instructed her to take as her own — and never reveal to her classmates or her younger siblings that she had been born the daughter of somebody else. Her own father was rarely spoken of, his very name a taboo.

“I was turned into an outsider, who could see that things were not always what they seemed, because I was not always what I seemed,” Turkle said.

When Turkle first began to publish and achieve recognition, she was asked personal questions, the kind of questions she had asked of her subjects. But she blanched. She was still carrying her mother’s secret, the secret of her real name, years after her mother had died. So when she was in the public eye, she insisted that the personal was off limits, that she would only comment on her work, despite the fact that one of the arguments animating her work is that thought and feeling are inseparable, the work and the person behind the work entwined. She remembers that moment well: shutting down when asked to reveal who she really was.

“That really began my journey and the arc of my beginning that conversation with myself,” she said.

But Turkle has long had an interest in memoirs, and she teaches a class on the subject at M.I.T. She was struck that scientists, engineers and designers often presented their work in purely intellectual terms, when, in conversation, “they’re impassioned by their lives, impassioned by their childhood, impassioned by a stone they found on the beach that got them thinking,” she said. “Everything about my research when I started interviewing scientists showed that their life’s work was lit up by the objects, the people, the relationships, that brought them to their work.”

Part of her motivation for teaching the course, she added, was to prompt her students into seeing their work and lives as connected. And she set out specifically to unite the two strands when she sat down to write her own memoir.

In her book, Turkle describes being denied tenure at M.I.T., a decision she fought and successfully reversed. She can laugh about it now (“What does a good woman have to do to get a job around here?”), but she felt marked by the experience.

Her colleague of nearly 50 years, Kenneth Manning, remembers the episode well. Turkle was “brilliant and creative” he said, but “she was bringing a whole new approach to looking at the computer culture, and she was coming from a psychoanalytic background. People didn’t quite understand that.” When he threw her a party to celebrate her tenure, some colleagues didn’t attend, he said.

Turkle now functions as a kind of “in-house critic,” as she imagines her colleagues might see her, writing about technology and its discontents from within an institution where technology is part of the name. “As her work has become more critical of the digital, there are certainly many elements at M.I.T. who have been dissatisfied with that, of course,” said David Thorburn, a literature professor at M.I.T.

The title of her new book reflects one of Turkle’s preoccupations. As we disappear into our lives onscreen, spending less time in reflective solitude, and less time in real-life conversation with others, empathy, as Turkle sees it, is one of the casualties. The word, which she defines as “the ability not only to put yourself in someone else’s place, but to put yourself in someone else’s problem,” is not only a concern for Turkle, it is a kind of specialty: She has even been called in as a one-woman emergency empathy squad by a school where teachers had noticed that with the proliferation of screens, their students seemed less and less able to put themselves in another point of view.

One of Turkle’s hopes for this particular moment is that the pandemic has afforded us a view of one another’s problems and vulnerabilities in a way we might not have had as much access to before. In the first months of lockdown, Turkle moved her M.I.T. classes onto Zoom. “You could see where everyone lived,” she said. “It opened up a conversation about the disparities in what our situations were. Something that a ‘college experience’ hides.”

In many ways, Turkle believes that the pandemic is a “liminal” time, in the phrasing of the writer and anthropologist Victor Turner, a time in which we are “betwixt and between,” a catastrophe with a built-in opportunity to reinvent. “In these liminal periods are these possibilities for change,” she said. “I think we are living through a time, both in our social lives but also in how we deal with our technology, where we are willing to think of very different ways of behaving.”

Turkle isn’t opposed to technology. She “proudly” watches a lot of TV and loves writing on her extra-small MacBook, the kind they don’t make anymore. But she resists the lure of internet-enabled rabbit holes. “I am so aware of how I am being manipulated by the screen, and I am so uninterested in talking to Alexa and Siri,” she said.

She has spent most of the past year at her house in Provincetown, Mass., and so it is inevitable that Henry David Thoreau comes up. The naturalist and philosopher once famously walked the 25 miles of beach connecting Provincetown to the tip of Cape Cod.

“You know, Thoreau, his big thing wasn’t about being alone,” Turkle said. “His big thing was: I want to live deliberately. I think we have an opportunity with technology to live deliberately.”

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PHOTOS: Empathy, as Sherry Turkle thinks of it, is “the ability not only to put yourself in someone else’s place, but to put yourself in someone else’s problem.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY JUSTIN KANEPS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C1); Top, Sherry Turkle and her grandfather during her doctoral graduation in 1976. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA SHERRY TURKLE) (C6)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Pilot, Storm and Notoriously Perilous Runway Are Cited in Fatal India Crash***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60JD-NBB1-DXY4-X0CK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 9, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1159 words

**Byline:** By Jeffrey Gettleman, Suhasini Raj and Shalini Venugopal Bhagat

**Body**

As investigators sought the cause of a jetliner accident that killed 18 people, blame began to fall on the pilot and the hilltop runway.

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Air India Express Flight 1344 was midair, roaring through a thunderstorm toward the city of Kozhikode's tabletop runway, which has a sudden drop-off at its end and was known to be potentially dangerous.

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On his second attempt at landing Friday night, he apparently hit Runway 10 too late -- more than a half mile into the 1.6-mile strip -- and with the wind at his back, which was exactly the scenario that Indian aviation experts had warned against.

''All the flights that land on Runway 10 in tailwind conditions in rain are endangering the lives of all on board,'' said a report submitted to India's civil aviation authorities in 2011.

The plane, a Boeing 737 that was returning to southern India from Dubai, slid right off the rain-slicked runway, tumbled down a hillside and split in half. Indian officials say that 18 people, including both pilots, were killed and more than 150 injured.

Looking at pictures of the wreckage taken on Saturday -- with the skin of the plane ripped off and huge chunks of the cabin scattered across the mud -- it is remarkable that more passengers weren't killed.

The plane was carrying 190 people. Rescue crews, including many villagers, rushed to the crash site within minutes and pulled people out. The plane apparently never caught fire; the relentless rain may have dampened any sparks.

Survivors said they knew something was wrong the instant the wheels hit the ground.

''The plane landed at such a high speed and then braked really hard,'' said Latheesh Muttooly, who was sitting by a window. ''There's usually a jerk when you land, but this was much harder and then suddenly the plane started going faster.''

The overhead bins burst open. Heavy pieces of luggage fell on people's heads.

''The next thing I heard was a loud crashing sound, the loudest sound I've ever heard,'' Mr. Muttooly said.

His face smashed into the seat back in front of him, in Row 15, splitting open his chin. He was dazed.

''When I opened my eyes and looked around,'' he said, ''there was only one row in front of me.''

The front of the plane had torn off.

With the crash investigation just starting, Indian aviation officials are already beginning to pin the blame on the pilot, not the runway.

''The basic problem, as we understand it in this incident, is that on a runway of 8,500 feet, the plane landed after crossing one third of the strip, beyond 3,000 feet,'' Arun Kumar, India's director general of civil aviation, said in an interview.

''What normally happens under such conditions is that the pilot does a go-round and either tries to land again or not land at all, given the weather conditions. Touchdown must happen within the first 500 feet of the strip.''

''The rules of aviation are too well laid out,'' Mr. Kumar added. ''Either the pilot goes around or should not have landed at all.''

The crash was very similar to another, much deadlier Indian air accident at a tabletop runway in 2010, which had prompted a closer look at similar hilltop runways. India has around four to five of them, officials said.

The 2010 crash involved the same kind of plane, a Boeing 737 belonging to the same airline, Air India Express, and a similar runway with steep gorges on each side. In that case, the aircraft skidded off a hill in Mangalore, fell into a valley and burst into flames. More than 150 people were killed.

After that, the Indian civil aviation ministry formed a safety advisory council that included aviation experts such as Capt. Mohan Ranganathan, a pilot who wrote the 2011 report warning that Kozhikode's Runway 10 was dangerous. Some of his recommendations, like adding a safety zone at the end of the runway, were heeded, at least in part.

But on Saturday, Captain Ranganathan said in an interview that he was dismayed to learn that the pilot tried to land in the very circumstances that he had warned about.

''Landing in rain with a tailwind is the most dangerous way you can think of landing,'' he said, especially on Kozhikode's Runway 10.

For a plane to crash, a bunch of things usually have to go wrong, which seems to have been the case in Flight 1344.

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The captain, Deepak Sathe, a former Indian Air Force test pilot, seems to have misjudged the distance he needed to bring the plane to a halt.

And the weather was horrendous.

This is monsoon season, the time of year of lashing rains, and Captain Sathe was trying to bring down a plane in the middle of a torrential downpour. For the past several days, Kerala State, where Kozhikode is, and which has a long history of ties to the Persian Gulf, has been drenched.

India's meteorological department had issued a red alert for several areas, including Kozhikode, on Friday. Earlier that same day more than 20 people were killed in a landslide in another part of the state after a hillside of rock and sludge crashed into a workers' hostel on a tea plantation.

The way the announcements were made to the passengers didn't help either, passengers said. The cabin crew used Hindi and English, India's most widely spoken languages.

But this was a special repatriation flight, run by the Indian government to rescue citizens who had been stranded in the Persian Gulf during the coronavirus pandemic. Most passengers were ***working-class*** people (and their families) from Kerala State who had been performing jobs such as clearing tables or driving trucks. They spoke Malayalam, Kerala's tongue.

''They had no idea they had to keep wearing their seatbelts,'' said Riyas Madaparambathu, another passenger who had been working at a restaurant in Dubai. He said more lives might have been saved if the crew had made the announcements in Malayalam, ''so that everyone could have understood the instructions.''

On Saturday, officials said they had found the aircraft's black box. Most of the surviving passengers remained in more than a dozen hospitals. Indian media reported that after some had tested positive for coronavirus, survivors were not allowed to leave the hospitals just yet.

Many were clearly shaken up.

''The flight had been going fine,'' said Muhammed Ali Meethal, who spoke by phone from his hospital bed. ''The pilot announced that we were going to land. There was no warning or signal of any kind of impending doom.''

But after the plane skittered off the runway and down the hillside, he said, ''There was a thud. And then a complete silence. I could smell death.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/08/world/asia/india-plane-crash-dubai.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/08/world/asia/india-plane-crash-dubai.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Eighteen people died Friday night in a crash in Kozhikode, India. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SHIJITH SREEDHAR/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** August 9, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Air India Crash Investigators Focus On a Dangerous Runway and a Pilot’s Actions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60J6-X861-DXY4-X4YP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; asia

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**Byline:** Jeffrey Gettleman, Suhasini Raj and Shalini Venugopal Bhagat

**Highlight:** As investigators sought the cause of a jetliner accident that killed 18 people, blame began to fall on the pilot and the hilltop runway.

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**Load-Date:** August 9, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Push in Israel To Tip Balance In Mixed Cities***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62RT-VMJ1-DXY4-X30K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1797 words

**Byline:** By Isabel Kershner

**Body**

An eruption of Arab-Jewish violence inside Israeli cities has focused attention on a movement of religious nationalists seeking to strengthen the Jewish presence in areas with large Arab populations.

LOD, Israel -- Years before the mixed Arab-Jewish city of Lod erupted in mob violence, a demographic shift had begun to take root: Hundreds of young Jews who support a religious, nationalist movement started to move into a mostly Arab neighborhood with the express aim of strengthening the Israeli city's Jewish identity.

A similar change was playing out in other mixed Arab-Jewish cities inside Israel, such as nearby Ramla and Acre in the north -- part of a loosely organized nationwide project known as Torah Nucleus. They say that their intention is to lift up poor and neglected areas on the margins of society, particularly in mixed cities, and to enrich Jewish life there. Its supporters have moved into dozens of Israeli cities and towns.

''Perhaps ours is a complex message,'' said Avi Rokach, 43, chairman of the Torah Nucleus association in Lod. ''Lod is a Jewish city. It is our agenda and our religious duty to look out for whoever lives here, be they Jewish, Muslim or Hindu.''

But in reality, the newcomers' presence, at times, created tensions, which built up for years and erupted amid the latest outbreak of warfare between Israelis and Palestinians. Arab and Jewish mobs attacked each other in the worst violence within Israeli cities in decades, raising fears of a civil war. For many, the intensity of the animosity came as a shock.

For decades, hard-line Israeli nationalists have sought to shift the demographics of the occupied West Bank by building Jewish settlements, undermining the prospect of a two-state solution to the long-running Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

With far less attention and fanfare, the Torah Nucleus movement set out with an ideological mission to alter the balance of Israeli cities and promote its brand of Judaism inside the country.

The first families who moved into Acre and Lod 25 years ago came from West Bank settlements, and they aimed to make mixed or predominantly Arab communities more Jewish.

With West Bank settlement firmly entrenched -- about 450,000 Jews now live among more than 2.6 million Palestinians -- Torah Nucleus supporters see Israeli cities as a new horizon.

Most of the world considers Jewish settlements in the occupied territories a violation of international law, but this was an attempt to create change within Israel's recognized boundaries. And many cast it as the new Zionism.

''Religious Zionism hasn't abandoned the old mission of Judea and Samaria,'' said Reut Gets, who manages the Torah Nucleus association in Acre, referring to the West Bank by its biblical names.

But the focus now was on ''the new challenge'' within Israel itself, she said.

Lod, a city of about 80,000 people in central Israel, is about 70 percent Jewish and 30 percent Arab. Frictions there had long been kept on a low boil.

But on May 10, Palestinian protests and an Israeli police raid at the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem -- one of Islam's holiest sites -- spilled over into a military conflict between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian militant group that controls the Gaza Strip.

It quickly ignited violence between mobs of Arabs and Jews in Israel's cities, starting in Lod and rapidly spreading across the country as internal fault lines were abruptly exposed.

In Lod, hundreds of the city's Arab citizens took to the streets, throwing stones, burning cars and setting fire to properties, venting their rage against one primary target: The mostly young, Orthodox Jewish families who had arrived in recent years, saying they wanted to lift up the ***working-class*** city and make it more Jewish.

Worst hit were the scores of families who had moved over the last decade into a hardscrabble, crime-ridden neighborhood populated mostly by Arabs. They rented or bought apartments in the dilapidated blocks lining a warren of streets near the city's old quarter, sharing the stairwells with longtime Arab residents.

The newcomers called it coexistence. But many Palestinian citizens of Lod viewed them as invaders and called them ''settlers.''

The violence soon turned lethal. Four Jews are suspected of fatally shooting an Arab resident, Musa Hassouna, and wounding three others during a riot in a nearby neighborhood. A Jewish man, Yigal Yehoshua, died after Arabs threw a heavy rock at him.

Over the past week, the clashes subsided and early Friday, a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas took hold. But the unrest in Lod nonetheless focused attention on the role of the Torah Nucleus movement.

Its representatives vehemently deny that they have any ill intent toward the Arab population, insisting that the opposite is true. Mr. Rokach, the local leader of the movement in Lod, insisted that the program's volunteer projects, such as distributing food to the needy, benefited Jews and Arabs.

''Coexistence is not standing on the road with a placard,'' he said, mocking liberal peace activists. ''It is getting up and saying good morning to your Arab neighbor and lending each other milk when necessary. We are living it.''

Rami Salama, a 24-year-old Arab resident of Lod and a building contractor whose apartment complex is now about half Arab and half Torah Nucleus families, said that was not his experience. He said it hurt him that his new Jewish neighbors never answered when he bid them good morning or a happy holiday.

''They want to rule here,'' he said. ''I blame the Arabs who sold them the apartments,'' which he added had since doubled in value. ''The violence wouldn't have happened if it wasn't for the settlers,'' he said.

The Lod neighborhood at the heart of the violence, Ramat Eshkol, was abandoned by many of its Jewish residents decades ago and there, the city's Jewish-Arab ratio is reversed. About 70 percent of Ramat Eshkol is Arab.

Across all of Israel, there are about 70 active hubs of Torah Nucleus, supported by an umbrella organization, the Community Renewal Foundation, which gets some government funding.

Izhak Lax, the chairman of the foundation, said the idea was for young activists, many of them professionals and graduates of army combat units, to establish homes in the geographical and socioeconomically weak margins of the country and contribute to improving them.

Their presence stretches from the predominantly Jewish desert towns of Yeruham and Dimona in the south to Kiryat Shemona on Israel's northern border with Lebanon. Of some 10,000 families involved nationally, about 1,200 of them are in Lod.

But Mr. Lax countered claims that they had come ''to conquer'' Lod and displace the Arabs. ''Where can we settle if not in a city in the middle of Israel?'' he said.

In Acre, up to 200 Torah Nucleus families have taken up residence. One member of the community was among those injured in the disturbances, a teacher in his 30s who was beaten unconscious by Arabs. Arabs also burned down Jewish-owned tourist sites.

Jewish vigilantes from across the country quickly organized on social networks and sought out Arab victims in Lod and other cities, beating an Arab man almost to death in the Tel Aviv suburb of Bat Yam.

Lod, which traces its history to the days of Canaan and is known as Lydda in Arabic, has a particularly fraught history centered around the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Most of the original Palestinian residents of the city were expelled and never allowed to return.

Bedouins -- the seminomadic Arabs from Israel's Negev desert -- arrived in the following decades, as did families of Palestinians from the West Bank who had collaborated with Israel, seeking refuge.

Now, Arab rage here is steeped in a smarting sense of inequality born of decades of government neglect and discrimination.

The city's mayor, Yair Revivo, has pressed in the past to tone down the volume on the Muslim call to prayer from minarets in the city and his right-hand man is a founder of Lod's Torah Nucleus.

Arab resentment is compounded by a lingering fear of displacement, house by house.

About eight years ago, Torah Nucleus built a pre-army academy and a religious boys' elementary school next to the long-established school for Arab pupils on Exodus Street in the heart of Ramat Eshkol.

These Jewish institutions were the first to be set on fire on May 10. The trouble started after evening prayers, witnesses said. Arab youths raised a Palestinian flag in the square and demonstrated in solidarity with Palestinians in Jerusalem and Gaza. The police dispersed them with tear gas and stun grenades.

Angry Arab mobs then went on a rampage, burning synagogues, Jewish apartments and cars in Ramat Eshkol. One group approached another Torah Nucleus neighborhood, where a Jewish crowd had gathered.

There, the four Jewish suspects in the shooting claimed, they fired in the air in self-defense as Arab rioters began to rush at them, throwing stones and firebombs, according to court documents.

The funeral for the victim, Mr. Hassouna, the next day devolved into new clashes as the mourners, the building contractor Mr. Salama among them, insisted on passing through Exodus Street with the body in defiance of police instructions.

That night, gangs of Jewish extremists, some of them armed, came from out of town to attack Arabs and their property, according to witnesses. Mr. Salama said he was hit by a stone while sitting in his garden. Gunshots were heard on both sides.

One Jewish apartment in Ramat Eshkol was burned to cinders after Arab intruders broke open a hole in the wall. The family had already left. A neighbor, Nadav Klinger, said the charred flat would be preserved as a museum.

Elsewhere in Lod, some veteran Jewish and Arab neighbors said their good relations remained intact and agreed that the influx of religious Jewish professionals had lifted the city up.

Ayelet-Chen Wadler, 44, a physicist who grew up in a West Bank settlement, came to Lod with her family 15 years ago to join the Torah Nucleus community.

''I was raised to try to make an impact,'' she said. ''Just by living here, you make a difference.''

A week after the peak in the violence, about 30 of the 40 Jewish families who had evacuated their homes in the Ramat Eshkol neighborhood had returned.

''I believe we can get back to where we were before, but it might take some time,'' said Mr. Rokach, the chairman of the Torah nucleus in Lod, condemning the revenge attacks by Jews from outside.

''Nobody's leaving. Quite the opposite. As we speak, I just got a WhatsApp message from a family looking for a home here. Nor are the Arabs leaving.''

Myra Noveck contributed reporting from Jerusalem.Myra Noveck contributed reporting from Jerusalem.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/23/world/middleeast/arabs-jewish-israel-palestine.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/23/world/middleeast/arabs-jewish-israel-palestine.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Jewish residents of Ramat Eshkol, a mostly Arab neighborhood in the mixed Israeli city of Lod, where much unrest has occurred.

Avi Rokach, chairman of the Torah Nucleus association in Lod. ''Perhaps ours is a complex message,'' he said of the movement.

Above, Ramat Eshkol on Wednesday in the aftermath of violence. Right, Israeli police officers in Lod last week de- tained an Israeli Arab man accused of carrying a knife. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN BALILTY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A9)

**Load-Date:** May 24, 2021

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[***Hailed as Historic, Biden's Interior Pick Is Also Partisan Lightning Rod***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:622M-HV51-DXY4-X0TT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 23, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1533 words

**Byline:** By Coral Davenport

**Body**

President Biden's choice for interior secretary faces her confirmation hearing on Tuesday. Democrats see her as embodying the hopes of the new administration; Republicans object to her activism.

WASHINGTON -- When Representative Deb Haaland was tapped in December to be President Biden's interior secretary, the decision was hailed as historic. She was the first Native American ever nominated to serve in cabinet -- in this case to head a department that, for much of the nation's history, has mistreated and neglected Indigenous Americans.

On Tuesday, when she faces her confirmation hearing, another label will be applied to her nomination: embattled.

No other Biden nominee to head a cabinet department has divided the political parties as sharply. To her considerable number of supporters, she embodies the hope of the Biden era, an activist second-term representative from New Mexico who would break ground like no other member of the cabinet, ethnically and politically.

Her detractors have zeroed in on her activism, especially her forthright denunciations of any and all oil and gas exploration on public land and her fierce opposition to the natural gas extraction method known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

''Representative Haaland has a long record as a vehement opponent of American fossil fuels,'' said Senator John Barrasso of Wyoming, one of the nation's largest oil, gas and coal producing states, who is the ranking Republican on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which will consider her nomination this week.

Propelled by an activist campaign, Ms. Haaland emerged last fall as a dark-horse candidate to head the Biden administration's Interior Department, the vast government agency that oversees the nation's 500 million acres of public lands and is most responsible for the well-being of the nation's 1.9 million Indigenous people.

Ms. Haaland, a citizen of Laguna Pueblo, one of the country's 574 federally recognized tribes, would also become the face of one of Mr. Biden's most divisive climate change policies, his pledge to ban all fracking on public lands.

To call her nomination the most endangered of Mr. Biden's slate would be untrue. That title belongs to his choice to head the White House Office of Management and Budget, Neera Tanden, who has garnered opposition not only from Republicans but also the Senate's most conservative Democrat, Joe Manchin III of West Virginia.

What differentiates Ms. Tanden's nomination from Ms. Haaland's is the depth of their support from the Democratic Party's activist wing. Ms. Tanden's social-media needling of Senator Bernie Sanders, independent of Vermont, and her association with Hillary Clinton has left her liberal support tepid at best, while Ms. Haaland has become a favorite of the Sanders wing, who see her as a transformational figure. She could also win the support of some Republican moderates, such as Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, whose state is 18 percent Alaska Native.

''The number of folks across the country who are energized about her nomination, I've never seen,'' said Collin O'Mara, the head of the National Wildlife Federation and a former top environmental official in Delaware who worked with the Biden administration's transition team as it assembled its list of nominees for environmental posts.

In the center of that partisan chasm once again sits Senator Manchin, who leads the Senate Energy Committee and has a history of siding with Republicans on issues of energy and climate change.

To win him over, Ms. Haaland will highlight her distinctive personal story and a hardscrabble background that could appeal to a West Virginian who identifies with his increasingly Republican state's ***working class***.

''I'm not a stranger to the struggles many families across America face today,'' she will say, according to prepared remarks distributed by the Interior Department on Monday afternoon. ''I've lived most of my adult life paycheck to paycheck.''

''It's because of these struggles that I fully understand the role interior must play in the president's plan to build back better; to responsibly manage our natural resources to protect them for future generations -- so that we can continue to work, live, hunt, fish, and pray among them,'' Ms. Haaland will say, according to the remarks.

A ''35th-generation New Mexican'' and the child of military veterans, she attended 13 public schools before graduating from high school, started a salsa company and worked as a cake decorator before putting herself through college and law school on food stamps and student loans.

In 2015, Ms. Haaland became the head of the state Democratic Party and helped to flip the New Mexico Statehouse to Democratic control. In 2018, she and Sharice Davids of Kansas became the first two Native American women elected to Congress.

That personal story has not insulated her from partisan attacks. Oil-state Republicans have called Ms. Haaland ''radical'' and ''divisive.''

Some of Ms. Haaland's past environmental positions have gone further than those of Mr. Biden, who has sought to reassure the oil and gas industry and labor unions that his plans do not include shutting down existing drilling and fracking on public lands. Ms. Haaland was an original co-sponsor of the Green New Deal -- the resolution written by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Democrat of New York, and Senator Edward Markey, a Massachusetts Democrat -- which calls for the United States to eradicate fossil fuel pollution within a decade.

''I am wholeheartedly against fracking and drilling on public lands,'' Ms. Haaland told The Guardian in 2019.

Her congressional campaign sponsored the People's Demand for Climate Change, a petition demanding that governments ''pledge to an outright and immediate ban on fracking.'' In 2016, Ms. Haaland joined the Standing Rock Sioux protesters in North Dakota who camped out for months in opposition to the Dakota Access oil pipeline.

Senator Steve Daines, a Republican from the oil- and coal-rich state of Montana who also sits on the Senate energy panel, said that while he did not agree with Mr. Biden's energy and climate change agenda, he has voted to confirm nominees such as Jennifer Granholm for energy secretary and Pete Buttigieg for the transportation secretary.

But Mr. Daines said Ms. Haaland could be more strongly guided by the activist beliefs she espoused before her nomination than by Mr. Biden's. ''I'm not convinced that she can divorce herself from those radical views,'' Mr. Daines said in an interview.

There is also opposition in her own home state, where the $2 billion generated annually by oil and gas production on public lands make up nearly a quarter of New Mexico's budget.

''A permanent ban would devastate New Mexico's economy,'' said Ryan Flynn, executive director of New Mexico Oil and Gas Association. ''The consequences on New Mexico would be more severe than any other state.''

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Mr. Manchin declined a request for an interview, although his spokeswoman, Sam Runyon, said he was looking forward to Tuesday's hearing, ''where they will further discuss her experience and qualifications to lead the Department of the Interior.''

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Ms. Haaland's supporters said they were prepared to campaign against any senator willing to vote against the first Native American cabinet secretary.

''There is a potential that Republicans will burn their bridges with tribal and Indigenous voters if they come out against her,'' said Julian Brave NoiseCat, vice president of strategy and policy at the research group Data for Progress who spearheaded last fall's campaign to urge Mr. Biden to nominate Ms. Haaland.

''In Arizona, Wisconsin, Alaska, and New Mexico -- a lot of western parts of the U.S. -- it's a significant part of the vote,'' he added. ''If you want to be competitive in those areas, it's better not to lose 80 percent of the Native vote.''

Ms. Haaland's backers also point to her role as a member of the House Natural Resources Committee in pushing through a major bipartisan public lands law last year that increased funding to preserve land for public use. Introducing her to the panel on Tuesday will be Representative Don Young of Alaska, the Republican House veteran who worked with Ms. Haaland on that bill.

In a statement last year, Mr. Young called Ms. Haaland a ''consensus builder'' who has ''been open to working across the aisle'' and ''would pour her passion into the job every single day.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/22/climate/deb-haaland-interior.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/22/climate/deb-haaland-interior.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Representative Deb Haaland of New Mexico, nominated as President Biden's interior secretary, faces nomination hearings this week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX EDELMAN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** February 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Fight Over Deb Haaland, First Native American Cabinet Pick, Reflects Partisan Divide***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:622G-HHM1-JBG3-63WN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 22, 2021 Monday 07:42 EST

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 1547 words

**Byline:** Coral Davenport

**Highlight:** President Biden’s choice for interior secretary faces her confirmation hearing on Tuesday. Democrats see her as embodying the hopes of the new administration; Republicans object to her activism.

**Body**

President Biden’s choice for interior secretary faces her confirmation hearing on Tuesday. Democrats see her as embodying the hopes of the new administration; Republicans object to her activism.

WASHINGTON — When Representative [*Deb Haaland*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/02/us/politics/deb-haaland-interior.html) was tapped in December to be President Biden’s interior secretary, the decision was hailed as [*historic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/02/us/politics/deb-haaland-interior.html). She was the first Native American ever nominated to serve in cabinet — in this case to head a department that, for much of the nation’s history, has mistreated and neglected Indigenous Americans.

On Tuesday, when she faces her confirmation hearing, another label will be applied to her nomination: embattled.

No other Biden nominee to head a cabinet department has divided the political parties as sharply. To her [*considerable number of supporters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/02/us/politics/deb-haaland-interior.html), she embodies the hope of the Biden era, an activist second-term representative from New Mexico who would break ground like no other member of the cabinet, ethnically and politically.

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To call her nomination the most endangered of Mr. Biden’s slate would be untrue. That title belongs to his choice to head the White House Office of Management and Budget, Neera Tanden, who has garnered opposition not only from Republicans but also the Senate’s most conservative Democrat, Joe Manchin III of West Virginia.

What differentiates Ms. Tanden’s nomination from Ms. Haaland’s is the depth of their support from the Democratic Party’s activist wing. Ms. Tanden’s social-media needling of Senator Bernie Sanders, independent of Vermont, and her association with Hillary Clinton has left her liberal support tepid at best, while Ms. Haaland has become a favorite of the Sanders wing, who see her as a transformational figure. She could also win the support of some Republican moderates, such as Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, whose state is 18 percent Alaska Native.

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PHOTO: Representative Deb Haaland of New Mexico, nominated as President Biden’s interior secretary, faces nomination hearings this week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX EDELMAN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Covid Shaming, Virulent in Canada, Forced Him to Flee Town***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:622D-5TC1-JBG3-6268-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 22, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

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**Byline:** By Catherine Porter

**Body**

The fear of public shaming is becoming so prevalent in some Canadian provinces that doctors worry it is driving virus cases underground.

For a time, Cortland Cronk, 26, was Canada's most famous -- and infamous -- coronavirus patient.

Mr. Cronk, a traveling salesman, went viral after testing positive in November and recounting his story of being infected while traveling for work to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

He was called a virus-spreader, a job-killer, a liar and a sleaze. Online memes painted him as the Grinch, since subsequent outbreaks led to restrictions against Christmas parties. Many people, including a newspaper columnist, made elaborate fun of his name.

He also received threats. So many, in fact, that he fled his hometown, Saint John, for Victoria -- a city on the opposite end of the country, 3,600 miles away.

''They were acting like I purposely got Covid,'' Mr. Cronk said from his new apartment. ''I had hundreds of death threats per day. People telling me I should be publicly stoned.''

Many Canadians believed that it was just rewards and that his case formed a cautionary tale to others who flagrantly break the rules, putting lives and livelihoods at risk. Some even think more formal shaming should happen in Canada, with governments not just fining culprits for breaking coronavirus regulations but broadcasting their names.

Others have argued Mr. Cronk is a victim of a worsening civic problem in the country -- public shaming of people testing positive -- that is not just unfair but ineffective and that makes the coronavirus harder to quash.

''It might feel like a release for the community, but it does very little to prevent virus transmission,'' said Robert Huish, an associate professor at Dalhousie University in Halifax, who is conducting a study on the coronavirus and stigma. ''In the process, we are causing people harm.''

Canadians might be known internationally as nice, apologetic and fair-minded. But, a year after the pandemic arrived, some Canadians worry it has exposed a very different national persona: judgmental, suspicious and vengeful. Covid-shaming has become fervent in parts of the country, with locals calling for the heads of not just politicians and doctors breaking the rules but their own family members and neighbors.

''It's not getting Covid -- it's breaking the rules that worries us,'' said Randy Boyagoda, a novelist and English professor at the University of Toronto, noting that a Canadian foundational motto is ''peace, order and good government.''

''What's the key point? It's order,'' he said. ''For order to be sustained, we have to follow the rules. Canadians are a distinctly rule-focused and rule-following people.''

Complaint lines -- or so-called ''snitch lines'' -- set up across Canada have been flooded with tips about people suspected of breaking quarantine rules, businesses flouting public health restrictions and outsiders, arriving with unfamiliar license plates, potentially bringing the disease with them.

Facebook groups are full of stories of people being labeled potential vectors and being refused service, disinvited from family gatherings and reported to the police and public health authorities.

''This is impacting our ability to contain the virus,'' said Dr. Ryan Sommers, one of eight public health doctors in Nova Scotia who published a letter beseeching locals in the small Atlantic province to stop shaming one another, as fear of discrimination was delaying reports of Covid symptoms and potentially driving cases underground.

The province has one of the lowest Covid rates in the country: just 18 active cases, as of Feb 20. But instead of offering solace, people have become hypervigilant, Dr. Sommers said.

''We want to create a social norm, where people will be supportive and caring and compassionate'' Dr. Sommers said. ''Social media can be more virulent than the virus itself.''

In the country's four eastern provinces, which have enforced self-isolation rules for anyone entering the region, the shaming is not just online, Mr. Huish said. It's intimate, particularly in small communities, where ''community cohesion quickly flips to become community surveillance.''

Trisha Girouard said a member of her extended family reported her to public health officials after learning she was driving from her home in Irishtown, New Brunswick, across the border to Maine to work as a nurse. She was disinvited from a family baby shower, even though she was complying by self-isolation guidelines, she said.

The sense of being policed by her small community made her feel so frightened, she didn't dare walk into a coffee shop one day to use the washroom -- instead choosing to urinate in a cup in the back of her truck.

''I'm an educated person, but that's how worked up they had me,'' she said in an interview, referring to her extended family.

Some say the fear of stigma has become worse than the fear of catching the disease.

Recently, after taking her second mandatory coronavirus test, Jennifer Hutton pulled out her suitcases, preparing to leave Halifax if she tested positive. She envisioned a front-page newspaper story saying she had brought the virus into the community because she travels for her job as an I.T. director for a medical supply company, she said.

Already, she had received a cold reception from local stores and a profane note had been put on her vehicle, which had Ontario license plates, telling her to go ''home and take the rona with you.'' ''I just couldn't handle any more stigma,'' she said.

Few victims of public shaming have become as famous as Mr. Cronk, the New Brunswicker who contracted coronavirus on a business trip.

He initially had no symptoms, so was not required to self-isolate upon returning, he said.

Nine days later, he exhibited a few symptoms and tested positive for the coronavirus, so the health department began contact tracing. After the local news media did a story about a frustrated store owner disbelieving his staff had been exposed to the virus, Mr. Cronk worried he'd be outed as the source of the exposure, knowing he had visited the store.

''Saint John is very small,'' he said. ''I knew it was matter of time before my name was spoken.'' So, he approached the C.B.C. network to ''get the story straight, before chatter got around.'' To his knowledge, none of his contacts tested positive and he was never ticketed by the police for breaking public emergency regulations, he said.

Afterward, a video clip from his Instagram account promoting his marijuana supply business, ''Cronk Grow Nutrients'' made the rounds on Twitter. In it, Mr. Cronk said he ''can't taste a thing right now'' and detailed the many trips he had taken that month. Many assumed he had been knowingly, carelessly spreading the virus.

The optics, and the timing, were terrible: As the memes multiplied, the province's top doctor announced a surge in cases and the premier declared a crackdown on Christmas travel and gatherings. Online, Mr. Cronk was deemed New Brunswick's infector in chief.

''There wasn't a lesson to be learned,'' said Mr. Cronk. ''I was shamed for no reason.''

Historically, stigma and shaming have faithfully trailed pandemics, said David Barnes, an associate professor at the University of Pennsylvania who studies the history of infectious diseases and epidemics. During the plague in Europe, Jewish people became convenient scapegoats. During the cholera epidemic in Britain in the 19th century, ***working-class*** Irish people were blamed, Mr. Barnes said.

Most recently, gay men and Haitians were stigmatized during the AIDS epidemic in the United States.

''We make ourselves feel safer and superior by associating disease with people who are not like us, do things we don't do, or come from places unlike our place,'' said Mr. Barnes. ''We shouldn't be surprised.''

A recent poll from British Columbia revealed that flouting coronavirus public safety regulations was common, with around half of respondents admitting they had frequented bars or restaurants with people outside their household -- a no-no under the provincial regulations. However, around 60 percent said they thought they were doing a better job than others following the rules.

While some politicians and public health experts across the country are sounding an alarm about the trend of shaming, others are calling out for more.

In Manitoba, the premier began to publicly name businesses fined for breaking pandemic regulations in November. Since then, a list of their names is published every week.

''For many people, the scorn and contempt and disapproval of their neighbors will be at least as effective as a fine,'' said Arthur Schafer, the founding director of the Centre for Professional and Applied Ethics at the University of Manitoba.

Mr. Schafer believes people who are fined for breaking the rules should be publicly named, too.

''We need to fully exploit every kind of deterrent,'' he said. ''Nobody wants to be seen as a terrible community neighbor.''

Allison Hannaford contributed research from North Bay, Ontario. Meagan Campbell contributed reporting from Halifax.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/21/world/canada/coronavirus-public-shaming.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/21/world/canada/coronavirus-public-shaming.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Near the Maine-Canada border at Mullholland Point lighthouse in New Brunswick, where one resident who tested positive said the sense of being policed by her small community made her feel scared. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN MORRIS/REUTERS)

Cortland Cronk moved 3,600 miles away to Victoria, British Columbia, after he tested positive in November and was publicly shamed in his home province of New Brunswick. ''They were acting like I purposely got Covid,'' he said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JACKIE DIVES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2021

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[***Why Biden Won’t Find His Biden; On Politics With Lisa Lerer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60H6-JNY1-DXY4-X14B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 3, 2020 Monday 19:51 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1112 words

**Byline:** Lisa Lerer

**Highlight:** He would be wise to remember that Barack Obama didn’t pick him simply because they were “simpatico.”

**Body**

He would be wise to remember that Barack Obama didn’t pick him simply because they were “simpatico.”

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.

When it comes to the vice presidency, [*Joe Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) has a perfect candidate in mind: himself.

Well, if he were Josephine Biden, of course.

In comments about his search for a [*running mate*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), Mr. Biden has made clear he wants someone with the characteristics that he believes made him the perfect pick for [*Barack Obama*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) in 2008 — someone who is loyal, is ready to govern “on Day 1” and is, as Mr. Biden has said, “simpatico with me, both in terms of personality as well as substance.”

Of course, self-perception isn’t always accurate. Sure, Mr. Obama wanted someone he could work alongside. And, as his strategist David Axelrod later recounted, [*early chemistry*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) between the two men helped finalize the selection of Mr. Biden.

But at the start, the Obama-Biden relationship was hardly the bromance immortalized in the Democratic memes that followed. People close to Mr. Obama’s 2008 campaign have said they had real concerns about Mr. Biden, most centrally about his ability to stay on message and his propensity for political gaffes.

[*As the race against John McCain tightened*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) that August, the thinking of those in Mr. Obama’s orbit was that they needed a white man on the ticket, preferably an “[*older guy*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics)” who could reassure voters worried about taking a chance on a young, barrier-breaking senator.

People involved in the process, The New York Times [*reported in the immediate aftermath of the announcement*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), attributed Mr. Obama’s decision to Mr. Biden’s appeal among white ***working-class*** voters and his compelling personal story. Another plus: At Mr. Biden’s age, then a spry 65 years old, Obama advisers didn’t expect him to run for the presidency (LOL).

“You are the pick of my heart, but Joe is the pick of my head,” [*Mr. Obama told Tim Kaine*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), then the governor of Virginia, after he made his choice.

So Mr. Biden’s idealized version of his own vice-presidential process clearly involves a bit of revisionist history.

He has already made at least one politically strategic choice by limiting the candidates to women. Limiting the prospects by gender eliminates a lot of Mr. Biden’s most loyal and presumably “simpatico” allies — a group that largely comprises white men. As [*one racial justice activist politely put it*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics): “Even his set of relationships, I’m quite sure, are geared toward his world.”

Picking a woman isn’t about personal loyalty; it’s about energizing female voters and recognizing the momentum that women — particularly Black women — have given the Democratic Party during the Trump era.

Given his age, Mr. Biden also needs to reassure voters that there’s someone who can take over if he can no longer serve as president — a reason there aren’t many older women on the list.

I suppose this is a really long way of guiding you, dear readers, through the blizzard of vice-presidential speculation blanketing the political conversation.

Mr. Biden said he would announce his pick in early August, so the forecast this week is for more hot takes, rumors and backbiting. Because the field is all women, there will probably be a touch of sexism in the mix as well, as we’ve already seen in [*reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) detailing largely anonymous concerns from donors [*who say Kamala Harris*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) is “too ambitious” for the job. (I’ve never met an unambitious politician, but perhaps that’s a subject for a whole other column.)

Don’t get too caught up in the leaks and the counterleaks, the “close Biden allies” and the chattering donors. Sure, picking a running mate is complicated. Sure, personal relationships and trust matter. But you know who doesn’t care about chemistry? Losing presidential candidates.

In the end, there’s one strategic imperative that outweighs all of the others.

Winning.

Drop us a line!

We want to hear from our readers. Have a question? We’ll try to answer it. Have a comment? We’re all ears. Email us at [*onpolitics@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).

Who’s the ‘pick of your head’?

We asked for your thoughts on the vice-presidential pick. Here’s some of what you had to say:

It should be Kamala Harris for several reasons: 1) She will have Mike Pence crying out for Mommy before the end of the V.P. debate. 2) When attacked by the Republicans for her gaffes as California’s attorney general, she’ll shame them as white nationalists trying to destroy another Black woman. 3) She has a winning smile. Think Reagan. Think W. Think Clinton. Think Obama. 4) Who else has an anagram of her name close to “I Alarm Shark”?

— Tom Woodward

The first — and most important — question the nominee has to ask of her/himself is: “Who would be the best president?” Susan Rice passes that test with all her experience, understanding, temperament and grace. And she’ll adapt easily to campaign mode.

— Tim Hulbert

Tammy Duckworth would be a strong vice-presidential candidate for the following reasons: She has campaign experience. She has congressional experience. She represents a seemingly forgotten constituency: the men and women actually fighting a war that can’t be won and apparently will never end. She juggles daily the responsibilities of motherhood with those of her political career.

— Elisabeth Martensen

And there were at least a few names not on Mr. Biden’s list …

I suggest Condoleezza Rice. As a former secretary of state, she has a strong background in world affairs, speaks Russian and could help repair the damage done by Trump around the world. Although she has not run for office, I think she would be an articulate speaker and candidate. Since she has served a Republican president, I think she would be appealing to the many Republicans like me who will be voting for Joe Biden.

— Irene McAllister

Michelle Obama. She has more experience and ability than all of them, including Biden.

— Jerry McCann

Compiled by Isabella Grullón Paz.

… Seriously

#teamleggings for life. The Washington Post quotes Alexa Muñoz, who is [*saying goodbye to jeans*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics):

“I haven’t worn a single pair of jeans since the pandemic started,” said Muñoz, 46, a translator in Manhattan. “They’re looking at me sadly from the closet, but it’s like, ‘You know what? I’m not wearing those anymore.’ Why was I punishing myself?”

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 19, 2020

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[***‘Like We’re Being Cursed’: First Covid and Now Waterlogged Homes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:622G-P4V1-DXY4-X0JY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1448 words

**Byline:** Jack Healy

**Highlight:** Basics remain scarce in some parts of Texas, and many already battered by a year of the coronavirus now face a costly recovery.

**Body**

Basics remain scarce in some parts of Texas, and many already battered by a year of the coronavirus now face a costly recovery.

KILLEEN, Texas — After her pipes burst and flooded her house, after she spent one night on a church couch and another fleeing a four-alarm fire in the hotel where she and her husband sought refuge, Janet Culver, 88, finally made it home a week after [*Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/us/texas-ercot-board-resigned.html)’ epic winter nightmare began.

But oh, what she found.

The sunken living room where Ms. Culver and her 91-year-old husband, Jim, had sequestered themselves from the coronavirus was now a frigid pond. The floorboards in the dining room were warped by water. Their tightknit Episcopal church, which has lost three members to the virus over the past awful year, had also flooded.

“I’m at the end of my rope,” Ms. Culver said.

Who wasn’t by now? Even with power back on across most of the state and warmer weather in the forecast for much of this week, millions of Texans whose health and finances were already battered by a year of Covid-19 now face a grinding recovery from a storm estimated to cost upward of $20 billion, the costliest in state history, according to the Insurance Council of Texas.

Across the state, many basics remained scarce on Monday. Gas stations were without fuel, grocery store shelves were empty and long lines formed in the early-morning darkness at food distribution sites. About 8.6 million people were still being told to boil their drinking water, and about 120,000 others had no water at all as plumbers and water utilities [*battled an epidemic of leaky, broken pipes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/us/texas-ercot-board-resigned.html).

For many lower-income families whose ceilings collapsed and kitchens flooded after frozen pipes burst, the disaster did not melt with the snow. As a new week began, they were still doubled up with relatives. They were trying to figure out where to go next, how to pay for cars debilitated by the storm. They worried that their children would fall further behind in classes after their laptops had been destroyed by spraying pipes.

“I’ve been so low,” said Iris Cantu, 45, a nanny and single mother in Dallas. Ms. Cantu spent three weeks home sick with Covid-19 over the summer, then watched her waterlogged living-room ceiling cave in last week — the result of a pipe failure that she said her homeowner’s insurance would not cover.

When getting sick hammered her finances last summer, Ms. Cantu began driving to a community food distribution center for fresh fruit, bread and meat as she tried to rebuild her savings. Now, there is the cost of fixing her home and replacing her 3-year-old daughter’s toys that were contaminated by a shower of moldering insulation.

President Biden’s declaration of a major disaster in Texas — at one point last week every one of the state’s 254 counties was under a freeze warning — will provide more aid. But with millions of people scrambling for assistance, Ms. Cantu said she had not yet made a claim through the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“I don’t know what to do,” she said.

At the San Antonio food bank, Diana Gaitan joined a two-mile line of cars waiting for hard-to-find groceries, including tortillas, beans and water. The storm’s aftermath loomed as one more miserable obstacle to confront after Ms. Gaitan contracted the coronavirus and stopped working last year as her stress and anxiety spiraled.

“It’s kind of like we’re being cursed,” Ms. Gaitan, 66, said.

She had been searching grocery stores for milk, eggs and potatoes but had little luck finding enough to feed her grandchildren the bean and cheese tacos they love.

Killeen, a military town anchored by Fort Hood, has been battered over the past year by a litany of [*soldiers’ killings and suicides*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/us/texas-ercot-board-resigned.html) and revelations about [*pervasive sexual harassment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/us/texas-ercot-board-resigned.html) on post. Those challenges came amid a pandemic that has infected at least 20,148 residents, or 1 in 18, of surrounding Bell County, according to a [*New York Times database*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/us/texas-ercot-board-resigned.html).

And the storm’s aftermath of damaged homes, scarce food and lost pay has piled on more difficulties. Over the weekend, drivers prowled in search of a gas station without plastic bags covering up empty pumps. [*People lined up for hours outside supermarkets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/23/us/texas-ercot-board-resigned.html) for bottled water, milk and juice. They took sponge baths at their dribbling sinks.

“So many things have broken down on so many levels,” said Dr. Chris Colvin, the medical director of Seton Medical Center just outside Killeen.

A week on, those breakdowns were still plaguing crucial services. Flights were being waved away from the airport because the water pressure was too low, according to Mayor José Segarra. At the hospital, Dr. Colvin said on Saturday that there had not been enough water for employees to flush toilets or wash their hands. The weekend shift was advised to use the bathroom before going to work, he said.

And a new wave of patients was arriving: people who had fallen and injured themselves during the storm, but who could not traverse the roads until the worst of the weather had passed.

It was just crisis after crisis, said Chris Mendoza, an Army veteran who was still recovering from Covid-19 when a bathroom pipe burst and flooded his family out of their home.

They could not afford this. Not now. Mr. Mendoza said he had lost his job as a barber when the first wave of pandemic closures shuttered salons last year. He spent a month out of work before finding a gig as an exterminator, killing pests on commission as his wife, Jenny, home-schooled their 2- and 5-year-old sons.

Though they wore masks when they saw friends and sat apart from the congregation at their church, the virus found the family in late January. They all tested positive, but Mr. Mendoza got pummeled. He spent two weeks in bed, a burly guy who played basketball and lifted weights now winded by a trip to the bathroom.

His health had barely recovered when the power flickered off and the frozen pipe cracked open, filling the boys’ playroom and bedroom with water and rupturing their plans and finances. The pandemic has disproportionately hit ***working-class*** families like the Mendozas, and they had not been able to spare $90 a month for renter’s insurance. Now, there was new furniture to buy and hotel rooms to rent.

“Nobody expected this,” Mr. Mendoza said.

The family bunked together in the master bedroom for a night. But half the house is unlivable, and the heat and noise of a half-dozen industrial fans and dehumidifiers forced them out, to search for a hotel room.

The Culvers, the older couple displaced in the fire, had spent much of the pandemic stuck at home to avoid the coronavirus. Now, the house where they sat together each evening to watch “Jeopardy!” after dinner was barely habitable.

The gray couch and easy chairs were soaked. The dining-room floorboards were buckling from the moisture — a hazard for a couple who use canes and have had hips and knees replaced. For the moment, they were staying with friends until they could turn their water back on.

The morning after the Culvers fled the burning hotel, where fire officials said the freeze had disabled the automatic sprinkler system, their priest, the Rev. Steve Karcher, swung by to give them a few bathroom supplies. He then drove to St. Christopher’s Episcopal Church to gauge the damage as the warming weather unfroze the pipes and melted the snow piled on the roof.

It was bad. Two inches of water lapped at the pews. The floor of the small room where Mr. Karcher keeps chalices and the sacrament was rocking like a water bed.

The past year might have been a bit much even for the biblical Job. Mr. Karcher’s mother died of the virus in the fall, plus the three church members who felt like family.

“On the one hand, it’s awful, grievous,” Mr. Karcher said of the winter storm and of the past year. But now pressing matters awaited, he said. There was water to vacuum, plumbers to call, a church preschool to rebuild. “You’ve got a job to do. Buck up. Go back to work.”

Giulia McDonnell Nieto del Rio contributed reporting from San Antonio.

Giulia McDonnell Nieto del Rio contributed reporting from San Antonio.

PHOTOS: At the Killeen, Texas, home of Jim Culver, left, his children tried to remedy a soaked living room. (A1); Water from a burst pipe soaked St. Christopher’s Episcopal Church in Killeen, Texas, where Dana Karcher’s husband is the priest.; Janet Culver, 88, and her husband, Jim, 91, after water damaged their home and a fire erupted at the hotel where they took refuge; Sprinklers were frozen at Killeen’s Hilton Garden Inn when the four-alarm blaze hit Friday, displacing guests like the Culvers.; Being without power for days was just one hardship for Killeen residents like Heather Graham. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** February 23, 2021

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[***What Causes Vaccine Hesitancy?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:647D-RN91-DXY4-X1M0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 5, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 8; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 2899 words

**Byline:** By Anita Sreedhar and Anand Gopal

**Body**

Robert Steed knew the toll Covid-19 had taken on the South Bronx, where he'd lived most of his life. There were the ambulances that would pull up to the drab brick apartment buildings of St. Mary's Park Houses, the public housing complex where he'd grown up. There were longtime tenants who'd succumbed to the disease. There were posters pasted near the elevators, urging residents to get vaccinated. But he wouldn't go near the vaccine.

''I'm not going to listen to what the government says,'' he told friends. While he was down South working at a Waffle House, he tested positive for the coronavirus. He decided he'd fight the disease himself; after all, he was only 41, was rail thin and had no underlying conditions. But when his girlfriend didn't hear from him for a few days in October, his friends said authorities forced their way into his apartment -- and discovered his body. The death shook his friends and former neighbors at St. Mary's Park Houses, but even as they mourned, many had made up their minds: They would not get vaccinated.

About 70 percent of American adults are now fully immunized, but in pockets around the country -- from the rural South to predominately Black and brown neighborhoods in large cities -- vaccine hesitancy remains a stubborn obstacle to defeating the pandemic. And it's not just in the United States: In 2019, the World Health Organization declared vaccine hesitancy one of the 10 threats to global health. With persistent vaccine avoidance and unequal access to vaccines, unvaccinated pockets could act as reservoirs for the virus, allowing for the spread of new variants like Omicron.

The world needs to address the root causes of vaccine hesitancy. We can't go on believing that the issue can be solved simply by flooding skeptical communities with public service announcements or hectoring people to ''believe in science.''

One of us is a primary care physician with a degree in public health, working in the Bronx, and the other is a sociologist assisting international institutions to support polio and Covid vaccination in underdeveloped countries (as well as a journalist covering conflict). For the past five years, we've conducted surveys and focus groups abroad and interviewed residents of the Bronx to better understand vaccine avoidance. We've found that people who reject vaccines are not necessarily less scientifically literate or less well-informed than those who don't. Instead, hesitancy reflects a transformation of our core beliefs about what we owe one another.

Over the past four decades, governments have slashed budgets and privatized basic services. This has two important consequences for public health. First, people are unlikely to trust institutions that do little for them. And second, public health is no longer viewed as a collective endeavor, based on the principle of social solidarity and mutual obligation. People are conditioned to believe they're on their own and responsible only for themselves. That means an important source of vaccine hesitancy is the erosion of the idea of a common good.

One of the most striking examples of this transformation is in the United States, where anti-vaccination attitudes have been growing for decades. For Covid-19, commentators have chalked up vaccine distrust to everything from online misinformation campaigns, to our tribal political culture, to a fear of needles. Race has been highlighted in particular: In the early months of the vaccine rollout, white Americans were twice as likely as Black Americans to get vaccinated. Dr. Anthony Fauci pointed to the long shadow of racism on our country's medical institutions, like the notorious Tuskegee syphilis trials, while others emphasized the negative experiences of African Americans and Latinos in the examination room. These views are not wrong; compared with white Americans, communities of color do experience the American health care system differently. But a closer look at the data reveals a more complicated picture.

Since the spring, when most American adults became eligible for Covid vaccines, the racial gap in vaccination rates between Black and white people has been halved. In September, a national survey found that vaccination rates among Black and white Americans were almost identical. Other surveys have determined that a much more significant factor was college attendance: Those without a college degree were the most likely to go unvaccinated.

Education is a reliable predictor of socioeconomic status, and other studies have similarly found a link between income and vaccination. An analysis in June of census tract data in Michigan showed, for example, that vaccination rates in the heavily Black neighborhoods of Saginaw County were below 35 percent, and the rates in nearby poor white areas were not much different. Voters who identify as Democrats are much more likely than voters who identify as Republicans to get vaccinated, but, according to the Michigan data, this gap also disappears when accounting for income and education. It turns out that the real vaccination divide is class.

This is particularly visible at the St. Mary's Park Houses, where Mr. Steed grew up. Here, amid the peeling walls and broken front door, residents say that New York City's chronically underfunded housing authority has left them to fend for themselves. When we visited recently to ask about vaccines, the heating system was out despite the November chill. The roof was in disrepair. Some residents had no choice but to occupy unlivable units; gas line interruptions forced tenants to use hot plates. Homeless people have taken shelter in the stairwells and hallways.

Dana Elden, the tenant association president and a friend of Mr. Steed's, said she's felt neglected by the city's public housing authority. When the pandemic hit, she said, residents were forced to dip into funds meant for the property's upkeep to purchase masks, gloves and hand sanitizer. They've leaned on local charities for Covid testing, and even for meals for hungry tenants. ''People are thinking, 'If the government isn't going to do anything for us,''' said Elden, '''then why should we participate in vaccines?'''

Americans began thinking about health care decisions this way only recently; during the 1950s polio campaigns, for example, most people saw vaccination as a civic duty. But as the public purse shrunk in the 1980s, politicians insisted that it's no longer the government's job to ensure people's well-being; instead, Americans were to be responsible only for themselves and their own bodies. Entire industries, such as self-help and health foods, have sprung up on the principle that the key to good health lies in individuals making the right choices.

Amanda Santiago, a St. Mary's Park tenant, told us, ''I'm not necessarily anti-vaccine.'' But she decided against the shot, she explained, as ''a personal choice.'' A growing body of research suggests that Ms. Santiago's views reflect a broader shift in America, across class and race. Without an idea of the common good, health is often discussed using the language of ''choice.'' At a recent anti-vaccine-mandate demonstration in Brooklyn, some protesters wore Black Lives Matter T-shirts and chanted, ''My body, my choice!'' When the Brooklyn Nets banned their star guard Kyrie Irving for refusing the vaccine, the Nets' general manager, Sean Marks, acknowledged, ''Kyrie has made a personal choice, and we respect his individual right to choose.''

Of course, there's a lot of good that comes from viewing health care decisions as personal choices: No one wants to be subjected to procedures against their wishes. But there are problems with reducing public health to a matter of choice. It gives the impression that individuals are wholly responsible for their own health. This is despite growing evidence that health is deeply influenced by factors outside our control; public health experts now talk about the ''social determinants of health,'' the idea that personal health is never simply just a reflection of individual lifestyle choices, but also the class people are born into, the neighborhood they grew up in and the race they belong to.

Poverty and environmental conditions are closely linked to chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease. The South Bronx has one of the highest death rates from asthma in the country, in part because of dilapidated public housing; it is also one of the least food secure regions in America. But food deserts and squalor are not easy problems to solve -- certainly not by individuals or charities -- and they require substantial government action. Without such reforms, primary care physicians can approach their patients only through the lens of personal responsibility. Many medical schools teach ''motivational interviewing,'' so that physicians can coach patients to make better lifestyle choices. This can be helpful, but it fails to address the deeper problem: Being healthy is not cheap. Studies indicate that energy-dense foods with less nutritious value are more affordable, and low-cost diets are linked to obesity and insulin resistance.

Another problem with reducing well-being to personal choice is that this treats health as a commodity. This isn't surprising, since we shop for doctors and insurance plans the way we do all other goods and services.

Recent research has shed light on this problem. Jennifer Reich, a sociologist at the University of Colorado, Denver, has spent years studying families who refuse to vaccinate their children against diseases like measles. She found that mothers devoted many hours to ''researching'' vaccines, soaking up parental advice books and quizzing doctors. In other words, they act like savvy consumers. The mothers in Reich's study maintain that each child is unique, and that they know their child's needs better than anyone. As a result, they insist that they alone have the expertise to decide what medicines to give their children. When thinking as a consumer, people tend to downplay social obligations in favor of a narrow pursuit of self-interest. As one parent told Reich, ''I'm not going to put my child at risk to save another child.''

Such risk-benefit assessments for vaccines are an essential part of parents' consumer research. For illnesses like measles, outbreaks -- until recently -- have been so rare that it's not hard to be convinced that the harm of vaccines outweighs that of the disease. However, we've found in our research that for Covid-19, this risk analysis can get turned on its head: Vaccine uptake is so high among wealthy people because Covid is one of the gravest threats they face. In some wealthy Manhattan neighborhoods, for example, vaccination rates run north of 90 percent.

For poorer and ***working-class*** people, though, the calculus is different: Covid-19 is only one of multiple grave threats. In the South Bronx, one man who works two jobs shared that he navigates around drug dealers, hostile police and shootings. ''I don't want my kids to see what I've seen,'' he said. Another man said he lost his job during the pandemic and slipped back into addiction. ''Most of my friends are dead or in jail,'' he said. Neither one plans to get vaccinated. Their hesitancy is not irrational: When viewed in the context of the other threats they face, Covid no longer seems uniquely scary.

Most of the people we interviewed in the Bronx say they are skeptical of the institutions that claim to serve the poor but in fact have abandoned them. ''When you're in a high tax bracket, the government protects you,'' said one man who drives an Amazon truck for a living. ''So why wouldn't you trust a government that protects you?'' On the other hand, he and his friends find reason to view the government's sudden interest in their well-being with suspicion. ''They are over here shoving money at us,'' a woman told us, referring to a New York City offer to pay a $500 bonus to municipal workers to get vaccinated. ''And I'm asking, why are you so eager, when you don't give us money for anything else?'' These views reinforce the work of social scientists who find a link between a lack of trust and inequality. And without trust, there is no mutual obligation, no sense of a common good.

As the emergence of the Omicron variant shows, vaccine mandates in the United States are not enough to solve this problem. Hesitancy is a global phenomenon. While the reasons vary by country, the underlying causes are the same: a deep mistrust in local and international institutions, in a context in which governments worldwide have cut social services.

Research shows that private systems not only tend to produce worse health outcomes than public ones, but privatization creates what public health experts call ''segregated care,'' which can undermine the feelings of social solidarity that are critical for successful vaccination drives. In one Syrian city, for example, the health care system now consists of one public hospital so underfunded that it is notorious for poor care, a few private hospitals offering high-quality care that are unaffordable to most of the population, and many unlicensed and unregulated private clinics -- some even without medical doctors -- known to offer misguided health advice. Under such conditions, conspiracy theories can flourish; many of the city's residents believe Covid vaccines are a foreign plot.

In many developing nations, international aid organizations are stepping in to offer vaccines. These institutions are sometimes more equitable than governments, but they are often oriented to donor priorities, not community needs. In Afghanistan, villagers lack access to most basic health services; some must travel hours to reach a clinic. Cases of childhood malnutrition are widespread and growing. Even though the country has only a few dozen cases of polio yearly, institutions like the W.H.O. spend considerable sums promoting and carrying out polio vaccinations. People in Kandahar speak about polio in ways that are strikingly similar to how residents in the Bronx speak about Covid. ''We have starvation and women die in childbirth.'' one tribal elder told us, ''Why do they care so much about polio? What do they really want?''

Researchers find these sentiments echoed in poor and marginalized communities around the world. Despite the scale of the problem, experts are divided on which interventions might work best. Here, too, the experience of the United States might prove instructive. In America, anti-vaccine movements are as old as vaccines themselves; efforts to immunize people against smallpox prompted bitter opposition in the turn of the last century. But after World War II, these attitudes disappeared. In the 1950s, demand for the polio vaccine often outstripped supply, and by the late 1970s, nearly every state had laws mandating vaccinations for school with hardly any public opposition.

What changed? This was the era of large, ambitious government programs like Medicare and Medicaid. In the mid-'60s, the number of government-funded social programs targeting the poor and communities of color skyrocketed. The anti-measles policy, for example, was an outgrowth of President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and War on Poverty initiatives. Government workers from initiatives like Head Start assisted in vaccination campaigns. In some cities, the government sponsored the creation of health councils, made up of community members, which served as intermediaries between health centers and the public. These councils embodied the idea that public health is effective only when community members share in decision making.

The experience of the 1960s suggests that when people feel supported through social programs, they're more likely to trust institutions and believe they have a stake in society's health. Only then do the ideas of social solidarity and mutual obligation begin to make sense.

The types of social programs that best promote this way of thinking are universal ones, like Social Security and universal health care. Universal programs inculcate a sense of a common good because everyone is eligible simply by virtue of belonging to a political community. In the international context, when marginalized communities benefit from universal government programs that bring basic services like clean drinking water and primary health care, they are more likely to trust efforts in emergency situations -- like when they're asked to get vaccinated.

If the world is going to beat the pandemic, countries need policies that promote a basic, but increasingly forgotten, idea: that our individual flourishing is bound up in collective well-being.

Anita Sreedhar is a resident specializing in primary care and social medicine residency at Montefiore Medical Center. She has reported from Afghanistan, India and elsewhere. Anand Gopal, a sociologist, is a professor at Arizona State University and a fellow at Type Media. They are co-founders of the Zomia Center, which assists with public health initiatives in conflict zones.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Selman Design FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***The Savior***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:647D-RN91-DXY4-X1N0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 5, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By M.H. Miller

**Body**

THE SAINT JOHN Coltrane Church in San Francisco -- a branch of the African Orthodox Church, where the jazz musician John Coltrane is the canonized patron saint -- is a family affair. It was founded in 1969 by His Eminence Archbishop Franzo W. King, D.D., and his wife, the Most Rev. Supreme Mother Marina King, before they possessed such lofty titles. (Their daughter, the Rev. Chaplain Wanika Stephens, Archpriest, M.A., is also a pastor there.)

The church began around 1964, as the Jazz Club in the couple's garage -- ''a listening clinic,'' F.W. King, now 77, says on a recent Zoom call with his wife, 75, from their home in San Francisco's Bayview-Hunters Point. (Their daughter, 57, also joined.) ''Maybe less than a dozen brothers and sisters would come together every week. Everybody would bring a new album. We'd put the music on and start testing our ears and our knowledge,'' seeing if they could name the drummer or the piano player on a track without looking at the record sleeve. One day, someone brought Coltrane's 1965 record ''A Love Supreme,'' and King looked at the liner notes, which Coltrane wrote himself. ''All Praise be to God to whom all praise is due,'' Coltrane begins, and then tells a story: ''During the year 1957,'' he writes, ''I experienced, by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening which was to lead me to a richer, fuller, more productive life. At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to be given the means and privilege to make others happy through music.'' In those years, Coltrane was addicted to heroin and -- so the legend goes -- while experiencing withdrawals heard the voice of God and got clean, rededicating his life to music.

''I wasn't really that impressed!'' King says. ''I didn't even want to listen to the album.'' His own father had been a Pentecostal minister, and King believed back then that he had ''successfully escaped from the raft of the church.'' This changed a few months later, when he and his wife attended a Coltrane concert at the Jazz Workshop, in San Francisco's North Beach neighborhood, to celebrate their first wedding anniversary; the doorman was a friend and sat the couple right in front of the stage. ''So we were able to get a full dose,'' King says. There have been countless attempts to capture the power of Coltrane's music -- his unmatched ear for both melody and chaos, his seemingly endless ability to find new sounds in traditional chords, the complex interplay between him and his band (which, in addition to Coltrane on saxophone, included Jimmy Garrison on bass, Elvin Jones on drums and McCoy Tyner on piano) -- but, to King, ''It was as though he was speaking in tongues and there was fire coming from heaven -- a sound baptism,'' he says. ''That began the evolutionary, transitional process of us becoming truly born-again believers in that anointed sound that leaped down from the tone of heaven out of the very mind of God, stepped from the very wall of creation and took on a gob of flesh, and we beheld his beauty as one that was called John.''

There is a long and rich tradition of popular music fans deifying their icons. A famous, if dubious, graffiti tag in mid-60s London consecrated the then-lead guitarist for the Yardbirds, proclaiming, ''[Eric] Clapton is God.'' The mythology surrounding the blues singer and guitarist Robert Johnson claims he sold his soul to the devil sometime in the 1930s in order to gain mastery over his instrument. Google a certain disgraced pop star in 2021 and the algorithm might helpfully suggest the following question: ''Was Michael Jackson a gift from God?'' Any musician who is heralded as the second coming tends to be brought back down to earth eventually, whether through changing tastes or human foibles (Clapton is now an anti-vaccine proponent), though there was always something different about Coltrane, whose death from cancer in 1967 at age 40 transformed him into a kind of martyr. Through the years, the story of Coltrane's veneration has been treated by his critics and biographers as a quirky footnote to his afterlife, if not ignored entirely, but it provides a revealing glimpse at his legacy, as well as a key to understanding the intensity of his appeal.

''DO YOU HAVE a religious affiliation at all yourself?'' Archbishop King asks me over Zoom. ''Lapsed Catholic,'' I say, which isn't inaccurate. I suggest, somewhat humorlessly, that for this reason I consider the liner notes to ''A Love Supreme'' -- Coltrane's most famous recording, and one of the great achievements in all of music -- to be more legitimate than the Lord's Prayer.

''Check this out, Brother Miller,'' King says, and he and his wife begin singing the ''Our Father'' in exquisite harmony to the tune of ''Psalm,'' the closing section of ''A Love Supreme,'' after which -- and this isn't a joke, either -- I offer out my hands, clasped as if in prayer, to them in thanks.

''I think most real Coltrane devotees are lapsed religious people in one sense,'' the archbishop says. ''Religion is so much built on what we believe. And a lot of times what we believe is because we've been trained to believe it, keeping in mind that believing falls short of knowing. And if you ask too many questions for the sake of knowledge, you might get excommunicated. So we're sympathetic with that.''

It was only after King saw Coltrane live again a few months later that he began to think of the club in his garage as more of a temple. The Kings had to travel to a venue in a white neighborhood, where King found that the audience ''was not so populated with people who looked like me.'' Coltrane himself had been talking about the treatment of musicians in clubs, saying that ''the music is rising into something else,'' and that it would need a different context. Around this time, King had been learning how to play the saxophone, and was gigging in San Francisco with his teacher, Norman Terrell Williams. The duo began attracting a following, and the venue filled up nightly with patrons. King asked Williams if, as a result, its white owner had given him a raise. ''And he said, 'Nah, man,''' King recalls. ''And I said, 'Something's wrong with this.' To me it was just unacceptable.''

Coltrane's music provided an outlet for such frustrations. Around the same time that he was quoting Jesus in his liner notes, various changes were underway in San Francisco's Black community. Black churches had been at the center of the civil rights movement for most of the 1960s, preaching a message of pacifism and nonviolence, but in 1966, when Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party across the bay in Oakland, the fight for equality became a brash, revolutionary one. Around then, the Kings moved out of the garage and into a storefront in the ***working-class*** neighborhood of Visitation Valley, where they became known as the Yardbird Temple Vanguard Revolutionary Church of the Hour. Coltrane -- in no small part thanks to the Kings -- became the hero of not just the Black Panther Party but the burgeoning Black power movement at large. Newton often spoke of how more traditional churches had failed Black society; Miles Davis, with whom Coltrane had some of his earliest successes as a sideman, writes in his 1989 autobiography that by the time the Black Panthers formed, Coltrane's music had become ''for many blacks, the fire and passion and rage and anger and rebellion and love that they felt.''

The musician was an unexpected choice for a revolutionary lodestar, for his message was ultimately one of peace and harmony. ''I think music can make the world better and, if I'm qualified, I want to do it,'' he once said. Though that doesn't mean he was apolitical: One of his finest songs, ''Alabama,'' was written in 1963, in response to the Ku Klux Klan's bombing of a Baptist church in Birmingham that year, killing four Black children. It's one of the great works of art produced by the civil rights movement, and Coltrane's band never sounded better. Garrison and Jones work themselves into a funereal groove, and Tyner somehow makes his piano sound like it's crying. Coltrane on the tenor sax is nothing less than the sound of dignity prevailing through overwhelming tragedy.

Though the Black Panthers were, as King notes, atheists, they became some of his church's most ardent supporters. Out of the storefront in the Western Addition, King was preaching that Coltrane was Christ incarnate, and structuring a weekly meeting around his music, especially ''A Love Supreme,'' a suite in four parts -- ''Acknowledgement,'' ''Resolution,'' ''Pursuance,'' ''Psalm'' -- that has the loose structure of a prayer service. And King, in turn, realized that the Panthers' Marxist ideology (''Dialectical materialism,'' as Marina says with a small sigh) had more in common with the Christian faith than he might have expected.

The Kings' dogma may have been untraditional, but for the most part they did and still do what most churches do -- perform music, meditate, offer prayers, organize food drives. (Colloquially, they are known in the Bay Area as the Beans and Rice Church: ''Free vegetarian meals!'' Marina says excitedly at one point in our interview.) In 1972, for the Black Panther Community Survival Program at the Oakland Auditorium, the church's house band opened for Ike and Tina Turner and helped pass out thousands of bags of groceries to families in need. Newton and Seale had promised a whole chicken in each one and told the Kings that they needed $2,000 to ''get the chickens out of hostage to give them to the people.'' The church raised the funds to do so and, in thanks, Newton commissioned Emory Douglas, the Panthers' minister of culture, to make a Coltrane painting -- it became something like the church's first icon. The Kings are sitting in front of it when we speak on Zoom.

Of course, the Kings have also been met with skepticism over the years. Alice Coltrane, the artist's widow (and his piano player in the last years of his career), was a friend of the Kings and a religious leader in her own right. She converted to Hinduism after Coltrane's death and founded the Vedantic Center near Malibu, and the Kings considered her to be their guru. (They sing in Sanskrit on some of her early devotional music.) But in 1981, she sued the church, then known as the One Mind Temple Evolutionary Transitional Church of Christ, for copyright infringement and for using her late husband's name without permission. A spokesman for the church at the time asked The New York Times, in its defense, ''Did you ever think it was necessary to ask Mother Mary to use Jesus' name?''

The suit was eventually dropped, but it turned out to be fortuitous; it brought the Kings to the attention of leaders in the African Orthodox Church, which was founded in New York City in the early 20th century by defectors from the Episcopalian faith. George Duncan Hinkson, a bishop in the A.O.C., told the Kings that Coltrane couldn't be their god, but he could be their patron saint. (When asked what he wanted to be in 10 years in a 1966 interview, Coltrane, whose father and grandfather were Methodist ministers, famously replied, ''A saint.'') ''So I said,'' King tells me, '''Well, we ain't got no problem with that,''' and in 1982, the A.O.C. officially canonized Coltrane. The Kings began studying orthodoxy, commissioning icon paintings in the Byzantine style, and changed the congregation's name to the Saint John Coltrane African Orthodox Church. In the years since, gentrification has forced them to move around San Francisco, holding weekly services (they migrated to Facebook during the pandemic) and preaching what they call ''Coltrane Consciousness.'' People have made pilgrimages from across the world to attend these services the way other devotees might travel to Rishikesh, India, or Jerusalem.

THAT'S THE STORY of how a postwar 20th-century musician became a saint, but it still leaves the question: Why Coltrane? What is it about him that makes people dedicate their entire lives to his art? So many other musicians have made music with overtly Christian themes and been celebrated for it -- Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Bono, Kanye West and Justin Bieber, to name just a few -- though many of them (the men, anyway) also seemed to present themselves as self-consciously Christlike in doing so. (West, for instance, preached the dangers of pornography and premarital sex when publicizing his 2019 record ''Jesus Is King.'') But what's always struck me about Coltrane, and ''A Love Supreme'' in particular, is how welcoming he is in his approach to spirituality, how lacking in judgment. He seemed to know how good he was on a technical level -- he certainly thought making people happy with his music was an achievable goal -- but he also harbored no delusions of grandeur. Nearly every account that exists of him depicts a quiet and somewhat shy family man. He spent most of his free time practicing. He drove a Chrysler station wagon and lived on Long Island. It's not that his music filtered out the banality of being human but that he had an uncanny ability to make his human flaws into something useful. The difference between Coltrane the man and Coltrane the performer was a nearly alchemical transfiguration.

It's no coincidence that, more than any other figure in the history of American music, his admirers tend to experience his work the way others might undergo a religious epiphany. ''I thought I was going to die from the emotion,'' the musician Joe McPhee once told the critic Ben Ratliff of witnessing a 1965 Coltrane concert at the Village Gate in New York. The record producer George Avakian, as recounted in Davis's autobiography, once said that Coltrane ''seemed to grow taller in height and larger in size with each note that he played,'' that he ''seemed to be pushing each chord to its outer limits, out into space.'' On our Zoom call, Stephens describes a similar experience when ''Song of Praise,'' a deep cut from the 1965 album ''The John Coltrane Quartet Plays,'' came on one day when she was vacuuming her living room. As she says, ''John Coltrane spoke to me.''

There are enough stories like this to create an entire subgenre, but my personal favorite, and the one that best explains Coltrane's lasting appeal, comes from the poet and playwright Amiri Baraka's liner notes for the 1964 album ''Live at Birdland,'' a concert at the historic club just north of Times Square, sessions for which Baraka, then known as LeRoi Jones, was in attendance. In describing the extreme contrast of Coltrane's transcendent, highly emotional music -- ''one of the reasons suicide seems so boring'' -- and its earthly setting, he writes, ''Birdland is a place no man should wander into unarmed.

''After riding a subway through New York's bowels,'' he continues, ''and that subway full of all the many things any man should expect to find in something's bowels, and then coming up stairs to the street and walking slowly, head down, through the traffic and failure that does shape this place, and then entering 'the Jazz Corner of the World,' a temple erected in praise of what God (?), and then finally amidst that noise and glare to hear a man destroy all of it, completely, like Sodom, with just the first few notes from his horn, your 'critical' sense can be erased completely, and that experience can place you somewhere a long way off from anything ugly.''

Baraka admits that there are people who can't hear what he calls the ''daringly human quality'' of Coltrane, as if the notes he played were on a wavelength that simply didn't register for certain nonbelievers. Even the most beloved music, like all art forms, falls in and out of style. But Coltrane's work has not only endured, it's become ever more embraced, inspiring greater fervor the further removed we get from its original recording. The only other thing that compares is, curiously, religion itself. If you allow yourself to hear Coltrane -- really hear him -- his music, like God or Buddha or Dharma or Allah, can, as Baraka describes it, ''make you think a lot of weird and wonderful things.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/t-magazine/john-coltrane-church.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/t-magazine/john-coltrane-church.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ''St. John Coltrane The Divine Sound Baptist'' (1992), an icon painting of the jazz musician John Coltrane by Mark Doox, a deacon at the Saint John Coltrane Church in San Francisco.

Another painting by Doox, titled ''Alabama'' (2020), inspired by Coltrane's song of the same name. One of the musician's most celebrated works, it was written in response to the 1963 bombing of a Black Baptist church in Birmingham. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAINT JOHN WILL I AM COLTRANE AFRICAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (A.O.C.) AND THE ARTIST © MARK DOOX)

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[***How Abortion Views Are Different; The Morning Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62PS-4J01-DXY4-X2J4-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** With the Supreme Court set to hear a major abortion case, we look at the state of public opinion.

**Body**

With the Supreme Court set to hear a major abortion case, we look at the state of public opinion.

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*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) restrictions in dozens of states.

But now that the court has agreed to hear a case [*that could lead to the overturning of Roe*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/), voters and legislators may soon again be determining abortion laws, state by state. This morning’s newsletter offers a guide to public opinion on the subject.

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.

Here are five.

1. A pro-Roe majority …

Polls consistently show that a majority of Americans — 60 percent to 70 percent, in recent polls by both [*Gallup*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) and [*Pew*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) — 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*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

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 (in addition to the 20 percent who say abortion should be illegal in all circumstances).

This helps explain why many abortion rights advocates are worried that the Supreme Court [*will gut Roe*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) without officially overturning it. Yes, the justices are often [*influenced by public opinion*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

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 same-sex marriage and marijuana legalization — views have moved sharply in one direction.

But opinion on abortion has [*barely budged*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/). Here is Gallup’s four-category breakdown, going back to 1994:

Other survey questions show a similar pattern, with the stability [*stretching back to the 1970s*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/), just after the Roe ruling.

A key reason is that abortion opinion differs [*only modestly*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) 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*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/), [*same-sex marriage*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) and [*climate change*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) are all larger.

Abortion remains [*a vexing issue*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) 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*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) Joe Biden, while most men voted for Donald Trump. On many issues, [*like gun control*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) and [*the minimum wage*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/), 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*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/). 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.

(One note: When people are asked whether they identify as “pro-choice” or “pro-life,” both the gender and age gaps grow. Those terms appear to prime people to think as Democrats or Republicans, rather than thinking through the details of their own policy views.)

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*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) 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*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) 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 of abortion access, the life of an unborn child is too important to be subject to almost any other consideration.

If the Supreme Court overrules or substantially weakens Roe, this intense debate will play out state by state. Many states are likely to restrict abortion access substantially.

For more: Pew’s Jeff Diamant and Aleksandra Sandstrom look at [*opinion in each state*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/). And The Upshot looks in detail at [*how and where laws may change if Roe falls*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* New C.D.C. mask guidelines have Americans wondering [*whether they can trust one another*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

1. Republican-controlled states are [*cutting off federal pandemic unemployment benefits*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/), arguing that they are making it hard for businesses to hire.
2. An estimated 40 percent of doctors in India have gotten Covid, and [*more than 250 have died*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) since early April.
3. Many New York businesses [*are allowed to fully reopen today*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/). Parts of Europe [*are also lifting restrictions*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).
4. Virus resources: How should you think about virus variants [*if you’re vaccinated*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/)

Politics

* “The future of the auto industry is electric,” President Biden said during a [*visit to a Ford plant*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) in Michigan.

1. The House passed a bill to help law enforcement agencies review hate crimes against Asian-Americans, [*sending it to Biden*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).
2. New York’s attorney general joined the Manhattan district attorney’s [*criminal inquiry into the Trump Organization*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).
3. House Republican leaders [*oppose creating a bipartisan commission*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) to investigate the Jan. 6 Capitol attack.

Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

* Diplomatic efforts to end the violence [*are gaining urgency*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/), with the E.U., the U.N., and others calling on the Israeli military and Hamas militants to lay down their weapons.

1. Israeli airstrikes have damaged Gaza’s health and sewage systems and displaced tens of thousands of people, [*deepening a humanitarian crisis*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).
2. Biden was said to have [*sharpened his tone*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel in a private call.
3. Palestinians across the West Bank, Gaza and Israel [*went on strike*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

Other Big Stories

* Climate change is forcing the National Park Service [*to decide which species and landscapes to save*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) — and which to let slip away.

1. A North Carolina prosecutor said sheriff’s deputies [*were “justified”*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) in the killing of Andrew Brown Jr., a Black man.
2. In Japan, a woman who overstayed her visa [*got sick and died alone in detention*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/), causing criticism of the country’s treatment of migrants.
3. Darwin’s Arch, a rock formation in the Galápagos Islands, [*collapsed because of natural erosion*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).
4. Spain is trying a new solution for officials who can’t stop stealing: [*corruption rehab*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

Opinions

* [*Why are people in your state not getting vaccinated*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/)

1. “To me it represents everything that is beautiful and possible”: [*Dr. Adam Lee Goldstein*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) writes about his hospital near Tel Aviv, where Jews and Muslims, side by side, treat the wounded.

Morning Reads

Anonymous no more: In 1944, they were children on a train to a Nazi death camp. Researchers identified them, [*and they’re still alive*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

A Times classic: [*Eight things worth your time*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

Lives Lived: With deadpan comedy and Everyman good looks, Charles Grodin first drew notice on Broadway. He went on to star onscreen in “The Heartbreak Kid,” “Midnight Run” and “Beethoven.” [*He died at 86*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

ARTS AND IDEAS

‘Shrek’ at 20

Nobody at DreamWorks, then a relatively new animation studio, expected “Shrek” to be a hit. “Getting sent to ‘Shrek’ felt like being sent to Siberia,” the director Vicky Jenson said.

Released 20 years ago, the movie was a departure from other animated features of the time. Its hero was a misanthropic ogre. The cheeky and crude humor made fun of fairy-tale tropes. And the film was loaded with pop culture references and [*contemporary songs*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

Yet “Shrek” went on to spawn a billion-dollar franchise and win the first Academy Award for best animated feature. It “defined the kind of films the studio would go on to make: offbeat stories that, unlike Disney fairy tales, had more of an edge to them,” as [*Gina Cherelus writes in The Times*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

Today, Shrek-related content is [*ubiquitous in memes*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) and on social media, introducing the film [*to a new generation*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/). At a sushi restaurant years ago, Jenson was delighted to overhear nearby diners talking about it. “One of them says, ‘Have you seen “Shrek”?’ And the other one is like, ‘No, no, I don’t go see kids’ stuff,’ and they go: ‘No, no, it’s not for kids. You have to go see it.’” — Sanam Yar, a Morning writer

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

This [*fried snapper*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) is topped with thyme-laced Creole sauce. Eat it [*while reading Pete Wells*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) on New York City’s return to full-scale indoor dining.

What to Read

The mainstream narrative is that Sinead O’Connor ripped up a photo of the pope on “Saturday Night Live” and derailed her music career. [*She’d like to set the record straight*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

Virtual Travel

See [*a ghost town on a Norwegian archipelago*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) in the High Arctic.

Late Night

The hosts [*discussed the Giulianis*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was jocular. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/), and a clue: Euphoric feeling (four letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

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

P.S. Three of our colleagues’ stories appear in [*The Best American Food Writing 2020*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/): Amelia Nierenberg’s [*article on Hatch chiles*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/), Kim Severson’s [*profile of Jamie Oliver*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/) and Pete Wells’s [*viral review of Peter Luger*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/)” is about Gaza. On “[*The Argument*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/),” a debate about critical race theory.

Lalena Fisher, Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/01/22/charts-how-roe-v-wade-changed-abortion-rights/).

PHOTO: Supporters and opponents of abortion rights outside the Supreme Court last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. Kirkpatrick for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Positive Coronavirus Test? Canadians Worry Their Neighbors Will Find Out***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6227-33S1-JBG3-6191-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 21, 2021 Sunday 00:16 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; canada

**Length:** 1587 words

**Byline:** Catherine Porter

**Highlight:** The fear of public shaming is becoming so prevalent in some Canadian provinces that doctors worry it is driving virus cases underground.

**Body**

The fear of public shaming is becoming so prevalent in some Canadian provinces that doctors worry it is driving virus cases underground.

For a time, Cortland Cronk, 26, was Canada’s most famous — and infamous — coronavirus patient.

Mr. Cronk, a traveling salesman, went viral after testing positive in November and recounting his story of being infected while traveling for work [*to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830).

He was called a virus-spreader, a job-killer, a liar and a sleaze. Online memes painted him as the Grinch, since subsequent outbreaks led to restrictions against Christmas parties. Many people, including a newspaper columnist, made elaborate fun of his name.

He also received threats. So many, in fact, that he fled his hometown, Saint John, for Victoria — a city on the opposite end of the country, 3,600 miles away.

“They were acting like I purposely got Covid,” Mr. Cronk said from his new apartment. “I had hundreds of death threats per day. People telling me I should be publicly stoned.”

Many Canadians believed that it was just rewards and that his case formed a cautionary tale to others who flagrantly break the rules, putting lives and livelihoods at risk. Some even think more formal shaming should happen in Canada, with governments not just fining culprits for breaking coronavirus regulations but broadcasting their names.

Others have argued Mr. Cronk is a victim of a worsening civic problem in the country — public shaming of people testing positive — that is not just unfair but ineffective and that makes the coronavirus harder to quash.

“It might feel like a release for the community, but it does very little to prevent virus transmission,” said Robert Huish, an associate professor at Dalhousie University in Halifax, who is conducting a study on the coronavirus and stigma. “In the process, we are causing people harm.”

Canadians might be known internationally as nice, apologetic and fair-minded. But, a year after the pandemic arrived, some Canadians worry it has exposed a very different national persona: judgmental, suspicious and vengeful. Covid-shaming has become fervent in parts of the country, with locals calling for the heads of [*not just politicians*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) and [*doctors*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) breaking the rules but their own family members and neighbors.

“It’s not getting Covid — it’s breaking the rules that worries us,” said Randy Boyagoda, a [*novelist*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) and English professor at the University of Toronto, noting that a Canadian foundational motto is “peace, order and good government.”

“What’s the key point? It’s order,” he said. “For order to be sustained, we have to follow the rules. Canadians are a distinctly rule-focused and rule-following people.”

Complaint lines — or so-called “snitch lines” — set up across Canada have been flooded with tips about people suspected of breaking quarantine rules, businesses flouting public health restrictions and outsiders, arriving with unfamiliar license plates, potentially bringing the disease with them.

Facebook groups are full of stories of people being labeled potential vectors and being refused service, disinvited from family gatherings and reported to the police and public health authorities.

“This is impacting our ability to contain the virus,” said Dr. Ryan Sommers, one of eight public health doctors in Nova Scotia who [*published a letter*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) beseeching locals in the small Atlantic province to stop shaming one another, as fear of discrimination was delaying reports of Covid symptoms and potentially driving cases underground.

The province has one of the lowest Covid rates in the country: just 18 [*active cases, as of Feb 20.*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) But instead of offering solace, people have become hypervigilant, Dr. Sommers said.

“We want to create a social norm, where people will be supportive and caring and compassionate” Dr. Sommers said. “Social media can be more virulent than the virus itself.”

In the country’s four eastern provinces, which have enforced self-isolation rules for anyone entering the region, the shaming is not just online, Mr. Huish said. It’s intimate, particularly in small communities, where “community cohesion quickly flips to become community surveillance.”

Trisha Girouard said a member of her extended family reported her to public health officials after learning she was driving from her home in Irishtown, New Brunswick, across the border to Maine to work as a nurse. She was disinvited from a family baby shower, even though she was complying by self-isolation guidelines, she said.

The sense of being policed by her small community made her feel so frightened, she didn’t dare walk into a coffee shop one day to use the washroom — instead choosing to urinate in a cup in the back of her truck.

“I’m an educated person, but that’s how worked up they had me,” she said in an interview, referring to her extended family.

Some say the fear of stigma has become worse than the fear of catching the disease.

Recently, after taking her second mandatory coronavirus test, Jennifer Hutton pulled out her suitcases, preparing to leave Halifax if she tested positive. She envisioned a front-page newspaper story saying she had brought the virus into the community because she travels for her job as an I.T. director for a medical supply company, she said.

Already, she had received a cold reception from local stores and a profane note had been put on her vehicle, which had Ontario license plates, telling her to go “home and take the rona with you.” “I just couldn’t handle any more stigma,” she said.

Few victims of public shaming have become as famous as Mr. Cronk, the New Brunswicker who contracted coronavirus on a business trip.

He initially had no symptoms, so was not required to self-isolate upon returning, he said.

Nine days later, he exhibited a few symptoms and tested positive for the coronavirus, so the health department began contact tracing. After the [*local news media did a story*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830)about a frustrated store owner disbelieving his staff had been exposed to the virus, Mr. Cronk worried he’d be outed as the source of the exposure, knowing he had visited the store.

“Saint John is very small,” he said. “I knew it was matter of time before my name was spoken.” So, he approached [*the C.B.C.*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) network to “get the story straight, before chatter got around.” To his knowledge, none of his contacts tested positive and he was never ticketed by the police for breaking public emergency regulations, he said.

Afterward, a video clip from his Instagram account promoting his marijuana supply business, “Cronk Grow Nutrients” made the rounds on Twitter. In it, Mr. Cronk said he “can’t taste a thing right now” and detailed the many trips he had taken that month. Many assumed he had been knowingly, carelessly spreading the virus.

The optics, and the timing, were terrible: As the memes multiplied, the province’s top doctor [*announced a surge in cases*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) and the premier declared a crackdown on [*Christmas travel and gatherings*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830). Online, Mr. Cronk was deemed New Brunswick’s infector in chief.

“There wasn’t a lesson to be learned,” said Mr. Cronk. “I was shamed for no reason.”

Historically, stigma and shaming have faithfully trailed pandemics, said David Barnes, an associate professor at the University of Pennsylvania who studies the history of infectious diseases and epidemics. During the plague in Europe, Jewish people became convenient scapegoats. During the cholera epidemic in Britain in the 19th century, ***working-class*** Irish people were blamed, Mr. Barnes said.

Most recently, gay men and Haitians were stigmatized during the AIDS epidemic in the United States.

“We make ourselves feel safer and superior by associating disease with people who are not like us, do things we don’t do, or come from places unlike our place,” said Mr. Barnes. “We shouldn’t be surprised.”

A [*recent poll from British Columbia*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) revealed that flouting coronavirus public safety regulations was common, with around half of respondents admitting they had frequented bars or restaurants with people outside their household — a no-no [*under the provincial regulations*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830). However, around 60 percent said they thought they were doing a better job than others following the rules.

While some [*politicians*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) and [*public health experts*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) across the country are sounding an alarm about the trend of shaming, others are calling out for more.

In Manitoba, [*the premier began to publicly name businesses*](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/cortland-cronk-saint-john-covid-test-new-brunswick-1.5813830) fined for breaking pandemic regulations in November. Since then, a list of their names is published every week.

“For many people, the scorn and contempt and disapproval of their neighbors will be at least as effective as a fine,” said Arthur Schafer, the founding director of the Centre for Professional and Applied Ethics at the University of Manitoba.

Mr. Schafer believes people who are fined for breaking the rules should be publicly named, too.

“We need to fully exploit every kind of deterrent,” he said. “Nobody wants to be seen as a terrible community neighbor.”

Allison Hannaford contributed research from North Bay, Ontario. Meagan Campbell contributed reporting from Halifax.

PHOTOS: Near the Maine-Canada border at Mullholland Point lighthouse in New Brunswick, where one resident who tested positive said the sense of being policed by her small community made her feel scared. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN MORRIS/REUTERS); Cortland Cronk moved 3,600 miles away to Victoria, British Columbia, after he tested positive in November and was publicly shamed in his home province of New Brunswick. “They were acting like I purposely got Covid,” he said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JACKIE DIVES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Israel's Push to Vaccinate Raises Host of Legal, Moral and Ethical Questions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:621S-V8S1-DXY4-X12D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 19, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1508 words

**Byline:** By Isabel Kershner

**Body**

New government and business initiatives are moving in the direction of a two-tier system for the vaccinated and unvaccinated, raising legal, moral and ethical questions.

BAT YAM, Israel -- Israel has raced ahead with the fastest Covid vaccination campaign in the world, inoculating nearly half its population with at least one dose. Now, the rapid rollout is turning the country into a live laboratory for setting the rules in a vaccinated society -- raising thorny questions about rights, obligations and the greater good.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet voted this week to open shopping malls and museums to the public, subject to social distancing rules and mandatory masking. For the first time in many months, gyms, cultural and sports events, hotels and swimming pools will also reopen, but only for some.

Under a new ''Green Badge'' system that functions as both a carrot and a stick, the government is making leisure activities accessible only to people who are fully vaccinated or recovered starting Sunday. Two weeks later, restaurants, event halls and conferences will be allowed to operate under those rules. Customers and attendees will have to carry a certificate of vaccination with a QR code.

Israel is one of the first countries grappling in real time with a host of legal, moral and ethical questions as it tries to balance the steps toward resuming public life with sensitive issues such as public safety, discrimination, free choice and privacy.

''Getting vaccinated is a moral duty. It is part of our mutual responsibility,'' said the health minister, Yuli Edelstein. He also has a new mantra: ''Whoever does not get vaccinated will be left behind.''

The debate swirling within Israel is percolating across other parts of the world as well, with plans to reserve international travel for vaccinated ''green passport'' holders and warnings of growing disparities between more-vaccinated affluent countries and less-vaccinated poor ones.

Israel's central government -- eager to bring the country out of its third national lockdown without setting off a new wave of infections -- was spurred into action by local initiatives. Chafing under the country's lockdown regulations, an indoor shopping mall in the ***working-class*** Tel Aviv suburb of Bat Yam threw its doors open last week for customers who could prove that they had been vaccinated or had recovered from Covid-19.

In Karmiel, the mayor made a similar decision to open his city in the northern Galilee region for business. His office began processing requests from employers who could verify that all of their employees had received the requisite two vaccine doses or had recovered from the virus.

And in other cities, mayors wanted to bar unvaccinated teachers from classrooms while some hoteliers threatened unvaccinated employees with dismissal.

Dr. Maya Peled Raz, an expert in health law and ethics at the University of Haifa, defended some limits on personal liberties for the greater good. Employers cannot force employees to get vaccinated, she said, but they might be allowed to employ only vaccinated workers if not doing so could harm their business.

''That may involve some damage to individual rights, but not all damage is prohibited if it is well-balanced and legitimate in order to achieve a worthy goal,'' she said. ''It's your choice,'' she added of leisure activities. ''If you are vaccinated, you can enter. As long as you aren't, we can't let you endanger others.''

Four million Israelis -- nearly half the population of nine million -- have received at least one dose of the Pfizer vaccine, and more than 2.6 million have gotten a second dose. But about two million eligible citizens aged 16 or over have not sought vaccines. The average number of new daily infections is hovering around 4,000.

The speedy vaccination program in Israel contrasts sharply with the situation in the occupied territories, where few Palestinians have received even one dose. The disparity has provoked fierce debates about Israel's ethical and legal obligations to the Palestinians, as well as the potential health risk to Israelis of not vaccinating them.

Mr. Edelstein, the health minister, said on Thursday that vaccination would not be compulsory in Israel. But his ministry is proposing legislation that would oblige unvaccinated employees whose work involves contact with the public to be tested for the virus every two days. And he is promoting a bill that would allow the ministry to identify unvaccinated people to the local authorities.

Local authorities and volunteers have been trying to lure people to vaccination centers with offers of free pizza, Arabic sweets and, in the ultra-Orthodox city of Bnei Brak, bags of cholent -- a slow-cooked stew traditionally prepared for the sabbath.

Yet getting vaccinated remains voluntary and not everybody is rushing to it.

Ofek Hacohen, 34, a manager of vacation rentals in Jerusalem, said he believed in a natural approach to a healthy body and insisted that the risk posed by the virus -- which he called ''a flu'' -- had been exaggerated. He added that he did not trust the vaccine's safety.

He said he did not know what he would do if legislation was introduced limiting his options.

''But I won't get vaccinated. I'll surely participate in demonstrations. I believe I won't be alone,'' he said, adding, ''I can survive without going to the theater, to soccer matches or to a restaurant. It's annoying but what can I do?''

Concerts and restaurants are luxuries that people can more easily forgo. But the questions become more pressing and contentious when it comes to the rights of employers and workers.

The rights of teaching staffs have come under particular scrutiny as some in-person classes reopen. A quarter or more of Israel's teachers have not sought a first dose, a situation that critics say poses a potential danger to pupils under 16, who are too young to be vaccinated. Some health workers have also refrained from being vaccinated.

After a number of city mayors threatened to bar unvaccinated teachers from their classrooms, the deputy attorney general clarified that they did not have the authority to do so without new legislation.

Dr. Peled Raz said the temporary emergency law governing Israel's response to the virus would be easier to amend with regard to health workers than to others because of potential harm to themselves and patients, adding that would be justified.

''You want to be a nurse and won't get vaccinated?'' she said. ''Either get vaccinated or choose another profession.''

But two rights organizations, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel and the Worker's Hotline, said they had already received complaints from other unvaccinated workers. The groups wrote a letter to the attorney general this month demanding that he issue a clear opinion and said that under existing law an employer may not demand information from workers regarding their vaccination status.

''The first problem is that there is no policy,'' said Gil Gan-Mor, the director of the civil and social rights unit at the Association for Civil Rights in Israel. ''When the government is not working fast enough, we see too many private initiatives.''

Striking a balance between competing rights and interests remains a matter of debate, he said, and requires a broad discussion in Parliament.

Barak Cohen, a lawyer and social activist, raised more questions in a recent Facebook post.

''To what degree is it appropriate to pressure and coerce when the decision-making process surrounding the vaccine is kept hidden, in the dark and confidential?'' he wrote, noting that he does not deny the seriousness of the coronavirus or the effectiveness of the Pfizer vaccine.

He also pointed to the low public trust in the government and what he called drug companies' ''huge financial interest.''

In Karmiel, City Hall gave at least 20 businesses a local version of a Green Badge to put in their windows, according to Eli Sade, the director of the mayor's office. All who entered were required to show that they had been vaccinated or had recovered from the virus. But police officers told store owners to close because they were breaking the law.

The shopping mall in Bat Yam, which wanted customers to prove they had been vaccinated, soon dropped the requirement for showing a green passport at the entrance and went back to equipping the guards with temperature guns.

Inside, the few stores that opened had created their own entry policies. One chain followed basic social distancing regulations while another required a vaccination certificate. Sportswear and lingerie stores operated a ''takeout'' service for customers who stood at the door.

Haifa Zeinab, 20, who was working in a Japanese-style home wear and gift store, said she did not plan to be vaccinated because an aunt had been overcome by dizziness after both of her doses. If she was told not to come without a green passport or a negative test every two days, she said with a shrug, ''So I won't come.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/world/middleeast/israel-covid-vaccine-reopen.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/world/middleeast/israel-covid-vaccine-reopen.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The intensive-care ward for coronavirus patients at the Ziv Medical Center in Safed. Getting vaccinated remains voluntary in Israel.

Four million Israelis, nearly half the country's population, have received at least one dose of Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ODED BALILTY/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** February 19, 2021

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[***Texans Facing New Crisis: Too Little Drinkable Water***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:621S-V8S1-DXY4-X128-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 19, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1473 words

**Byline:** By Jack Healy, Richard Fausset and James Dobbins

**Body**

Electricity was restored to most Texans who had lost power after a winter storm, but water systems for nearly two-thirds of residents were disrupted, leaving millions without drinkable water.

DALLAS -- Power began to flicker back on across much of Texas on Thursday, but millions across the state confronted another dire crisis: a shortage of drinkable water as pipes cracked, wells froze and water treatment plants were knocked offline.

The problems were especially acute at hospitals. One, in Austin, was forced to move some of its most critically ill patients to another building when its faucets ran nearly dry. Another in Houston had to haul in water on trucks to flush toilets.

But for many of the state's residents stuck at home, the emergency meant boiling the tap water that trickled through their faucets, scouring stores for bottled water or boiling icicles and dirty snow on their stoves.

For others, it meant no water at all. Denise Gonzalez, 40, had joined a crowd at a makeshift relief center in a ***working-class*** corner of West Dallas on Thursday where volunteers handed out food from the luggage compartment of a charter bus.

Back at her apartment, she said, the lights were finally back on. But her pipes were frozen solid. She could not bathe, shower or use the toilet. She said she had been calling plumbers all day, but one of the few who answered told her it would be $3,000 to come out to assess the damage.

''If I had $3,000,'' Ms. Gonzalez said, ''I wouldn't be getting food from people on the bus.''

Major disruptions to the Texas power grid left more than four million households without power this week, but by Thursday evening, only about 347,000 lacked electricity. Much of the statewide concern had turned to water woes.

More than 800 public water systems serving 162 of the state's 254 counties had been disrupted as of Thursday, affecting 13.1 million people, according to a spokeswoman for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

In Harris County, which includes Houston, the nation's fourth-largest city, more than one million people have been affected by local water systems that have either issued notices to boil water so it is safe to drink or that cannot deliver water at all, said Brian Murray, a spokesman for the county emergency management agency.

Residents in the Texas capital, Austin, were also told to boil water because of a power failure at the city's largest water-treatment facility. The director of Austin Water, Greg Meszaros, said that plummeting temperatures caused water mains to break and pipes to burst, spurring an increase in water usage and allowing water to leak out of the system.

He said on Thursday that power had been restored, and that restoring water service to hospitals and other health care facilities was a priority. The city's reservoirs, which can hold about 100 million gallons of water -- or a day's worth of water for Austin -- had been nearly emptied because of the leaks or the increased use by residents.

''We never imagined a day where hospitals wouldn't have water,'' he said.

For many Texans, the disruptions were a staggering inconvenience that seemed to push them back to the state's frontier past. People hunted for firewood across suburban yards, shivered in dark homes, lived off canned food, and went without electronics.

Others faced more dire consequences. At St. David's South Austin Medical Center, officials were trying Wednesday night to fix a heating system that was failing because of low water pressure. They were forced to seek portable toilets and distribute bottles of water to patients and employees so they could wash their hands.

In San Antonio, Jesse Singh, 58, a Shell gas station owner, said his 80-year-old father was turned away from regularly scheduled dialysis treatments Tuesday and Thursday because his clinic was having water access issues.

''It's a dangerous situation,'' Mr. Singh said.

Compounding the problem was the fact that much of Texas was still experiencing cold weather and snowstorms on Thursday, part of a havoc-inducing bout of winter weather that also dumped snow and prompted winter storm warnings in parts of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut through Friday night.

Corey Brown, an employee at Tyler Water Utilities -- which serves the city of Tyler in the northeast part of Texas -- said the temperature was in the 20s on Thursday, which complicated efforts to restore water service. Mr. Brown guessed that half of the utility's 110,000 customers were completely without water.

''They had freezing water lines,'' he said. ''We have two water plants -- one of them went down, and we also have power outages. And then we had a hard freeze the last couple of days, so as a result a lot of the pipes are freezing over and that is stopping flow to some people's houses or causing low pressure.''

Days of glacial weather have left at least 38 people dead nationwide, made many roads impassable, disrupted vaccine distribution and blanketed nearly three-quarters of the continental United States in snow. Federal Emergency Management Agency officials said they had made 60 generators available ''to support critical infrastructure'' in Texas and were providing the state blankets, bottled water and meals.

The head of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which operates the state's power grid, warned on Thursday that the state was ''not out of the woods yet,'' due largely to the enduring cold.

''We're still in very cold conditions, so we're still seeing much higher than normal winter demand,'' Bill Magness, the council's president and chief executive, said at a news conference. That meant, he said, that planned outages could be necessary in coming days to keep the grid stable.

''If we do hit a bump and have some generation have to come back off, we may have to ask for outages,'' he said. ''But if we do, we believe they will be at the level where they could be rotating outages, not the larger numbers that we faced earlier this week.''

There were other signs of progress. William P. Hobby Airport in Houston, which had been forced to shut down on Wednesday because of water supply issues, announced early Thursday morning that it had restored water in a limited capacity, and that flights would resume.

But even as the power flickered back on for many Texans, thousands more continued on with neither light nor water. For Angelina Diaz and her four children, Thursday was yet another day of shuttling between their cold house in West Dallas and the cramped S.U.V. idling in the driveway.

It was Day 4 without a shower or baths. Day 4 with no toilet. Day 4 of warming up bottled water on a barbecue grill to make the formula for Ms. Diaz's 6-month-old daughter, Jimena.

The family has spent nearly a year zealously washing their hands to avoid contracting the coronavirus, and they worried that a week without water would undo those efforts.

''How do we keep our hands clean?'' Ms. Diaz, 25, asked.

Most of their neighbors had electricity by Thursday afternoon, but as utility trucks drove through the slush, Ms. Diaz was losing her patience with sleeping in the car and shivering under blankets. She was enticed by hotels or city-run warming centers but worried too much about exposing her family to the virus. So it was back to the S.U.V. to wait.

At the Family Place, a domestic violence shelter in Dallas, the power had been out for two days when the waterlogged ceiling caved in, unleashing a freezing waterfall onto the 120 women and children seeking refuge there.

The water soaked their clothes and the few possessions they had brought, spoiling hard-to-replace legal documents. The hallways became streams. The residents and staff members tried to sweep out the water and piled up bedsheets to create dams, but soon gave up and hurriedly piled into five city buses to seek shelter at a church.

''They lost basically everything,'' Shelbi Driver, a resident advocate at the shelter, said.

Advocates said at least three other domestic violence shelters around Dallas were also evacuated after pipes burst and flooded their hallways with frigid water, displacing hundreds of vulnerable people who did not have the option of going home.

''They went through one horrible trauma, came to our organization to get safe and had another trauma,'' Paige Flink, chief executive of the Family Place, said. ''It makes me want to cry just to say it,'' she said. ''It is a total nightmare.''

Jack Healy reported from Dallas, Richard Fausset from Atlanta, and James Dobbins from San Antonio. Maria Jimenez Moya contributed reporting from Houston, and Lucy Tompkins from New York.Jack Healy reported from Dallas, Richard Fausset from Atlanta, and James Dobbins from San Antonio. Maria Jimenez Moya contributed reporting from Houston, and Lucy Tompkins from New York.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/us/texas-water-crisis-winter-storm.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/us/texas-water-crisis-winter-storm.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A family in San Antonio burning furniture to stay warm. More than four million Texans lost power when the state's grid collapsed. (A1): From left, Ziam Ghaznavi, Will Conte, Trish Cope and Matthew Snyder heading home after buying bottled water and other items from a convenience store in Austin. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

Downed trees in Austin, where residents were told to boil water because of a power failure at the city's largest water-treatment plant. More than 800 public water systems in the state had been disrupted as of Thursday. Near right, St. David's South Austin Medical Center was forced to move some patients Wednesday after losing water pressure. Far right, stocking up on propane in San Antonio. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ILANA PANICH-LINSMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

CHRISTOPHER LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14-A15)

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[***With American TV on Pause, Here Are 5 British Series to Watch; critic’s notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60G9-PDK1-DXY4-X080-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** ARTS; television

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**Byline:** Mike Hale

**Highlight:** On outlets from Hulu to Peacock to PBS, it’s the summer of the trans-Atlantic import.

**Body**

On outlets from Hulu to Peacock to PBS, it’s the summer of the trans-Atlantic import.

Among the things the Covid-19 pandemic has taken away from us, at least temporarily, new American-made television series are not the most important. But for those who keep track of these things, the paucity of domestic scripted shows premiering in the next 10 days or so is striking. There’s a “Star Trek” cartoon, a DreamWorks cartoon, a new season of “Umbrella Academy” and — that’s about it.

And yet there are plenty of fresh comedies and dramas arriving during that time, more than 20 of them, scoured from countries around the globe where they were made before the virus struck. The majority are British, continuing a trend that began as a small stream with [*the launch lineups of HBO Max and Peacock*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/arts/television/capture-intelligence-review-peacock.html) and is turning into a cross-Atlantic tsunami as summer progresses. Here are some highlights of this latest batch of British imports, in chronological order.

‘In My Skin’

[*Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/arts/television/capture-intelligence-review-peacock.html)

Bethan (Gabrielle Creevy), the Welsh teenager at the center of this gently barbed coming-of-age story, is a full-time fabulist. She feeds her friends and teachers a steady diet of haute-bourgeois lies — one of her more inspired ad-libs when a friend wants to come over is, “I can’t, we’re having a conservatory built” — because she’s mortified by the sad, even dangerous reality of life with her bipolar mom and drunk, deadbeat dad.

It’s part of her larger artistic impulse: While she’s spinning her vision of a stable, prosperous home environment as a smoke screen for those around her, she’s writing derivative proletarian verses for her high school literary anthology. (The show frequently cuts away from the action to show us flashes of what’s going on inside Bethan’s head; her poetry is accompanied by heroic black-and-white images of Welsh coal miners.)

The lies begin to catch up with her, of course, partly because she’s powerfully distracted by a popular female classmate (Zadeiah Campbell-Davies). But across the five episodes of the initial season — written by Kayleigh Llewellyn and directed by Lucy Forbes, who directed half of the second season of “[*The End of the \_\_\_\_ World*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/arts/television/capture-intelligence-review-peacock.html),” and shown on BBC Three in March — happily smutty dark humor and light melancholy mostly win out over maudlin life lessons. The distinctively British mix of winsome-glum kitchen-sink drama and sitcom beats works in this case, helped by the loose, run-and-gun style of Forbes and her cinematographer, Benedict Spence, and Creevy’s alert, understated performance.

‘Hitmen’

Peacock, Aug. 6

Imagine Laverne and Shirley as a pair of ***working-class*** contract killers and you’ve pretty much got the idea of this comedy, whose six-episode first season ran in March on Sky. Mel Giedroyc and Sue Perkins, best known as the original hosts of “[*The Great British Bake Off*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/arts/television/capture-intelligence-review-peacock.html),” play Jamie and Fran, who approach their violent occupation with the enthusiasm and professionalism of shelf-stockers at a big-box store. (Joe Markham and Joe Parham, the show’s creators, previously worked together on the nutty animated series “The Amazing World of Gumball.”)

The broad humor, largely of the restless-middle-age variety, often takes place while the hit women sit in their van with a trussed-up victim, waiting for instructions from their unseen employer, Mr. K. Much of the fun comes from the actors playing the testy, garrulous targets, including Jason Watkins of “The Crown” as a crooked lawyer and Sian Clifford of “Fleabag” as a disloyal accountant.

‘Endeavour’

PBS, Aug. 9

This prequel series, a fixture of PBS’s “Masterpiece,” is creeping closer in time to “Inspector Morse,” the popular British mystery from which it was spun off: The seventh season of “[*Endeavour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/arts/television/capture-intelligence-review-peacock.html)” is set in 1970, within hailing distance of the 1987 advent of “Morse.” And as the shows converge, the notion that the stern young detective Endeavour Morse played by Shaun Evans in the current series is going to age into the paunchy, sardonic, thoroughly modern misanthrope played by John Thaw in the original is becoming increasingly hard to entertain.

Evans’s formal, diffident, awkward Morse is fine in its own right, though, and ITV’s “Endeavour” shares the original’s pensive, almost mournful atmosphere. The new three-episode season (it premiered in February) carries on story lines from Season 6 that find Morse increasingly at odds with his boss and mentor, Fred Thursday (Roger Allam), as the case of the killer haunting the towpaths of Oxford’s canals refuses to stay solved. The racism and sexism of the time figure into other homicides, and the indignities of aging and Morse’s latest disastrous love affair contribute to the generally downbeat tone. As always, the dolorous goings-on are exquisitely enacted by Evans, Allam and, as their superintendent, Anton Lesser.

‘We Hunt Together’

Showtime, Aug. 9

At the far end of the British mystery spectrum from “Endeavour,” this rare original series from Alibi — a channel that exists primarily to show reruns of other channel’s crime shows — is firmly within the camp of lurid melodrama. Everyone is damaged, from the former child soldier to the brainy phone-sex worker to the frighteningly rigid cop.

[*Eve Myles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/arts/television/capture-intelligence-review-peacock.html) (“Torchwood”) and Babou Ceesay (“Into the Badlands”) play the latest variation on mismatched partners — her the all-business sergeant, him the jolly, empathetic, higher-ranking detective just brought in from internal affairs. Myles and Ceesay make the familiar byplay fairly engaging, but they’re only half the story: Equal time, and nearly equal sympathy, is given across the six episodes (which debuted in Britain in May) to the Bonnie-and-Clyde killers played by Hermione Corfield and Dipo Ola. The murder-for-love plotline may not hold water, but everyone involved is fun to watch.

‘The Other One’

Acorn TV, Aug. 10

This series about two half sisters who discover each other when their father dies belongs to a genre, the life-force comedy, that isn’t my favorite. (It often involves weddings, as in “Muriel’s” and “My Big Fat Greek.”) But the show’s creator, Holly Walsh (“Motherland”), deftly undercuts the inherent sentimentalities of her story, even as the supremely uptight Cathy (Ellie White) and the raucous, free-spirited Cat (Lauren Socha) predictably overcome their differences and form a new family blended from emotional openness and cheap white wine run through a SodaStream.

White, who plays the dire Princess Beatrice in “The Windsors,” is entirely convincing as the anxious and controlling but big-hearted Cathy, and she’s ably supported in the first season’s seven episodes (shown on BBC beginning in June) by Socha and a pair of scene-stealing veterans, Rebecca Front and Siobhan Finneran, as the dead man’s furious wife and his dizzy, agoraphobic mistress. Perhaps most important in setting the show’s tone is a classic-pop soundtrack centered in the missing father’s late-70s sweet spot: Supertramp, Orleans, Hall and Oates, “The Piña Colada Song.”

More recent and coming British, Australian and Canadian series premieres: “Maxxx,” Hulu; “Ladhood,” Hulu; “Frayed,” HBO Max; “Brassic,” Hulu (Friday); “Get Even,” Netflix (Friday); “Wild Bill,” BritBox (Tuesday); “Coroner,” the CW (Wednesday); “Upright,” Sundance Now (Aug. 6); “Being Reuben,” the CW (Aug. 7); “Five Bedrooms,” Peacock (Aug. 13).

PHOTO: Babou Ceesay, left, and Eve Myles play mismatched partners in “We Hunt Together.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUDOVIC ROBERT/BBC STUDIOS/UKTV)

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[***What Sanders Needs to Do To Beat Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8S-T2B1-DXY4-X376-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

It has to do with respect.

The last four presidents -- Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump -- are four very different politicians. But they have one crucial similarity: They all tried to appeal to voters who weren't obvious supporters.

Clinton promised a ''third way,'' distinct from traditional Democratic or Republican policies. Bush ran on compassionate conservatism. Obama said that red and blue America shared more in common than pundits claimed.

Even Trump, radical as he is, flouted Republican orthodoxy by sounding like a populist Democrat on Social Security, Medicare and trade. Polls showed that voters judged Trump to be more moderate than any Republican nominee since the 1970s.

The art of peeling off voters -- those in the middle or those who aren't ideological -- may be the most important skill in politics. It doesn't require a mushy centrist policy agenda, either. Trump has made that clear. So, in earlier eras, did Ronald Reagan and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

How? By understanding that politics is inescapably performative. Voters respond to signals. They respond to gestures of respect from politicians who are willing to say, in effect: We may not agree on everything, but I see you and understand what matters to you.

The newly energetic American left has largely rejected this approach, choosing instead to believe a comforting myth about swing voters being extinct and turnout being a cure-all. It's a big mistake.

Before going further, I want to make clear that this is not a column urging Democrats to return to Clintonian centrism. I'm making a different case -- that the left is hurting its own ability to win elections and enact sweeping change, by insisting on an orthodox version of progressivism.

To put it another way: Can you think of one way that Bernie Sanders is signaling respect to voters outside of his base?

He has taken a nearly maximalist liberal position on every major issue. It's especially striking from him, because he has shown over his career that he grasps the importance of building a coalition.

Sanders once won over blue-collar Vermonters with help from a moderate position on guns. ''We need a sensible debate about gun control which overcomes the cultural divide that exists in this country,'' he said in 2015, ''and I think I can play an important role in this.'' He was also once an heir to organized labor's skepticism of large-scale immigration. ''At a time when the middle class is shrinking, the last thing we need is to bring over in a period of years, millions of people into this country who are prepared to lower wages for American workers,'' he said in 2007.

Now, though, Sanders has evidently decided that progressives will no longer accept impurities -- or even much tactical vagueness. He, along with Elizabeth Warren, has embraced policies that are popular on the left and nowhere else: a ban on fracking; the decriminalization of border crossings; the provision of federal health benefits to undocumented immigrants; the elimination of private health insurance.

For many progressives, each of these issues has become a moral litmus test. Any restriction of immigration is considered a denial of human rights. Any compromise on guns or health care is an acceptance of preventable deaths.

And I understand the progressive arguments on these issues. But turning every compromise into an existential moral failing is not a smart way to practice politics. It comforts the persuaded while alienating the persuadable.

F.D.R. and Reagan understood this, as did Abraham Lincoln and many great social reformers, including Frederick Douglass, Jane Addams, Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesar Chavez. Strong political movements can accept impurity on individual issues in the service of a larger goal: winning.

The impurities will still produce bitter complaints, of course. F.D.R. and Reagan were both lambasted by their allies at times. But few of those allies abandoned them. Victory is an excellent balm.

Over the past few years, the progressive left has made impressive progress, elevating issues like the $15 minimum wage, expanded Medicare and free college. A central figure in the movement, Sanders, is now the favorite to win the Democratic nomination.

But progressives are still a very long way from achieving the changes they seek. Republicans control the Senate, and a conservative majority runs the Supreme Court. Trump has an excellent chance to win re-election and usher in a dark era for American progressivism.

Faced with the potential of either large gains or historic losses, progressives would be wise to stop believing only what they want to believe. Don't cherry-pick polls to claim that most Americans actually favor a ban on private insurance. Don't imagine that millions of heretofore silent progressive supporters will materialize on Election Day. In the 2018 midterms, Sanders-style candidates lost swing districts, while candidates demonstrating respect to swing voters won again and again.

Beating Trump in November will be even harder. And uncomfortable compromises will make it more likely.

For Sanders, that may mean walking back his position on fracking, which threatens his chances in must-win Pennsylvania. It could also mean repeating some of his earlier arguments about the need for border security and immigration restrictions. Many ***working-class*** voters, including people of color, agree with that.

Sanders is not an ideal Democratic nominee. But he does have some big strengths. One of them is the passionate support he inspires, which gives him an opportunity to reach out to new voters while holding on to his base.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/23/opinion/bernie-sanders-trump-2020.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/23/opinion/bernie-sanders-trump-2020.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Bernie Sanders speaking at a rally in San Antonio on Saturday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2020

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[***The Canonization of Saint John Coltrane; histories and happenings***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6470-R6V1-JBG3-60HB-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** T-MAGAZINE

**Length:** 2749 words

**Byline:** M.H. Miller

**Highlight:** The intensity of the jazz legend’s music has always inspired passion, but in the 1960s, one group of devotees was so stirred they founded a church in his name.

**Body**

THE [*SAINT JOHN Coltrane Church*](https://www.coltranechurch.org/) in San Francisco — a branch of the African Orthodox Church, where the jazz musician [*John Coltrane*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/12/07/movies/critic-s-notebook-the-miracle-of-coltrane-dead-at-40-still-vital-at-75.html) is the canonized patron saint — is a family affair. It was founded in 1969 by His Eminence Archbishop Franzo W. King, D.D., and his wife, the Most Rev. Supreme Mother Marina King, before they possessed such lofty titles. (Their daughter, the Rev. Chaplain Wanika Stephens, Archpriest, M.A., is also a pastor there.) The church began around 1964, as the Jazz Club in the couple’s garage — “a listening clinic,” F.W. King, now 77, says on a recent Zoom call with his wife, 75, from their home in San Francisco’s Bayview-Hunters Point. (Their daughter, 57, also joined.) “Maybe less than a dozen brothers and sisters would come together every week. Everybody would bring a new album. We’d put the music on and start testing our ears and our knowledge,” seeing if they could name the drummer or the piano player on a track without looking at the record sleeve. One day, someone brought Coltrane’s 1965 record “[*A Love Supreme*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/19/arts/music/john-coltrane-a-love-supreme-live-in-seattle.html),” and King looked at the liner notes, which Coltrane wrote himself.

“All Praise be to God to whom all praise is due,” Coltrane begins, and then tells a story: “During the year 1957,” he writes, “I experienced, by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening which was to lead me to a richer, fuller, more productive life. At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to be given the means and privilege to make others happy through music.” In those years, Coltrane was addicted to heroin and — so the legend goes — while experiencing withdrawals heard the voice of God and got clean, rededicating his life to music.

“I wasn’t really that impressed!” King says. “I didn’t even want to listen to the album.” His own father had been a Pentecostal minister, and King believed back then that he had “successfully escaped from the raft of the church.” This changed a few months later, when he and his wife attended a Coltrane concert at the Jazz Workshop, in San Francisco’s North Beach neighborhood, to celebrate their first wedding anniversary; the doorman was a friend and sat the couple right in front of the stage. “So we were able to get a full dose,” King says. There have been countless attempts to capture the power of Coltrane’s music — his unmatched ear for both melody and chaos, his seemingly endless ability to find new sounds in traditional chords, the complex interplay between him and his band (which, in addition to Coltrane on saxophone, included Jimmy Garrison on bass, Elvin Jones on drums and McCoy Tyner on piano) — but, to King, “It was as though he was speaking in tongues and there was fire coming from heaven — a sound baptism,” he says. “That began the evolutionary, transitional process of us becoming truly born-again believers in that anointed sound that leaped down from the tone of heaven out of the very mind of God, stepped from the very wall of creation and took on a gob of flesh, and we beheld his beauty as one that was called John.”

There is a long and rich tradition of popular music fans deifying their icons. A famous, if dubious, graffiti tag in mid-60s London consecrated the then-lead guitarist for the Yardbirds, proclaiming, “[Eric] Clapton is God.” The mythology surrounding the blues singer and guitarist [*Robert Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/25/obituaries/robert-johnson-overlooked.html) claims he sold his soul to the devil sometime in the 1930s in order to gain mastery over his instrument. Google a certain disgraced pop star in 2021 and the algorithm might helpfully suggest the following question: “Was Michael Jackson a gift from God?” Any musician who is heralded as the second coming tends to be brought back down to earth eventually, whether through changing tastes or human foibles (Clapton is now an [*anti-vaccine proponent*](https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-features/eric-clapton-vaccine-lockdown-racist-comments-1239027/)), though there was always something different about Coltrane, whose death from cancer in 1967 at age 40 transformed him into a kind of martyr. Through the years, the story of Coltrane’s veneration has been treated by his critics and biographers as a quirky footnote to his afterlife, if not ignored entirely, but it provides a revealing glimpse at his legacy, as well as a key to understanding the intensity of his appeal.

“DO YOU HAVE a religious affiliation at all yourself?” Archbishop King asks me over Zoom. “Lapsed Catholic,” I say, which isn’t inaccurate. I suggest, somewhat humorlessly, that for this reason I consider the liner notes to “A Love Supreme” — Coltrane’s most famous recording, and one of the great achievements in all of music — to be more legitimate than the Lord’s Prayer.

“Check this out, Brother Miller,” King says, and he and his wife begin singing the “Our Father” in exquisite harmony to the tune of “Psalm,” the closing section of “A Love Supreme,” after which — and this isn’t a joke, either — I offer out my hands, clasped as if in prayer, to them in thanks.

“I think most real Coltrane devotees are lapsed religious people in one sense,” the archbishop says. “Religion is so much built on what we believe. And a lot of times what we believe is because we’ve been trained to believe it, keeping in mind that believing falls short of knowing. And if you ask too many questions for the sake of knowledge, you might get excommunicated. So we’re sympathetic with that.”

It was only after King saw Coltrane live again a few months later that he began to think of the club in his garage as more of a temple. The Kings had to travel to a venue in a white neighborhood, where King found that the audience “was not so populated with people who looked like me.” Coltrane himself had been talking about the treatment of musicians in clubs, saying that “the music is rising into something else,” and that it would need a different context. Around this time, King had been learning how to play the saxophone, and was gigging in San Francisco with his teacher, Norman Terrell Williams. The duo began attracting a following, and the venue filled up nightly with patrons. King asked Williams if, as a result, its white owner had given him a raise. “And he said, ‘Nah, man,’” King recalls. “And I said, ‘Something’s wrong with this.’ To me it was just unacceptable.”

Coltrane’s music provided an outlet for such frustrations. Around the same time that he was quoting Jesus in his liner notes, various changes were underway in San Francisco’s Black community. Black churches had been at the center of the civil rights movement for most of the 1960s, preaching a message of pacifism and nonviolence, but in 1966, when Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale founded the Black Panther Party across the bay in Oakland, the fight for equality became a brash, revolutionary one. Around then, the Kings moved out of the garage and into a storefront in the ***working-class*** neighborhood of Visitation Valley, where they became known as the Yardbird Temple Vanguard Revolutionary Church of the Hour. Coltrane — in no small part thanks to the Kings — became the hero of not just the Black Panther Party but the burgeoning Black power movement at large. Newton often spoke of how more traditional churches had failed Black society; Miles Davis, with whom Coltrane had some of his earliest successes as a sideman, writes in his [*1989 autobiography*](https://www.nytimes.com/1989/10/15/books/juillard-dropout-makes-good.html) that by the time the Black Panthers formed, Coltrane’s music had become “for many blacks, the fire and passion and rage and anger and rebellion and love that they felt.”

The musician was an unexpected choice for a revolutionary lodestar, for his message was ultimately one of peace and harmony. “I think music can make the world better and, if I’m qualified, I want to do it,” he once said. Though that doesn’t mean he was apolitical: One of his finest songs, “[*Alabama*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sd5R0susntk),” was written in 1963, in response to the Ku Klux Klan’s bombing of a Baptist church in Birmingham that year, killing four Black children. It’s one of the great works of art produced by the civil rights movement, and Coltrane’s band never sounded better. Garrison and Jones work themselves into a funereal groove, and Tyner somehow makes his piano sound like it’s crying. Coltrane on the tenor sax is nothing less than the sound of dignity prevailing through overwhelming tragedy.

Though the Black Panthers were, as King notes, atheists, they became some of his church’s most ardent supporters. Out of the storefront in the Western Addition, King was preaching that Coltrane was Christ incarnate, and structuring a weekly meeting around his music, especially “A Love Supreme,” a suite in four parts — “[*Acknowledgement*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMCHDC2Lurk),” “[*Resolution*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsxtKQW9ggg),” “[*Pursuance*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHkMFLhcKJg),” “[*Psalm*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gta2GOqvjVE)” — that has the loose structure of a prayer service. And King, in turn, realized that the Panthers’ Marxist ideology (“Dialectical materialism,” as Marina says with a small sigh) had more in common with the Christian faith than he might have expected.

The Kings’ dogma may have been untraditional, but for the most part they did and still do what most churches do — perform music, meditate, offer prayers, organize food drives. (Colloquially, they are known in the Bay Area as the Beans and Rice Church: “Free vegetarian meals!” Marina says excitedly at one point in our interview.) In 1972, for the Black Panther [*Community Survival Program*](https://www.pbs.org/hueypnewton/actions/actions_survival.html) at the Oakland Auditorium, the church’s house band opened for Ike and Tina Turner and helped pass out thousands of bags of groceries to families in need. Newton and Seale had promised a whole chicken in each one and told the Kings that they needed $2,000 to “get the chickens out of hostage to give them to the people.” The church raised the funds to do so and, in thanks, Newton commissioned Emory Douglas, the Panthers’ minister of culture, to make a Coltrane painting — it became something like the church’s first icon. The Kings are sitting in front of it when we speak on Zoom.

Of course, the Kings have also been met with skepticism over the years. Alice Coltrane, the artist’s widow (and his piano player in the last years of his career), was a friend of the Kings and a religious leader in her own right. She converted to Hinduism after Coltrane’s death and founded the Vedantic Center near Malibu, and the Kings considered her to be their guru. (They sing in Sanskrit on some of her early devotional music.) But in 1981, she sued the church, then known as the One Mind Temple Evolutionary Transitional Church of Christ, for copyright infringement and for using her late husband’s name without permission. A spokesman for the church at the time asked The New York Times, in its defense, “Did you ever think it was necessary to ask Mother Mary to use Jesus’ name?”

The suit was eventually dropped, but it turned out to be fortuitous; it brought the Kings to the attention of leaders in the African Orthodox Church, which was founded in New York City in the early 20th century by defectors from the Episcopalian faith. George Duncan Hinkson, a bishop in the A.O.C., told the Kings that Coltrane couldn’t be their god, but he could be their patron saint. (When asked what he wanted to be in 10 years in a 1966 interview, Coltrane, whose father and grandfather were Methodist ministers, famously replied, “A saint.”) “So I said,” King tells me, “‘Well, we ain’t got no problem with that,’” and in 1982, the A.O.C. officially canonized Coltrane. The Kings began studying orthodoxy, commissioning icon paintings in the Byzantine style, and changed the congregation’s name to the Saint John Coltrane African Orthodox Church. In the years since, gentrification has forced them to move around San Francisco, holding weekly services (they migrated to Facebook during the pandemic) and preaching what they call “Coltrane Consciousness.” People have made pilgrimages from across the world to attend these services the way other devotees might travel to Rishikesh, India, or Jerusalem.

THAT’S THE STORY of how a postwar 20th-century musician became a saint, but it still leaves the question: Why Coltrane? What is it about him that makes people dedicate their entire lives to his art? So many other musicians have made music with overtly Christian themes and been celebrated for it — [*Aretha Franklin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/16/opinion/aretha-franklin-church-detroit.html), Whitney Houston, Bono, Kanye West and Justin Bieber, to name just a few — though many of them (the men, anyway) also seemed to present themselves as self-consciously Christlike in doing so. (West, for instance, preached the dangers of pornography and premarital sex when publicizing his 2019 record “[*Jesus Is King*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/27/arts/music/kanye-west-jesus-is-king-review.html).”) But what’s always struck me about Coltrane, and “A Love Supreme” in particular, is how welcoming he is in his approach to spirituality, how lacking in judgment. He seemed to know how good he was on a technical level — he certainly thought making people happy with his music was an achievable goal — but he also harbored no delusions of grandeur. Nearly every account that exists of him depicts a quiet and somewhat shy family man. He spent most of his free time practicing. He drove a Chrysler station wagon and lived on Long Island. It’s not that his music filtered out the banality of being human but that he had an uncanny ability to make his human flaws into something useful. The difference between Coltrane the man and Coltrane the performer was a nearly alchemical transfiguration.

It’s no coincidence that, more than any other figure in the history of American music, his admirers tend to experience his work the way others might undergo a religious epiphany. “I thought I was going to die from the emotion,” the musician Joe McPhee once told the critic Ben Ratliff of witnessing a 1965 Coltrane concert at the Village Gate in New York. The record producer [*George Avakian*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/obituaries/george-avakian-dead-record-producer-and-talent-scout.html), as recounted in Davis’s autobiography, once said that Coltrane “seemed to grow taller in height and larger in size with each note that he played,” that he “seemed to be pushing each chord to its outer limits, out into space.” On our Zoom call, Stephens describes a similar experience when “[*Song of Praise*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsSLa5CVSsQ),” a deep cut from the 1965 album “The John Coltrane Quartet Plays,” came on one day when she was vacuuming her living room. As she says, “John Coltrane spoke to me.”

There are enough stories like this to create an entire subgenre, but my personal favorite, and the one that best explains Coltrane’s lasting appeal, comes from the poet and playwright [*Amiri Baraka’s liner notes*](http://albumlinernotes.com/Live_At_Birdland.html) for the 1964 album “Live at Birdland,” a concert at the historic club just north of Times Square, sessions for which Baraka, then known as LeRoi Jones, was in attendance. In describing the extreme contrast of Coltrane’s transcendent, highly emotional music — “one of the reasons suicide seems so boring” — and its earthly setting, he writes, “Birdland is a place no man should wander into unarmed.

“After riding a subway through New York’s bowels,” he continues, “and that subway full of all the many things any man should expect to find in something’s bowels, and then coming up stairs to the street and walking slowly, head down, through the traffic and failure that does shape this place, and then entering ‘the Jazz Corner of the World,’ a temple erected in praise of what God (?), and then finally amidst that noise and glare to hear a man destroy all of it, completely, like Sodom, with just the first few notes from his horn, your ‘critical’ sense can be erased completely, and that experience can place you somewhere a long way off from anything ugly.”

Baraka admits that there are people who can’t hear what he calls the “daringly human quality” of Coltrane, as if the notes he played were on a wavelength that simply didn’t register for certain nonbelievers. Even the most beloved music, like all art forms, falls in and out of style. But Coltrane’s work has not only endured, it’s become ever more embraced, inspiring greater fervor the further removed we get from its original recording. The only other thing that compares is, curiously, religion itself. If you allow yourself to hear Coltrane — really hear him — his music, like God or Buddha or Dharma or Allah, can, as Baraka describes it, “make you think a lot of weird and wonderful things.”

PHOTOS: “St. John Coltrane The Divine Sound Baptist” (1992), an icon painting of the jazz musician John Coltrane by Mark Doox, a deacon at the Saint John Coltrane Church in San Francisco.; Another painting by Doox, titled “Alabama” (2020), inspired by Coltrane’s song of the same name. One of the musician’s most celebrated works, it was written in response to the 1963 bombing of a Black Baptist church in Birmingham. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAINT JOHN WILL I AM COLTRANE AFRICAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (A.O.C.) AND THE ARTIST © MARK DOOX)

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[***As Israel Reopens, ‘Whoever Does Not Get Vaccinated Will Be Left Behind’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:621M-3WT1-DXY4-X55W-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Isabel Kershner

**Highlight:** New government and business initiatives are moving in the direction of a two-tier system for the vaccinated and unvaccinated, raising legal, moral and ethical questions.

**Body**

New government and business initiatives are moving in the direction of a two-tier system for the vaccinated and unvaccinated, raising legal, moral and ethical questions.

BAT YAM, Israel — [*Israel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-covid-restrictions.html) has raced ahead with the fastest [*Covid vaccination*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-covid-restrictions.html) campaign in the world, inoculating nearly half its population with at least one dose. Now, the rapid rollout is turning the country into a live laboratory for setting the rules in a vaccinated society — raising thorny questions about rights, obligations and the greater good.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s cabinet voted this week to open shopping malls and museums to the public, subject to social distancing rules and mandatory masking. For the first time in many months, gyms, cultural and sports events, hotels and swimming pools will also reopen, but only for some.

Under a new “Green Badge” system that functions as both a carrot and a stick, the government is making leisure activities accessible only to people who are fully vaccinated or recovered starting Sunday. Two weeks later, restaurants, event halls and conferences will be allowed to operate under those rules. Customers and attendees will have to carry a certificate of vaccination with a QR code.

Israel is one of the first countries grappling in real time with a host of legal, moral and ethical questions as it tries to balance the steps toward resuming public life with sensitive issues such as public safety, discrimination, free choice and privacy.

“Getting vaccinated is a moral duty. It is part of our mutual responsibility,” said the health minister, Yuli Edelstein. He also has a new mantra: “Whoever does not get vaccinated will be left behind.”

The debate swirling within Israel is percolating across other parts of the world as well, with plans to reserve international travel for vaccinated “green passport” holders and warnings of [*growing disparities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-covid-restrictions.html) between more-vaccinated affluent countries and less-vaccinated poor ones.

Israel’s central government — eager to bring the country out of its [*third national lockdown*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-covid-restrictions.html) without setting off a new wave of infections — was spurred into action by local initiatives. Chafing under the country’s lockdown regulations, an indoor shopping mall in the ***working-class*** Tel Aviv suburb of Bat Yam threw its doors open last week for customers who could prove that they had been vaccinated or had recovered from Covid-19.

In Karmiel, the mayor made a similar decision to open his city in the northern Galilee region for business. His office began processing requests from employers who could verify that all of their employees had received the requisite two vaccine doses or had recovered from the virus.

And in other cities, mayors wanted to bar unvaccinated teachers from classrooms while some hoteliers threatened unvaccinated employees with dismissal.

Dr. Maya Peled Raz, an expert in health law and ethics at the University of Haifa, defended some limits on personal liberties for the greater good. Employers cannot force employees to get vaccinated, she said, but they might be allowed to employ only vaccinated workers if not doing so could harm their business.

“That may involve some damage to individual rights, but not all damage is prohibited if it is well-balanced and legitimate in order to achieve a worthy goal,” she said. “It’s your choice,” she added of leisure activities. “If you are vaccinated, you can enter. As long as you aren’t, we can’t let you endanger others.”

Four million Israelis — nearly half the population of nine million — have received at least one dose of the Pfizer vaccine, and more than 2.6 million have gotten a second dose. But about two million eligible citizens aged 16 or over have not sought vaccines. The [*average number of new daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-covid-restrictions.html) infections is hovering around 4,000.

The speedy vaccination program in Israel contrasts sharply with the situation in the occupied territories, where few Palestinians have received even one dose. The disparity has provoked fierce [*debates about Israel’s ethical and legal obligations to the Palestinians*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-covid-restrictions.html), as well as the potential health risk to Israelis of not vaccinating them.

Mr. Edelstein, the health minister, said on Thursday that vaccination would not be compulsory in Israel. But his ministry is proposing legislation that would oblige unvaccinated employees whose work involves contact with the public to be tested for the virus every two days. And he is promoting a bill that would allow the ministry to identify unvaccinated people to the local authorities.

Local authorities and volunteers have been trying to lure people to vaccination centers with offers of free pizza, Arabic sweets and, in the ultra-Orthodox city of Bnei Brak, bags of cholent — a slow-cooked stew traditionally prepared for the sabbath.

Yet getting vaccinated remains voluntary and not everybody is rushing to it.

Ofek Hacohen, 34, a manager of vacation rentals in Jerusalem, said he believed in a natural approach to a healthy body and insisted that the risk posed by the virus — which he called “a flu” — had been exaggerated. He added that he did not trust the vaccine’s safety.

He said he did not know what he would do if legislation was introduced limiting his options.

“But I won’t get vaccinated. I’ll surely participate in demonstrations. I believe I won’t be alone,” he said, adding, “I can survive without going to the theater, to soccer matches or to a restaurant. It’s annoying but what can I do?”

Concerts and restaurants are luxuries that people can more easily forgo. But the questions become more pressing and contentious when it comes to the rights of employers and workers.

The rights of teaching staffs have come under particular scrutiny as some in-person classes reopen. A quarter or more of Israel’s teachers have not sought a first dose, a situation that critics say poses a potential danger to pupils under 16, who are too young to be vaccinated. Some health workers [*have also refrained*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-covid-restrictions.html) from being vaccinated.

After a number of city mayors threatened to bar unvaccinated teachers from their classrooms, the deputy attorney general clarified that they did not have the authority to do so without new legislation.

Dr. Peled Raz said the temporary emergency law governing Israel’s response to the virus would be easier to amend with regard to health workers than to others because of potential harm to themselves and patients, adding that would be justified.

“You want to be a nurse and won’t get vaccinated?” she said. “Either get vaccinated or choose another profession.”

But two rights organizations, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel and the Worker’s Hotline, said they had already received complaints from other unvaccinated workers. The groups wrote a letter to the attorney general this month demanding that he issue a clear opinion and said that under existing law an employer may not demand information from workers regarding their vaccination status.

“The first problem is that there is no policy,” said Gil Gan-Mor, the director of the civil and social rights unit at the Association for Civil Rights in Israel. “When the government is not working fast enough, we see too many private initiatives.”

Striking a balance between competing rights and interests remains a matter of debate, he said, and requires a broad discussion in Parliament.

Barak Cohen, a lawyer and social activist, raised more questions in a recent [*Facebook post*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/01/world/middleeast/israel-covid-restrictions.html).

“To what degree is it appropriate to pressure and coerce when the decision-making process surrounding the vaccine is kept hidden, in the dark and confidential?” he wrote, noting that he does not deny the seriousness of the coronavirus or the effectiveness of the Pfizer vaccine.

He also pointed to the low public trust in the government and what he called drug companies’ “huge financial interest.”

In Karmiel, City Hall gave at least 20 businesses a local version of a Green Badge to put in their windows, according to Eli Sade, the director of the mayor’s office. All who entered were required to show that they had been vaccinated or had recovered from the virus. But police officers told store owners to close because they were breaking the law.

The shopping mall in Bat Yam, which wanted customers to prove they had been vaccinated, soon dropped the requirement for showing a green passport at the entrance and went back to equipping the guards with temperature guns.

Inside, the few stores that opened had created their own entry policies. One chain followed basic social distancing regulations while another required a vaccination certificate. Sportswear and lingerie stores operated a “takeout” service for customers who stood at the door.

Haifa Zeinab, 20, who was working in a Japanese-style home wear and gift store, said she did not plan to be vaccinated because an aunt had been overcome by dizziness after both of her doses. If she was told not to come without a green passport or a negative test every two days, she said with a shrug, “So I won’t come.”

PHOTOS: The intensive-care ward for coronavirus patients at the Ziv Medical Center in Safed. Getting vaccinated remains voluntary in Israel.; Four million Israelis, nearly half the country’s population, have received at least one dose of Pfizer’s Covid-19 vaccine. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ODED BALILTY/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** June 1, 2021

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[***Behind Low Vaccination Rates Lurks a More Profound Social Weakness; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6470-TN41-DXY4-X06N-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Anita Sreedhar and Anand Gopal

**Highlight:** Vaccine hesitancy reflects a transformation of people’s core beliefs about what we owe each other.

**Body**

Robert Steed knew the toll Covid-19 had taken on the South Bronx, where he’d lived most of his life. There were the ambulances that would pull up to the drab brick apartment buildings of St. Mary’s Park Houses, the public housing complex where he’d grown up. There were longtime tenants who’d succumbed to the disease. There were posters pasted near the elevators, urging residents to get vaccinated. But he wouldn’t go near the vaccine.

“I’m not going to listen to what the government says,” he told friends. While he was down South working at a Waffle House, he tested positive for the coronavirus. He decided he’d fight the disease himself; after all, he was only 41, was rail thin and had no underlying conditions. But when his girlfriend didn’t hear from him for a few days in October, his friends said authorities forced their way into his apartment — and discovered his body. The death shook his friends and former neighbors at St. Mary’s Park Houses, but even as they mourned, many had made up their minds: They would not get vaccinated.

About 70 percent of American adults are now fully immunized, but in pockets around the country — from the rural South to predominately Black and brown neighborhoods in large cities — vaccine hesitancy remains a stubborn obstacle to defeating the pandemic. And it’s not just in the United States: In 2019, the World Health Organization declared [*vaccine hesitancy*](https://www.who.int/news-room/spotlight/ten-threats-to-global-health-in-2019) one of the 10 threats to global health. With persistent vaccine avoidance and unequal access to vaccines, unvaccinated pockets could act as reservoirs for the virus, allowing for the spread of new variants like Omicron.

The world needs to address the root causes of vaccine hesitancy. We can’t go on believing that the issue can be solved simply by flooding skeptical communities with public service announcements or hectoring people to “believe in science.”

One of us is a primary care physician with a degree in public health, working in the Bronx, and the other is a sociologist assisting international institutions to support polio and Covid vaccination in underdeveloped countries (as well as a journalist covering conflict). For the past five years, we’ve conducted surveys and focus groups abroad and interviewed residents of the Bronx to better understand vaccine avoidance. We’ve found that people who reject vaccines are not necessarily less scientifically literate or less well-informed than those who don’t. Instead, hesitancy reflects a transformation of our core beliefs about what we owe one another.

Over the past four decades, governments have slashed budgets and privatized basic services. This has two important consequences for public health. First, people are unlikely to trust institutions that do little for them. And second, public health is no longer viewed as a collective endeavor, based on the principle of social solidarity and mutual obligation. People are conditioned to believe they’re on their own and responsible only for themselves. That means an important source of vaccine hesitancy is the erosion of the idea of a common good.

One of the most striking examples of this transformation is in the United States, where anti-vaccination attitudes have been growing for decades. For Covid-19, commentators have chalked up vaccine distrust to everything from online misinformation campaigns, to our tribal political culture, [*to a fear of needles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/21/opinion/needle-fear-vaccine-covid.html). Race has been highlighted in particular: In the early months of the vaccine rollout, white Americans [*were twice as likely*](https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/26/us/vaccination-disparities-rollout/index.html) as Black Americans to get vaccinated. Dr. Anthony Fauci pointed to the long shadow of racism on our country’s medical institutions, like the notorious Tuskegee syphilis trials, while others emphasized the negative experiences of African Americans and Latinos in the examination room. These views are not wrong; compared with white Americans, communities of color do experience the American health care system differently. But a closer look at the data reveals a more complicated picture.

Since the spring, when most American adults became eligible for Covid vaccines, the racial gap in vaccination rates between Black and white people [*has been halved*](https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/latest-data-on-covid-19-vaccinations-by-race-ethnicity/). In September, a[*national survey found*](https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/kff-covid-19-vaccine-monitor-september-2021/) that vaccination rates among Black and white Americans were almost identical. [*Other surveys*](https://news.usc.edu/182848/education-covid-19-vaccine-safety-risks-usc-study/) have [*determined*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/24/briefing/vaccination-class-gap-us.html) that a much more significant factor was college attendance: Those without a college degree were the most likely to go unvaccinated.

Education is a reliable predictor of socioeconomic status, and other studies have similarly found a link between income and vaccination. An [*analysis in June*](https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-health-watch/are-your-neighbors-vaccinated-michigan-map-shows-rates-census-tracts) of census tract data in Michigan showed, for example, that vaccination rates in the heavily Black neighborhoods of Saginaw County were below 35 percent, and the rates in nearby poor white areas were not much different. Voters who identify as Democrats are [*much more likely*](https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/kff-covid-19-vaccine-monitor-october-2021/) than voters who identify as Republicans to get vaccinated, but, according to the Michigan data, this gap also [*disappears*](https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-health-watch/education-levels-drive-michigan-vaccines-whats-rate-your-neighborhood) when accounting for income and education. It turns out that the real vaccination divide is class.

This is particularly visible at the St. Mary’s Park Houses, where Mr. Steed grew up. Here, amid the peeling walls and broken front door, residents say that New York City’s chronically underfunded housing authority has left them to fend for themselves. When we visited recently to ask about vaccines, the heating system was out despite the November chill. The roof was in disrepair. Some residents had no choice but to occupy unlivable units; gas line interruptions forced tenants to use hot plates. Homeless people have[*taken shelter*](https://abc7ny.com/nycha-homeless-st-marys-park-houses-bronx/10904026/) in the stairwells and hallways.

Dana Elden, the tenant association president and a friend of Mr. Steed’s, said she’s felt neglected by the city’s public housing authority. When the pandemic hit, she said, residents were forced to dip into funds meant for the property’s upkeep to purchase masks, gloves and hand sanitizer. They’ve [*leaned*](https://motthavenherald.com/2021/04/12/grassroots-organizations-work-to-get-vaccine-shots-in-arms-as-nycha-falls-short/) on local charities for Covid testing, and even for meals for hungry tenants. “People are thinking, ‘If the government isn’t going to do anything for us,’” said Elden, “‘then why should we participate in vaccines?’”

Americans began thinking about health care decisions this way only recently; during the 1950s polio campaigns, for example, most people saw vaccination as a civic duty. But as the public purse shrunk in the 1980s, politicians insisted that it’s no longer the government’s job to ensure people’s well-being; instead, Americans were to be responsible only for themselves and their own bodies. Entire industries, such as self-help and health foods, have sprung up on the principle that the key to good health lies in individuals making the right choices.

Amanda Santiago, a St. Mary’s Park tenant, told us, “I’m not necessarily anti-vaccine.” But she decided against the shot, she explained, as “a personal choice.” A growing [*body*](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0891243214532711) of [*research*](https://books.google.com/books?id=2ZEBPUocHLwC&amp;pg=PA53&amp;lpg=PA53&amp;dq=Behavior,+disease,+and+health+in+the+twentieth-century+United+States:+the+moral+valence+of+individual+risk&amp;source=bl&amp;ots=LaHC4y7MJB&amp;sig=ACfU3U0nbFfFlfg1hnd2NuKLPZbOuGyTBw&amp;hl=en&amp;sa=X&amp;ved=2ahUKEwjE4ePJgMP0AhVFQzABHfAZB0EQ6AF6BAgOEAM#v=onepage&amp;q=Behavior%2C%20disease%2C%20and%20health%20in%20the%20twentieth-century%20United%20States%3A%20the%20moral%20valence%20of%20individual%20risk&amp;f=false) [*suggests*](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1525-1446.1995.tb00155.x?casa_token=2lsbfNgaNMEAAAAA:S5kPKLad1YuBzqz4OMOSAN6FgsvHiiBHk_JYvD208yACg-gZsajhwAxCz6fKNCgxmMZoUwURflddGPug) that Ms. Santiago’s views reflect a broader shift in America, across class and race. Without an idea of the common good, health is often discussed using the language of “choice.” At a recent anti-vaccine-mandate demonstration in Brooklyn, some protesters wore Black Lives Matter T-shirts and chanted, “My body, my choice!” When the Brooklyn Nets banned their star guard Kyrie Irving for refusing the vaccine, the Nets’ general manager, Sean Marks, acknowledged, “Kyrie has made a personal choice, and we respect his individual right to choose.”

Of course, there’s a lot of good that comes from viewing health care decisions as personal choices: No one wants to be subjected to procedures against their wishes. But there are problems with reducing public health to a matter of choice. It gives the impression that individuals are wholly responsible for their own health. This is despite [*growing evidence*](https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&amp;lr=&amp;id=rv42OY9QLkMC&amp;oi=fnd&amp;pg=PA342&amp;dq=social+determinants+of+health+obesity&amp;ots=LVy5-qCCfC&amp;sig=75uNTDJm9tVp5FiE2ruk9pV7eTY#v=onepage&amp;q=social%20determinants%20of%20health%20obesity&amp;f=false) that health is deeply influenced by [*factors*](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12020-014-0195-0) outside our [*control*](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600(20)30234-4/fulltext); public health experts now talk about the “social determinants of health,” the idea that personal health is never simply just a reflection of individual lifestyle choices, but also the class people are born into, the neighborhood they grew up in and the race they belong to.

Poverty and environmental conditions are closely linked to chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease. The South Bronx has one of the [*highest death rates from asthma*](https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/research/columbia-center-childrens-environmental-health/asthma) in the country, in part because of [*dilapidated public housing*](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25367995/); it is also one of the least food secure regions in America. But food deserts and squalor are not easy problems to solve — certainly not by individuals or charities — and they require substantial government action. Without such reforms, primary care physicians can approach their patients only through the lens of personal responsibility. Many medical schools teach “motivational interviewing,” so that physicians can coach patients to make better lifestyle choices. This can be helpful, but it fails to address the deeper problem: Being healthy is not cheap. Studies indicate that energy-dense foods with less nutritious value are more affordable, and low-cost diets are linked to obesity and insulin resistance.

Another problem with reducing well-being to personal choice is that this treats health as a commodity. This isn’t surprising, since we shop for doctors and insurance plans the way we do all other goods and services.

Recent research has shed light on this problem. Jennifer Reich, a sociologist at the University of Colorado, Denver, has[*spent years studying*](https://nyupress.org/9781479812790/calling-the-shots/) families who refuse to vaccinate their children against diseases like measles. She found that mothers devoted many hours to “researching” vaccines, soaking up parental advice books and quizzing doctors. In other words, they act like savvy consumers. The mothers in Reich’s study maintain that each child is unique, and that they know their child’s needs better than anyone. As a result, they insist that they alone have the expertise to decide what medicines to give their children. When thinking as a consumer, people tend to downplay social obligations in favor of a narrow pursuit of self-interest. As one parent told Reich, “I’m not going to put my child at risk to save another child.”

Such risk-benefit assessments for vaccines are an essential part of parents’ consumer research. For illnesses like measles, outbreaks — until recently — have been so rare that it’s not hard to be convinced that the harm of vaccines outweighs that of the disease. However, we’ve found in our research that for Covid-19, this risk analysis can get turned on its head: Vaccine uptake is so high among wealthy people because Covid is one of the gravest threats they face. In some wealthy Manhattan neighborhoods, for example, vaccination rates run north of 90 percent.

For poorer and ***working-class*** people, though, the calculus is different: Covid-19 is only one of multiple grave threats. In the South Bronx, one man who works two jobs shared that he navigates around drug dealers, hostile police and shootings. “I don’t want my kids to see what I’ve seen,” he said. Another man said he lost his job during the pandemic and slipped back into addiction. “Most of my friends are dead or in jail,” he said. Neither one plans to get vaccinated. Their hesitancy is not irrational: When viewed in the context of the other threats they face, Covid no longer seems uniquely scary.

Most of the people we interviewed in the Bronx say they are skeptical of the institutions that claim to serve the poor but in fact have abandoned them. “When you’re in a high tax bracket, the government protects you,” said one man who drives an Amazon truck for a living. “So why wouldn’t you trust a government that protects you?” On the other hand, he and his friends find reason to view the government’s sudden interest in their well-being with suspicion. “They are over here shoving money at us,” a woman told us, referring to a New York City offer to pay a $500 bonus to municipal workers to get vaccinated. “And I’m asking, why are you so eager, when you don’t give us money for anything else?” These views reinforce the work of[*social scientists*](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/world-politics/article/abs/all-for-all-equality-corruption-and-social-trust/09B64F404EB0F753E78680B70A9ABEDB) who find a[*link*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1012786) between a lack of trust and inequality. And without trust, there is no mutual obligation, no sense of a common good.

As the emergence of the Omicron variant shows, vaccine mandates in the United States are not enough to solve this problem. Hesitancy is a global phenomenon. While the reasons vary by country, the underlying causes are the same: a deep mistrust in local and international institutions, in a context in which governments worldwide have cut social services.

[*Research shows*](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22723748/) that private systems not only tend to produce worse health outcomes than public ones, but privatization creates what public health experts call “segregated care,” which can undermine the feelings of social solidarity that are critical for successful vaccination drives. In one Syrian city, for example, the health care system now consists of one public hospital so underfunded that it is notorious for poor care, a few private hospitals offering high-quality care that are unaffordable to most of the population, and many unlicensed and unregulated private clinics — some even without medical doctors — known to offer misguided health advice. Under such conditions, conspiracy theories can flourish; many of the city’s residents believe Covid vaccines are a foreign plot.

In many developing nations, international aid organizations are stepping in to offer vaccines. These institutions are sometimes more equitable than governments, but they are often oriented to donor priorities, not community needs. In Afghanistan, villagers lack access to most basic health services; some must travel hours to reach a clinic. Cases of childhood malnutrition are widespread and growing. Even though the country has only a few dozen cases of polio yearly, institutions like the W.H.O. spend considerable sums promoting and carrying out polio vaccinations. People in Kandahar speak about polio in ways that are strikingly similar to how residents in the Bronx speak about Covid. “We have starvation and women die in childbirth,” one tribal elder told us. “Why do they care so much about polio? What do they really want?”

Researchers [*find these sentiments*](https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.0040073) echoed in poor and marginalized communities around the world. Despite the scale of the problem, experts are divided on which interventions might work best. Here, too, the experience of the United States might prove instructive. In America, anti-vaccine movements are as old as vaccines themselves; efforts to immunize people against smallpox prompted bitter opposition in the turn of the last century. But after World War II, these attitudes disappeared. In the 1950s, demand for the polio vaccine often outstripped supply, and by the late 1970s, nearly every state had laws mandating vaccinations for school with hardly any public opposition.

What changed? This was the era of large, ambitious government programs like Medicare and Medicaid. In the mid-’60s, the number of government-funded social programs targeting the poor and communities of color skyrocketed. The anti-measles policy, for example, was an [*outgrowth*](https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520247499/state-of-immunity) of President Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society and War on Poverty initiatives. Government workers from initiatives like Head Start assisted in vaccination campaigns. In some cities, the government sponsored the creation of health councils, made up of community members, which served as intermediaries between health centers and the public. These councils [*embodied*](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29309216/) the idea that public health is effective only when community members share in decision making.

The experience of the 1960s suggests that when people feel supported through social programs, they’re more likely to trust institutions and believe they have a stake in society’s health. Only then do the ideas of social solidarity and mutual obligation begin to make sense.

The types of social programs that best promote this way of thinking are universal ones, like Social Security and universal health care. Universal programs inculcate a sense of a common good because everyone is eligible simply by virtue of belonging to a political community. In the international context, when marginalized communities benefit from universal government programs that bring basic services like clean drinking water and primary health care, they are more likely to trust efforts in emergency situations — like when they’re asked to get vaccinated.

If the world is going to beat the pandemic, countries need policies that promote a basic, but increasingly forgotten, idea: that our individual flourishing is bound up in collective well-being.

Anita Sreedhar is a resident specializing in primary care and social medicine residency at Montefiore Medical Center. She has reported from Afghanistan, India and elsewhere. Anand Gopal, a sociologist, is a professor at Arizona State University and a fellow at Type Media. They are co-founders of the Zomia Center, which assists with public health initiatives in conflict zones.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Selman Design FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***New York Trails Rest of the U.S. In Virus Rebound***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62YS-K2V1-JBG3-62XT-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Nelson D. Schwartz, Patrick McGeehan, Nicole Hong and Gabriela Bhaskar

**Body**

New York Faces Lasting Economic Toll Even as Pandemic Passes

As the national economy recovers from the pandemic and begins to take off, New York City is lagging, with changing patterns of work and travel threatening the engines that have long powered its jobs and prosperity.

New York has suffered deeper job losses as a share of its work force than any other big American city. And while the country has regained two-thirds of the positions it lost after the coronavirus arrived, New York has recouped fewer than half, leaving a deficit of more than 500,000 jobs.

Restaurants and bars are filling up again with New Yorkers eager for a return to normal, but scars are everywhere. Boarded-up storefronts and for-lease signs dot many neighborhoods. Empty sidewalks in Midtown Manhattan make it feel like a weekend in midweek. Subway ridership on weekdays is less than half the level of two years ago.

The city's economic plight stems largely from its heavy reliance on office workers, business travelers, tourists and the service businesses catering to all of them. All eyes are on September, when many companies aim to bring their workers back to the office and Broadway fully reopens, attracting more visitors and their dollars. But even then, the rebound will be only partial.

The shift toward remote work endangers thousands of businesses that serve commuters who are likely to come into the office less frequently than before the pandemic, if at all. By the end of September, the Partnership for New York City, a business advocacy group, predicts that only 62 percent of office workers will return, mostly three days a week.

Restoring the city to economic health will be an imposing challenge for its next mayor, who is likely to emerge from the Democratic primary on Tuesday. The candidates have offered differing visions of how to help struggling small businesses and create jobs.

''We are bouncing back, but we are nowhere near where we were in 2019,'' said Barbara Byrne Denham, senior economist at Oxford Economics. ''We suffered more than everyone else, so it will take a little longer to recover.''

At 10.9 percent in May, the city's unemployment rate was nearly twice the national average of 5.8 percent. In the Bronx, the city's poorest borough, the rate is 15 percent. Workers in face-to-face sectors like restaurants and hospitality, many of whom are people of color, are still struggling.

''While the recovery has probably exceeded expectations, unemployment remains staggeringly high for Black and brown individuals and historically marginalized communities,'' said Jose Ortiz Jr., chief executive of the New York City Employment and Training Coalition, a work force development group.

At the same time, hundreds of small businesses, which before the pandemic employed about half of the city's work force, didn't survive. And many that did are saddled with debt they took on to survive the downturn and owe tens of thousands of dollars in back rent.

''I have a huge amount of debt to pay back because I had to borrow all over the place to stay alive,'' said Robert Schwartz, the third-generation owner of Eneslow Shoes & Orthotics. He closed two of his four stores, but kept open branches on Manhattan's Upper East Side and in Little Neck, Queens. ''We'll survive, but it's going to be a long, slow recovery.''

One crucial factor in the city's economic trajectory, civic and business leaders say, is addressing safety concerns. Violent crime has risen since the pandemic hit -- including a high-profile Times Square shooting in May that wounded two women and a 4-year-old girl -- and the police have recently increased Midtown foot patrols.

''The negatives of New York life are worse,'' said Seth Pinsky, chief executive of the 92nd Street Y, a longtime cultural destination on the Upper East Side.

''Crime is going up and the city is dirtier,'' added Mr. Pinsky, who served as president of the city's Economic Development Corporation under former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. ''It's critical that we get the virtuous cycle going again.''

On Friday, Mayor Bill de Blasio said on a radio show on WNYC that the city had more police officers in the subway than at any time in the last 25 years. ''We want to really encourage people back, to protect everyone,'' he said.

Nonetheless, worries about crime are frequently cited by workers who have returned. ''There are questions from employees about safety in the city and increased concern,'' said Jonathan Gray, president of the financial behemoth Blackstone. ''My hope is that as the city fills up there will be less of that.''

New York is certainly feeling less deserted than it did a few months ago. Nearly 195,000 pedestrians strolled through Times Square on June 13, more than twice the typical number in the bleak winter days when the coronavirus was raging. That's a long way from the 365,000 who passed through daily before the pandemic, but the totals are edging higher, according to Tom Harris, president of the Times Square Alliance, a nonprofit group that promotes local businesses and the neighborhood.

When Mr. Gray returned to Blackstone's Midtown headquarters last summer, there were just 16 other people spread over 19 floors. Today, there are more than 1,600, and Blackstone is asking all employees who have been vaccinated to return.

''It's gone from feeling super lonely and now it's feeling pretty normal,'' Mr. Gray added.

Wall Street and the banking sector are pillars of the city's economy, and they have been among the most aggressive industries in prodding employees to go back to the office. James Gorman, the chief executive of Morgan Stanley, told investors and analysts this month that ''if you want to get paid in New York, you need to be in New York.''

Many firms, including Blackstone and Morgan Stanley, have huge real estate holdings or loans to the industry, so there is more than civic pride in their push to get workers to return. Technology companies like Facebook and Google are increasingly important employers as well as major commercial tenants, and they have been increasing their office space. But they have been more flexible about letting employees continue to work remotely.

Google, which has 11,000 employees in New York and plans to add 3,000 in the next few years, intends to return to its offices in West Chelsea in September, but workers will only be required to come in three days a week. The company has also said up to 20 percent of its staff can apply to work remotely full time.

The decision by even a small slice of employees at Google and other companies to stay home part or all of the week could have a significant economic impact.

Even if just 10 percent of Manhattan office workers begin working remotely most of the time, that translates into more than 100,000 people a day not picking up a coffee and bagel on their way to work or a drink afterward, said James Parrott, an economist with the Center for New York City Affairs at the New School.

''I expect a lot of people will return, but not all of them,'' he said. ''We might lose some neighborhood businesses as a result.''

The absence of white-collar workers hurts people like Danuta Klosinski, 60, who had been cleaning office buildings in Manhattan for 20 years. She is one of more than about 3,000 office cleaners who remain out of work, according to Denis Johnston, a vice president of their union, Local 32BJ of the Service Employees International Union.

Ms. Klosinski, who lives in Brooklyn, said that she had been furloughed twice since last spring and that she had been idle since November. She said she feared that if she were not recalled by September, she would lose the health insurance that covers her husband, who suffered a stroke and a heart attack.

''I'm worried about losing everything,'' she said.

Also weighing on the city's outlook is the decline in visits by tourists, who are venturing back in dribbles, not in droves.

In 2019, New York welcomed over 66 million out-of-towners, and they spent more than $45 billion in hotels, restaurants, shops and theaters. City officials expect that it will take years to draw so many visitors again, especially the bigger-spending foreign tourists and business travelers on expense accounts.

Ellen V. Futter, president of the American Museum of Natural History, said domestic tourism was rebounding faster than she had expected. ''The local population is out and about and happy to be so,'' Ms. Futter said. But the scarcity of international visitors ''is going to tamp down the pace of recovery,'' she said.

That lag will spell prolonged pain for many businesses. Employment in hotels and restaurants is about 150,000 lower than it was before the pandemic, while the number of jobs in the performing arts is down about 40,000.

To be sure, there are signs of a strengthening economy. After many residents fled the city last year, high-priced condos are again being snapped up, and the rental market is showing signs of firming after price drops.

Rudin Management, the real estate giant, is trimming back the concessions it offered to attract tenants at the height of the pandemic. ''I'm getting calls from people saying their son or daughter or grandson or granddaughter is graduating and asking for an apartment,'' said William C. Rudin, the firm's chief executive. ''We didn't get those calls for a year.''

New Yorkers are also getting out more. When the Rockaway Hotel in Queens opened in September after years of planning, a hip destination in a historically ***working-class*** beach neighborhood, ''people who lived four blocks away would take hotel rooms for the night because they wanted a staycation,'' said Terence Tubridy, a managing partner.

Since indoor dining resumed in February, the 53-room hotel's weekend occupancy rate has been 80 percent, Mr. Tubridy said. Along with more visitors recently from California and the Midwest, he reports a flood of inquiries about weddings and birthday parties.

As the hotel prepares for its first opportunity to serve the bustling summer crowds at Rockaway Beach, Mr. Tubridy is looking to add 100 employees to his current staff of 180.

Amy Scherber is also seeing signs of better days. When the pandemic struck, she was forced to close all but two of her Amy's Bread shops in New York City and lay off more than 100 employees. She wound up making cakes and pastries herself in a kitchen in Long Island City, Queens.

But now, Ms. Scherber has rehired some of her employees, and a crew of four bakers is handling the pastries while she oversees the steadily increasing production of baguettes and other loaves. She has reopened her store in Chelsea Market, a Manhattan tourist destination, and is preparing to reopen other retail locations. Her wholesale business is also rebounding as restaurants that were closed for months are again ordering dinner rolls.

''In the last couple of weeks, we finally have seen the business starting to pick up a bit,'' said Ms. Scherber, who started her operation 29 years ago. She is hopeful about a strong recovery, she said. But she added, ''I see the city taking several years to be the economy it was.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/20/business/economy/new-york-city-economy-coronavirus.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/20/business/economy/new-york-city-economy-coronavirus.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: While New York is less deserted than a few months ago, it's a long way from 2019. Tourists and workers have been slow to return. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GABRIELA BHASKAR/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

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[***95 Percent of Representatives Have a Degree. Look Where That’s Got Us.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61K0-BS01-DXY4-X042-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 21, 2020 Monday 14:46 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1396 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Senior

**Highlight:** All these credentials haven’t led to better results.

**Body**

All these credentials haven’t led to better results.

Over the last few decades, Congress has diversified in important ways. It has gotten less white, less male, less straight — all positive developments. But as I was staring at one of the many recent Senate hearings, filled with the usual magisterial blustering and self-important yada yada, it dawned on me that there’s a way that Congress has moved in a wrong direction, and become quite brazenly unrepresentative.

No, it’s not that the place seethes with millionaires, though there’s that problem too.

It’s that members of Congress are credentialed out the wazoo. An astonishing number have a small kite of extra initials fluttering after their names.

[*According to the Congressional Research Service*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf), more than one third of the House and more than half the Senate have law degrees. Roughly a fifth of senators and representatives have their master’s. Four senators and 21 House members have M.D.s, and an identical number in each body (four, 21) have some kind of doctoral degree, whether it’s a Ph.D., a D.Phil., an Ed.D., or a D. Min.

But perhaps most fundamentally, 95 percent of today’s House members and 100 percent of the Senate’s have a bachelor’s degree or higher. Yet just a [*bit more than*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf) one-third of Americans do.

“This means that the credentialed few govern the uncredentialed many,” writes the political philosopher Michael J. Sandel in “[*The Tyranny of Merit*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf),” published this fall.

There’s an argument to be made that we should want our representatives to be a highly lettered lot. Lots of people have made it, as far back as Plato.

The problem is that there doesn’t seem to be any correlation between good governance and educational attainment that Sandel can discern. In the 1960s, he noted, we got the Vietnam War thanks to “the [*best and the brightest*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf)” — it’s been so long since the publication of David Halberstam’s book that people forget the title was morbidly ironic. In the 1990s and 2000s, the highly credentialed gave us (and here Sandel paused for a deep breath) “stagnant wages, financial deregulation, income inequality, the financial crisis of 2008, a bank bailout that did little to help ordinary people, a decaying infrastructure, and the highest incarceration rate in the world.”

Five years ago, Nicholas Carnes, a political scientist at Duke, tried to measure whether more formal education made political leaders better at their jobs. After conducting a [*sweeping review*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf) of 228 countries between the years 1875 and 2004, he and his colleague Noam Lupu concluded: No. It did not. A college education did not mean less inequality, a greater G.D.P., fewer labor strikes, lower unemployment or less military conflict.

Sandel argues that the technocratic elite’s slow annexation of Congress and European parliaments — which resulted in the rather fateful decisions to outsource jobs and deregulate finance — helped enable the populist revolts now rippling through the West. “It distorted our priorities,” Sandel told me, “and made for a political class that’s too tolerant of crony capitalism and much less attentive to fundamental questions of the dignity of work.”

Both parties are to blame for this. But it was Democrats, Sandel wrote, who seemed especially bullish on the virtues of the meritocracy, arguing that college would be the road to prosperity for the struggling. And it’s a fine idea, well-intentioned, idealistic at its core. But implicit in it is also a punishing notion: If you don’t succeed, you have only yourself to blame. Which President Trump spotted in a trice.

“Unlike Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, who spoke constantly of ‘opportunity’” Sandel wrote, “Trump scarcely mentioned the word. Instead, he offered blunt talk of winners and losers.”

Trump was equally blunt after winning the Nevada Republican caucuses in 2016. [*“I love the poorly educated!*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf)” he shouted.

A pair of studies from 2019 also tell the story, in numbers, of the professionalization of the Democratic Party — or what Sandel calls “the valorization of credentialism.” One, [*from Politico*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf), shows that House and Senate Democrats are much more likely to have gone to private liberal arts colleges than public universities, whereas the reverse is true of their Republican counterparts; another shows that congressional Democrats are [*far more likely*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf) to hire graduates of Ivy League schools.

This class bias made whites without college degrees ripe for Republican recruitment. In both [*2016*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf) and [*2020*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf), two thirds of them voted for Trump; though the G.O.P. is the minority party in the House, more Republican members than Democrats currently do not have college degrees. All 11 are male. Most of them come from the deindustrialized Midwest and South.

Oh, and in the incoming Congress? Six of the seven new members without four-year college degrees are Republicans.

Of course, far darker forces help explain the lures of the modern G.O.P. You’d have to be blind and deaf not to detect them. For decades, Republicans have appealed both cynically and in earnest — it’s hard to know which is more appalling — to racial and ethnic resentments, if not hatred. There’s a reason that the Black ***working class*** isn’t defecting to the Republican Party in droves. (Of the nine Democrats in the House without college degrees, seven, it’s worth noting, are people of color.)

For now, it seems to matter little that Republicans have offered little by way of policy to restore the dignity of work. They’ve tapped into a gusher of resentment, and they seem delighted to channel it, irrespective of where, or if, they got their diplomas. Ted Cruz, quite arguably the Senate’s most insolent snob — he wouldn’t sit in [*a study group*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf) at Harvard Law with anyone who hadn’t graduated from Princeton, Yale or Harvard — was ready to argue [*on Trump’s behalf*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf) to overturn the 2020 election results, should the disgraceful Texas attorney general’s case have reached the Supreme Court.

Which raises a provocative question. Given that Trumpism has found purchase among graduates of Harvard Law, would it make any difference if Congress better reflected the United States and had more members without college degrees? Would it meaningfully alter policy at all?

It would likely depend on where they came from. I keep thinking of what Representative Al Green, Democrat of Texas, told me. His father was a mechanic’s assistant in the segregated South. The white men he worked for cruelly called him “the Secretary” because he could neither read nor write. “So if my father had been elected? You’d have a different Congress,” Green said. “But if it’d been the people who he served — the mechanics who gave him a pejorative moniker? We’d probably have the Congress we have now.”

It’s hard to say whether more socioeconomic diversity would guarantee differences in policy or efficiency. But it could do something more subtle: Rebuild public trust.

“There are people who look at Congress and see the political class as a closed system,” Carnes told me. “My guess is that if Congress looked more like people do as a whole, the cynical view — Oh, they’re all in their ivory tower, they don’t care about us — would get less oxygen.”

When I spoke to Representative Troy Balderson, a Republican from Ohio, he agreed, adding that if more members of Congress didn’t have four-year college degrees, it would erode some stigma associated with not having one.

“When I talk to high school kids and say, ‘I didn’t finish my degree,’ their faces light up,” he told me. Balderson tried college and loved it, but knew he wasn’t cut out for it. He eventually moved back to his hometown to run his family car dealership. Students tend to find his story emboldening. The mere mention of four-year college sets off panic in many of them; they’ve been stereotyped before they even grow up, out of the game before it even starts. “If you don’t have a college degree,” he explains, “you’re a has-been.” Then they look at him and see larger possibilities. That they can be someone’s voice. “You can become a member of Congress.”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R45583.pdf).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***New York Faces Lasting Economic Toll Even as Pandemic Passes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62YK-Y2G1-DXY4-X51P-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Nelson D. Schwartz, Patrick McGeehan, Nicole Hong and Gabriela Bhaskar

**Highlight:** The city’s prosperity is heavily dependent on patterns of work and travel that may be irreversibly altered.

**Body**

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As the national economy recovers from the pandemic and begins to take off, [*New York City*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/business/economy/nyc-economy-covid-delta-variant.html) is lagging, with changing patterns of work and travel threatening the engines that have long powered its jobs and prosperity.

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One crucial factor in the city’s economic trajectory, civic and business leaders say, is addressing safety concerns. Violent crime has risen since the pandemic hit — including a [*high-profile Times Square shooting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/business/economy/nyc-economy-covid-delta-variant.html) in May that wounded two women and a 4-year-old girl — and the police have recently increased Midtown foot patrols.

“The negatives of New York life are worse,” said Seth Pinsky, chief executive of the 92nd Street Y, a longtime cultural destination on the Upper East Side.

“Crime is going up and the city is dirtier,” added Mr. Pinsky, who served as president of the city’s Economic Development Corporation under former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. “It’s critical that we get the virtuous cycle going again.”

On Friday, Mayor Bill de Blasio said on a radio show on WNYC that the city had more police officers in the subway than at any time in the last 25 years. “We want to really encourage people back, to protect everyone,” he said.

Nonetheless, worries about crime are frequently cited by workers who have returned. “There are questions from employees about safety in the city and increased concern,” said Jonathan Gray, president of the financial behemoth Blackstone. “My hope is that as the city fills up there will be less of that.”

New York is certainly feeling less deserted than it did a few months ago. Nearly 195,000 pedestrians strolled through Times Square on June 13, more than twice the typical number in the bleak winter days when the coronavirus was raging. That’s a long way from the 365,000 who passed through daily before the pandemic, but the totals are edging higher, according to Tom Harris, president of the Times Square Alliance, a nonprofit group that promotes local businesses and the neighborhood.

When Mr. Gray returned to Blackstone’s Midtown headquarters last summer, there were just 16 other people spread over 19 floors. Today, there are more than 1,600, and Blackstone is asking all employees who have been vaccinated to return.

“It’s gone from feeling super lonely and now it’s feeling pretty normal,” Mr. Gray added.

Wall Street and the banking sector are pillars of the city’s economy, and they have been among the most aggressive industries in prodding employees to go back to the office. James Gorman, the chief executive of Morgan Stanley, told investors and analysts this month that “if you want to get paid in New York, you need to be in New York.”

Many firms, including Blackstone and Morgan Stanley, have huge real estate holdings or loans to the industry, so there is more than civic pride in their push to get workers to return. Technology companies like Facebook and Google are increasingly important employers as well as major commercial tenants, and they have been [*increasing their office space*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/23/business/economy/nyc-economy-covid-delta-variant.html). But they have been more flexible about letting employees continue to work remotely.

Google, which has 11,000 employees in New York and plans to add 3,000 in the next few years, intends to return to its offices in West Chelsea in September, but workers will only be required to come in three days a week. The company has also said up to 20 percent of its staff can apply to work remotely full time.

The decision by even a small slice of employees at Google and other companies to stay home part or all of the week could have a significant economic impact.

Even if just 10 percent of Manhattan office workers begin working remotely most of the time, that translates into more than 100,000 people a day not picking up a coffee and bagel on their way to work or a drink afterward, said James Parrott, an economist with the Center for New York City Affairs at the New School.

“I expect a lot of people will return, but not all of them,” he said. “We might lose some neighborhood businesses as a result.”

The absence of white-collar workers hurts people like Danuta Klosinski, 60, who had been cleaning office buildings in Manhattan for 20 years. She is one of more than about 3,000 office cleaners who remain out of work, according to Denis Johnston, a vice president of their union, Local 32BJ of the Service Employees International Union.

Ms. Klosinski, who lives in Brooklyn, said that she had been furloughed twice since last spring and that she had been idle since November. She said she feared that if she were not recalled by September, she would lose the health insurance that covers her husband, who suffered a stroke and a heart attack.

“I’m worried about losing everything,” she said.

Also weighing on the city’s outlook is the decline in visits by tourists, who are venturing back in dribbles, not in droves.

In 2019, New York welcomed over 66 million out-of-towners, and they spent more than $45 billion in hotels, restaurants, shops and theaters. City officials expect that it will take years to draw so many visitors again, especially the bigger-spending foreign tourists and business travelers on expense accounts.

Ellen V. Futter, president of the American Museum of Natural History, said domestic tourism was rebounding faster than she had expected. “The local population is out and about and happy to be so,” Ms. Futter said. But the scarcity of international visitors “is going to tamp down the pace of recovery,” she said.

That lag will spell prolonged pain for many businesses. Employment in hotels and restaurants is about 150,000 lower than it was before the pandemic, while the number of jobs in the performing arts is down about 40,000.

To be sure, there are signs of a strengthening economy. After many residents fled the city last year, high-priced condos are again being snapped up, and the rental market is showing signs of firming after price drops.

Rudin Management, the real estate giant, is trimming back the concessions it offered to attract tenants at the height of the pandemic. “I’m getting calls from people saying their son or daughter or grandson or granddaughter is graduating and asking for an apartment,” said William C. Rudin, the firm’s chief executive. “We didn’t get those calls for a year.”

New Yorkers are also getting out more. When the Rockaway Hotel in Queens opened in September after years of planning, a hip destination in a historically ***working-class*** beach neighborhood, “people who lived four blocks away would take hotel rooms for the night because they wanted a staycation,” said Terence Tubridy, a managing partner.

Since indoor dining resumed in February, the 53-room hotel’s weekend occupancy rate has been 80 percent, Mr. Tubridy said. Along with more visitors recently from California and the Midwest, he reports a flood of inquiries about weddings and birthday parties.

As the hotel prepares for its first opportunity to serve the bustling summer crowds at Rockaway Beach, Mr. Tubridy is looking to add 100 employees to his current staff of 180.

Amy Scherber is also seeing signs of better days. When the pandemic struck, she was forced to close all but two of her Amy’s Bread shops in New York City and lay off more than 100 employees. She wound up making cakes and pastries herself in a kitchen in Long Island City, Queens.

But now, Ms. Scherber has rehired some of her employees, and a crew of four bakers is handling the pastries while she oversees the steadily increasing production of baguettes and other loaves. She has reopened her store in Chelsea Market, a Manhattan tourist destination, and is preparing to reopen other retail locations. Her wholesale business is also rebounding as restaurants that were closed for months are again ordering dinner rolls.

“In the last couple of weeks, we finally have seen the business starting to pick up a bit,” said Ms. Scherber, who started her operation 29 years ago. She is hopeful about a strong recovery, she said. But she added, “I see the city taking several years to be the economy it was.”

PHOTO: While New York is less deserted than a few months ago, it’s a long way from 2019. Tourists and workers have been slow to return. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GABRIELA BHASKAR/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

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[***Learning to Love Joe Biden***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KX-FS81-JBG3-62KD-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

He's not out on the campaign trail now, but when he was a young man in a hurry, he told us who he was.

There's a reason that a certain kind of journalist makes a quadrennial habit of reading ''What It Takes,'' Richard Ben Cramer's gonzo classic about the 1988 presidential primary. It's catnip to prose snobs. It's a New Journalism masterpiece, freckled with ellipses, popping with sound effects. And it shows, better than perhaps any campaign book in the last half-century, what metabolically and psychologically distinguishes those who seek the presidency from those who consider eight nonspectacular hours at their day jobs triumph enough.

But today, this minute, there's an even more compelling reason to read it. Cramer followed just six candidates that season, seemingly with full-saturation access. One of them happened to be Joe Biden.

During this pandemic season, when the former vice president only periodically heaves to the surface before sinking away from public view, it is awfully powerful to see him not just on the campaign trail, but also on the campaign trail while still in the prime of his life. There's now a whole generation that looks at Biden and sees only a ragged lion in winter. To them, Cramer's portrait will be a revelation, like stumbling on a picture of a young Betty White.

It will also explain who Biden is -- and why, 33 years after his first presidential run and 48 years after his debut in national politics, his moment may finally be now.

Much of what we see in the Joe Biden of ''What It Takes'' is pleasantly familiar -- the doggedness, the sloppiness, the charm, the irrepressibility, the occasional gusts of temper. None of this is surprising, unless you believe in big discontinuities in people's personalities over time. Then, as now, he was an Olympic schmoozer and a screaming engine of chatter. His handlers -- Cramer called them ''the gurus'' -- often had no idea what to do with him. ''Even his own guys,'' he wrote, ''talked about him like a wild stallion who'd never felt the bridle.''

But what is no longer evident today, probably because Biden is 77 years old, is that the former vice president was once a furnace of ambition. He was a young man in a hurry who very much saw himself in this way; his self-image seemed to rest on the idea of being the whippersnapper in the room. It's what emboldened him to run for president at 44, surely, and it's what gave him the audacity to take on a 63-year-old Senate incumbent, Cale Boggs, when he was just 29.

''Joe could see it,'' Cramer wrote, ''how Joe would be, how he'd look: young, handsome, smart, self-assured. And the way he'd act, toward Senator Boggs: respectful, friendly, fond, like a grandson ... who knew the old man wasn't quite up to it anymore.''

But here's the paradox about Biden, the one thing ''What It Takes'' makes abundantly clear: His youthful energy never came from his ideas or any particularly revolutionary philosophy. Rather, it came from his hustle, his sociability, the way he locked in with people and related to them -- ''the connect,'' as Cramer called it. ''You were more likely to hear from Biden what Jill said the other day about teaching ... what his mother used to say ... or a wonderfully embroidered story about a nun in Scranton ... than you were about his five-point education plan,'' Cramer wrote.

This personal preference -- a preference for the personal -- was true in 1972, when Biden was the one who kept his Senate campaign from ''sliding into liberal orthodoxy,'' though the country was still humming with protests; and it was true when he first ran for president in 1987, when his gurus were leaning on him to assume the mantle of the slain heroes of the 1960s. As Biden had to repeatedly explain: He didn't really do the '60s. He was square. ''By the time the war movement was at its peak,'' he explained to reporters in 1987, ''I was married. I was in law school. I wore sport coats. I was not part of that.''

It drove his gurus nuts. They'd hitched their wagon to Biden, knowing he was a natural politician, the kind of man who should and could be president. But he could never articulate, as Cramer wrote, ''what he was going to be President for.''

Which may sound familiar. No one looked at Biden this primary season and said, Wow, what an unusual message. Innovation was not part of his appeal.

But that had nothing to do with his age. He was the same way in 1987. ''You think this is some kind of [expletive] crusade'' Biden screamed at his storied pollster, Pat Caddell. ''It's not. We've got to talk to regular Americans.''

So what was Biden sure of in 1987? What was the one bedrock of his conviction?

His decency. His identification with ordinary, bone-weary, underappreciated Americans. His commitment to them, his compassion for them. The connect. ''The whole thing would come down to character,'' Cramer wrote. ''One thing he knew: They would never take him apart on character -- his basic honesty -- his fabric as a man.''

Years ago, Gary Hart told me that in order to run for president, you have to be ''whatever the sane side of messianic is.'' I loved this answer, the casual and perfect economy of it. (Hart, too, is profiled in ''What It Takes.'')

But in Donald Trump, we got the insane side of messianic, and we've had it now for almost four years. When Democrats chose their presidential candidate this spring, they clearly decided they wanted sanity, hold the messiah.

So they chose Biden. The one who didn't have grand plans for government, but could certainly run one, certainly respect one, certainly improve one. The empath who could identify with the ***working class*** and precarious middle class, but wasn't selling any revolutionary plans to them, at least compared with his colleagues; he just wanted to make the system work better for them. It's the message he's been trying to sell his whole political life. It never quite took -- not in 1987 (he dropped out before the year of the actual race), and not in 2008. ''The connect'' may be one of his great strengths. But at the national level, he never quite seemed to manage it.

It was only during the Obama years that Americans truly made the connect with Joe Biden. He suffered a devastating personal tragedy during that time, with the loss of his son, Beau, to cancer, and the country suffered with him; he talked openly and movingly of his grief. He served Barack Obama diligently and faithfully during those eight years, always in good humor, and the public noticed that, too, African-Americans in particular. They sensed Obama's affection for him -- those two clearly had a connect, a bond, something easy and unspoken. So much so that Obama called himself a Biden at Beau's funeral.

When The Weekly, The New York Times television show, did its episode about who the editorial board was endorsing in the Democratic primary for president, the most riveting scene with Biden happened not in the conference room with my colleagues, but in the elevator, where he met a Black security guard named Jacquelyn. ''I love you, '' she gushed. ''I do. You're like my favorite.'' Biden was delighted. ''You got a camera?'' He posed for a selfie.

He'd made the connect. With Jacquelyn, and finally with enough voters to win him the Democratic presidential primary.

Writing in these pages four years ago, David Axelrod, Barack Obama's former senior strategist, offered his personal theory of open-seat presidential elections: Voters generally aren't seeking a replica of the last person to occupy the Oval Office; they're seeking a remedy.

This year isn't an open-seat presidential election. But it is an election with an unpopular, insolently demagogic incumbent. What it seems to have given us, in the Democratic nominee, is a remedy, certainly, but also a replica in a few peculiar ways -- ones I hadn't considered until rereading ''What It Takes.''

Ever the car salesman's son, Biden expressed, throughout his first primary, some level of cultural estrangement from the elite, just as Trump does now; he just did it without the hate. He was hellbent on showing voters he wasn't ''a whiz kid from Harvard, come to straighten them out.'' (And who won that primary? Michael Dukakis, Harvard Law '60.) Today, Biden is the first Democratic presidential nominee in 36 years not to have an Ivy League degree.

''He was so sure he knew where the people stood,'' Cramer wrote. ''They were like him, he was like them.''

Of a piece with this unpretentious instinct, you could argue, is Biden's unvarnished, corkscrew speaking style. People take it as a sign of his authenticity, just as they do with Trump -- and both men have faulty filtration systems, though neither of them drinks. It's not a secret that Biden is a popcorn maker of gaffes. The difference is intent. For all his klutziness and indiscretions, Biden's overall message appeals to our better angels and hopes, while Trump's appeals to our demons and fears.

Which brings us to the remedy part of this discussion. This country clearly requires a restoration, stat. Of democracy, of common decency. Biden has been in government for nearly half a century, and he spent eight years as a loyal, capable vice president in an administration for which many now have nostalgia. Primary voters could have chosen another moderate. But they chose Biden.

He's like your favorite cover band. He knows all the songs.

That Biden chose Kamala Harris, a biracial woman of Jamaican and Indian descent, as his running mate -- this, too, is an obvious remedy after three and three-quarter years of floridly racist policy and rhetoric. And it comes at a moment of profound moral and historical reckoning, and it offers the prospect of picking up where Obama left off. That he speaks kindly about Republicans -- also a remedy, after Trump's three and three quarter years of fomenting division.

But you could argue that the biggest Biden/Trump contrast, the mother of all remedies, is his capacity for compassion, identification -- the ability to make the connect, the very thing he's been peddling from the start. Biden is the empath to Trump's narcissist-shaped-by-a-sociopath. He would be the remedy for a nation bereft of jobs, of common kindness, of lives snapped away by a global pandemic. People are starving for sympathy right now.

Biden has spent much of his life reckoning with grief, having lost not just his elder son, Beau, but also his first wife and baby girl in a car accident some 48 years ago. He's famous for giving out his cellphone number to those in mourning, and he nearly blurted it out to Anderson Cooper a few months back, offering to console those who'd lost someone to the coronavirus.

The night his older brother, Freddy, died in the hospital, Trump went to the movies.

When Biden finally did find a message that resonated with him in his first presidential campaign, it wasn't his. It was that of Neil Kinnock, then the Labor Party leader in Britain. Biden was fond of quoting one of Kinnock's political ads -- with attribution at first. Then he forgot, which became pretty evident when he said his ancestors were coal miners. (They weren't.)

But that was what was so interesting: The stolen parts of Kinnock's speech were mainly biographical, not ideological, describing what it felt like to struggle as a ***working-class*** guy. They spoke to Biden. They made the connect. ''That was his life: he was just a middle-class kid who'd got a little help along the way,'' Cramer wrote.

This act of plagiarism -- in combination with other discoveries of intellectual theft, some conscious and some not -- cost Biden his candidacy. But in Cramer's view, and in his gurus' too, these reckless moments weren't about a failure of imagination or moral recklessness. They were about Biden's doglike desire to please, about that ''death-defying-Evel-Knievel-eighty-miles-an-hour-over-twenty-five-buses leap he would make to get the connect.''

Even if it meant exaggerating, even if it meant stealing other people's words (they resonated with him!) even if it meant (and this was prescient) putting his hands on an unsuspecting woman's shoulders in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and keeping them there as he addressed the crowd, because she wouldn't face him when he spoke. (''The woman looked like she'd swallowed her tongue,'' Cramer wrote. Well, yeah. Only in the last year or two was Biden forced to reckon with this behavior, and he vowed to change his ways.)

There'll be little campaigning on the hustings this season. For a politician who cherishes the connect, social distancing could be politically fatal; but for Biden, it could be a gift. He'll have fewer chances to get carried away as he speaks, to overhug, to stick his foot in it (and he's done quite a bit of that already). More important, this arrangement protects him in the pandemic: He's old, at risk.

In 1987, if he'd remained in the race, Biden might well have died. Roughly five months after he dropped out, he was rushed to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center all the way from Wilmington. He had a brain aneurysm, the first of two. If he'd remained on the stump, Lord knows where he would have been at the time.

A priest gave him his last rites that day. Biden gathered his family around, not to tell them that he loved them, which they already knew. ''He wanted them to know what he'd found out fifteen years before: They would go on,'' Cramer wrote.

If Biden loses the presidential race, the same will be true: He'll go on. He's survived far, far worse. The real question isn't about him. It's about us. Can we?

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: Senator Joseph Biden Jr. with his wife, Jill, and children, Robert Hunter, left, Joseph R. III, known as Beau, and Ashley, after announcing his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination in Wilmington, Del., on June 9, 1987

Vice President Biden with Beau at Camp Victory on the Baghdad outskirts in 2009

and Senator-elect Biden on Capitol Hill in December 1972. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEITH MEYERS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

KHALID MOHAMMED

ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Joe Biden and Senator Kamala Harris, his running mate, in a virtual fund-raiser at the Hotel du Pont in Wilmington on Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Israel Intensifies Its Gaza Barrage From The Ground***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62NP-62K1-JBG3-61XH-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Declan Walsh

**Body**

The surge in fighting left Israel in an unprecedented position -- fighting Palestinian militants on its southern flank as it sought to head off its worst civil unrest in decades.

Israeli ground forces carried out attacks on the Gaza Strip early Friday in an escalation of a conflict with Palestinian militants that had been waged by airstrikes from Israel and rockets from Gaza.

It was not immediately clear if the attack was the prelude to a ground invasion against Hamas, the Islamist militant group that controls Gaza.

An Israeli military spokesman, Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus, initially said that ''there are ground troops attacking in Gaza,'' but later clarified that Israeli troops had not entered Gaza, suggesting the possibility of artillery fire from the outside. He provided no further details.

The surge in fighting highlighted the unprecedented position Israel finds itself in -- battling Palestinian militants on its southern flank as it seeks to head off its worst civil unrest in decades.

It followed another day of clashes between Arab and Jewish mobs on the streets of Israeli cities, with the authorities calling up the army reserves and sending reinforcements of armed border police to the central city of Lod to try to head off what Israeli leaders have warned could become a civil war.

Taken together, the two theaters of turmoil pointed to a step change in the grinding, decades-old conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. While violent escalations often follow a predictable trajectory, this latest bout, the worst in seven years, is rapidly evolving into a new kind of war -- faster, more destructive and capable of spinning in unpredictable new directions.

In Gaza, an impoverished coastal strip that was the crucible of a devastating seven-week war in 2014, Palestinian militants fired surprisingly large barrages of enhanced-range rockets -- some 1,800 in three days -- that reached far into Israel.

Israel intensified its campaign of relentless airstrikes against Hamas targets there on Thursday, pulverizing buildings, offices and homes in strikes that have killed 103 people including 27 children, according to the Gaza health authorities.

Six civilians and a soldier have been killed by Hamas rockets inside Israel.

Egyptian mediators arrived in Israel Thursday in a sooner-than-usual push to halt the spiraling conflict.

Most alarming for Israel, though, was the violent ferment on its own sidewalks and streets, where days of rioting by Jewish vigilantes and Arab mobs showed no sign of abating.

The unrest in several mixed-ethnicity cities, where angry young men stoned cars, set fire to mosques and synagogues, and attacked each other, signaled a collapse of law and order inside Israel on a scale not seen since the start of the second Palestinian uprising, or intifada, 21 years ago.

The violence follows a month of boiling tensions in Jerusalem, where the threatened eviction of Palestinian families from their homes coincided with a spate of Arab attacks against Israeli Jews, and a march through the city by right-wing extremists chanting ''Death to Arabs.''

The jarring violence this week caused Israeli leaders, led by President Reuven Rivlin, to evoke the specter of civil war -- a once unthinkable idea. ''We need to solve our problems without causing a civil war that can be a danger to our existence,'' Mr. Rivlin said. ''The silent majority is not saying a thing, because it is utterly stunned.''

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Lod, a ***working-class*** city with a mixed Arab-Israeli population that has emerged as the center of the upheaval. Hulks of burned-out cars littered the streets where, a few nights earlier, Arab youths burned synagogues and cars, threw stones and let off sporadic rounds of gunfire, before gangs of Jewish vigilantes counterattacked and set their own fires.

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On Thursday, a Jewish man was stabbed as he walked to a synagogue there, but survived.

''There is no greater threat now than these riots,'' said Mr. Netanyahu, who vowed to deploy the Israel Defense Forces to keep the peace in Lod. A day earlier, he described the violence as ''anarchy'' and said: ''Nothing justifies the lynching of Jews by Arabs, and nothing justifies the lynching of Arabs by Jews.''

To secure Lod, the government brought in thousands of armed border police from the occupied West Bank, and imposed an 8 p.m. curfew, but to little effect.

Arab residents, who account for about 30 percent of the town's 80,000 people, continued a campaign of stone-throwing, vandalism and arson, while Jewish extremists arrived from outside Lod, burning Arab cars and property. Arab protesters erected flaming roadblocks.

As night fell there were signs that the violence might escalate when a large convoy of armed Jews in white vans moved into town.

Palestinian leaders, however, said the talk of civil war by Jewish leaders was a distraction from what they called the true cause of the unrest in Lod -- police brutality against Palestinian protesters and provocative actions by right-wing Israeli settler groups.

''The police shot an Arab demonstrator in Lod,'' said Ahmad Tibi, the leader of the Ta'al party and a member of Israel's Parliament. ''We don't want bloodshed. We want to protest.''

Mr. Tibi said that Mr. Netanyahu, who has frequently aligned with far-right and nationalist parties to stay in power, had only himself to blame for the political tinderbox that has exploded with such ferocity across Israel.

On Thursday evening, the State Department urged American citizens to reconsider traveling to Israel and warned against going to the occupied West Bank or Gaza. In an advisory, the department noted rocket attacks that could reach Jerusalem, protests and violence throughout Israel and a ''dangerous and volatile'' security environment in the Gaza Strip and on its borders.

The trouble started on Monday, when a heavy-handed police raid at Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque -- the third-holiest site in Islam, located atop a site also revered by Jews -- set off an instant backlash.

But beyond the images of police officers flinging stun grenades and firing rubber bullets inside the mosque, Palestinian outrage was also fueled by much wider, decades-old frustrations.

Human Rights Watch recently accused Israel of perpetrating a form of apartheid, the racist legal system that once governed South Africa, citing a number of laws and regulations that it said systematically discriminate against Palestinians. Israel vehemently rejected that charge. But its security forces are now confronted with a swelling wave of fury from the country's Arab Israeli minority, which complains of being treated as second-class citizens.

'''Coexistence' means that both sides exist,'' said Tamer Nafar, a famous rapper from Lod. ''But so far there is only one side -- the Jewish side.''

The rocket attacks from Gaza are also quantitatively and qualitatively different from the last war in 2014. The more than 1,800 rockets Hamas and its allies have fired at Israel since Monday already represent a third of the total fired during the seven-week war in 2014.

Israeli intelligence has estimated that Hamas, Islamic Jihad and other Palestinian militant groups have about 30,000 rockets and mortar projectiles stashed in Gaza, indicating that despite the Israeli-Egyptian blockade of the coastal territory, the militants have managed to amass a vast arsenal.

The rockets have also demonstrated a longer range than those fired in previous conflicts, reaching as far as Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

They have also proven more effective. In the 2014 war, they killed a total of six civilians inside Israel, the same number killed in the last three days.

Those casualties appeared to be a product of Hamas's new tactic of firing more than 100 missiles simultaneously, thwarting the American-financed Iron Dome missile-defense system, which Israeli officials say is 90 percent effective at intercepting rockets before they land inside Israel.

Gaza residents have no such protection against Israeli airstrikes, which crushed three multistory buildings in the strip after residents were warned to evacuate. Israeli officials said that the buildings housed Hamas operations and that they were striving to limit civilian casualties, but many Gaza residents viewed the Israeli attacks as a form of collective punishment.

Thursday was supposed to be a day of celebration for Palestinians as they marked the end of the holy month of Ramadan, a day when Muslims typically gather to pray, wear new clothes and share a family meal. In Jerusalem, tens of thousands of worshipers gathered at dawn outside the Aqsa Mosque, some waving Palestinian flags and a banner showing an image of Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of Hamas.

In Gaza, though, it was a somber day of funerals, fear and missile strikes. Some families buried their dead, others laid out prayer mats beside buildings recently destroyed in Israeli airstrikes, and still others came under attack from Israeli drones hovering overhead.

''Save me,'' pleaded Maysoun al-Hatu, 58, after she was wounded in a missile strike outside her daughter's house in Gaza, according to a witness. An ambulance arrived moments later, but it was too late. Ms. al-Hatu was dead.

American and Egyptian diplomats were heading to Israel to begin de-escalation talks. Egyptian mediators played a key role in ending the 2014 war in Gaza, but this time there is little optimism they can achieve a quick result.

Israeli military officials have said their mission is to stop the rockets from Gaza, and the military moved tanks and troops into place along the border with Gaza on Thursday in preparation for a possible ground invasion.

The decision to extend the campaign is ultimately political. Analysts said that a ground operation would likely incur high casualties, and it was unclear if the troop deployment was anything more than a threat.

But the political calculation grew more complicated on Thursday after the collapse of negotiations between opposition parties seeking to form a new government.

Naftali Bennett, an ultranationalist former settler leader who opposes Palestinian statehood, pulled out of the talks, citing the state of emergency in several Israeli cities.

His withdrawal increases the likelihood of Israel holding a general election later this summer -- in what would be its fifth in just over two years. And the collapse of the talks appears to benefit Mr. Netanyahu, making it impossible for opposition parties to form an alliance large enough to oust him from office.

Mr. Netanyahu, who is on trial on corruption charges, is serving as caretaker prime minister until a new government can be formed.

On the Palestinian side, the indefinite postponement last month of elections by the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, created a vacuum that Hamas is more than willing to fill.

Isabel Kershner contributed reporting from Lod, Israel; Iyad Abuheweila from Gaza City; Patrick Kingsley, Irit Pazner Garshowitz and Myra Noveck from Jerusalem; Gabby Sobelman from Rehovot, Israel; Mona el-Naggar and Vivian Yee from Cairo; Megan Specia from London; Steven Erlanger from Brussels; and Lara Jakes from Washington.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-hamas-war.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-hamas-war.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: FROM ISRAEL: Israeli troops firing an artillery piece on Thursday at the Gaza border. Egyptian mediators arrived in Israel on Thursday in a sooner-than-usual push to halt the spiraling conflict. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAN BALILTY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12)

FROM GAZA: Rockets fired from Gaza flew toward Israel, as seen from Gaza City, late on Thursday night. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MOHAMMED SABER/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK) (A13)

**Load-Date:** May 14, 2021

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[***Meet Young Joe Biden, the ‘Wild Stallion’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KP-X641-DXY4-X2H0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2396 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Senior

**Highlight:** He’s not out on the campaign trail now, but when he was a young man in a hurry, he told us who he was.

**Body**

He’s not out on the campaign trail now, but when he was a young man in a hurry, he told us who he was.

There’s a reason that a certain kind of journalist makes a quadrennial habit of reading “[*What It Takes*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880),” Richard Ben Cramer’s gonzo classic about the 1988 presidential primary. It’s catnip to prose snobs. It’s a New Journalism masterpiece, freckled with ellipses, popping with sound effects. And it shows, better than perhaps any campaign book in the last half-century, what metabolically and psychologically distinguishes those who seek the presidency from those who consider eight nonspectacular hours at their day jobs triumph enough.

But today, this minute, there’s an even more compelling reason to read it. Cramer followed just six candidates that season, seemingly with full-saturation access. One of them happened to be Joe Biden.

During this pandemic season, when the former vice president only periodically heaves to the surface before sinking away from public view, it is awfully powerful to see him not just on the campaign trail, but also on the campaign trail while still in the prime of his life. There’s now a whole generation that looks at Biden and sees only a ragged lion in winter. To them, Cramer’s portrait will be a revelation, like stumbling on a picture of a young [*Betty White*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880).

It will also explain who Biden is — and why, 33 years after his first presidential run and 48 years after his debut in national politics, his moment may finally be now.

Much of what we see in the Joe Biden of “What It Takes” is pleasantly familiar — the doggedness, the sloppiness, the charm, the irrepressibility, the occasional gusts of temper. None of this is surprising, unless you believe in big discontinuities in people’s personalities over time. Then, as now, he was an Olympic schmoozer and a screaming engine of chatter. His handlers — Cramer called them “the gurus” — often had no idea what to do with him. “Even his own guys,” he wrote, “talked about him like a wild stallion who’d never felt the bridle.”

But what is no longer evident today, probably because Biden is 77 years old, is that the former vice president was once a furnace of ambition. He was a young man in a hurry who very much saw himself in this way; his self-image seemed to rest on the idea of being the whippersnapper in the room. It’s what emboldened him to run for president at 44, surely, and it’s what gave him the audacity to take on a 63-year-old Senate incumbent, Cale Boggs, when he was just 29.

“Joe could see it,” Cramer wrote, “how Joe would be, how he’d look: young, handsome, smart, self-assured. And the way he’d act, toward Senator Boggs: respectful, friendly, fond, like a grandson … who knew the old man wasn’t quite up to it anymore.”

But here’s the paradox about Biden, the one thing “What It Takes” makes abundantly clear: His youthful energy never came from his ideas or any particularly revolutionary philosophy. Rather, it came from his hustle, his sociability, the way he locked in with people and related to them — “the connect,” as Cramer called it. “You were more likely to hear from Biden what Jill said the other day about teaching … what his mother used to say … or a wonderfully embroidered story about a nun in Scranton … than you were about his five-point education plan,” Cramer wrote.

This personal preference — a preference for the personal — was true in 1972, when Biden was the one who kept his Senate campaign from “sliding into liberal orthodoxy,” though the country [*was still humming with protests*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880); and it was true when he first ran for president in 1987, when his gurus were leaning on him to assume the mantle of the slain heroes of the 1960s. As Biden had to repeatedly explain: He didn’t really do the ’60s. He was square. “By the time the war movement was at its peak,” he explained to reporters in 1987, “I was married. I was in law school. I wore sport coats. I was not part of that.”

It drove his gurus nuts. They’d hitched their wagon to Biden, knowing he was a natural politician, the kind of man who should and could be president. But he could never articulate, as Cramer wrote, “what he was going to be President for.”

Which may sound familiar. No one looked at Biden this primary season and said, Wow, what an unusual message. Innovation was not part of his appeal.

But that had nothing to do with his age. He was the same way in 1987. “You think this is some kind of [expletive] crusade” Biden screamed at his storied pollster, Pat Caddell. “It’s not. We’ve got to talk to regular Americans.”

So what was Biden sure of in 1987? What was the one bedrock of his conviction?

His decency. His identification with ordinary, bone-weary, underappreciated Americans. His commitment to them, his compassion for them. The connect. “The whole thing would come down to character,” Cramer wrote. “One thing he knew: They would never take him apart on character — his basic honesty — his fabric as a man.”

Years ago, [*Gary Hart told me*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880) that in order to run for president, you have to be “whatever the sane side of messianic is.” I loved this answer, the casual and perfect economy of it. (Hart, too, is profiled in “What It Takes.”)

But in Donald Trump, we got the insane side of messianic, and we’ve had it now for almost four years. When Democrats chose their presidential candidate this spring, they clearly decided they wanted sanity, hold the messiah.

So they chose Biden. The one who didn’t have grand plans for government, but could certainly run one, certainly respect one, certainly improve one. The empath who could identify with the ***working class*** and precarious middle class, but wasn’t selling any revolutionary plans to them, at least compared with his colleagues; he just wanted to make the system work better for them. It’s the message he’s been trying to sell his whole political life. It never quite took — not in 1987 (he dropped out [*before the year of the actual race*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880)), and not in 2008. “The connect” may be one of his great strengths. But at the national level, he never quite seemed to manage it.

It was only during the Obama years that Americans truly made the connect with Joe Biden. He suffered a devastating personal tragedy during that time, with the loss of his son, Beau, to cancer, and the country suffered with him; [*he talked openly and movingly of his grief*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880). He served Barack Obama diligently and faithfully during those eight years, always in good humor, and the public noticed that, too, African-Americans in particular. They sensed Obama’s affection for him — those two clearly had a connect, a bond, something easy and unspoken. So much so that Obama called himself a Biden at Beau’s funeral.

When The Weekly, The New York Times television show, did its episode about who the editorial board was endorsing in the Democratic primary for president, the most riveting scene with Biden happened not in the conference room with my colleagues, but in the elevator, [*where he met a Black security guard named Jacquelyn*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880). “I love you,” she gushed. “I do. You’re like my favorite.” Biden was delighted. “You got a camera?” He posed for a selfie.

He’d made the connect. With Jacquelyn, and finally with enough voters to win him the Democratic presidential primary.

Writing in these pages four years ago, David Axelrod, Barack Obama’s former senior strategist, offered [*his personal theory of open-seat presidential elections*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880): Voters generally aren’t seeking a replica of the last person to occupy the Oval Office; they’re seeking a remedy.

This year isn’t an open-seat presidential election. But it is an election with an unpopular, insolently demagogic incumbent. What it seems to have given us, in the Democratic nominee, is a remedy, certainly, but also a replica in a few peculiar ways — ones I hadn’t considered until rereading “What It Takes.”

Ever the car salesman’s son, Biden expressed, throughout his first primary, some level of cultural estrangement from the elite, just as Trump does now; he just did it without the hate. He was hellbent on showing voters he wasn’t “a whiz kid from Harvard, come to straighten them out.” (And who won that primary? Michael Dukakis, Harvard Law ’60.) Today, Biden is the first Democratic presidential nominee in 36 years not to have an Ivy League degree.

“He was so sure he knew where the people stood,” Cramer wrote. “They were like him, he was like them.”

Of a piece with this unpretentious instinct, you could argue, is Biden’s unvarnished, corkscrew speaking style. People take it as a sign of his authenticity, just as they do with Trump — and both men have faulty filtration systems, though neither of them drinks. It’s not a secret that Biden is a popcorn maker of gaffes. The difference is intent. For all his klutziness and indiscretions, Biden’s overall message appeals to our better angels and hopes, while Trump’s appeals to our demons and fears.

Which brings us to the remedy part of this discussion. This country clearly requires a restoration, stat. Of democracy, of common decency. Biden has been in government for nearly half a century, and he spent eight years as a loyal, capable vice president in an administration for which many now have nostalgia. Primary voters could have chosen another moderate. But they chose Biden.

He’s like your favorite cover band. He knows all the songs.

That Biden chose Kamala Harris, a biracial woman of Jamaican and Indian descent, as his running mate — this, too, is an obvious remedy after three and three-quarter years of floridly racist policy and rhetoric. And it comes at a moment of profound moral and historical reckoning, and it offers the prospect of picking up where Obama left off. That he speaks kindly about Republicans — also a remedy, after Trump’s three and three quarter years of fomenting division.

But you could argue that the biggest Biden/Trump contrast, the mother of all remedies, is his capacity for compassion, identification — the ability to make the connect, the very thing he’s been peddling from the start. Biden is the empath to Trump’s [*narcissist-shaped-by-a-sociopath*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880). He would be the remedy for a nation bereft of jobs, of common kindness, of lives snapped away by a global pandemic. People are starving for sympathy right now.

Biden has spent much of his life reckoning with grief, having lost not just his elder son, Beau, but also his first wife and baby girl in a car accident some 48 years ago. He’s famous for giving out his cellphone number to those in mourning, and he [*nearly blurted it out*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880) to Anderson Cooper a few months back, offering to console those who’d lost someone to the coronavirus.

The night his older brother, Freddy, died in the hospital, [*Trump went to the movies*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880).

When Biden finally did find a message that resonated with him in his first presidential campaign, it wasn’t his. It was that of [*Neil Kinnock*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880), then the Labor Party leader in Britain. Biden was fond of quoting one of Kinnock’s political ads — with attribution at first. Then he forgot, which became pretty evident when he said his ancestors were coal miners. (They weren’t.)

But that was what was so interesting: The stolen parts of Kinnock’s speech were mainly biographical, not ideological, describing what it felt like to struggle as a ***working-class*** guy. They spoke to Biden. They made the connect. “That was his life: he was just a middle-class kid who’d got a little help along the way,” Cramer wrote.

This act of plagiarism — in combination with [*other discoveries of intellectual theft*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880), some conscious and some not — cost Biden his candidacy. But in Cramer’s view, and in his gurus’ too, these reckless moments weren’t about a failure of imagination or moral recklessness. They were about Biden’s doglike desire to please, about that “death-defying-Evel-Knievel-eighty-miles-an-hour-over-twenty-five-buses leap he would make to get the connect.”

Even if it meant exaggerating, even if it meant stealing other people’s words (they resonated with him!) even if it meant (and this was prescient) putting his hands on an unsuspecting woman’s shoulders in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and keeping them there as he addressed the crowd, because she wouldn’t face him when he spoke. (“The woman looked like she’d swallowed her tongue,” Cramer wrote. Well, yeah. Only in the last year or two was Biden forced to reckon with this behavior, and [*he vowed to change his ways*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880).)

There’ll be little campaigning on the hustings this season. For a politician who cherishes the connect, social distancing could be politically fatal; but for Biden, it could be a gift. He’ll have fewer chances to get carried away as he speaks, to overhug, to stick his foot in it (and he’s done [*quite a bit of that already*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880)). More important, this arrangement protects him in the pandemic: He’s old, at risk.

In 1987, if he’d remained in the race, Biden might well have died. Roughly five months after he dropped out, he was rushed to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center all the way from Wilmington. [*He had a brain aneurysm*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880), the first of two. If he’d remained on the stump, Lord knows where he would have been at the time.

A priest gave him his last rites that day. Biden gathered his family around, not to tell them that he loved them, which they already knew. “He wanted them to know what he’d found out fifteen years before: They would go on,” Cramer wrote.

If Biden loses the presidential race, the same will be true: He’ll go on. He’s survived far, far worse. The real question isn’t about him. It’s about us. Can we?

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.politico.com/story/2013/01/richard-ben-cramers-masterpiece-085880).

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PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: Senator Joseph Biden Jr. with his wife, Jill, and children, Robert Hunter, left, Joseph R. III, known as Beau, and Ashley, after announcing his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination in Wilmington, Del., on June 9, 1987; Vice President Biden with Beau at Camp Victory on the Baghdad outskirts in 2009; and Senator-elect Biden on Capitol Hill in December 1972. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEITH MEYERS/THE NEW YORK TIMES; KHALID MOHAMMED; ASSOCIATED PRESS); Joe Biden and Senator Kamala Harris, his running mate, in a virtual fund-raiser at the Hotel du Pont in Wilmington on Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 18, 2020

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[***Surviving Coronavirus as a Broke College Student***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YJ9-K691-JBG3-60C8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 15, 2020 Wednesday 11:01 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1025 words

**Byline:** Sydney Goins

**Highlight:** We need better options. Our rent is due April 1.

**Body**

We need better options. Our rent is due April 1.

SUWANEE, Ga. — College was supposed to be my ticket to financial security. My parents were the first ones to go to college in their family. My grandpa said to my mom, “You need to go to college, so you don’t have to depend on a man for money.” This same mentality was passed on to me as well.

I had enough money to last until May— $1,625 to be exact — until the [*coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/us/coronavirus-colleges-universities-admissions.html) ruined my finances.

My mom works in human resources. My dad is a project manager for a mattress company. I worked part time at the university’s most popular dining hall and lived in a cramped house with three other students. I don’t have a car. I either walked or biked a mile to attend class. I have student debt and started paying the accrued interest last month.

I was making it work until the coronavirus shut down my [*college*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/us/coronavirus-colleges-universities-admissions.html) town. At first, spring break was extended by two weeks with the assumption that campus would open again in late March, but a few hours after that email, all 26 colleges in the University System of Georgia canceled in-person classes and closed integral parts of campus.

UGA professors are currently remodeling their courses and revising their syllabuses for online learning. Students were advised to not return to the campus at Athens from their vacations or hometowns. Our May graduation ceremony was even canceled without any hope of rescheduling it for a future date.

After this news, one of my housemates drove for 12 hours to her mom’s house in Chicago. Another gave me a few rolls of toilet paper and left with her boyfriend for a neighboring county.

The dining hall I worked at remained open. UGA allowed to-go meals for those still living in their dorms without a place to go. Student workers who didn’t leave for the break could call in and ask to work their usual shifts, but on many occasions, the staff wouldn’t answer the phone.

So far, an athletics trainer and honors student have tested positive for the coronavirus. They were last on campus on March 6. As of Tuesday, one person has died in the Athens hospital. Some students are asking for the semester to end with a pass-fail grading scale. This would help those without access to Wi-Fi or a distraction-free environment. I didn’t even have a personal laptop to use until a few weeks ago. It broke in November and I couldn’t afford to fix it until recently.

What if I had to do intensive schoolwork on a lagging smartphone? For the last three years, I have relied on the libraries and other on-campus resources like interlibrary loans and the bus system in order to complete my coursework. Now, the university is refunding us around $128 for services that we may need for a semester online.

After three years as an undergrad, I will graduate in May. I had applied to two highly selective creative writing programs with the ambitious hopes of acceptance. Brown University sent me an email to check the portal, and Iowa Writers Workshop sent me a letter through the mail. Both were rejections.

I pivoted my plans. I thought I could find another restaurant job in Athens or hopefully an internship during the summer until I could apply to grad school again. Those odds are not in my favor anymore. Many restaurants here have closed indefinitely or only offer takeout options. They are not hiring anytime soon.

A local coffee shop and bar, Hendershots, has started a GoFundMe for their out-of-work employees with around $10,000 raised so far. [*Just the Tip: Athens Virtual Tip Jar*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/us/coronavirus-colleges-universities-admissions.html) also allows regular customers to send their favorite servers tip money they would normally leave on a night out. Many service industry workers my age have added their names to this list.

Not all college students are gallivanting across the white sand beaches of Florida without a care in the world. This pandemic affects young people too. Our future depends on the efforts of the national and state governments. Coronavirus testing is extremely limited in Georgia. For its 10.52 million residents, only 100-200 state tests are available each day.

“The state does not have the capacity to test those with mild symptoms,” said Dr. Kathleen Toomey, commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Health, in a news conference [*call*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/us/coronavirus-colleges-universities-admissions.html) last week.

On Thursday night, Athens-Clarke County unanimously passed an ordinance that enforces social distancing and a “shelter in place” rule, eliminating nonessential travel and large gatherings. Over 60 percent of the city’s population — the homeless, elderly, and those with pre-existing conditions — are susceptible to Covid-19.

Local grocery stores had already limited their hours and lacked essential food items like beans, rice and paper goods, showcasing barren shelves. I had a panic attack, looking at items marked “out-of-stock” on the Instacart app and watching peers post photos online. I asked my mom if I could come home.

We drove through the empty Atlanta highway, away from my struggling college town. Now, I am back in Suwanee with dwindling savings, still having to pay rent until the end of my lease in July. I won’t have an income to pay it.

For college students like me, the current solutions are: File for unemployment! Find a job at Kroger or Aldi at the detriment of your physical health! Call your potentially toxic parents! Tax refund! Personal loan! Sell your belongings!

These options are not good enough. College was supposed to give us hope for our financial future, not place us back in our parents’ houses without jobs.

Mortgage and rent payments must be suspended, so further debt and illness can be avoided, especially for restaurant servers, broke college students and those in the ***working class*** who cannot afford to escape financial crises. Our rent is due April 1.

Sydney Goins ([*@sydgoins*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/us/coronavirus-colleges-universities-admissions.html)) is a senior English major at the University of Georgia.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/us/coronavirus-colleges-universities-admissions.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/2020/04/15/us/coronavirus-colleges-universities-admissions.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/us/coronavirus-colleges-universities-admissions.html).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Claire Merchlinsky FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2020

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[***The Amazon Of Quinoa Bowls***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63XF-TMY1-JBG3-63TN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 24, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BU; Column 0; Money and Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 2591 words

**Byline:** By Jane Black

**Body**

The chicken tinga is the same in both Los Angeles establishments: It's a bowl of pasture-raised chicken, lentils, quinoa and black beans.

At the University Park outpost of Everytable, it costs $5.10. In Monterey Park, a 15-minute drive away, it's $8.35.

That variable pricing -- less in an area with students and ***working-class*** families, more in a spot with prime real estate -- is part of Everytable's Robin Hood-esque pitch to make healthy, fresh food affordable to everyone. It has won Sam Polk, its founder and chief executive, plaudits and millions of dollars in investment in the five years since he started the company.

By the end of the year he expects to double the number of stores in California to 20, from 10, then double again in 2022. Next year, Everytable is coming to New York, where Mr. Polk plans to open 100 outlets in three years -- more than the 94 spots that Chipotle has across the city after nearly 30 years in business.

''No one says, 'I want to kill myself with food today,''' Mr. Polk said. ''They also don't want to cook and they also don't want to spend a lot of money. So you can see what the opportunity is.''

And yet, food that is healthy, affordable and something people actually want to eat has long been an elusive goal in the United States. For one thing, healthy food isn't often a big seller. (Remember Burger King's ''Satisfries''? The healthier French fries, which customers named ''the saddest fries,'' lasted about a year on the chain's menu.) Many lower-income communities also resist the idea of do-gooders from the outside telling them what they should or shouldn't eat.

But the biggest obstacle is making the numbers work. Fresh ingredients are more expensive than highly processed ones and the result is grain bowls galore for those who can spend $10 or more per meal, and fast food full of salt, fat and sugar for everyone else. Over the past decade, a series of entrepreneurs have tried, and mostly failed, to find ways to serve food that is both healthy and affordable: The celebrity chefs Roy Choi and Daniel Patterson boasted that the veggie burgers at their Southern California chain Locol would revolutionize fast food, but they closed their four restaurants within two and a half years.

Everytable's sliding-scale pricing is one way to address the higher costs. But Mr. Polk's real innovation is something his customers don't see: a hyper-efficient supply chain that churns out the kind of fresh meals typically found in upscale farm-to-table chains at half the price. He is building commercial-scale kitchens and managing a fleet of delivery trucks to supply his stores and a growing network of subscription customers and smart fridges.

If this system sounds a lot like the ones used by the big food manufacturers and fast-food chains that entrepreneurs like Mr. Polk have vowed to defeat, it is -- and intentionally so. Mr. Polk, a former hedge-fund trader, is uninterested in being small or artisanal, preferring instead to co-opt the strength of the fast-food industry while pushing reform.

''The question is how can you produce made-from-scratch meals for the same price as fast food?'' he said. ''We think it's building out the same kind of infrastructure fast food has, with the same economies, for fresh food.''

Mr. Polk is a somewhat unlikely ambassador for the good-food movement. He spent eight years on Wall Street, first as a bond trader, then at a hedge fund, where at age 30 he quit in a rage over what he deemed an inadequate $3.6 million annual bonus. He had, as he wrote in a raw guest essay in this newspaper, a wealth addiction, a subject he elaborated on in a 2016 memoir, ''For The Love of Money.'' In it, Mr. Polk, now 41, describes growing up with an abusive father, followed by years of struggle with bulimia and alcohol and drug abuse. His quest for money, and through it power, was an effort to prove he was worthy.

Healthy food had never been much of an interest for Mr. Polk. (His favorite restaurant remains the Brooklyn steakhouse Peter Luger, a longstanding go-to for Wall Street types.) After leaving finance, he traded New York for Los Angeles. He taught writing to high school girls in a group foster home and visited jails and juvenile detention centers to speak about getting sober. He was, he said, searching for purpose.

Then, in 2013, he stumbled upon the documentary ''A Place at the Table,'' which spotlights the problem of hunger in America. ''It was the first time I understood that there were neighborhoods that didn't have access to fresh food and that led to a high incidence of obesity and diabetes and heart disease,'' Mr. Polk said. ''It was clear to me that healthy food should be a human right, not a luxury product.''

Within a year, Mr. Polk started Groceryships, a nonprofit that provided money to low-income families to buy wholesome foods like fruits, vegetables, beans and grains, along with education on how to prepare them. (It was renamed Feast in 2018.) ''I had this idea that nonprofits were how you do good in the world,'' Mr. Polk said. ''But what I learned quickly is that nonprofits were how you spend a lot of your time sucking up to rich people.''

Mr. Polk realized he needed a business model.

Despite his very public exit from the financial world, Mr. Polk still thinks -- and talks -- like a Wall Street veteran. He's ''bullish'' on New York's comeback and obsessed with the ''elasticity of demand'' (how rising prices affect the volume of purchases). Unlike many reformers, who are keen to tear down what they see as a fundamentally flawed food system, Mr. Polk is single-minded about efficiency, often mulling aloud how Everytable is, or can be more like, Amazon.

''We think of Amazon as a website, but its power comes from its operational and logistical efficiencies and scale -- that's where they win,'' Mr. Polk said. ''Honestly, I think Everytable is in a similar place for food as Amazon was in 1997.''

Call it pluck or hubris. Either way, Mr. Polk's vision of how to make fresh food affordable is a departure from the way fast-casual restaurants usually operate.

In the traditional model, pioneered by Chipotle in the 1990s, each burrito, salad or bowl is prepared in house. That means that for each location the company needs to build a kitchen, deliver ingredients and train staff. Because these restaurants are generally located in urban centers, they are more expensive than an industrial facility, where one set of workers can produce thousands of meals for multiple locations, as well as for delivery.

In contrast, Everytable's meals are prepared in a kitchen with pots big enough to cook 50 gallons of chicken tinga at a time. Its stores are small, usually 500 to 700 square feet, just big enough to house a wall of refrigerated cases, a microwave and two employees to stock shelves and work the checkout. Mr. Polk also assembled a fleet of refrigerated trucks to deliver food to stores and to customers at home. These decisions, he explained, allow him to sell meals at whatever price a neighborhood could afford.

This setup, Mr. Polk noted with pride, is vastly different than, say, the one deployed by Sweetgreen, the upscale salad chain worth about $1.8 billion, which he both admires and resents for its success. On a trip to New York last spring to scout locations for Everytable, Mr. Polk went out of his way to buy a Sweetgreen salad, just to see what his custom bowl, packed with quinoa, sweet potato, broccoli, chicken, avocado and more, would cost. ''I paid $21.50 for a salad and a drink,'' he announced to an entourage of real estate brokers (who had chosen a New York slice instead). ''Their food is extremely well done. But I was a hedge fund trader and I can't afford a $21 salad.''

Sweetgreen is known for its locally sourced and environmentally friendly ingredients, but Mr. Polk argues that its prices have as much to do with its model as with its food. Everytable serves dishes that look a lot like the ones you'd find there. A sample shipped to this reporter included a $6.55 carnitas bowl with a generous portion of rice and braised pork, brightened with pickled onions and tangy feta and a $6.95 turmeric chicken salad with curry-yogurt dressing. It had fewer greens than a $10-plus salad from Sweetgreen, but was as fresh and full of flavor thanks to tart diced apples and a sweet-and-salty seed-packed granola. (Sweetgreen, which in June filed to go public, is clearly aware of its high labor costs: Last summer, it acquired a company that developed a robotic kitchen that can turn out salads and bowls without human intervention.)

Michael Kaufman, a senior lecturer at Harvard Business School and a partner at the Astor Group, an investment and advisory firm to the food and beverage industry, said Everytable's centralized model allows it to do what other restaurants cannot. Specifically, it ''can populate underserved areas or wealthier ones with retail outlets or subscribers and create efficiencies that are significant.''

Ghost kitchens, the latest fad in the restaurant world, are chasing these same efficiencies. Essentially commercial kitchens for rent, they allow multiple restaurants to prepare food for delivery in the same space, and they have taken off during the pandemic: The celebrity chef Guy Fieri, for example, is serving up his famous Donkey Sauce at outlets of Guy Fieri's Flavortown Kitchen in 33 states and the District of Columbia. But unlike Everytable, ghost kitchens usually serve specific neighborhoods, rather than a whole city, and they generally rely on third-party delivery services to get food to the customer. Services like DoorDash and Grubhub reportedly charge anywhere from 10 to 25 percent of the order total.

''Success here is about integrating the chain,'' said Gad Allon, a professor of operations management at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. ''Sam understands that when you do it all, you enjoy the economies of scale.''

Everytable's financials bear this out: The average cost to produce and package an Everytable meal is about $3.25 -- still a 35 percent margin if you sell a meal for $5. Company models also show that preparing all its food in a central commissary reduces the cost of building out each store by 75 percent.

In 2020, an apocalyptic year for most restaurants, Everytable sold 5.3 million meals and saw its revenues jump to $36 million from $6 million a year earlier, even though it was forced to temporarily close five of its 10 Los Angeles stores. The rise was fueled by home-delivery subscriptions as well as contracts with city and state agencies that were keen to find ready-to-eat meals for the swelling ranks of food-insecure: older adults, college students and the homeless. Last November, the company raised $16 million from investors.

For Everytable, the big question is whether Americans will embrace grab-and-go restaurants at the speed Mr. Polk needs to open them to achieve his Amazon-ambition efficiencies.

Grab-and-go options were popular during the height of the pandemic, when they were seen as a safer option. But as Americans creep back toward some kind of normal, they may revert to their preference for fully customizable food. ''A lot of marketing dollars have been spent on the idea of 'have it your way,''' said Mr. Kaufman of Harvard Business School. ''Is this going to be perceived, particularly in disadvantaged communities, as a second-best way of having restaurant food? We can't afford Sweetgreen so they're giving us grab-and-go?''

LaToya Meaders, the president and co-founder of Collective Fare, a cafe and catering company in Brownsville, Brooklyn, says it all comes down to the marketing. In Brownsville, the main thoroughfares are a parade of fast food, fried chicken, seafood and soul food restaurants, and national brands like McDonald's have cachet.

Collective Fare has thrived, Ms. Meaders said, by integrating into the community -- serving a vegetable-rich cauliflower macaroni and cheese alongside the must-have fried chicken sandwiches -- and hiring from the neighborhood. ''People don't want to be told what you think they like,'' she said. ''In these communities, they get that enough.''

Still, Ms. Meaders is optimistic that with the right marketing, Everytable can overcome that sort of skepticism. She might open a franchise through the company's social equity franchise program, which is in the process of raising a $20 million debt fund to support and train Black entrepreneurs and put them on a path to owning and operating an Everytable store. She is also in talks to collaborate with the company to create a signature New York dish, similar to Everytable's Trap Kitchen Chicken Curry, which was developed by Black chefs in the Compton neighborhood of Los Angeles. ''There's a risk of a white guy coming in and saying, 'You got to eat that way,''' she said. ''But we can say, 'We rocks with him.'''

Another concern: whether Everytable's food is actually affordable enough for the poorest Americans. Adam Drewnowski, a professor of epidemiology at the University of Washington and a leading researcher on social disparities and health, said he was encouraged by Everytable's model, especially its focus on prepared foods, which aid those who are time- as well as cash-poor. But he noted that, even with a recent increase in food stamp benefits, the federal government's Thrifty Food Plan, an estimate of the cost of a minimum, nutritionally sufficient diet, allocates just $6.89 for a full day's worth of calories.

Ultimately, though, Everytable's fate will probably be decided by the public. And predicting what people will embrace at mealtime is a tricky proposition. For Katrina Barber, at least, a 31-year-old photographer, Everytable works. She discovered it during the pandemic after she lost her job in Austin, Texas, and moved to Los Angeles. Money was, and remains, tight. Since Ms. Barber isn't much of a cook, she finds herself ordering the chicken tinga or carnitas bowl at the Everytable in University Park as much as twice a week.

Ms. Barber is enthusiastic about Everytable's mission, but her loyalty is cemented by its low prices. ''I love spending $6 for something that tastes like a $10 meal,'' she said. ''Instead of going to Burger King or Taco Bell and spending the same amount, I can get a nutritious meal that actually tastes good.''

Mr. Polk acknowledges that Everytable's food may not be affordable to everyone. But over time, he plans to bring prices down, just like -- you guessed it -- Amazon. ''When Amazon started, they were selling books for the same price as Barnes & Noble,'' he said. ''What Bezos intuited is that if he lowered the price, even though he wouldn't make as much margin, it would create a massive wave of adoption.''

Of course, Amazon went on to sell a lot more than just books -- and Mr. Bezos has never embraced a social welfare mission like the one Mr. Polk envisions. But Mr. Polk is following the Bezos playbook by keeping his costs fixed and rapidly expanding his offerings. Everytable now offers cut fruit, smoothies and pressed juices (which sell for $5 versus $9 or more at boutique juice bars). The company also is trying out a program to sell medically tailored meals to serve patients with chronic diseases. Mr. Polk is optimistic that Everytable's meal prices can fall to $4 to $6, depending on the neighborhood, from $6 and $8.

''Then you see the whole world start to change,'' he said. ''You'll get a fresh salad for as much as Cinnamon Toast Crunch.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/business/everytable-healthy-fast-food.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/business/everytable-healthy-fast-food.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Sam Polk, left, a co-founder and the C.E.O. of Everytable, is single-minded about efficiency in his expansion plans. Above, a customer considered the grab-and-go meals at an Everytable location in Los Angeles. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GABRIELLA ANGOTTI-JONES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

LaToya Meaders, below, a founder of Collective Fare, a Brooklyn cafe and catering company, said Everytable's marketing might ease skepticism in some areas. ''People don't want to be told what you think they like,'' she said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CALLA KESSLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Trash Collectors Fight for Dignity***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60DB-9R81-JBG3-62SM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 21, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1080 words

**Byline:** By Daytrian Wilken

**Body**

''All labor has dignity,'' the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. told striking sanitation workers in Memphis more than 50 years ago.

''One day,'' he said, ''our society will come to respect the sanitation worker, if it is to survive. For the person who picks up our garbage, in the final analysis, is as significant as the physician. For if he doesn't do his job, diseases are rampant.''

I never paid much attention to what sanitation workers did until a small group of them went on strike in early May in my hometown, New Orleans. They are called ''hoppers,'' because they spend all day hopping on and off the backs of trucks, rounding up garbage containers, and using their strength to dump them into the barrel that crushes the trash.

My Uncle Jonathan is one of them, and he asked me to help him and his fellow Black workers organize their City Waste Union in the first weeks of the strike. Their fight, which has now gone on for more than two months, has shown me more clearly than ever before that Black people are still shackled to a cycle of generational poverty and mistreatment.

They often carry signs that say, ''I Am a Man,'' as they protest. It's the iconic sign Memphis sanitation workers first carried in 1968, in their bitter, 65-day strike, during which Dr. King was assassinated after coming to support them. I am only 25, but it's obvious to me that my uncle and his co-workers are still waging the same civil rights battle 52 years later.

In 1968, a living wage and safer working conditions were among the Memphis strikers' top demands -- the same things New Orleans strikers are asking for in 2020. The men in Memphis worked full time, but their pay was so low that they still qualified for food stamps.

In New Orleans, before our strike, my uncle, for example, got paid $10.25 an hour, which isn't a living wage.

''I get up every day and go to work,'' said Darnell Harris, 34, another hopper. ''But I can't take care of my family off what they paid me. I am just tired of being stepped on. Me and all the guys, we're tired of it.''

Our members are asking for $15 an hour. ''In the 14 years I've been working as a hopper,'' said Harold Peters, 43, ''I've never made much more than $100 a day. To actually see a decent income, you have to be out there 60 or 70 hours a week.''

In 1968, work-safety fears set off the Memphis strike, after two workers were crushed to death in the barrel of their truck. Today in New Orleans, fears of Covid-19, which hit the city so early and so hard, prompted our strike. The men's longtime concern that their health and safety on the job are not taken seriously turned urgent. That's why the hoppers are asking for $150 a week in hazard pay, and assurances of a steadier supply of personal protective equipment.

One difference between the two strikes is that the New Orleans sanitation workers today actually have less bargaining power than the 1968 Memphis strikers had.

The 1,300 Black men who stood up against the mayor and the city of Memphis worked for the sanitation department and negotiated directly with city leaders. But in 2020, outsourcing of garbage pickup means a few private contracting companies manage many small groups of New Orleans sanitation workers.

Only 14 Black men are on strike in New Orleans, but their experience echoes those of many more hoppers in the city. And support from the larger community has kept us going. A strike fund we set up on GoFundMe has raised almost $200,000. In addition, the National Labor Relations Board is investigating some of our complaints.

But with the mix of private employers, one of which hired a public relations firm to help during the strike, it is nearly impossible for a large number of the workers doing the same jobs across the city to band together and negotiate their working conditions with any one company or with elected officials. That means Mayor LaToya Cantrell and the sanitation department are insulated, remaining one or two steps removed from dealing directly with the men on the front lines.

In my uncle's case, the city contracts with Metro Service Group, a Black-owned, New Orleans-based company, for part of its residential sanitation pickup. Then, Metro subcontracts with an employment company called PeopleReady, a division of TrueBlue, based in Washington State, that oversees and pays my uncle and his co-workers.

So when we spoke out about how the men's pay was less than the $11.19 living wage that the city requires, the mayor pointed to Metro for answers. And Metro pointed to PeopleReady. After more than two months, no one from the mayor's office has spoken directly with the men.

At one point, Metro subcontracted with another company to replace the strikers with prison inmates, who were paid even less than the men on strike got paid. But after that arrangement was made public, the subcontractor backed out.

As I understood it, one of the original goals of contracting out the work years ago was to give more opportunity and power to Black and brown private contractors in a majority-Black city. And a goal of the city's living wage ordinance was to protect the people those companies hired. I don't think anyone set out to take advantage of ***working-class*** Black men; I just think it has turned into that.

''Instead of actually helping everybody,'' said Kendrick Anderson, 27, a hopper, ''they just went along with that system they already have going.''

In a city that makes millions of dollars off Mardi Gras, the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and the Essence Festival, when you see City Council members swinging beads and Mayor Cantrell second lining, our guys are riding behind them, cleaning it all up. But these men feel invisible and uncared for.

Don't my uncle, the other hoppers and their families deserve the dignity that Dr. King spoke of a half-century ago? Isn't it about time to do right by these Black men, and meet their simple demands to be treated as significant in their own city?

Daytrian Wilken is the spokesperson for the City Waste Union in New Orleans. This was written in collaboration with Emily Yellin, who produced the video series ''1,300 Men: Memphis Strike '68'' on The Root.com.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/20/opinion/new-orleans-garbage-strike.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/20/opinion/new-orleans-garbage-strike.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ''Being a sanitation worker is not easy,'' said D'Artanian DeJean, a ''hopper'' on strike in New Orleans.

''They don't give us enough gloves

I have to buy my own safety shirts, clothing, boots,'' said Anthony Perkins. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM WIDMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Sanitation workers on strike in Memphis in 1968. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BETTMANN ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 21, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Yes, Yan Can Still Cook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62XR-CHS1-DXY4-X511-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 16, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Dining In, Dining Out / Style Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1722 words

**Byline:** By Priya Krishna

**Body**

HILLSBOROUGH, Calif. -- Live from his home kitchen in the Bay Area, Martin Yan flashed a smile, raised his cleaver and chanted the catchphrase that the 150 or so people watching him online were clamoring to hear: ''If Yan can cook, so can you!''

For Mr. Yan -- who over a four-decade career has played the roles of television personality, cookbook author, restaurateur and now YouTube host -- this longtime slogan is more than just a shtick. It's a summary of all he believes in. If a soft-spoken boy from Guangzhou, China, can make it big in America cooking stir-fries and dumplings, he figures, anyone can do just about anything.

Mr. Yan doesn't have an enormous social media following or a list of viral recipes to his name. But his impact on the culinary sphere is immeasurable. In 1982, at age 33, Mr. Yan became one of the first people of Asian descent to host a cooking show in the United States. ''Yan Can Cook,'' on public television, was a contemporary of programs like ''Julia Child & More Company'' and later on, ''Today's Gourmet,'' starring Jacques Pépin. His show is still syndicated around the world, making it one of the longest-running American cooking programs.

Mr. Yan, now 72, introduced legions of people to Chinese flavors, and eventually to other Asian cuisines. In the 1980s and '90s, he achieved what many nonwhite cooks still struggle to do today -- to get Americans to view the cooking of other countries as something they can replicate at home.

Today, Mr. Yan has re-energized his existing fans and found new ones -- both on Instagram, where he has been posting more frequently, and on YouTube, where he livestreams himself cooking from home. KQED, the San Francisco PBS member station, has been releasing old episodes of ''Yan Can Cook'' to YouTube weekly since January 2020.

His cooking repertoire is more wide-ranging, his style a little more relaxed -- and he remains as kinetic as ever.

''Look at this physical specimen,'' he exclaimed to an iPhone on a camera rig, standing in a power pose before tossing a piece of ginger into a wok to make adobo. ''I haven't gained weight in 35 years.''

Yet Mr. Yan now inhabits a landscape that is vastly different from the one in which he came up. Food media has been rocked by calls for racial justice and equity, and continuing criticism of how frequently non-Western cuisines and ingredients are appropriated or whitewashed in recipes. And throughout the United States, Asian Americans have become the targets of widespread violence.

Mr. Yan, in his perennially cheery way, focuses on the progress that's been made -- pointing to, say, the ubiquity of Chinese restaurants in America, or the availability of ingredients like soy sauce in grocery stores. Asked about his experience with discrimination, he insisted he had been ''fortunate.''

But the next day, after thinking about it, he told a story: Forty years ago, he was taking out the trash at his San Francisco apartment, near a lake with ducks. A young white couple, seeing him with a bin, accused him of trying to kill and eat the ducks, saying that Asians like him were destroying the environment.

Mr. Yan assured the couple he had no plan to kill anything, and invited them to come over that evening for Peking duck.

He believes many conflicts can be resolved with a smile, a conversation and a sense of humor. ''I cannot change my accent, I cannot change my background, I cannot change the color of my face, I can't change,'' he said. ''I truly believe, as long as we are doing things to project a positive image,'' that's enough.

The couple accepted his explanation. They did not come over for duck.

Food television is now big business, but when ''Yan Can Cook'' premiered, Mr. Yan became one of only a few chefs teaching cooking to a national audience.

''It was very weird to see someone like'' Mr. Yan onscreen, recalled Hua Hsu, 43, a staff writer for The New Yorker who watched the show with his mother as a child. ''You are used to seeing an Asian face in detective stories, as the Dragon Lady, or as a delivery worker or as a scientist,'' but not as a home cook.

A few chefs, like Joyce Chen and Cecilia Chiang, were already bringing more attention to Chinese food. But Mr. Yan said that when ''Yan Can Cook'' first appeared, few people foresaw that cooking shows would become a cultural touchstone. He felt simply lucky to be on TV considering where he started, as the child of ***working-class*** parents in Guangzhou.

At 13, he moved to Hong Kong alone, at his mother's urging, to work at a family friend's restaurant. He worked long hours filleting fish and chopping chicken, sleeping on the kitchen floor. Once he finished high school, a church elder helped him secure a visa so he could attend college in Calgary, Alberta.

Mr. Yan filled in at the last minute for a cooking segment on the Calgary station CFAC-TV in 1978, then was asked to keep coming in. Those demonstrations became ''Yan Can Cook,'' which aired daily on CFAC-TV for four years before shifting in 1982 to KQED in San Francisco, which broadcast it weekly.

June Mesina Ouellette, the associate producer of ''Yan Can Cook,'' remembers that Mr. Yan ''had this energy that could have filled the space.''

Before she met him, she didn't know how to cook. As she worked on his show, ''I got over my fear,'' she said. ''He made it fun.''

Mr. Yan also highlighted local Chinese businesses on his show -- he took viewers inside an egg roll factory and the kitchen of a dim sum restaurant. Because he spoke several Chinese dialects and understood the culture, ''he had access'' that a white host wouldn't, said Bernie Schimbke, the art director for ''Yan Can Cook.''

Still, Mr. Yan was well aware of the xenophobia directed at Chinese people in America, starting with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which banned immigration by laborers from that country.

''Chinese food and Chinese culture were not as well received'' when his show debuted, he said. He was hesitant to introduce any dish that people might consider too different or difficult. ''I do either steamed, deep-fried or stir-fried.''

The show carefully avoided ingredients like chicken feet, said Gayle Yamada, a former executive producer. ''You self-censor,'' she said.

Ms. Mesina Ouellette wondered how exhausting it must have been for Mr. Yan to be constantly fighting people's biases.

But he didn't see it that way. There weren't many Chinese cooking classes in America at the time, he said. He started with straightforward dishes so he could draw people in and, over time, introduced more complicated ones.

He tried to keep to traditional ingredients, but always suggested substitutions, said Tina Salter, the former culinary producer at KQED. ''He would rather see them cooking and stir-frying than skipping and staying with a hamburger.''

Mr. Yan retained a good deal of control over his show. In fact, he recruited sponsors himself, and set his own compensation -- $3,500 to $4,000 per episode, on average, he said. ''I made myself indispensable. I said, 'OK, go find another Martin Yan.'''

From ''Yan Can Cook,'' he built a lucrative career doing television specials, cooking and speaking at schools, companies and festivals around the world, writing cookbooks and running restaurants in China and California.

But the pandemic forced him to slow down. Last year, he had planned to travel to Vietnam and Malaysia to film a television special titled ''Martin Yan's Mobile Kitchen,'' in which he would drive around a food truck and cook with locals. That project has been postponed indefinitely.

In November, he closed his last restaurant, M.Y. China in the Westfield San Francisco Centre, because it didn't have the space for outdoor dining.

Before the pandemic, he was never a fan of social media -- it takes up too much time, he said. But he has been posting more of late. In March, he published a photo to Instagram of himself on a communal walk to stand against Asian hate, with the gentle caption, ''How's that for perfect exercise?'' It was one of the first times he used his account for activism.

''The disadvantage of us Asians,'' he said, is that ''we don't like to make noise.''

Despite his on-camera bravado, Mr. Yan considers himself a quiet person. It's easier to give in to the model-minority myth and put one's head down, he said; but more Asian Americans, himself included, should be speaking out.

He followed the upheavals in the food media last summer, most notably the resignation of Adam Rapoport as editor in chief of Bon Appétit, after a photo surfaced of him dressed in an offensive costume.

''I think you and I, all of us in the media, would like to see change faster,'' Mr. Yan said. ''But the problem is that will never happen.'' So, he reasons, it's best to be happy with whatever shifts do occur.

He pointed to the success of other Asian American chefs like Brandon Jew and Ming Tsai as proof that there has been plenty of advancement.

''They are bringing Asian food to another level,'' in a way he was not able to, Mr. Yan said. When, in 2003, Mr. Tsai started hosting ''Simply Ming'' on public television, Mr. Yan helped him find sponsors. When Mr. Jew's San Francisco Chinatown restaurant, Mister Jiu's, opened in 2016, Mr. Yan showed up with cleavers for the cooks.

''He is like the Jackie Robinson of Asians,'' said Mr. Jew, 41.

But these days Mr. Yan is not a household name in the same way as Jackie Robinson or Julia Child, who has inspired an exhibit in the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History, a movie starring Meryl Streep and several biographies.

Both Child and Mr. Yan wrote best-selling cookbooks. Both have led fascinating lives. So where is Mr. Yan's movie?

A few of his former colleagues pointed to systemic racism as the reason. Mr. Yan disagreed, saying that Child, who lived on the East Coast, benefited from her proximity to the mainstream media.

But he also found the question to be flawed.

''If the public says, 'Oh, Martin, you are not as famous,' I really don't care,''' he said. After all, ''how many people in our business can last as long as Martin Yan?''

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.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above left, Martin Yan in 1979, when he was cooking at a Canadian TV station. Since then, he has taught millions of people how to cook a variety of Asian cuisines. Above right, Mr. Yan prepared a dish at his Bay Area home. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARTIN YAN

AYA BRACKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D1)

Clockwise, from center: Martin Yan in his home kitchen in the Bay Area, using his branded knife to prepare vegetables

every chef needs an assistant, and this is Mr. Yan's dog, Stephanie

some of the awards that he's won

he spends much of his time in his home kitchen, livestreaming his cooking on YouTube, and he says he is pleased by the wide availability of Asian ingredients in grocery stores as a sign of progress since his career started

Mr. Yan has published dozens of cookbooks, and has a library of about 4,000 others. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AYA BRACKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Top, from left, three stages of Mr. Yan. Above, Brandon Jew, the chef and co-owner of the San Francisco restaurant Mister Jiu's, says Mr. Yan has been very supportive of his career. Above that, June Mesina Ouellette, the associate producer of ''Yan Can Cook,'' says he taught her how to cook. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA MARTIN YAN) (D7)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Black Sanitation Workers Who Are Saying, ‘I Am a Man’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60D4-NTY1-DXY4-X131-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 20, 2020 Monday 19:37 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1096 words

**Byline:** Daytrian Wilken

**Highlight:** A determined handful of men in New Orleans carry on the cause Dr. King died defending in Memphis.

**Body**

“All labor has dignity,” the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. told striking sanitation workers in Memphis more than 50 years ago.

“One day,” he said, “our society will come to respect the sanitation worker, if it is to survive. For the person who picks up our garbage, in the final analysis, is as significant as the physician. For if he doesn’t do his job, diseases are rampant.”

I never paid much attention to what sanitation workers did until a small group of them went on strike in early May in my hometown, New Orleans. They are called “hoppers,” because they spend all day hopping on and off the backs of trucks, rounding up garbage containers, and using their strength to dump them into the barrel that crushes the trash.

My Uncle Jonathan is one of them, and he asked me to help him and his fellow Black workers organize their City Waste Union in the first weeks of the strike. Their fight, which has now gone on for more than two months, has shown me more clearly than ever before that Black people are still shackled to a cycle of generational poverty and mistreatment.

They often carry signs that say, “I Am a Man,” as they protest. It’s the iconic sign Memphis sanitation workers first carried in 1968, in their bitter, 65-day strike, during which Dr. King was assassinated after coming to support them. I am only 25, but it’s obvious to me that my uncle and his co-workers are still waging the same civil rights battle 52 years later.

In 1968, a living wage and safer working conditions were among the Memphis strikers’ top [*demands*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike) — the same things New Orleans strikers are asking for in 2020. The men in Memphis worked full time, but their pay was so low that they still qualified for food stamps.

In New Orleans, before our strike, my uncle, for example, got paid $10.25 an hour, which isn’t a living wage.

“I get up every day and go to work,” said Darnell Harris, 34, another hopper. “But I can’t take care of my family off what they paid me. I am just tired of being stepped on. Me and all the guys, we’re tired of it.”

Our members are asking for $15 an hour. “In the 14 years I’ve been working as a hopper,” said Harold Peters, 43, “I’ve never made much more than $100 a day. To actually see a decent income, you have to be out there 60 or 70 hours a week.”

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The 1,300 Black men who stood up against the mayor and the city of Memphis worked for the sanitation department and negotiated directly with city leaders. But in 2020, outsourcing of garbage pickup means a few private contracting companies manage many small groups of New Orleans sanitation workers.

Only 14 Black men are on strike in New Orleans, but their experience echoes those of many more hoppers in the city. And support from the larger community has kept us going. A strike fund we set up on GoFundMe has raised almost $200,000. In addition, the National Labor Relations Board is investigating some of our complaints.

But with the mix of private employers, one of which hired a public relations firm to help during the strike, it is nearly impossible for a large number of the workers doing the same jobs across the city to band together and negotiate their working conditions with any one company or with elected officials. That means Mayor LaToya Cantrell and the sanitation department are insulated, remaining one or two steps removed from dealing directly with the men on the front lines.

In my uncle’s case, the city contracts with Metro Service Group, a Black-owned, New Orleans-based company, for part of its residential sanitation pickup. Then, Metro subcontracts with an employment company called PeopleReady, a division of TrueBlue, based in Washington State, that oversees and pays my uncle and his co-workers.

So when we spoke out about how the men’s pay was less than the $11.19 living wage that the city [*requires*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike), the mayor [*pointed*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike) to Metro for answers. And Metro [*pointed*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike) to PeopleReady. After more than two months, no one from the mayor’s office has spoken directly with the men.

At one point, Metro [*subcontracted*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike) with another company to replace the strikers with prison inmates, who were paid even less than the men on strike got paid. But after that arrangement was made public, the subcontractor backed out.

As I understood it, one of the original goals of contracting out the work years ago was to give more opportunity and power to Black and brown private contractors in a majority-Black city. And a goal of the city’s living wage ordinance was to protect the people those companies hired. I don’t think anyone set out to take advantage of ***working-class*** Black men; I just think it has turned into that.

“Instead of actually helping everybody,” said Kendrick Anderson, 27, a hopper, “they just went along with that system they already have going.”

In a city that makes [*millions*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike) of dollars off Mardi Gras, the New Orleans Jazz &amp; Heritage Festival and the Essence Festival, when you see City Council members swinging beads and Mayor Cantrell second lining, our guys are riding behind them, cleaning it all up. But these men feel invisible and uncared for.

Don’t my uncle, the other hoppers and their families deserve the dignity that Dr. King spoke of a half-century ago? Isn’t it about time to do right by these Black men, and meet their simple demands to be treated as significant in their own city?

Daytrian Wilken is the spokesperson for the City Waste Union in New Orleans. This was written in collaboration with Emily Yellin, who produced the video series “[*1,300 Men: Memphis Strike ’68”*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike) on The Root.com.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike).

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PHOTO: Anthony Perkins, one of the members of the new City Waste Union on strike. (PHOTOGRAPH BY William Widmer for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 21, 2020

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[***Searching for the Perfect Trump Antidote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y6F-4BG1-JBG3-63H7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 13, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 26

**Length:** 920 words

**Byline:** By Gail Collins

**Body**

Help wanted, and it's named Ralph.

Perhaps you think New Hampshire sent us a mixed message. After all, Bernie Sanders won but the moderates got more votes, and on Tuesday night three different candidates seemed to be giving victory speeches.

What does the Democratic rank-and-file really want? Well, the answer is: Ralph in Michigan.

Ralph is the symbol of all the people in swing states who went for Barack Obama and then turned Republican in 2016. Democrats want him back! They care way less about finding a candidate with the perfect health care plan than finding one who can rid the world of President Trump.

And who does Ralph want? Somebody who looks more reasonable than the current occupant of the White House? Well, that's all the Democratic candidates. And pretty much every other elected official in recent memory.

OK, maybe not the senator who got arrested for lewd conduct in a men's restroom. But even the congressman who used campaign donations to fly around his pet bunny can't compare to a president who bills the government $650 a night for putting up the agents who have to provide security when he goes to Mar-a-Lago.

Getting rid of Trump is everything. While nobody in either party has ever described him as restrained, he's gotten worse since he skittered past the impeachment crisis. A normal unhinged president might, say, fire a cabinet member on a whim. Trump preferred to can a distinguished military officer for being the brother of an officer who testified about the Ukraine situation under subpoena.

How do you think Ralph would react if a Democratic candidate connected the brothers' story to Trump's draft-dodging bone spur? Pete Buttigieg, who served in Afghanistan, is definitely into bringing up that bone spur.

We're presuming Ralph is a non-crazy, non-racist average person who thought it was time for a change when Hillary Clinton was the Democratic nominee. And liked Trump's, um, spunkiness. Now he's begun to worry that there's a tad too much spunk in the current White House.

Who do you think he'd be looking at now? Probably not Joe Biden anymore.

Although Biden is certainly holding out hope. ''It is important that Iowa and Nevada have spoken, but, look, we need to hear from Nevada and South Carolina,'' the former vice president said, in what would have been a New Hampshire concession speech if he had not forgotten the name of the state he just lost.

Biden has now run for president three times and he's never won a primary. Or come in second. Or third. Ralph cannot possibly be impressed.

Elizabeth Warren's only possible consolation for her poor showing was that she came in ahead of Joe Biden. But she was spunky even in defeat. Warned the party against ''harsh tactics'' and then posed for a ton of selfies. Kudos.

And what about Bernie Sanders? He won, but he beat Buttigieg by fewer than 4,000 votes -- out of nearly 300,000 cast. And although Sanders does do well with ***working-class*** voters, I doubt Mrs. Ralph is going to come around unless he learns how to talk about, say, eliminating college tuition without shouting and scowling.

The big winner in New Hampshire was Amy Klobuchar, who came in a rather impressive third. Now she's a very serious candidate, and it will be interesting to see how Trump decides to attack her. Sanders has already entered the president's rally speeches as Crazy Bernie, and Trump has devoted quite a bit of time to making fun of Buttigieg's name. Klobuchar hasn't really come up much, except for a tweet in which he referred to the Minnesota Democrat as ''Snowman (woman)!''

If Klobuchar keeps climbing, soon the Trump crowds will be chanting ''Lock her up!'' Really, any woman will do. This week, they did it for Nancy Pelosi. Any minute now, it'll be Oprah Winfrey.

But back to Ralph the target swing voter. We have not discussed how old he is. That matters a lot. Sanders, 78, has huge support from younger Democrats, but in New Hampshire he got only 14 percent of the voters over 65. Buttigieg, 38, got nearly a quarter of those older voters.

What's the story?

A) Mayor Pete reminds them of their grandchildren.

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We should probably pause to congratulate New Hampshire for getting the votes counted right away. It's sort of the dream state for candidates who believe that if the citizenry just got to know them, they'd be converted to their cause. Now the dream is over for people like Andrew Yang and Michael Bennet. We're down to just eight contenders.

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Right now, Michael Bloomberg is pretty darned popular. Most people don't know much about him except his ads -- he's sort of the political equivalent of Geico. But we'll have much more opportunity to be snide about his campaign once we get to Super Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Ralph hasn't made up his mind. But we've come a long way. Hopes soaring, hopes crushed. And if we ever get Iowa totally straightened out, the Democrats will have allocated nearly 2 percent of the delegates to the convention.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: Voters cast their ballots in Concord, N.H., on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 13, 2020

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[***Searching for the Perfect Trump Antidote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y6D-17N1-DXY4-X4MG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 12, 2020 Wednesday 11:53 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 939 words

**Byline:** Gail Collins

**Highlight:** Help wanted, and it’s named Ralph.

**Body**

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OK, maybe not the senator who got arrested for lewd conduct in a men’s restroom. But even the congressman who used campaign donations to fly around his pet bunny can’t compare to a president who bills the government $650 a night for putting up the agents who have to provide security when he goes to Mar-a-Lago.

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PHOTO: Voters cast their ballots in Concord, N.H., on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 14, 2020

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[***The British Activist Who Was a Spiritual Ancestor to Today’s Teen Radicals; nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61HP-HPJ1-DXY4-X13J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 15, 2020 Tuesday 16:25 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1502 words

**Byline:** Francesca Wade

**Highlight:** “Sylvia Pankhurst: Natural Born Rebel,” by Rachel Holmes, captures the turbulent life of an indefatigable crusader for women’s and workers’ rights.

**Body**

SYLVIA PANKHURST

Natural Born Rebel

By Rachel Holmes

On Jan. 5, 1921, Sylvia Pankhurst stood in the witness stand at London’s Guildhall and reminded the court that, as her biographer Rachel Holmes puts it, she had “faced death many times for her beliefs.” Arrested at the offices of the newspaper she ran, on suspicion of inciting sedition, Pankhurst, then 38, appeared with a red carnation in her buttonhole, and held the court’s attention for 90 minutes as she told the story of her life — a tale spanning her upbringing in Manchester as the daughter of feminist reformists whose social circle encompassed American abolitionists, Hindu nationalists and founding members of the Labour Party; her early ambition to paint; her winning a scholarship to the Royal College of Art; and her 13 prison sentences as a suffragist, during which she was subjected to force-feeding and solitary confinement in cramped cells infested with vermin.

Reproaching her accusers, Pankhurst insisted that “it is wrong that people like you should be comfortable and well fed, while all around you people are starving.” Her appeal was unsuccessful, and she returned to Holloway prison, condemned to cleaning tasks while members of the Women’s Suffrage Federation kept her spirits up by gathering to sing outside the prison gates. “Why,” wrote her parents’ friend George Bernard Shaw somewhat patronizingly, “didn’t you make up your mind to keep out of prison instead of persistently breaking into it?”

Holmes’s mammoth biography, “Sylvia Pankhurst: Natural Born Rebel,” positions Pankhurst as “a free spirit and a visionary,” a modern political thinker deeply attuned to the intersections among oppressions rooted in gender, class and race. Although her mother, Emmeline, became Britain’s most famous suffragist, it was from her father, Richard, with whose death Holmes opens her book, that Sylvia derived her lifelong commitment to “an equalitarian society, in which by mutual aid and service, there should be abundance for all to satisfy material and spiritual needs.”

[ Read an excerpt from [*“Sylvia Pankhurst.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/books/review/sylvia-pankhurst-natural-born-rebel-by-rachel-holmes-an-excerpt.html) ]

While her mother and sister Christabel supported World War I, never campaigned for universal suffrage and renounced their links with the trade union movement — Emmeline would (disingenuously) deny that the Women’s Social and Political Union, founded in the family’s parlor in 1903, had begun in affiliation with the Labour Party — Sylvia, a socialist and pacifist, always believed “in the necessary conjoining of the economic and political struggle of women and the ***working class***.” Her consistent opposition to legislation that would offer the vote to only a limited number of property-owning women caused serious ruptures within the family and led to Sylvia’s expulsion from the W.S.P.U. Undeterred, she dedicated herself to work in London’s impoverished East End, organizing factory workers and campaigning for maternal health care.

After numerous historical, fictional and cinematic treatments, the story of the suffragist movement is familiar, though always captivating: plucky women smuggling themselves into Westminster in furniture removal vans, chaining themselves to railings and smashing windows. But Sylvia Pankhurst’s work for equal rights extended far beyond votes for women. Her life’s project lay in a fight against fascism, imperialism and racism, insisting, in Holmes’s words, on the value of “principled and powerful collective protest as the only channel available to those systematically excluded from power.”

Holmes, the author of several other books, including a [*biography of Eleanor Marx*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/books/review/sylvia-pankhurst-natural-born-rebel-by-rachel-holmes-an-excerpt.html), charts Pankhurst’s attempts, following the Russian Revolution of 1917, to transform British socialism and set up a communist party in her own country (a subsequent falling-out with Lenin didn’t stop her from being arrested multiple times on suspicion of working for the Soviet government). Of most lasting significance, personally as well as politically, were her staunch opposition to Mussolini — even when many in Britain were courting his favor — and, especially, her work on behalf of Ethiopian independence. In her 70s, she emigrated to Addis Ababa with her son, Richard Keir Pethick Pankhurst, and his wife; when she died there in 1960, she received a full state funeral, and a bustling thoroughfare was renamed Sylvia Pankhurst Street. She dedicated her magisterial cultural history of the country to Haile Selassie, her close ally; he assured her that her “unceasing efforts and support in the just cause of Ethiopia will never be forgotten.”

At more than 900 pages, Holmes’s book is packed with detail, but marred by so much repetition that the reader is left with the impression of a vast amount of material not fully marshaled into narrative form. At times, her paragraphs feel like notes hastily compiled and not fully digested; moments of high drama are interrupted by digressions that leave the reader grasping to fillet meaning from a barrage of information. Holmes’s writing is prone to sweeping overstatement — “in sum, Richard Pankhurst was the living incarnation of every pioneering, radical Victorian cause”; his daughter is “possessed of almost magical reserves of optimism, hope and the physical and emotional energy required to support them” — and replete with clichés: Talents are “rare,” storms “threaten to break,” speeches are “barnstorming” and activists’ souls are “made of such stern stuff.” The word “radical” is so overused as to lose all meaning, applied to everything from the views of W. E. B. Du Bois to an English folk ballad, from Mancunian socialism to a vegetarian restaurant.

Despite its length, Holmes’s book tends to skate over opportunities for psychological insight into its subject, in particular her personal relationships. Potentially seismic quarrels tend to be reported then resolved in the space of a few lines, with little attention paid to the erosions and ambivalences that shape dynamics over a lifetime of shared experience. We’re tantalized by the promise of “an intense period of explicit love letters” exchanged in 1911 between Sylvia and Keir Hardie, the first leader of the Labour Party, but when these are eventually quoted, what Holmes promoted as “sexually explicit longing, separation anxieties and profound reflection on the nature and quality of their bond” turns out to consist mostly of opaque dreams and avowals of socialism as “the cure for all ills.” Holmes assures us that theirs was “a fully fledged love affair, passionate, ecstatic and tormented,” but doesn’t really interrogate the effects on Sylvia’s self-esteem of a relationship with a man 26 years her senior who seems never to have considered leaving his wife. We learn even less about her “soul mate,” Silvio Corio, an exiled Italian anarchist with whom she had her son, beyond the fact that “their commonality was the desire to try and make the world a better place.”

Tensions with Emmeline and Christabel — Sylvia’s “personal political tragedy” — feel particularly underexplored. Emmeline comes across as formidably capricious, constantly favoring Christabel to the sadness and bewilderment of her younger daughters; when Sylvia, though unmarried, became pregnant, her mother refused to see her, and lamented that she continued to use the family name. A friend of Emmeline’s wrote that “Mrs. Pankhurst died of chagrin — of pain and horror at the disgrace brought on her name by that disgusting Bolshie daughter of hers.” In a biography of her mother that she published in 1936, Sylvia omitted to mention how hurt she had felt; Holmes briefly describes the book as “surprisingly even-toned,” but it would be fascinating to linger in the mind-set of the biographer daughter, creating in her writing the supportive maternal relationship that she herself had been denied.

Nonetheless, no book on Sylvia Pankhurst could fail to pass on an exhilarating story. Pankhurst took on the 20th century both as participant and observer. She was an indefatigable activist, but also a journalist, who traveled — often in perilous conditions — across Europe, America and Africa to report on the dangers of fascism, the suppression of workers’ rights, the degradation of women, the folly of any system that imposed difference over commonality. Holmes positions Pankhurst as a spiritual ancestor to “teen radicals” of today such as Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg. The continued relevance of her life story needs no such justification. Asked how she might like to be remembered, Pankhurst wrote that she had “never deserted a cause in its days of adversity. … When victory for any cause came, she had little leisure to rejoice, none to rest; she had always some other objective in view.”

Francesca Wade is the author of “Square Haunting: Five Writers in London Between the Wars.” SYLVIA PANKHURST Natural Born Rebel By Rachel Holmes Illustrated. 949 pp. Bloomsbury. $40.

PHOTO: Sylvia Pankhurst, 1912. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES)

**Related Articles**

* [*‘Eleanor Marx: A Life,’ by Rachel Holmes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/books/review/sylvia-pankhurst-natural-born-rebel-by-rachel-holmes-an-excerpt.html)

**Load-Date:** January 5, 2021

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[***The Irreducible William Parker***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61YG-HGC1-DXY4-X01Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 8, 2021 Monday 07:43 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 1488 words

**Byline:** Alan Scherstuhl

**Highlight:** The bassist, bandleader and composer’s 10-disc “Migration of Silence Into and Out of the Tone World” invites you to listen, and let the music do its work.

**Body**

The bassist, bandleader and composer’s 10-disc “Migration of Silence Into and Out of the Tone World” invites you to listen, and let the music do its work.

“Listen,” the singer Raina Sokolov-Gonzalez implores in the opening notes of the monumental new boxed set from William Parker, the champion of improvised music, community building and appreciation of beauty.

Parker composed the track as “a map or a mantra” to the outsize collection of music that follows, the 10 CDs of new material that make up the bassist and composer’s recently released “Migration of Silence Into and Out of the Tone World.” For many, free jazz or creative music has a reputation, justified or not, for being off-putting or difficult. But “Listen,” a stirring sliver of a track, declares that we only need to know one thing to enter what Parker has long called “the tone world”: How to hear. The set’s second track, a storming ’70s R&amp;B groove played by jazz trio and string quartet, finds Sokolov-Gonzalez celebrating what Parker believes can happen once our ears are tuned in: “Cosmic funk will save the world.”

Parker, a bandleader and composer who was once declared by The Village Voice “the most consistently brilliant free jazz bassist of all time,” explained his conception of a “tone world” over video interview in late January. “When you play music in this world, you’re actually stepping into another world,” he said from his apartment in Lower Manhattan. “No matter what’s happening with you, whether you owe 10 months’ rent, or you’re dealing with some kind of mental anxiety or hardship, the music takes over and you step into the tone world.”

He elaborated with an analogy in which sound is water. “When it vibrates, it turns into steam and changes properties and appearance,” he said. “When it changes, you step into another place, and in there there’s a vision of a corridor of light. You walk down the corridor, and at the end there’s a door. Behind that door are the secrets of life.”

Since 2011 Parker has published three volumes of his conversations with other musicians and thinkers about music, spiritualism, politics, race and culture. (A fourth is forthcoming.) He has written books, lyrics, poetry and liner notes urging us to find transcendence in beauty, as well as blistering manifestoes that attack how systems of racism and capitalism staunch imagination and keep children and musicians starving.

So, if some practical part of you balks at this talk of “corridors of light” in our age of unrest, remember his imperative: “Listen.”

“Every time you play music, you’re able to open that door and take one of the secrets of life out and keep that,” Parker continued, his eyes animated behind his signature black glasses. “When the music stops, it isn’t the music that actually stops — you stop. The music continues on. So, you play music again, and you play it again, and each time you get a glimpse of what’s beautiful.”

For Parker, 69, music is healing, solace and love. He suggests that listening is something like walking outside and looking up: “No matter where you are, no matter what’s happening, you look up and you’ll see a beautiful sky. I’ve never seen an ugly sky. It’s just ringing with hope and joy. That’s our teacher.”

In the world of improvised music, Parker is foundational. A key player in the ’70s loft scene, and a crucial collaborator in the ’80s and ’90s in bands led by Cecil Taylor and David S. Ware, he’s recorded over 50 albums as a leader, including classics like “O’Neal’s Porch,” “Piercing the Veil” and “Wood Flute Songs,” a bumper crop boxed set of live recordings from the first decade of this millennium.

He’s a tireless collaborator who, in non-pandemic times, plays dozens of shows a year, in concert halls and record-store basements, with established and ad hoc bands, sometimes with compositions to spring from and often without. Patricia Nicholson, the dancer and activist who has been his spouse since 1975, organizes the annual [*Vision Festival*](https://www.artsforart.org/vision.html), which gives a vital platform to avant-garde and free jazz musicians and other artists, and is a culmination of the couple’s decades of nurturing creativity and community.

He’s the kind of figure it might be tempting to label a giant if such shorthand weren’t sure to strike him as distastefully hierarchical. Talk to his colleagues, and you’ll hear stories of him personally driving the stage to a gig, or aiding a stalwart of the avant-garde in accessing Social Security benefits, or leading street protests, or simply going out of his way to make each contributor to a project feel as free as he does.

“He’s a wonderful person,” said the pianist and composer Eri Yamamoto, a Parker collaborator who plays an album’s worth of his solo piano compositions on the new set. “He trusts musicians, and challenges us, and reminds us to be strict with ourselves but also humble.” She recalled once asking, as she studied an ambiguous mark on the music he had written, whether she was to play in E or E flat. “He said, ‘If you feel E major, it’s E major. If you feel E minor, it’s E minor.”

The sound artist Fay Victor also takes inspiration from Parker: “He shows ways to keep expanding creatively, to pursue every creative avenue, all while being incredibly generous and not expecting much fanfare for it.” Citing the nonprofit that Nicholson and Parker founded, she added, “More than almost anybody outside of the Village Vanguard and Smalls, Arts for Art has really kept the music going in the pandemic.”

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Parker’s art and family history get explored at length in Cisco Bradley’s illuminating new critical study “Universal Tonality,” the first William Parker book that William Parker didn’t have to write himself. Parker appreciates the attention — he called it the story of how he rose “from rags to enlightenment. Note that I didn’t say riches” — but still encourages musicians to tell their own stories, and not just because critics can be slow to catch up.

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Parker is irreducible, as such explorations demonstrate. A global-minded musician deeply committed to and inspired by the world outside his window. A ***working-class*** populist of the avant-garde who believes that when people actually hear this music they appreciate and understand it.

“He’s like [*Sun Ra*](https://www.artsforart.org/vision.html),” said Daniel Carter, the multi-instrumentalist improviser and veteran of over five decades on the free and creative music scene. “He’s figured out his own way of how to get his message out to the world.” Carter, who still records challenging and engaging music well after his 70th birthday, first collaborated with Parker in the 1970s. He added, “I’ve always felt that William set a standard that I never wanted to disregard, either as a musician or spiritually as a person.”

Or, as Victor put it, “William is a beacon of light and wisdom.”

PHOTOS: Describing what he calls “the tone world,” the free jazz bassist and composer William Parker says, “When you play music in this world, you’re actually stepping into another world.” (C1); In the world of improvised music, William Parker is foundational. He recently released a monumental boxed set, “Migration of Silence Into and Out of the Tone World. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATHAN BAJAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C2)

**Load-Date:** February 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Irreducible William Parker***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61YN-5BS1-DXY4-X15X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 9, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1439 words

**Byline:** By Alan Scherstuhl

**Body**

The bassist, bandleader and composer's 10-disc ''Migration of Silence Into and Out of the Tone World'' invites you to listen, and let the music do its work.

''Listen,'' the singer Raina Sokolov-Gonzalez implores in the opening notes of the monumental new boxed set from William Parker, the champion of improvised music, community building and appreciation of beauty.

Parker composed the track as ''a map or a mantra'' to the outsize collection of music that follows, the 10 CDs of new material that make up the bassist and composer's recently released ''Migration of Silence Into and Out of the Tone World.'' For many, free jazz or creative music has a reputation, justified or not, for being off-putting or difficult. But ''Listen,'' a stirring sliver of a track, declares that we only need to know one thing to enter what Parker has long called ''the tone world'': How to hear. The set's second track, a storming '70s R&B groove played by jazz trio and string quartet, finds Sokolov-Gonzalez celebrating what Parker believes can happen once our ears are tuned in: ''Cosmic funk will save the world.''

Parker, a bandleader and composer who was once declared by The Village Voice ''the most consistently brilliant free jazz bassist of all time,'' explained his conception of a ''tone world'' over video interview in late January. ''When you play music in this world, you're actually stepping into another world,'' he said from his apartment in Lower Manhattan. ''No matter what's happening with you, whether you owe 10 months' rent, or you're dealing with some kind of mental anxiety or hardship, the music takes over and you step into the tone world.''

He elaborated with an analogy in which sound is water. ''When it vibrates, it turns into steam and changes properties and appearance,'' he said. ''When it changes, you step into another place, and in there there's a vision of a corridor of light. You walk down the corridor, and at the end there's a door. Behind that door are the secrets of life.''

Since 2011 Parker has published three volumes of his conversations with other musicians and thinkers about music, spiritualism, politics, race and culture. (A fourth is forthcoming.) He has written books, lyrics, poetry and liner notes urging us to find transcendence in beauty, as well as blistering manifestoes that attack how systems of racism and capitalism staunch imagination and keep children and musicians starving.

So, if some practical part of you balks at this talk of ''corridors of light'' in our age of unrest, remember his imperative: ''Listen.''

''Every time you play music, you're able to open that door and take one of the secrets of life out and keep that,'' Parker continued, his eyes animated behind his signature black glasses. ''When the music stops, it isn't the music that actually stops -- you stop. The music continues on. So, you play music again, and you play it again, and each time you get a glimpse of what's beautiful.''

For Parker, 69, music is healing, solace and love. He suggests that listening is something like walking outside and looking up: ''No matter where you are, no matter what's happening, you look up and you'll see a beautiful sky. I've never seen an ugly sky. It's just ringing with hope and joy. That's our teacher.''

In the world of improvised music, Parker is foundational. A key player in the '70s loft scene, and a crucial collaborator in the '80s and '90s in bands led by Cecil Taylor and David S. Ware, he's recorded over 50 albums as a leader, including classics like ''O'Neal's Porch,'' ''Piercing the Veil'' and ''Wood Flute Songs,'' a bumper crop boxed set of live recordings from the first decade of this millennium.

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Describing what he calls ''the tone world,'' the free jazz bassist and composer William Parker says, ''When you play music in this world, you're actually stepping into another world.''(C1)

In the world of improvised music, William Parker is foundational. He recently released a monumental boxed set, ''Migration of Silence Into and Out of the Tone World. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATHAN BAJAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C2)

**Load-Date:** February 10, 2021

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[***Hilary Mantel Takes On Royals and Rebels in a Book of Essays; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6116-BJ71-JBG3-60RG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 8, 2020 Thursday 02:00 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1258 words

**Byline:** Fernanda Eberstadt

**Highlight:** “Mantel Pieces” compiles nearly 30 years of the author’s work for The London Review of Books.

**Body**

MANTEL PIECES

Royal Bodies and Other Writing From The London Review of Books

By Hilary Mantel

The person we meet at the beginning of [*Hilary Mantel’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/hilary-mantel-mirror-and-the-light-thomas-cromwell.html) collection of essays is 35 and has already published two novels. She’s immensely ambitious, but she’s had some obstacles to literary success: She’s female; she’s the daughter of Irish Catholic millworkers; she comes from a village in England’s industrial North; she has had to support herself as a barmaid, medical social worker and department-store assistant; she is married to the boy she met at 16 and has followed him to postings in Africa and the Middle East; she’s dogged by a chronic illness. And finally, most damning: Her chosen genre, historical fiction, is considered down-market. All of which means it will take her a bit longer to become herself — or rather, to persuade the world of her prodigious powers. She’s still a long way from becoming Dame Hilary, internationally renowned author of the “Wolf Hall” trilogy.

“Mantel Pieces,” which includes nearly 30 years of Mantel’s essays for [*The London Review of Books*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/hilary-mantel-mirror-and-the-light-thomas-cromwell.html), accompanied by facsimiles of her correspondence with its editors, is the story of an outsider finding her literary home. When the book opens, it’s 1987, and Mantel, with exaggerated self-deprecation, is offering her services to a magazine she considers the finest in Europe. “I was in awe of my paymasters,” she confesses in her introduction, and had decided to say “‘yes’ to anything, especially if it frightened me.”

Fear is a running theme — and essential motive — in Mantel’s makeup. The chosen subjects of her novels and essays are frankly hair-raising: child murders, ghosts, the French Revolution and the Tudor monarchy — a period, as she writes, that signifies “terror in the name of the church and torture in the name of the state.”

As a child, “I was often very frightened and the imprint of that fear stays with me,” she has said in an interview. Fear alternates with a formidable though somewhat specialized curiosity throughout this collection, as if knowledge — the child’s need to decode the system of “pipes and drains, culverts and sewers” beneath her feet — is the only thing that will keep her alive.

In the early pieces, we see a working critic accepting assignments that don’t so much frighten as bore her. Her riffs on Madonna and “[*The Hite Report*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/hilary-mantel-mirror-and-the-light-thomas-cromwell.html)” offer the kind of acid one-liners English critics can reel out in their sleep, whereas what we need her to do is explain the world to us. Her true province is history, and it’s only once Mantel-as-reviewer digs down hard into its rich soil, delving into biographies of Tudor aristocrats or Danton or Robespierre or Marie Antoinette — fortune’s darlings who end up headless in the Tower or the Tuileries — that she truly warms up, moving into a prose whose rhythmic and allusive range, whose nonchalance, bite and wayward erudition are always surprising, often thrilling. A Mantel essay will take you from the Children’s Crusade of 1212 to the Liverpool supermarket where a toddler is lured to his death. Is the author teasing us? Is such magic legal?

A good third of “Mantel Pieces” is devoted to kings and queens and courtiers, another third to the revolutionaries who are out to string them up. It’s clear where Mantel’s sympathies lie: Royals are mythic, archaic, “both gods and beasts,” but it’s their assassins — the stiff-backed, lawyerly, provincial fanatics — whom she loves. (It’s revealing that in her “Wolf Hall” trilogy she manages to spin her protagonist, Thomas Cromwell, not as courtier but as revolutionary: radical Protestant, protocapitalist numbers-cruncher.)

“Mantel Pieces” includes the author’s most celebrated essay, “Royal Bodies.” When The London Review [*published it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/hilary-mantel-mirror-and-the-light-thomas-cromwell.html) in 2013, there were death threats, practically, [*from Britain’s right-wing press*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/hilary-mantel-mirror-and-the-light-thomas-cromwell.html). Mantel’s offense was to compare Kate Middleton, Prince William’s wife, to a plastic doll. But actually the essay’s most incendiary moment is when Mantel, at a Buckingham Palace reception, finds herself staring at the queen: “I passed my eyes over her as a cannibal views his dinner, my gaze sharp enough to pick the meat off her bones.” “The force of my devouring curiosity,” she writes, was enough to make Elizabeth II look back over her shoulder with an expression of “hurt bewilderment.”

Mantel doesn’t hate the queen; she’s just curious about the hole in her center, the fact that monarchy has made her “a thing which only had meaning when it was exposed.”

This anti-institutional bent is what drives Mantel’s imaginative intelligence, flaming out in unexpected places. It drives her to describe the Virgin Mary statuettes that haunt her Catholic girlhood, perched in niches like CCTV cameras, watching her every move with “painted eyes of policeman blue.” It drives her in “The Hair Shirt Sisterhood,” a brilliant disquisition on eating disorders, sainthood and the church’s misogyny, to a defense of young girls who choose anorexia: “It is a way of shrinking back, of reserving, preserving the self. … For a year or two, it may be a valid strategy; to be greensick, to be out of the game; to die just a little; to nourish the inner being while starving the outer being; to buy time.”

The origins of her resistance to institutional power, her sympathy for the unsympathetic, Mantel has examined in an earlier memoir, “Giving Up the Ghost.” She describes the first day of school in her industrial Derbyshire village: “I thought that I had come among lunatics; and the teachers, malign and stupid, seemed to me like the lunatics’ keepers. I knew you must not give in to them.” Education is the traditional leg up for clever children from rackety ***working-class*** backgrounds like hers. Mantel, however, from her first glimpse of a classroom, recognized “the need to resist what I found there.”

She might say the same of her experience of the medical establishment, as glanced at in “Meeting the Devil,” an essay in “Mantel Pieces.” Riven since puberty by agonizing period pains and torrential bleeding, Mantel is gaslighted for decades by (male) doctors who palm her off with antidepressants and, yes, antipsychotics. Even after she has correctly diagnosed her own endometriosis and undergone an operation removing her ovaries and uterus, as well as part of her bladder and bowels, the pain and exhaustion are unrelenting. The drugs Mantel will need to take for the rest of her life cause gargantuan weight gain. The author of these essays, you are reminded, is someone in chronic pain, someone whose own body has become unrecognizable to her. What she’s left with is the ferociously lucid mind, the unruly delight of her mocking and self-mocking humor.

My favorite sentence in this book is uncharacteristically quiet, almost plaintive, let fall sotto voce in the middle of a hospital-bed memory: “I wonder, though, if there is a little saint you can apply to, if you are a person with holes in them?”

I suspect we all are people with holes in them, and there are many saints to apply to. For those who feel compelled to examine not just their own “perforations” but the world’s, St. Hilary is your woman.

Fernanda Eberstadt’s novels include “The Furies” and “RAT.” MANTEL PIECES Royal Bodies and Other Writing From The London Review of Books By Hilary Mantel 333 pp. 4th Estate. $26.99.

PHOTO: Hilary Mantel (PHOTOGRAPH BY ELS ZWEERINK)

**Related Articles**

* [*Crashing Henry VIII’s Court One Last Time With Hilary Mantel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/hilary-mantel-mirror-and-the-light-thomas-cromwell.html)

1. [*For Hilary Mantel, There’s No Time Like the Past*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/hilary-mantel-mirror-and-the-light-thomas-cromwell.html)
2. [*Hilary Mantel’s Triumphant New Novel Brings Thomas Cromwell Across the Finish Line*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/books/hilary-mantel-mirror-and-the-light-thomas-cromwell.html)

**Load-Date:** December 9, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Amid Bernie Sanders’s ‘Resurgence,’ a Progressive Coalition Endorses Him***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XPS-GDY1-DXY4-X0G1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 8, 2020 Wednesday 12:11 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1074 words

**Byline:** Astead W. Herndon

**Highlight:** The Center for Popular Democracy Action, a collective of progressive community groups, is endorsing Mr. Sanders over Elizabeth Warren for the Democratic presidential nomination.

**Body**

The Center for Popular Democracy Action, a collective of progressive community groups, is endorsing Mr. Sanders over Elizabeth Warren for the Democratic presidential nomination.

[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).]

The Center for Popular Democracy Action, a coalition of more than 40 progressive community groups totaling about 600,000 members, will on Tuesday endorse [*Senator Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html) of Vermont for the Democratic presidential nomination, signaling that Mr. Sanders’s political standing among the party’s left wing has rebounded — or even risen — in the months since he suffered a heart attack.

At the time of his [*hospitalization*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html), in early October, Mr. Sanders was under intense political pressure. [*Senator Elizabeth Warren*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html) of Massachusetts had surged past him in polling and positioned herself as the progressive standard-bearer in the race, buoyed by an endorsement from [*the Working Families Party*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html), a key progressive group that had endorsed Mr. Sanders in the 2016 race.

Now, their political fortunes have shifted. Mr. Sanders has [*risen in the polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html), while Ms. Warren has plateaued, stymied by a barrage of political attacks that have forced her to make a rare shift in messaging. Leaders for C.P.D. Action, which includes liberal groups focusing on immigration, health care, housing and other issues, said Mr. Sanders had seen a jolt of popularity within the organization in the past two months, surpassing Ms. Warren. This is the first time the group, founded in 2012, has endorsed in the presidential race.

Jennifer Epps-Addison, the group’s co-executive director, called it a “resurgence.”

“What Bernie Sanders has built — it is not arguable,” Ms. Epps-Addison said. “It’s an exciting and different energy than we’ve seen in the Democratic base.”

Mr. Sanders also nabbed the endorsement of the [*National Nurses United*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html), the country’s biggest nurses’ union, in November.

The fight to become the party’s progressive front-runner is having significant effects on the battle for the Democratic nomination. Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. continues to lead in polling with the support of nonwhite and ***working-class*** voters, while groups like C.P.D. Action and the Working Families Party are seeking to entice these demographics into their progressive coalition. If they are successful, it may upend the primary.

But without a clear candidate atop the progressive coalition, and Mr. Sanders and Ms. Warren still battling for pole position among their ideological base just two months before the Iowa caucus, some worry that the left will miss a critical window to overtake Mr. Biden and define the Democratic Party’s future.

“I’m a little worried about the split,” said Gustavo Torres, president of CASA in Action, a Latino and immigrant organization that is an affiliate of C.P.D.

Maurice Mitchell, the national director of the Working Families Party, acknowledged that the race remains fluid, and the electoral picture on the party’s left, like the presidential race at large, can shift at a moment’s notice.

“Warren and Sanders are both giants of the progressive movement,” Mr. Mitchell said in a statement. “We’re with Warren, but I applaud anyone putting their organizing muscle behind either of them. It’s the only way we’re going to win against the corporate Democrats and beat Donald Trump.”

For C.P.D. Action, the endorsement means it will now marshal its affiliates — more than 600,000 members across the country — to organize voters in support of Mr. Sanders in the primary. Leaders said there will be a particular focus on reaching racial minorities and a grass-roots strategy to bring new voters into the process.

Mr. Sanders, Ms. Warren and the former cabinet secretary Julián Castro were finalists for the group’s endorsements. C.P.D. Action did not release raw vote totals from its affiliates, but the Vermont senator secured a commanding 75 percent of the vote on the second ballot against Ms. Warren, said a person familiar with the process.

The group’s endorsement comes after Mr. Sanders also secured the backing of three of the most prominent and progressive members of the House: Representatives [*Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html)of New York, [*Rashida Tlaib*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html) of Michigan and [*Ilhan Omar*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html) of Minnesota.

[*Ms. Ocasio-Cortez campaigned for Mr. Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html) in eastern Iowa last month.

“When people try to accuse us of going too far left — we’re not pushing the party left,” Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said during a rally in Coralville. “We are bringing the party home.”

The split among progressive groups shows that while Mr. Sanders and Ms. Warren are often seen as interchangeable left-wingers by the party’s moderates, leading progressives see tangible differences.

Ms. Warren has had more success among college-educated white liberals and prominent liberal activists who backed Hillary Clinton in the last presidential cycle. Mr. Sanders is often preferred by the party’s more ardent activists, who are not scared off by his willingness to buck Democratic traditions.

In their own words, Ms. Warren has defined herself as a capitalist working within the Democratic Party. Mr. Sanders has identified as a Democratic Socialist, and is an independent who has not registered with the Democratic Party during his decades in Congress.

However, leaders from C.P.D. Action said it’s that history of outside advocacy that helped sway their support to Mr. Sanders over rivals such as Ms. Warren and Mr. Castro. They clarified that both still have significant good will among the collection of members, even as their members endorse Mr. Sanders.

“His supporters have found each other collectively, and they’ve found a voice in the movement orientation of Bernie Sanders,” Ms. Epps-Addison said. “That’s the energy we need to defeat Donald Trump.”

Mr. Torres said considering the importance of next year’s election, he wants to support someone who can match the outsider persona of Mr. Trump. In that view, he sees Mr. Sanders’s self-identified socialist label as not an electoral liability but a strength.

“How we see it, Senator Sanders very clearly distinguished himself from President Trump on politics and style and behavior,” he said. And while they approve of Ms. Warren, he believes that in order to win in 2020, “we need the biggest distinction possible.”

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders spoke at a rally in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, on Saturday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jordan Gale for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2020

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[***The Community That Covid-19 Built; CANADA LETTER***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60CJ-RH01-DXY4-X41K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 17, 2020 Friday 16:56 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; canada

**Length:** 1101 words

**Byline:** Catherine Porter

**Highlight:** On Hiawatha Road, the virus has stitched neighbors into a community that exchanges homemade food and homegrown produce.

**Body**

On Hiawatha Road, the virus has stitched neighbors into a community that exchanges homemade food and homegrown produce.

The wagon on Jennifer Ois’s front porch is a symbol of the coronavirus’s silver lining. It’s red and wooden, with black rubber wheels that once fell off, when Ms. Ois was towing her first child and a frozen turkey home from a store many years ago.

These days, the wagon is crowded with homemade things like fermented turmeric soda, ginger-berry kefir water, lemongrass ice cream and fresh lettuce from the garden, all waiting to be picked up by a neighbor.

“Now it’s got a whole other purpose,” says Ms. Ois. It’s carrying kindness down her street.

Since visiting her neighborhood on Hiawatha Road a few weeks ago, I’ve returned to it many times in my mind. I find it comforting. It reminds me that despite the virus’s darkness, it has offered some illumination — a slowing of time and a return to life’s essentials. The people on this street have used that time to learn old-fashioned skills like fermentation and growing vegetables, and in the process they’ve become a community.

They’ve been lucky, too — while some on the street have lost employment to the virus, [*this part of the city has been relatively unscathed*](https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/05/28/as-toronto-covid-19-hotspot-maps-show-an-unequal-toll-ontario-has-yet-to-start-collecting-income-and-race-data.html) by Covid-19 infections and deaths.

The street is classic east-end Toronto — three long blocks of houses huddled together, as if for warmth. It was once part of a 600-acre farm owned by the Ashbridges, an English Quaker family from Pennsylvania who fled to Canada as Loyalists after the American Revolution. It remained a farm outside the city limits for more than a century, until the land was parceled and sold off — for shacks for the immigrating poor and for planned subdivisions.

Walking down the street, you can see the signs of that history in the architecture — old ***working-class*** bungalows wedged beside gentrified two-story brick homes. You can also see locals homesteading in ways that Sarah Ashbridge, the matriarch of the Quaker settlers, would likely recognize.

Ms. Ois is known locally as the “fer-mentor.” On her stove, a pot of water, grated ginger and molasses cools next to her “ginger bug” — the makings for ginger ale. Her slow cooker is warming milk for yogurt. She pulls colorful jars out of her “fermenting cupboard” — homemade vinegars, kombuchas and pickles.

For many years, she bugged her neighbors to try her hobby, but they were too busy, rushing from work to children’s hockey practices. When the country went into lockdown in March, she found a captive audience with long days to fill and anxiety to expend.

“When this all happened, everyone else came into my world,” said Ms. Ois, 43, a stay-at-home parent. “Many said, ‘I don’t know what to do.’ Well, I know what to do. I’m an expert at it.”

She offered [*kombucha scobies*](https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/05/28/as-toronto-covid-19-hotspot-maps-show-an-unequal-toll-ontario-has-yet-to-start-collecting-income-and-race-data.html), sourdough starter, and seeds for her neighbors’ nascent vegetable patches. She left them all in the wagon on her front porch, and texted pictures of her handwritten recipes.

Just down the street, Guillermo del Aguila had set up a hydroponics nursery in his basement for the first time, to supply the seedlings for his family’s backyard greenhouse. He was better at it than he expected. He joined in the exchange, issuing his own community offerings: eggplant, sweet pepper, tomato and leek seedlings.

Jon Harris lives a few doors down. Both he and his wife had been deemed essential workers, so time had not stopped still for them. But he found making bread soothing. The baking section of grocery store shelves was bare, but he knew of a commercial mill and put out a call to the street. His first order was for 300 kilograms of flour and 25 pounds of yeast.

“There’s something magical happening,” said Mr. Harris, 44, an electrician.

He added, “I wonder if there is something about watching the world spin around you and thinking about your mortality. We have a little more space to grab onto the things we want to be important.”

The trading and pioneer hobbies have continued, even as the city has begun slowly to open up. Ms. Ois set up a swap page on Facebook, and offers went up from neighbors for homemade granola, freezer strawberry jam, lavender, eggs, espresso syrup, bitters for cocktails. Deborah MacDonald ventured to the red wagon to pick up champagne yeast to make raspberry mead, with Ms. Ois’s handwritten recipe. She left fresh-baked bread.

“I used to joke I didn’t know anybody on the street,” said Ms. MacDonald, a film producer who often clocked 11-hour days at the office. While there was a sense of community before, many of her neighbors barely knew each other before the virus stitched their friendships.

“We’ve all helped each other get through this crazy time,” said Ms. MacDonald. “In some respects it’s allowed us to forget a little about all the terrible.”

Ms. Ois’s husband hammered together a greenhouse in their backyard that she called “the house Covid built.” She and the del Aguila family plan to grow seedlings for their neighbors’ bursting gardens next spring.

“There’s no going back,” said Kara del Aguila, Guillermo’s wife, who considers the street her “precious lifeline.”

“We don’t order flowers for delivery anymore,” she said. “We go to our neighbors’ homes and knock on the front door and give them something we made.”

Trans Canada

* Prime Minister Justin Trudeau [*apologized*](https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/05/28/as-toronto-covid-19-hotspot-maps-show-an-unequal-toll-ontario-has-yet-to-start-collecting-income-and-race-data.html) again this week — this time for taking part in a decision to award a no-bid government contract to a charity deeply connected to his family. The country’s ethics commissioner is digging into the affair, marking the third time Mr. Trudeau has been investigated for breaking conflict-of-interest rules since coming to power in 2015.

1. Since a New Jersey hedge fund quietly assumed ownership of Postmedia, Canada’s largest newspaper chain, the company has cut its work force, shuttered papers across Canada, reduced salaries and benefits, and centralized editorial operations in a way that has made parts of its 106 newspapers into clones of one another, my colleague [*Edmund Lee reports*](https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/05/28/as-toronto-covid-19-hotspot-maps-show-an-unequal-toll-ontario-has-yet-to-start-collecting-income-and-race-data.html).

Catherine Porter is the Canada bureau chief, based in Toronto. Before she joined the Times in 2017, she was a columnist and feature writer for The Toronto Star, Canada’s largest-circulation newspaper. Follow her on Twitter at [*@porterthereport*](https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/05/28/as-toronto-covid-19-hotspot-maps-show-an-unequal-toll-ontario-has-yet-to-start-collecting-income-and-race-data.html)

How are we doing?

We’re eager to have your thoughts about this newsletter and events in Canada in general. Please send them to [*nytcanada@nytimes.com*](https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/05/28/as-toronto-covid-19-hotspot-maps-show-an-unequal-toll-ontario-has-yet-to-start-collecting-income-and-race-data.html).

Like this email?

Forward it to your friends, and let them know they can sign up [*here*](https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/05/28/as-toronto-covid-19-hotspot-maps-show-an-unequal-toll-ontario-has-yet-to-start-collecting-income-and-race-data.html).

PHOTO: Hiawatha Road in Toronto, where neighbors are growing, trading and sharing food. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ian Willms for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 18, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The French Reaction to 'Emily'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:610C-1NB1-DXY4-X0HK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 4, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 1246 words

**Byline:** By Elaine Sciolino

**Body**

Darren Star's latest serial goes down like sour wine with les vrais Parisiennes.

PARIS -- The old story of the American ingénue who moves to Paris, succumbs to the city's sensual pleasures (usually by way of a French lover) and masters its hardened customs (never smiling at strangers) is a perennial crowd-pleaser -- if the crowds are American, that is.

Parisians, however, like to rail against the clichés about their city as the world's epicenter of romance. So as soon as Netflix released a minute-long trailer for''Emily in Paris,'' a series created by Darren Star and starring Lily Collins that is being billed as the Gallic-themed heir to ''Sex and the City'' and that will premiere on Oct. 2, some French commentators went on the attack.

''Between the beret, the cocktail dresses and the impeccable streets, Parisians had a hard time recognizing their everyday life,'' RTL, the French radio station, wrote on its website. Les Inrockuptibles, a French magazine that likes to hate American popular culture, wrote that Parisians were already laughing at the show.

But when I showed excerpts from 10 episodes to more than a dozen Parisians from the ages of 22 to 81, they elicited more nuanced impressions. Slightly more nuanced.

The overwhelming response was ''ridicule'' -- French for ridiculous and absurd, as well as comical and amusing.

''Ridicule'' that Emily Cooper, a 20-something social media wiz from Chicago, played by Ms. Collins, would unexpectedly find herself responsible for teaching a Parisian luxury marketing firm (clients: a perfumer who is a thinly disguised Frederic Malle and a couturier who is a cross between Karl Lagerfeld and Christian Lacroix) how to improve their Instagram and Twitter game.

''Ridicule'' that Emily arrives to every scene in a different pair of stiletto heels and flashy pret a porter ensemble that couldn't possibly fit onto the streets of Paris -- or into her budget.

''Ridicule'' that Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu, who plays Sylvie Grateau, the head of the firm, publicly insults and belittles Emily with artful malevolence, not, as many French might do, behind her back.

And most ''ridicule'' of all, that Emily speaks no French, and relied on a translation app on her cellphone. ''They never work,'' said Caroline Valentin, the owner and director of an atelier that creates hand-embroidered and beaded costumes for the theater.

''The clichés are so many and so concentrated that they pile up like a collection of little stories that become comical in their exaggeration,'' said Philippe Thureau-Dangin, 65, the owner and director of Exils, a small French book publishing firm. ''Maybe the creators of the series are trying to mimic Molière. Molière also exaggerated and created impossible situations for comic effect.''

Mr. Thureau-Dangin chuckled when the middle-aged outgoing director of the French company greets Emily with a warm ''bise'' -- kiss on each cheek. ''That bise would never happen in an office of professionals on a first meeting,'' he said. ''It's a little too direct, no?'' The director also happens to be smoking a cigarette. ''And smoking -- without asking permission?'' Mr. Thureau-Dangin added. ''That would never happen either, especially as you can't smoke in French offices anymore.''

Another thing viewers thought would never happen: an advertising shoot of a lean blond Serbian model strutting across the Alexandre III bridge for a perfume campaign. She is naked, except for the scent she wears. Emily, acutely aware of the #MeToo movement, objects to the campaign's sexism. The French perfumer, backed by Emily's female boss, calls it, rather, ''sexy.''

''It's a parody of the nudity they used in publicity 20 or 30 years ago!'' said Léo Bigiaoui, a 29-year-old videographer. In 2016, after Paris City Hall released a short film showing the city's picturesque icons -- the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, bridges over the Seine -- Mr. Bigiaoui and his partner Maxime Baudin countered with their short video ''Paris We Love You Too.'' It showed everyday life: a man fishing, a full-hipped woman jogging and ***working-class*** shoppers in outdoor food markets. .

''I could never, ever imagine a shoot of a naked woman on a bridge over the Seine,'' Mr. Bigiaoui said. ''This really sucks!''

France's version of #MeToo, #BalanceTonPorc (#ExposeYourPig), has made advertisers and marketers more cautious about how they use sex as a selling tool. ''I wouldn't try to sell perfume with a video showing a naked woman trying to excite men,'' said Florence Coupry, a 33-year-old executive in a top French strategic communications firm. ''This has nothing to do with being French. A campaign like this would backfire.''

Still, Ms. Coupry believes the exaggeration of the stereotypes was intentional ''This is a series about extreme clichés, cliché after cliché,'' she said. ''Whoever made this is clearly having fun with the clichés. As viewers, we're being played with here.''

For Ms. Coupry, the series is a feed of color-saturated Instagram posts come to life. ''Remember, the word 'cliché' means picture, and Emily is the queen of Instagram pictures, of online 'likes,''' Ms. Coupry said. ''She is obsessed with wanting to be 'liked' in real life, even by her very mean boss.''

Yet one thing about that mean boss rang true for many viewers: When Emily asks Sylvie why she doesn't want to get to know her, Sylvie replies, ''You come to Paris. You walk into my office. You don't even bother to learn the language. You treat the city like it's your amusement park. And after a year of food, sex, wine and maybe some culture, you'll go back to where you came from.'' There is a certain native reluctance to befriend Americans who come and go.

Parisians can be sticklers for accuracy, and some viewers were quick to point out factual mistakes. Among them: Emily's 120-watt vibrator may have short-circuited the electricity in her apartment but would never have shut down the power in the entire neighborhood; her apartment is not, as portrayed, a standard, cramped, 100-square-foot chambre de bonne (maid's room) in the attic, but a generous space on the floor below. And no one raised on aged, marbled American beef from the Midwest would ever call a French steak ''surprisingly tender,'' no matter how rare it was cooked.

And yet I can relate to Emily. I first moved to Paris from Chicago as a foreign correspondent for Newsweek when I was in my late 20s, with no friends, imperfect French and an apartment with a close-up view of the Eiffel Tower. The other correspondents in the bureau (older men) treated me with tolerance or barely concealed contempt.

Within a year, I was on an Air France chartered plane with an aging ayatollah to Iran, where he made his revolution. I survived professionally by leaving the country. My sheepskin coat and Sorel snow boots from Chicago, no use in Paris, were perfect in Tehran.

I learned that sometimes the clichés are true.

And that is what makes ''Emily in Paris,'' at times, fun. Some viewers saw the series as refreshing escapism from the pandemic. In real-life Paris, masks are mandatory in all public places; bars close at 10 p.m.

''The series started out cringe worthy, but gets better,'' said Arthur Back, a 22-year-old volunteer for an NGO that resettles political refugees. ''I might watch it with friends as a pick-me-up. Any kind of distraction is good these days.''

Elaine Sciolino's most recent book is ''The Seine: The River That Made Paris.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/style/Emily-in-Paris.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/style/Emily-in-Paris.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From top: Lily Collins as Emily, a transplanted young American, in Darren Star's new Netflix series, ''Emily in Paris''

from left, Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu, Samuel Arnold and Ms. Collins

Ms. Collins and Lucas Bravo. Among a group of Parisians who watched excerpts, many said the show was riddled with clichés. ''As viewers, we're being played with here,'' said Florence Coupry, a 33-year-old executive. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROLE BETHUEL/NETFLIX

NETFLIX)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Heartland Woes: 'If He Doesn't Win Ohio, It's Over'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:610C-1NB1-DXY4-X0JC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 4, 2020 Sunday

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 23; POLL WATCH

**Length:** 1330 words

**Byline:** By Giovanni Russonello

**Body**

Four years ago, the president easily won Ohio by building a balanced coalition among white voters across educational lines. But his support has waned since then, particularly in the suburbs.

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.

No Republican has ever won a presidential election without taking Ohio, and Donald J. Trump carried it with ease in 2016, performing strongly with white voters in almost every demographic.

If he doesn't capture the state in November, it's hard to see him winning the election -- but the polling picture looks more worrisome for him this time around.

In a Quinnipiac University poll released last week, Joe Biden had a statistically insignificant edge of one percentage point on the president, while a survey released the same day by Fox News put Mr. Biden ahead by five points.

After the president said early Friday morning that he had tested positive for the coronavirus, the future of the race was thrown even further into doubt. But Ohio's bellwether status remains a dependable fact of political life.

''If he doesn't win Ohio, it's over,'' David Cohen, a political scientist at the University of Akron, said in an interview. He noted that Mr. Trump had traveled to Ohio several times last month, holding rallies in white, ***working-class*** areas in a tacit acknowledgment of how badly he'll need the state in order to eke out an Electoral College victory.

''If you think about it, why the heck is he spending any time in Ohio in September, in a state that he won by over eight points?'' Dr. Cohen said. ''The only answer is that he and his campaign know that he's in trouble.''

Four years ago, Mr. Trump built a particularly balanced coalition among Ohio's white voters, winning across education levels. But his support in the state has waned over the past four years, particularly in the suburbs.

In the process, white voters in Ohio have become about as heavily divided along educational lines as they are in the rest of the country. It is evidence, from a conservative Midwestern stronghold where most state offices are consistently held by Republicans, that Mr. Trump's divisive brand of politics has been more effective at sifting voters out of his coalition than at bringing them in.

In 2016, exit polls showed that Hillary Clinton actually did better among non-college white voters in Ohio than she did nationally, reflective of a longstanding blue-collar Democratic tradition in parts of the state. Among white voters with college degrees, meanwhile, the opposite was true: She underperformed especially badly in Ohio, where staunch white-collar conservatism is a long-held custom.

The result is that Mr. Trump did almost as well among white people with a degree in Ohio -- who deeply distrusted Mrs. Clinton -- as he did among those without a college education.

But this has all changed. Averaging together the recent Fox and Quinnipiac polls, Mr. Trump was running 12 points behind his 2016 totals among white voters with degrees.

As a result, while exit polls four years ago showed Mr. Trump winning the suburbs in Ohio by 20 points -- leagues better than his support in suburbs elsewhere in the country -- the Fox poll last week put him 10 points behind Mr. Biden in the state's suburbs.

Thomas Sutton, the director of the Community Research Institute at Baldwin Wallace University outside Cleveland, pointed out that the only part of the state with a significant growth in population in recent years had been the Columbus area, home of the state capital and its major public university, where there has been an influx of health care industry jobs and other white-collar work in recent years.

Columbus's growth, and the expansion of suburbs and exurbs into what used to be rural and blue-collar areas, might have once spelled an opportunity for Republicans. But under Mr. Trump the Republican Party has lost its footing among specifically these kinds of voters -- and the growth in Franklin County, which includes Columbus, plays into Mr. Biden's hands.

Mrs. Clinton barely had the advantage in the Columbus area in 2016, according to exit polls; this year, Mr. Biden appears poised to far outmatch her totals there.

''Trump's support has peaked, and particularly in the suburbs, people are turning toward Biden,'' Dr. Sutton said. ''Some of them were Obama voters before that; some of them are dyed-in-the-wool Republican types. And in both cases, they've had enough of Trump, is what they say.''

In the case of disenchanted Republican voters, ''they support the politics of his administration -- lower taxes, deregulation, conservative judges and justices being appointed,'' Dr. Sutton added. ''But it's Trump himself that they've had enough of. It's not that they're embracing Biden, but they're ready to move away from Trump.''

The Quinnipiac poll found Mr. Biden with an approval rating of just 45 percent, while 49 percent saw him unfavorably. For Mr. Trump, the numbers were similar: Forty-five percent saw him favorably, 51 percent unfavorably.

While the president maintains a commanding lead among rural voters, recent polling has put him more than 10 points behind his 2016 numbers with this group. Dr. Cohen, the University of Akron professor, said that Mr. Trump had also worn on the patience of some in these areas, after making great promises to them in 2016.

''When he came to Ohio and told people to not sell their houses, that he was going to bring all their jobs back -- and he clearly hasn't -- people pay attention,'' Dr. Cohen said. ''The people that worked at that G.M. Lordstown plant, they know the jobs haven't come back,'' he added, referring to a General Motors factory whose abrupt closure in 2018 Mr. Biden has sought to exploit on the campaign trail.

Dr. Cohen added that the president's decision to target Goodyear in a public spat had alienated some voters in northeastern Ohio, where the company is both iconic and a major employer.

The Quinnipiac poll found that when given a list of eight political issues, Ohio voters selected the economy and ''law and order'' as their top areas of concern, with 27 percent and 17 percent naming those two -- a positive sign for Mr. Trump, who has sought to center voters' focus on these topics. An additional 14 percent named the coronavirus, and 11 percent cited issues of racial injustice -- more favorable political terrain for Mr. Biden.

But the virus has been a matter of major concern across the state, and Dr. Cohen said that a poll that he and his colleagues conducted at the University of Akron's Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics had shown that worries about it cut across demographic divides.

The Fox poll last week found that 69 percent of likely voters said they thought the virus was no better than ''somewhat'' under control.

Ohio has been conducting no-excuse absentee voting in statewide elections for over a decade and is offering an array of early-voting options this year. Other than a legal dispute over how many early-voting drop boxes to allow in each county, there have not been many high-profile examples of legal challenges to ballot access.

According to the Fox poll, just 42 percent of voters said they would vote in person on Election Day. About the same number planned to vote by mail. Democrats were twice as likely as Republicans to say they would vote by mail, the poll found.

Ohio allows election officials to open and scan absentee ballots before Election Day, contacting voters whose ballots have errors so that they can fix them and preparing the ballots to be counted at polling places. As soon as polls close at 7:30 p.m., those ballots can be counted.

Therefore, unlike in other key states that wait longer to count mail-in ballots, it's possible that in Ohio, votes cast by mail -- which are likely to be more heavily Democratic than others -- will be among the first to be counted.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/us/politics/trump-ohio-polls.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/us/politics/trump-ohio-polls.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: People waved as President Trump's motorcade passed through Clyde, Ohio, in August. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Anna Moneymaker for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Not Every Minute Needs to Be Optimized***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YKJ-B9D1-JBG3-634S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 5, 2020 Sunday

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 1037 words

**Byline:** By Taylor Lorenz

**Body**

The internet wants you to believe you aren't doing enough with all that ''extra time'' you have now. But staying inside and attending to basic needs is plenty.

When Dave Kyu, 34, an arts administrator in Philadelphia, realized that he would be working from home for the foreseeable future, he began to fantasize about the projects he could now complete around the house.

''We went and bought all this paint and cabinet hardware and thought we were going to do the kitchen cabinet project we had wanted to do forever,'' he said. Two weeks later, he and his wife haven't touched their supplies. They have two children and demanding jobs. There's no extra time.

''We realize now it was a silly thought,'' Mr. Kyu said. ''It's a lot more stressful than I expected.''

As the coronavirus outbreak has brought life largely indoors, many people are feeling pressure to organize every room in their homes, become expert home chefs (or bakers), write the next ''King Lear'' and get in shape. The internet -- with its constant stream of how-to headlines and viral challenges -- has only reinforced the demand to get things done.

''It's everywhere,'' said Julie Ulstrup, 57, a photographer in Colorado. ''It's in blog posts, it's on social media, it's in emails I get from people like, 'use this time productively!' As if I usually don't.''

But in the midst of a global pandemic that has upended nearly every facet of modern life, people are finding it harder and harder to get things done.

''It's tough enough to be productive in the best of times let alone when we're in a global crisis,'' said Chris Bailey, a productivity consultant and the author of ''Hyperfocus: How to Manage Your Attention in a World of Distraction.'' ''The idea that we have so much time available during the day now is fantastic, but these days it's the opposite of a luxury. We're home because we have to be home, and we have much less attention because we're living through so much.''

After her office announced that it would be going remote, Sara Johnson, 30, who works in philanthropy, created a detailed schedule of all the things she'd do with the extra three hours a day that she would no longer spend commuting. ''I sat down last weekend and just felt like I hadn't been maximizing this time that I have that I don't usually have on my hands,'' she said.

''I set an hour on my cal every day for a home workout. Then I'd be on calls for three hours, then I'd make a homemade breakfast, take a walk at lunchtime, work on something non-screen-related in the evening, cook dinner and go on a run,'' she said. So far, she admitted, ''none of this has stuck.''

This urge to overachieve, even in times of global crisis, is reflective of America's always-on work culture. In a recent article for The New Republic, the journalist Nick Martin writes that ''this mind-set is the natural endpoint of America's hustle culture -- the idea that every nanosecond of our lives must be commodified and pointed toward profit and self-improvement.'' Drew Millard put it more directly in an essay for The Outline: If you are lucky enough to be employed, the only person who cares what you're doing right now is your boss.

Anne Helen Petersen, a journalist and the author of the forthcoming book ''Can't Even: How Millennials Became the Burnout Generation,'' seconded his assertion. ''We're so used to making every moment of ours productive in some capacity,'' she said. ''Like, I'm on a walk, I should listen to this information podcast that makes me more informed or a better person.''

Dr. Petersen said that the impulse to optimize every minute is especially common in millennials, many of whom are now balancing work and child care at home. ''I think for millennials, our brains are particularly broken in terms of productivity,'' she said. ''Either you give up or feel bad about it all the time.''

Maggie Schuman, 32, is facing that very quandary now that her family is taking part in a Peloton challenge through the workout platform's app.

''Every day everyone sends around a green check mark, and for some reason, now that I have that in my head of this thing I'm supposed to be doing, I'm not doing it,'' Ms. Schuman, a product specialist in California, said. ''I feel a bit like a failure.'' She also ignored her sister when she tagged her in a push-up challenge on Instagram.

Instead, Ms. Schuman has started a gratitude journal and is working on practicing acceptance. ''You're supposed to be inventing something or coming up with the next big business idea or doing something great that's going to be worthy of time spent at home,'' she said. ''I'm trying to be more OK with just being.''

Noelle Kelso, 38, a scientific consultant in Georgia, said that she's ''trying to find productivity in the small moments'' but that the recent events have given her perspective.

''For a lot of Americans, everyone's job is at stake right now whether you thought you were upper middle class, middle or ***working class***, everyone's livelihood is at stake,'' she said. Right now she is focusing on not allowing her mind to ''drift to a place of fear, concern, panic or stress,'' she said, and instead encouraging herself to ''keep the faith and remain grateful.''

''Putting all this pressure and stress on myself, it's incredibly counterproductive,'' said Ms. Ulstrup. ''I'm putting stress on myself during a time that's already stressful.''

Adam Hasham, 40, a product manager in Washington, said that it's only a matter of time before more people realize that self-optimization in this time is futile. ''I stopped seeing the light at the end of the tunnel,'' he said, adding that his optimism about the situation had ''gone out the window.''

''It's like you're underwater,'' Mr. Hasham said.

Dr. Petersen said having compassion during these times is key. ''I think that everyone is coping with this differently, and there's a real tendency to shame people who aren't coping with it the way you are or have different circumstances,'' she said.

Finding small pleasures helps, too. Mr. Bailey offered one suggestion: ''Get yourself some Indian food and drink a bottle of wine with your spouse. We're going through a lot and we all just need to take it easy.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/style/productivity-coronavirus.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/style/productivity-coronavirus.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Raz Latif FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***‘Ridicule’: The French Reaction to ‘Emily in Paris’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60YX-HG81-DXY4-X093-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** STYLE

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**Byline:** Elaine Sciolino

**Highlight:** Darren Star’s latest serial goes down like sour wine for actual Parisians.

**Body**

Darren Star’s latest serial goes down like sour wine for actual Parisians.

PARIS — The old story of the American ingénue who moves to Paris, succumbs to the city’s sensual pleasures (usually by way of a French lover) and masters its hardened customs (never smiling at strangers) is a perennial crowd-pleaser — if the crowds are American, that is.

Parisians, however, like to rail against the clichés about their city as the world’s epicenter of romance. So as soon as Netflix released a minute-long trailer for“Emily in Paris,” a series created by Darren Star and starring Lily Collins that is being billed as the Gallic-themed heir to “Sex and the City” and that will premiere on Oct. 2, some French commentators went on the attack.

“Between the beret, the cocktail dresses and the impeccable streets, Parisians had a hard time recognizing their everyday life,” RTL, the French radio station, wrote on its [*website*](https://www.rtl.fr/culture/cine-series/emily-in-paris-netflix-le-paris-fantasme-de-la-serie-fait-hurler-les-francais-7800770102). Les Inrockuptibles, a French magazine that likes to hate American popular culture, wrote that Parisians were [*already laughing at the show*](https://www.rtl.fr/culture/cine-series/emily-in-paris-netflix-le-paris-fantasme-de-la-serie-fait-hurler-les-francais-7800770102).

But when I showed excerpts from 10 episodes to more than a dozen Parisians from the ages of 22 to 81, they elicited more nuanced impressions. Slightly more nuanced.

The overwhelming response was “ridicule” — French for ridiculous and absurd, as well as comical and amusing.

“Ridicule” that Emily Cooper, a 20-something social media wiz from Chicago, played by Ms. Collins, would unexpectedly find herself responsible for teaching a Parisian luxury marketing firm (clients: a perfumer who is a thinly disguised Frederic Malle and a couturier who is a cross between Karl Lagerfeld and Christian Lacroix) how to improve their Instagram and Twitter game.

“Ridicule” that Emily arrives to every scene in a different pair of stiletto heels and flashy pret a porter ensemble that couldn’t possibly fit onto the streets of Paris — or into her budget.

“Ridicule” that Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu, who plays Sylvie Grateau, the head of the firm, publicly insults and belittles Emily with artful malevolence, not, as many French might do, behind her back.

And most “ridicule” of all, that Emily speaks no French, and relied on a translation app on her cellphone. “They never work,” said Caroline Valentin, the owner and director of an atelier that creates hand-embroidered and beaded costumes for the theater.

“The clichés are so many and so concentrated that they pile up like a collection of little stories that become comical in their exaggeration,” said Philippe Thureau-Dangin, 65, the owner and director of Exils, a small French book publishing firm. “Maybe the creators of the series are trying to mimic Molière. Molière also exaggerated and created impossible situations for comic effect.”

Mr. Thureau-Dangin chuckled when the middle-aged outgoing director of the French company greets Emily with a warm “bise” — kiss on each cheek. “That bise would never happen in an office of professionals on a first meeting,” he said. “It’s a little too direct, no?” The director also happens to be smoking a cigarette. “And smoking — without asking permission?” Mr. Thureau-Dangin added. “That would never happen either, especially as you can’t smoke in French offices anymore.”

Another thing viewers thought would never happen: an advertising shoot of a lean blond Serbian model strutting across the Alexandre III bridge for a perfume campaign. She is naked, except for the scent she wears. Emily, acutely aware of the #MeToo movement, objects to the campaign’s sexism. The French perfumer, backed by Emily’s female boss, calls it, rather, “sexy.”

“It’s a parody of the nudity they used in publicity 20 or 30 years ago!” said Léo Bigiaoui, a 29-year-old videographer. In 2016, after Paris City Hall released a short film showing the city’s picturesque icons — the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, bridges over the Seine — Mr. Bigiaoui and his partner Maxime Baudin countered with their short video “Paris We Love You Too.” It showed everyday life: a man fishing, a full-hipped woman jogging and ***working-class*** shoppers in outdoor food markets.

“I could never, ever imagine a shoot of a naked woman on a bridge over the Seine,” Mr. Bigiaoui said. “This really sucks!”

France’s version of #MeToo, #BalanceTonPorc (#ExposeYourPig), has made advertisers and marketers more cautious about how they use sex as a selling tool. “I wouldn’t try to sell perfume with a video showing a naked woman trying to excite men,” said Florence Coupry, a 33-year-old executive in a top French strategic communications firm. “This has nothing to do with being French. A campaign like this would backfire.”

Still, Ms. Coupry believes the exaggeration of the stereotypes was intentional “This is a series about extreme clichés, cliché after cliché,” she said. “Whoever made this is clearly having fun with the clichés. As viewers, we’re being played with here.”

For Ms. Coupry, the series is a feed of color-saturated Instagram posts come to life. “Remember, the word ‘cliché’ means picture, and Emily is the queen of Instagram pictures, of online ‘likes,’” Ms. Coupry said. “She is obsessed with wanting to be ‘liked’ in real life, even by her very mean boss.”

Yet one thing about that mean boss rang true for many viewers: When Emily asks Sylvie why she doesn’t want to get to know her, Sylvie replies, “You come to Paris. You walk into my office. You don’t even bother to learn the language. You treat the city like it’s your amusement park. And after a year of food, sex, wine and maybe some culture, you’ll go back to where you came from.” There is a certain native reluctance to befriend Americans who come and go.

Parisians can be sticklers for accuracy, and some viewers were quick to point out factual mistakes. Among them: Emily’s 120-watt vibrator may have short-circuited the electricity in her apartment but would never have shut down the power in the entire neighborhood; her apartment is not, as portrayed, a standard, cramped, 100-square-foot chambre de bonne (maid’s room) in the attic, but a generous space on the floor below. And no one raised on aged, marbled American beef from the Midwest would ever call a French steak “surprisingly tender,” no matter how rare it was cooked.

And yet I can relate to Emily. I first moved to Paris from Chicago as a foreign correspondent for Newsweek when I was in my late 20s, with no friends, imperfect French and an apartment with a close-up view of the Eiffel Tower. The other correspondents in the bureau (older men) treated me with tolerance or barely concealed contempt.

Within a year, I was on an Air France chartered plane with an aging ayatollah to Iran, where he made his revolution. I survived professionally by leaving the country. My sheepskin coat and Sorel snow boots from Chicago, no use in Paris, were perfect in Tehran.

I learned that sometimes the clichés are true.

And that is what makes “Emily in Paris,” at times, fun. Some viewers saw the series as refreshing escapism from the pandemic. In real-life Paris, masks are mandatory in all public places; bars close at 10 p.m.

“The series started out cringe worthy, but gets better,” said Arthur Back, a 22-year-old volunteer for an NGO that resettles political refugees. “I might watch it with friends as a pick-me-up. Any kind of distraction is good these days.”

Elaine Sciolino’s most recent book is “The Seine: The River That Made Paris.”

PHOTOS: From top: Lily Collins as Emily, a transplanted young American, in Darren Star’s new Netflix series, “Emily in Paris”; from left, Philippine Leroy-Beaulieu, Samuel Arnold and Ms. Collins; Ms. Collins and Lucas Bravo. Among a group of Parisians who watched excerpts, many said the show was riddled with clichés. “As viewers, we’re being played with here,” said Florence Coupry, a 33-year-old executive. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAROLE BETHUEL/NETFLIX; NETFLIX)

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**End of Document**



[***Embracing Imperfection, Breaking Ground***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63W0-1441-DXY4-X53F-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

''Insecure'' begins its final season by looking backward.

In the season premiere, which debuts Oct. 24 on HBO, the best friends Issa Dee (Issa Rae) and Molly Carter (Yvonne Orji) meet up at Stanford University for their 10-year college reunion, having spent most of last season fighting and apart. Over an eventful weekend, they reminisce about the origins of their relationship and pledge to move forward together, once again firmly in each other's corners.

It suggests that for the final stretch, ''Insecure'' is returning to the thing that made it so appealing for Black viewers especially, and so subtly groundbreaking for premium cable: consistent focus on the ups and downs of Black women's friendships. Created by Rae (then known for her web series ''The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl'') and the veteran comic and showrunner Larry Wilmore, ''Insecure'' was only the second comedy created by and starring a Black woman when it debuted in 2016. (The first was Wanda Sykes's ''Wanda at Large,'' which premiered in 2003 on Fox.) ''Insecure'' briefly overlapped on HBO with ''Girls,'' which ended in 2017 -- both descendants of the network's ''Sex and the City,'' but which swapped the Blahniks and Birkins for millennial angst and awkwardness.

''Insecure'' countered the racial homogeneity of those New York predecessors, but it also stood in contrast to other shows and films set in Los Angeles. Neighborhoods like Baldwin Hills, Windsor Hills and View Park (where Rae grew up) had rarely been seen onscreen; if South Los Angeles was portrayed at all, it tended to happen in movies like ''Boyz 'N the Hood'' and ''Menace II Society'' that depicted predominantly Black communities like Watts and Inglewood (where Rae's father had his dental practice) as plagued by gangs and gun violence. Rae has said her goal was to make those neighborhoods feel as sexy as any other place in the city.

Part of that sexiness came from the look and sound of the show's world. Melina Matsoukas, best known when the show debuted for having just directed Beyoncé's ''Formation'' video, set a visual tone as a director and executive producer. The experimental R&B singer Solange Knowles served as a music consultant. (The neo-soul legend Raphael Saadiq also composed music for the score.)

It also came from the fashion -- Molly's couture work wardrobe, Issa's chic political T-shirts -- and from the dazzling array of natural hairstyles. The aesthetics made for a sleek, inviting backdrop to the show's trailblazing casting, which centered two dark-skinned Black women as stars and romantic leads.

But the most revolutionary aspect of ''Insecure'' was the abundance of decidedly unsexy moments -- when Issa and friends messed up, hurt themselves and others, indulged in the kinds of mistakes and bad decisions most of us make as young adults.

''True representation is the ability to show your vulnerability and be able to say, 'I don't have it all together, just like the next white person doesn't have it all together,''' Rae said recently. ''I think the show gave Black people permission to also be like, 'You're right: We are insecure.'''

Like Rae and Matsoukas, most of the show's creative team had new jobs or new levels of responsibility when ''Insecure'' began. The showrunner Prentice Penny and the executive producer Amy Aniobi had never before filled those positions. Playing Molly was the first major acting role for Orji, a stand-up comedian. Five years later, they are a tight-knit group of veterans, proud of what they created together.

For a recent video interview about the end of ''Insecure,'' Rae and Orji were together in Miami; their co-star Jay Ellis, who plays Issa's intermittent love interest Lawrence, dialed in from that city's airport; Aniobi was in New York City; and Matsoukas and Penny were in Los Angeles. Despite being all over the country, their intimacy was genuine and inviting. There was plenty of ribbing -- Penny's oversized Green Bay Packers cap and Ellis's bad phone reception were popular targets -- but after nearly every joke came sincere reflection about a colleague's talent or insights. These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

Issa, when ''Insecure'' debuted, you described it as a show that wasn't exclusively about the struggle of being Black but rather ''just regular Black people living life.'' Looking back, did it live up to that vision?

ISSA RAE: I think we nailed it. The goal was to elevate regular Black people and make us look as beautiful in our regularness as humanly possible. I think we achieved that.

PRENTICE PENNY: One of the problems we show is that Black people face racial microaggressions at random. Like, in Episode 3 of the first season, when Issa Dee realized that her white co-workers were leaving her out of their emails. Not everybody's shot by the police, but everybody knows what it feels like when white people are talking about you behind your back. Those are the things that felt regular, right? Or what is life like for a Black person on any given Tuesday? A day that's not special, but super regular. That was our North Star.

RAE: And when we did include Lawrence getting pulled over by the police, a high tension moment that we know ends up so fatally for so many men and women in our community, we asked ourselves, ''How does that encounter affect the next events of your day?'' We deal with these things all the time and do not get an opportunity to pause and reflect. Instead, Black people experience microaggression or racism and keep pushing. You may come home mad and yell at your partner, or you might journal. ''Insecure'' is more interested in those moments and how they affect your day-to-day life.

PENNY: Issa said in the writers' room at one point: ''When you're white, racism is a period. Like, 'This is wrong, this needs to stop, period.' But when you're Black, it's a comma.'' It's like, this racist thing happened to me, but I still have to go pay bills, still have to drive and go home and see my kids. Yes, this thing happened, but how are you going to deal with it?

In 2016, ''Insecure'' and ''Atlanta'' broke new ground as comedies about Black millennials. Did any of you ever feel pressure to speak for your generation?

MELINA MATSOUKAS: I never felt the burden of having to speak for an entire generation of people. The task we felt was to show these characters and this environment authentically. That meant actually shooting in the neighborhoods these characters are from, speaking to and incorporating those people into our storytelling, using strong female relationships and all the things that are authentic to a real, vibrant community and the world where Issa Dee comes from.

Was representing Black people of varying class statuses part of that honesty? The characters Issa and Lawrence, for example, live in the Dunes, an apartment complex with predominantly ***working-class*** Black residents, even though they graduated from Stanford and Georgetown.

RAE: To Melina's point, it was authenticity. I graduated from Stanford and didn't have a job, so I moved back to L.A. into my parents house, and the first place I moved to after that was a Dunes-like apartment complex where you have people of different classes.

PENNY: There's this expectation that we have to be perfect and excellent all the time. I remember we when we were pitching it with the title ''Insecure,'' there was push back about that because insecurity is not usually associated with Black people. That was such a moment for Issa, Melina and me, and it made me realize, ''No, that's even more reason we want the show to be that.''

YVONNE ORJI: They were like, ''You guys are flawless, you're fierce, you're ----''

PENNY: ''So dope, you're so dope.''

MATSOUKAS: I'm literally feeling uncomfortable and insecure right now.

ORJI: This conversation is making me insecure.

JAY ELLIS: That is part of the reason this show never felt like a burden. Because the burden is being excellent all the time. The burden is the expectation that we have for what a Black man or a Black woman who went to Princeton or Stanford is supposed to be like, or what Molly had to go through being in that white law firm, right? But when we got to do the show the way Issa, Prentice, Melina and Amy wanted to do it, we didn't have to wear a mask for anybody or live up to anybody else's expectation. This is actual freedom.

For most of you, this was your first time leading a project of this caliber. How do you look back on that risk now?

AMY ANIOBI: I think back to our first production meeting when someone asked a really good question. And then I realized, ''Oh, I'm supposed to answer that?'' It was a bit like working at a teaching hospital; we were all learning for the first time together. That contributed to why we had each other's backs so hard.

PENNY: We were trying to create a safe space for failure. We're going to open the door as fast as possible to get many people in and make a safe space for Black creative people.

ORJI: What Issa has started for me is a chain reaction. With my specials or next projects, I'm pulling in people that I've seen doing amazing things but haven't had that big break yet. I'm giving them a chance. White people are allowed to do that for their friends.

ANIOBI: If you want to get enraged, read the Wikipedia for ''Seinfeld.'' I'm like, what? It had so many tries.

PENNY: And I've worked with writers from ''Seinfeld'' and ''Friends'' after those shows ended, and they still get overall deals all the time. Those shows are 20 years old now. They still believe, ''I think those white people still got something in them.''

Even though your show was on HBO, it often felt as if it was written for a Black audience. Characters like Issa and Molly started off code-switching and working in predominantly white offices, and they quit. Their worlds and the show itself started getting more and more ----

ANIOBI: Blacker.

RAE: With ''We Got Y'all,'' we just felt tired of telling those stories. There is this pressure for Black writers to talk about the Black experience within a white context. In Season 1, we were briefly encouraged to tell the point of view of the Frieda character [Issa's white colleague at the nonprofit, played by Lisa Joyce]. Why would we do that?

ORJI: By Season 4, Issa was out of that environment, and Molly went to a Black firm. And when you put the characters in a Black space, you also told a realistic story of what that looks like, too. When Molly goes from the white firm to the Black firm, it's not like, ''Ah! My people!'' It's like, ''Hi, this other place did it differently ...'' and they were like, ''You can go back there.'' But at the same time, she's like, ''Whatever I lost coming here, I gained this other thing that you can't put a price tag on.''

MATSOUKAS: Those story lines really paralleled what was happening to us within the industry. We all came together and we were all coming from a place where we were othered, where we were the only Black person working in white spaces. Then naturally gravitating toward one another and really enjoying the freedom that comes with working with each other, speaking the same language and not having to code switch. Now we just have one code.

RAE: Now we are the code.

Making a complex friendship between two dark-brown complexioned Black women, Molly and Issa, the heart of the show still seems rare, even today.

ORJI: That was very refreshing to see that casting breakdown and realize, ''Hold up, she's talking about me.''

RAE: This is based off my real friendship. So I wasn't interested in the trope of one light-skinned and one dark-skinned friend. I was very interested in staying true to that authentic friendship, and we often don't get two dark-skinned Black woman leads. So that was a mandate for us, to make sure that was showcased.

MATSOUKAS: We really wanted to be a part of redefining what beauty looked like. I remember going to film school and them being like, ''If you cast a Black woman as your lead, it won't be a marketable film.'' That's literally what I was taught in school. So to show that beauty exists in all different shades and colors, and that these women and can just be as sexy as anyone else, was really important for all of us.

ANIOBI: Some of the storytelling felt almost like wish fulfillment for us as dark-skinned Black women. It was exciting to be like: ''If we were the center of the story, what would happen? How would it happen?'' There was so much of it, especially in the early seasons, where we were like, ''Well, what would you expect if it were your story?''

RAE: Portraying a desirable dark-skinned lead over the years -- this is something I'm only recognizing now -- greatly increased my own sense of self, too. My life would be completely different had we not written those characters that way. I don't think I've ever attributed this to the show and to the portrayal of this lead. I wrote myself with more confidence, and now I get to live that out and portray it, too.

''Insecure'' is ending in a complicated moment, a year after Black Lives Matter protests ignited the country, and we are still in a pandemic. What do you hope the show's legacy will be?

ELLIS: There's security in insecurity. There's something about the journey that these characters go on by the end of Season 5 that it just feels like, ''What happened on Tuesday?'' I'm good with what happened Tuesday, and I'm going to keep moving on to Wednesday and not let it ruin my day or my life or whatever.

RAE: I've got to credit Amy. We were really trying to find the right way to end the show and she told us, ''We keep trying to land the plane.'' Instead, she reminded us that the plane ride continues, and these characters are going to live on. That was so freeing to be able to say to each other, ''Oh, we're not ending this show.'' These characters that I know and I've grown with are going to continue to make decisions and live on.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/15/arts/television/insecure-final-season-issa-rae.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/15/arts/television/insecure-final-season-issa-rae.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Issa Rae says, ''True representation is the ability to show your vulnerability and be able to say, 'I don't have it all together, just like the next white person doesn't have it all together.''' (PHOTOGRAPH BY NATALIA MANTINI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (AR14)

Above, from left, Amanda Seales, Yvonne Orji, Issa Rae and Natasha Rothwell in ''Insecure.'' Left, Jay Ellis with Rae in the show. He played her intermittent love interest, Lawrence. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MERIE W. WALLACE/HBO

ANNE MARIE FOX/HBO) (AR15)

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**End of Document**



[***Jayapal Won't Let Biden Fail***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63W0-1441-DXY4-X51Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

I RECENTLY confided to Pramila Jayapal, the leader of the House Progressive Caucus, that I was literally losing sleep over the fate of the giant social spending bill she's negotiating. It's been impressive to see the left exert control over Congress, refusing to move on legislation cherished by moderates until there's a deal on a bill containing progressive priorities. At the same time, it's been terrifying to imagine what it will mean for the Biden presidency -- and the future of the country -- if an agreement isn't reached soon.

Was she sure, I wanted to know, that progressive resolve wouldn't blow up in all our faces?

She insisted she wasn't worried. ''We're going to get both bills done,'' she said.

The details of the procedural battle that Jayapal is fighting are stultifying to describe, but the stakes are existential for the social safety net and the environment, not to mention American democracy. A dysfunctional and evenly divided Senate means that Democrats probably have only one shot to enact progressive policies on climate, health care, child care and taxes by using the so-called reconciliation process, a mechanism for passing budget bills that can't be filibustered. But even then, Democrats need all 50 of their senators to pass their package, giving veto power to the recalcitrant right-leaning Democrats Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema.

So House progressives, perhaps more powerful than they've ever been, are trying to exercise veto power of their own, holding up a bipartisan infrastructure bill that the Senate passed in August, and which Manchin and Sinema value. The progressive threat is this: Either everyone gets some of what they want, or no one does. They held firm even after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, under pressure from moderates in her caucus, scheduled the bipartisan bill to come to the floor, and Pelosi was forced to cancel the vote.

This was a tactical victory for the left, but one seen in the Beltway, perhaps unsurprisingly, as a big setback for Joe Biden. The New York Times described it as a ''humiliating blow to Mr. Biden and Democrats.''

Jayapal and other progressives argue, I think credibly, that this conventional wisdom is misguided. The reconciliation bill, otherwise known as the Build Back Better Act, includes some of President Biden's key campaign promises, which he, obviously, has an interest in enacting. ''Build Back Better, the president's agenda, the Democratic agenda, would have died had we not done what we did,'' said Jayapal.

If progressives are able to save the bulk of Build Back Better, Biden's presidency will be transformative. American life will become less unequal and precarious. Parenting will no longer be a ticket to immiseration for many. Drug prices will go down, and people on Medicare will enjoy added benefits like vision and dental care.

As currently constituted, Build Back Better would also be the biggest step Congress has ever taken to fight climate change. According to the Rhodium Group, an energy research and consultancy firm, the infrastructure and reconciliation bills together would lead to emission cuts ''roughly equivalent to zeroing out annual emissions from all light-duty vehicles on the road or the annual emissions from Texas and Florida combined.''

To Jayapal, passing the reconciliation bill is a political imperative as well as a moral one, because she's convinced that voters will reward Democrats for making their lives materially easier. She shares some of Senator Bernie Sanders's analysis of Trumpism, seeing it at least in part as a result of Democrats abandoning economic populism. Speaking of the Build Back Better agenda, she said, ''I would argue that had Democrats done some of these things 10 years ago, we would have a lot of the ***working-class*** voters that are white in Republican districts.''

She also believes that Democrats risk disillusioning newer voters if they don't deliver. ''I'll take my kiddo as an example,'' she said. ''Twenty-four years old, very smart, educated, person of color, trans, runs in circles that are extremely left. And if I wasn't in politics I don't know that they would really have a lot of faith in Democrats.'' Many of her child's friends, she said, don't vote because ''they are so cynical about anybody actually fighting for them.''

But if progressives fail to come to an agreement with Manchin and Sinema and both infrastructure bills fail, the Biden presidency will likely fail as well. The stage will be set for an unleashed Donald Trump to retake power.

Sanders told me he believes ''that the very strong likelihood is that we will end up with two very important pieces of legislation, which will create millions of good paying jobs, improve life for working families, and help rebuild our crumbling infrastructure.'' But he allows that there's a ''minimal possibility'' that Democrats end up with nothing.

The failure of both bills would be so catastrophic that it's made Representative Steve Cohen, a Democrat from Tennessee and longtime member of the progressive caucus, anxious about what he described as his colleagues' ''brinkmanship.'' If the bipartisan infrastructure bill had come to the floor, he was planning to break with his caucus and vote in favor.

''These bills are important,'' he told me, ''but they're not as important as keeping the presidency.''

The fact that progressives are in a position to block major legislation if their demands aren't met represents a major change in Washington. Sanders said he's never seen the left exercise such leverage in Congress. ''I helped start, along with four other members of Congress, the progressive caucus way back in 1991,'' he said. ''Never in a million years did I ever believe the progressive caucus would be as strong and effective as they are today under Pramila's leadership.''

JAYAPAL was born in the South Indian city of Chennai and raised mostly in Indonesia, where her father worked in the oil business. At 16, she moved to America by herself to attend Georgetown. Her parents had fairly conventional ideas about what immigrant success looked like. ''To my dad, only three professions were worthy of his ambition for me: doctor, lawyer or business person,'' she wrote in her 2020 book, ''Use the Power You Have: A Brown Woman's Guide to Politics and Political Change.''

For a time, she tried to fulfill her father's hopes. After college she worked in the leveraged buyout department of an investment bank, then attended business school at Northwestern. The experience, she said, left her ''extremely comfortable with numbers and spreadsheets,'' which has likely proved useful in hashing out the reconciliation bill.

But Jayapal didn't find the business world fulfilling, and an internship at a nonprofit in Thailand put her on a different path. In her book, she describes visiting Site 2, an enormous refugee camp on the Thai-Cambodian border, in 1989. It was, she said, her ''first exposure to the travails, trauma, and the dire situations that cause migration.'' Risking her parents' disappointment, she eventually took a job at a Seattle-based international development nonprofit. Then, after Sept. 11, she began organizing on behalf of immigrants targeted by both bigoted civilians and the federal government, whose agencies regularly harassed innocent Muslims in the name of combating terrorism.

It was this work that brought Jayapal into contact with her congressman, Jim McDermott. He was the first politician she'd ever met, and she recalled that he carried a copy of Martin Niemöller's ''First They Came for the Socialists ...'' in his jacket pocket. In him, she wrote, ''I saw what real leadership in an elected office looked like.''

When Jayapal started thinking of running for office herself, it was with the idea of doing essentially what she's doing now -- forcing the system leftward. ''For years, I had believed that if politics is the art of the possible, then our job as activists is to push the boundaries of what is possible, but from the outside,'' she wrote. ''Why couldn't that pushing also occur from the platform of an elected office?'' In 2014, when she was 49, Jayapal was elected to the Washington State Senate, becoming that chamber's only woman of color. Two years later, after McDermott announced his retirement from Congress, she won the race to succeed him.

Jayapal brought her decades of organizing experience to the work of fortifying the House Progressive Caucus, which has grown from 78 people in 2017 to 96 today. ''When I came into Congress, I was kind of stunned by the lack of foundation for the progressive caucus,'' she said, though she credits her predecessors with starting to reform it. ''There was really no organization. It was more of a social club.''

When she and Mark Pocan, Democrat of Wisconsin, took over the caucus's leadership in 2019, they sought to create a stronger structure, raising dues and hiring more staff. They instituted requirements that members attend meetings and sign on to a certain number of flagship bills.

Jayapal and Pocan professionalized the caucus's political action committee. ''I think when I came in we were raising maybe $300,000 to elect progressive candidates,'' she said, referring to the 2016 cycle. In the most recent cycle, they raised $4.4 million. They built up an outside organization, a nonprofit called the Progressive Caucus Center, which does research, develops policy and coordinates with labor and social justice organizations.

She became the caucus's sole chair in January. The decision to jettison the caucus's co-chair structure led some anonymous sources to grouse to Politico about a ''power grab,'' but Pocan insisted that it made the caucus more nimble. With two co-chairs, he said, decision-making could be agonizingly slow: ''Every press release had to be approved by two offices.''

Jayapal has a reputation as a tough boss; a recent BuzzFeed News article featured former staff members accusing her of running a ''dysfunctional and volatile workplace'' with grueling and unrealistic standards. But to many of her peers, she's an effective leader.

Ro Khanna, a Democrat from California, said that Jayapal and Mike Darner, the caucus's executive director, ''have brought an extraordinary amount of structure to the caucus, and purpose. I can't imagine if you call around that others wouldn't share my view that she's done an extraordinary job.''

NOW, Jayapal has a lot of power to determine if whatever Manchin and Sinema eventually agree to -- assuming they eventually agree to something -- is good enough.

Ever since Pelosi canceled the vote on the bipartisan infrastructure bill, some pundits have compared the House Progressive Caucus to the Freedom Caucus, the claque of far-right representatives whom the former Republican House speaker John Boehner once described as ''anarchists'' who want to ''tear it all down and start over.'' Chris Stirewalt wrote in The Dispatch, ''Perhaps both parties in Congress will be held captive by a clutch of performative cable news and social media stars who use their voting bloc's power to seek attention more than legislation.''

This is a bad analogy, for a few reasons. First and foremost, the House Progressive Caucus is desperate to pass legislation. In the past, said Jayapal, progressives in Congress were seen as ineffectual: ''They're obstructionist, they don't really know how to drive power. And honestly I kind of felt that way too when I came in.'' The last thing Jayapal wants is for progressives to imitate the right in turning politics into a brand-building exercise devoid of policy content.

Further, the House Progressive Caucus isn't pushing Biden to go beyond the proposals he himself has outlined; Jayapal is always careful to talk about their demands in terms of what the president has said he wants. ''This is the president's agenda, that he delivered in a speech to Congress and told us to bring him legislation that gets that done,'' she said. ''He himself said he wrote the damn bills.''

Nor is the caucus totally at odds with moderates in the House. Yes, plenty of centrists would have liked to pass the infrastructure bill last month, and some have objected to parts of the reconciliation package. But many also see elements of Build Back Better as crucial to their own re-elections.

Last month, the House Democrats Colin Allred, Cindy Axne, Sharice Davids, Andy Kim and Abigail Spanberger, each of whom flipped a Republican district in 2018, published a Washington Post op-ed essay calling for Congress to give Medicare the power to negotiate prescription drug prices. That's a part of the reconciliation package that Sinema reportedly objects to. Allred joined with another group of so-called frontline members to argue for Build Back Better in Newsweek. ''We may represent swing districts, but we are firm in our conviction that the passage of both of these bills is what's best for our constituents,'' they wrote.

Speaking of the House Progressive Caucus, Susan Wild, one of the co-authors of the Newsweek piece, told me, ''I commend them for being relentless -- and I mean that in the kindest possible way -- in their pursuit of goals that I do believe will advance this country.''

Wild, a moderate who represents a district in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley, bonded with Jayapal when they were trapped together in the gallery of the House chamber on Jan. 6. They live in the same apartment building and see each other often. Their politics are different, but Wild says that Jayapal ''has been very focused on bringing some frontliners into the conversation and understanding what our priorities are that are compatible'' with the progressive caucus.

For Wild, those priorities include dental, hearing and vision benefits for Medicare recipients, in addition to price negotiations for prescription drugs. ''I would say, we've probably never seen the frontline and the progressives as aligned as they are right now, and a lot of that is because many of us are very much aligned with the Biden administration's agenda,'' she said.

The divide in Congress, then, isn't really between progressives and moderates. It's between the vast majority of Democrats and a few holdouts in both chambers. Indeed, it's precisely because Democrats aren't divided that some progressives find the need to make major concessions to Manchin and Sinema galling.

''If you have a caucus which is divided -- you've got 25 people who want to do one thing, 25 people who want to do the other thing -- you know what you do? You compromise,'' said Sanders. But ''when you've got 48 people who want to do something and two who don't,'' as well as the overwhelming majority of Democratic voters and the president of the United States, ''it is not a 50-50 compromise.''

Except the issue isn't what's fair, but who has power. Which leads to the question of whether Jayapal will be able to unite her caucus behind something that Manchin and Sinema can accept, even if it seems inadequate.

Reaching a compromise is complicated by the fact that Manchin and Sinema aren't coordinating their demands, some of which don't overlap. Manchin has said he wants to undo some of the Trump tax cuts, while Sinema, who has revealed almost nothing publicly about her position, has reportedly said that she won't accept any corporate or income tax increases.

Manchin has offered a top line number of $1.5 trillion for the reconciliation package, which is far less than the $3.5 trillion in the Build Back Better Act but at least offers a starting point for talks. Sinema hasn't released a figure, and though she's speaking to the White House, outsiders are largely in the dark about where she stands. ''I think Senator Sinema is in negotiations, I just think we don't know about it,'' said Jayapal. ''I know enough to know that she is at the table.''

So far, the progressives have shown flexibility. Jayapal has rejected Manchin's $1.5 trillion figure, but according to Politico, when Biden told her and several other House progressives that the final figure would likely be $1.9 trillion to $2.2 trillion, the progressives didn't push back. At the same time, while others worry about the price of progressive intransigence, Jayapal is determined not to concede too much preemptively. She's there to push.

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**Graphic**

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[***A Nation's Legacy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:644F-55P1-JBG3-62DC-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

THE 1619 PROJECTA New Origin StoryEdited by Nikole Hannah-Jones, Caitlin Roper, Ilena Silverman and Jake Silverstein

Has a book ever come into the world when at least four other books were already in print attacking it? Admittedly, these broadsides were against earlier incarnations of The New York Times's 1619 Project, which appeared in this newspaper two years ago, followed by a podcast, public forums, lesson plans for schools and a Pulitzer Prize for the originator, Nikole Hannah-Jones. The project asserted that the full origin story of the United States begins not with the arrival of the Mayflower in 1620, but with that of the White Lion and its cargo of captive Africans in Virginia the year before. This declaration provoked a Twitter firestorm of angry accusations from critics and combative replies from Hannah-Jones. President Trump denounced the project, and lawmakers introduced bills in the U.S. Senate and at least five state legislatures to strip funds from schools that used its curriculum. The appearance now of an expanded version of the project in book form is sure to provoke yet more assaults.

I picked up ''The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story'' with some apprehension. Not because I disagree with the project's basic aim, but because I had been troubled by some overstatements and factual errors in the newspaper version, such as the claim that there were ''growing calls to abolish the slave trade'' in Britain in 1776. (That country's abolitionist movement didn't come to life until a decade later.) A group of respected American history scholars later criticized The Times for these. As the controversy continued, a historian who had been consulted by a fact-checker on the project went public to complain that corrections she had urged were ignored. It was disappointing to see work whose intention I admired marred by missteps.

As I read the new book, however, my worries largely melted away. It is not without flaws, which I will come back to, but on the whole it is a wide-ranging, landmark summary of the Black experience in America: searing, rich in unfamiliar detail, exploring every aspect of slavery and its continuing legacy, in which being white or Black affects everything from how you fare in courts and hospitals and schools to the odds that your neighborhood will be bulldozed for a freeway. The book's editors, knowing that they were heading into a minefield, clearly trod with extraordinary care. They added more than 1,000 endnotes, and in their acknowledgments thank a roster of peer reviewers so long and distinguished as to make any writer of history envious.

The articles in the original Times version have here been extended and revised. There are seven new essays -- for a total of 18, by as many contributors -- and woven through the book are photographs as well as poems and short fiction inspired by historical events. The contributors have flair: Khalil Gibran Muhammad calls the large slave markets of New Orleans ''the Walmart of people-selling''; Wesley Morris speaks of the segregated, all-white nightclubs of a century ago that featured ''pasteurized jazz.'' ''If our dead could speak,'' Tracy K. Smith writes in a poem derived from a speech given by the first Black senator, Hiram Rhodes Revels, in 1870, ''what a voice, like to the rushing of a mighty wind, would come up.''

Part of the book's depth lies in the way it offers unexpected links between past and present. New Yorkers, for instance, have long protested that the city Police Department's ''stop and frisk'' searches for contraband or guns disproportionally snag people of color. But how many had connected it, as Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander do here, to the slave patrols of the old South, in which groups of armed white men routinely barged into the cabins of enslaved men and women to hunt for stolen goods or ''anything they judged could be used as a weapon''?

Another contributor, Matthew Desmond, points out that the cotton plantation ''was America's first big business.'' On the eve of the Civil War the monetary value ''of enslaved people exceeded that of all the railroads and factories in the nation.'' That fact alone should silence anyone who claims that slavery is not central to American history.

Moreover, controlling those workers ''helped mold modern management techniques.'' The plantations' size allowed for economies of scale. And ''like today's titans of industry, planters understood that their profits climbed when they extracted maximum effort out of each worker. So they paid close attention to inputs and outputs'' -- easy to do when you compared harvesters according to how far each had progressed down parallel rows of cotton plants. Every fieldworker's yield was carefully recorded, and rewards or whippings administered accordingly. Spreadsheets tabulated the depreciating value of human property over time. Trade magazines for planters carried management tips on getting the most out of enslaved workers: the best diet, clothing and even the proper tone of voice to use when giving orders.

Again and again, ''The 1619 Project'' brings the past to life in fresh ways. I knew nothing, for instance, of Callie House, a widowed Tennessee laundress born into slavery who in the early 1900s organized a national movement to demand pensions for the formerly enslaved, like the pensions paid to former Union soldiers. When Congress refused, House sued the federal government, arguing ''that the U.S. Treasury owed Black Americans $68,073,388.99 for the taxes it had collected between 1862 and 1868 on the cotton enslaved people had grown. The federal government had identified the cotton and could trace it.'' Her boldness so infuriated the white Southerners of Woodrow Wilson's cabinet that they saw to it that House and her attorney were indicted for mail fraud. She served a year in prison.

Most readers also may not know that a planter could take out mortgages on his enslaved workers. Thomas Jefferson did, to raise the money to build Monticello. If the debtor defaulted, the bank then auctioned off these men and women -- adding to slavery's shattering of families. The book also reminds us that slavery's stains on our history were not restricted to the South. Nearly 1,000 voyages to Africa to procure captives were made from Rhode Island. Following an 18th-century uprising, 21 enslaved men and women were executed, some burned at the stake and one strapped to a large wheel while his bones were broken with a mallet -- in New York City.

Several times, a ''1619 Project'' writer makes a bold assertion that departs so far from conventional wisdom that it sounds exaggerated. And then comes a zinger that proves the author's point. For example, Hannah-Jones, who wrote the book's preface and the first and last of its 18 essays, declares that the way the Constitution allowed Congress to ban the Atlantic slave trade after 20 years (beginning in 1808) is something ''often held up as proof of the antislavery sentiment of the framers'' but ''can be seen in some respects as self-serving.'' Self-serving? Virginians, she says, so prominent among the founding fathers, knew that ''years of tobacco growing had depleted the soil, and landowners like Jefferson were turning to crops that required less labor, such as wheat. That meant they needed fewer enslaved people to turn a profit'' and ''stood to make money by cutting off the supply of new people from Africa and . . . selling their surplus laborers'' to Southern cotton and sugar growers. Hmm, the reader then wonders; prove it. And she does: Over a 30-year period, ''Virginia alone sold between 300,000 and 350,000 enslaved people south, nearly as many as all of the Africans sold into the United States over the course of slavery.''

Another example comes from Ibram X. Kendi, who writes about the ''vision of our past as a march of racial progress'' from the Emancipation Proclamation to the election of Barack Obama. This has long been a comforting myth, he says, quoting even George Washington as suggesting that slavery was on its way out. But, the reader thinks, can't celebrating progress coexist with recognizing that we've still got a long way to go? How can Kendi claim that the progress narrative ''actually undermines the effort to achieve and maintain equality''? Rhetorical overkill? Yes, but then comes the zinger: In 2013, the Supreme Court eviscerated the Voting Rights Act on the grounds, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in his majority opinion, that since it was passed in 1965, ''things have changed dramatically.''

In that instance, at least, belief in inevitable progress had tragic results, for that ruling opened the way to the greatest wave of voter suppression laws in this country since Southern legislatures swept Blacks off the rolls in the late 19th century -- a pivotal period recalled in detail elsewhere in the book. Despite the striking integration of much of the country's elite over the last half-century -- from who's on TV to who's in the White House -- Hannah-Jones points out that the gap between Black and white household income has barely changed for more than half a century. The same is true for the far wider gap in overall household wealth. That wealth gap has vast repercussions for everything from whether you're likely to be evicted to whether you can send your child to college. No one saw this more clearly than Lyndon B. Johnson, who, interestingly, is quoted in the book almost as often as Martin Luther King Jr. Progress has come mainly for ''a growing middle-class minority'' of Blacks, he said in a 1965 speech, while for the Black poor ''the walls are rising and the gulf is widening.''

The project's writers tell us why. White Southern Democrats demanded that New Deal programs be crafted to exclude Blacks from most benefits. The systematic ''redlining'' of Black neighborhoods in both North and South meant that from 1934 to 1962, 98 percent of Federal Housing Administration-backed mortgage loans went to white households. Similarly, only a minuscule number of Black people benefited from the Homestead Act of 1862, under which the government gave away 246 million acres. (Most of that was wrested away from Native Americans, whose part in the country's ''origin story'' began well before 1619.) Some 20 percent of American adults today are descended from beneficiaries of that massive affirmative action program for white people.

In a few ways ''The 1619 Project'' falls short. Hannah-Jones, for instance, still makes too much of Abraham Lincoln's flirtation with the idea of colonization, or encouraging Black Americans to go to Africa. This surely felt insulting to Black citizens (although colonization had some Black backers), but it did not define him. On another point that earlier also drew scholarly criticism, she has made a few changes but basically remains insistent, claiming that ''we might never have revolted against Britain if some of the founders had not . . . believed that independence was required in order to ensure that the institution [of slavery] would continue unmolested.'' But this is untenable.

Yes, it's true that the British colonial governor of Virginia threatened to sabotage the growing independence movement by promising freedom to those enslaved by ''rebels'' who fled their masters to join the British Army. And yes, this infuriated the likes of George Washington (more than a dozen of whose own enslaved workers took up the offer) and helped persuade some wavering plantation owners to join the revolt against the crown. But the governor was making a fruitless attempt to stanch a rebellion against Britain that, for other reasons, was well underway and had already escalated into open combat at the Battles of Lexington and Concord.

It's fine to take slavery's many defenders among the founding fathers off their pedestals. But there is no need to go out on this shaky limb to do so, for their zeal to preserve the system that so enriched them is beyond dispute. Our Constitution, with its three-fifths clause and fugitive slave clause, is shameful testimony to that.

A broader issue in the book is that, with a few exceptions, such as Muhammad's excellent article about the brutal world of sugar cultivation, the reader can too easily leave with the impression that the heritage of slavery is uniquely American. It's not. The pervasive presence of slavery throughout the hemisphere strengthened the system here: When Washington had a ''Rogue & Runaway'' he wanted to get rid of in 1766, he could find a buyer for him where escape was much harder, in the West Indies. And some of the management techniques Desmond describes evolved simultaneously on the large, lucrative British sugar plantations there. From ancient Egypt to czarist Russia, from sub-Saharan Africa to the Aztecs, forms of slavery have blighted nearly every continent. In Brazil and every nation in the Caribbean, descendants of enslaved people are a far larger share of the population than in the United States -- and some of their captured ancestors arrived in chains from Africa well before 1619. As the historian Seymour Drescher has put it, several hundred years ago, ''freedom, not slavery, was the peculiar institution.''

A final point: I wish the book had included more about the allies of Black Americans who fought against slavery or its ongoing aftermath. It barely mentions the Underground Railroad, whose conductors were both Black and white, and shortchanges the longtime abolitionist editor William Lloyd Garrison, depicting him largely as a purveyor of the inevitable progress myth. Garrison was not perfect, but the movement he stimulated so enraged his enemies that they burned him in effigy in South Carolina and erected a gallows on his Boston doorstep. And without the deaths of more than 300,000 Union soldiers, most of them white, American slavery would have continued much longer.

Or, to take a more recent example: The Black leader Bob Moses, who died last summer, knew that the country would pay attention to the battle for equal rights in the South only if white people shared some of what Blacks endured. He helped recruit roughly 1,000 volunteers, almost all of them young white Northerners (I was one), to go to Mississippi in 1964 to do such work as registering voters. Two, along with a Black colleague, were murdered. The names of six additional whites who also died in the movement are inscribed along with the many Black names in the granite of the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Ala.

These numbers of course are tiny compared with the nearly 6,500 documented lynchings of Blacks since the end of slavery and the additional Black victims who continue to be killed in disproportionate numbers by police officers today. But they bear mention in a book that I hope will reach a wide audience of high school and college students in a country more than 86 percent of whose people are not Black. Such readers need models to show them that men and women of all ethnicities can try -- and have tried -- to battle against four centuries of injustice.

To be clear: Eliminating these minor shortcomings would not have prevented the torrent of outrage against this whole venture from Trump and his followers. From people determined to inflame a sense of grievance by proclaiming that any hint of Black advance means white victimization, such venom was inevitable. It may be too much to expect in this deeply divided country of ours, but my hope is that the multifaceted and often brilliant ways in which this book's authors etch the Black experience will inspire not resentment but empathy. And perhaps emulation: There are other projects about unduly ignored parts of our history to be written. I would love to see one, for example, on how the American ***working class*** -- white, Black and brown --- has seen its share of the national bounty first rise and then painfully fall over the last century.

Despite what demagogues claim, honoring the story told in ''The 1619 Project'' and rectifying the great wrongs in it need not threaten or diminish anyone else's experience, for they are all strands of a larger American story. Whether that fragile cloth holds together today, in the face of blatant defiance of election results and the rule of law, depends on our respect for every strand in the weave.Adam Hochschild's books include ''Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves,'' a finalist for the National Book Award.THE 1619 PROJECTA New Origin StoryEdited by Nikole Hannah-Jones, Caitlin Roper, Ilena Silverman and Jake SilversteinIllustrated. 590 pp. One World. $38.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/15/books/review/the-1619-project-nikole-hannah-jones-caitlin-roper-ilena-silverman-jake-silverstein.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/15/books/review/the-1619-project-nikole-hannah-jones-caitlin-roper-ilena-silverman-jake-silverstein.html)

**Graphic**

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An enslaved family in Hanover County, Va., 1862. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE HARPER HOUGHTON, VIA THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS) (BR20)

Lyndon B. Johnson and Martin Luther King Jr. at the signing of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. (PHOTOGRAPH BY YOICHI R. OKAMOTO/WHITE HOUSE PRESS OFFICE)

New York City police officers detaining a man in the Bronx on July 11, 2017. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK LENNIHAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (BR21)

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[***Pramila Jayapal Won’t Let the Biden Presidency Fail; Michelle Goldberg***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63VS-GR71-DXY4-X4MJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2743 words

**Byline:** Michelle Goldberg

**Highlight:** In the infrastructure negotiations, the leader of the House progressive caucus has shown a willingness to play hardball.

**Body**

I RECENTLY confided to Pramila Jayapal, the leader of the House Progressive Caucus, that I was literally losing sleep over the fate of the giant social spending bill she’s negotiating. It’s been impressive to see the left exert control over Congress, refusing to move on legislation cherished by moderates until there’s a deal on a bill containing progressive priorities. At the same time, it’s been terrifying to imagine [*what it will mean for the Biden presidency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/08/opinion/biden-democrats-2022-2024.html) — and the future of the country — if an agreement isn’t reached soon.

Was she sure, I wanted to know, that progressive resolve wouldn’t blow up in all our faces?

She insisted she wasn’t worried. “We’re going to get both bills done,” she said.

The details of the procedural battle that Jayapal is fighting are stultifying to describe, but the stakes are existential for the social safety net and the environment, not to mention American democracy. A dysfunctional and evenly divided Senate means that Democrats probably have only one shot to enact progressive policies on climate, health care, child care and taxes by using the so-called reconciliation process, a mechanism for passing budget bills that can’t be filibustered. But even then, Democrats need all 50 of their senators to pass their package, giving veto power to the recalcitrant right-leaning Democrats Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema.

So House progressives, perhaps more powerful than they’ve ever been, are trying to exercise veto power of their own, holding up a bipartisan infrastructure bill that the Senate passed in August, and which Manchin and Sinema value. The progressive threat is this: Either everyone gets some of what they want, or no one does. They held firm even after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, under pressure from moderates in her caucus, scheduled the bipartisan bill to come to the floor, and Pelosi was forced to cancel the vote.

This was a tactical victory for the left, but one seen in the Beltway, perhaps unsurprisingly, as a big setback for Joe Biden. The New York Times [*described it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/30/us/politics/infrastructure-democrats-pelosi.html?partner=slack&amp;smid=sl-share) as a “humiliating blow to Mr. Biden and Democrats.”

Jayapal and other progressives argue, I think credibly, that this conventional wisdom is misguided. The reconciliation bill, otherwise known as the [*Build Back Better Act*](https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/5376/text), includes some of President Biden’s key campaign promises, which he, obviously, has an interest in enacting. “Build Back Better, the president’s agenda, the Democratic agenda, would have died had we not done what we did,” said Jayapal.

If progressives are able to save the bulk of Build Back Better, Biden’s presidency will be transformative. American life will become less unequal and precarious. Parenting will no longer be a ticket to immiseration for many. Drug prices will go down, and people on Medicare will enjoy added benefits like vision and dental care.

As currently constituted, Build Back Better would also be the biggest step Congress has ever taken to fight climate change. According to the [*Rhodium Group*](https://rhg.com/research/build-back-better-congress-budget/), an energy research and consultancy firm, the infrastructure and reconciliation bills together would lead to emission cuts “roughly equivalent to zeroing out annual emissions from all light-duty vehicles on the road or the annual emissions from Texas and Florida combined.”

To Jayapal, passing the reconciliation bill is a political imperative as well as a moral one, because she’s convinced that voters will reward Democrats for making their lives materially easier. She shares some of Senator Bernie Sanders’s analysis of Trumpism, seeing it at least in part as a result of Democrats abandoning economic populism. Speaking of the Build Back Better agenda, she said, “I would argue that had Democrats done some of these things 10 years ago, we would have a lot of the ***working-class*** voters that are white in Republican districts.”

She also believes that Democrats risk disillusioning newer voters if they don’t deliver. “I’ll take my kiddo as an example,” she said. “Twenty-four years old, very smart, educated, person of color, trans, runs in circles that are extremely left. And if I wasn’t in politics I don’t know that they would really have a lot of faith in Democrats.” Many of her child’s friends, she said, don’t vote because “they are so cynical about anybody actually fighting for them.”

But if progressives fail to come to an agreement with Manchin and Sinema and both infrastructure bills fail, the Biden presidency will likely fail as well. The stage will be set for an unleashed Donald Trump to retake power.

Sanders told me he believes “that the very strong likelihood is that we will end up with two very important pieces of legislation, which will create millions of good paying jobs, improve life for working families, and help rebuild our crumbling infrastructure.” But he allows that there’s a “minimal possibility” that Democrats end up with nothing.

The failure of both bills would be so catastrophic that it’s made Representative Steve Cohen, a Democrat from Tennessee and longtime member of the progressive caucus, anxious about what he described as his colleagues’ “brinkmanship.” If the bipartisan infrastructure bill had come to the floor, he was planning to break with his caucus and vote in favor.

“These bills are important,” he told me, “but they’re not as important as keeping the presidency.”

The fact that progressives are in a position to block major legislation if their demands aren’t met represents a major change in Washington. Sanders said he’s never seen the left exercise such leverage in Congress. “I helped start, along with four other members of Congress, the progressive caucus way back in 1991,” he said. “Never in a million years did I ever believe the progressive caucus would be as strong and effective as they are today under Pramila’s leadership.”

JAYAPAL was born in the South Indian city of Chennai and raised mostly in Indonesia, where her father worked in the oil business. At 16, she moved to America by herself to attend Georgetown. Her parents had fairly conventional ideas about what immigrant success looked like. “To my dad, only three professions were worthy of his ambition for me: doctor, lawyer or business person,” she wrote in her 2020 book, “Use the Power You Have: A Brown Woman’s Guide to Politics and Political Change.”

For a time, she tried to fulfill her father’s hopes. After college she worked in the leveraged buyout department of an investment bank, then attended business school at Northwestern. The experience, she said, left her “extremely comfortable with numbers and spreadsheets,” which has likely proved useful in hashing out the reconciliation bill.

But Jayapal didn’t find the business world fulfilling, and an internship at a nonprofit in Thailand put her on a different path. In her book, she describes visiting Site 2, an enormous refugee camp on the Thai-Cambodian border, in 1989. It was, she said, her “first exposure to the travails, trauma, and the dire situations that cause migration.” Risking her parents’ disappointment, she eventually took a job at a Seattle-based international development nonprofit. Then, after Sept. 11, she began organizing on behalf of immigrants targeted by both bigoted civilians and the federal government, whose agencies regularly harassed innocent Muslims in the name of combating terrorism.

It was this work that brought Jayapal into contact with her congressman, Jim McDermott. He was the first politician she’d ever met, and she recalled that he carried a copy of Martin Niemöller’s “First They Came for the Socialists …” in his jacket pocket. In him, she wrote, “I saw what real leadership in an elected office looked like.”

When Jayapal started thinking of running for office herself, it was with the idea of doing essentially what she’s doing now — forcing the system leftward. “For years, I had believed that if politics is the art of the possible, then our job as activists is to push the boundaries of what is possible, but from the outside,” she wrote. “Why couldn’t that pushing also occur from the platform of an elected office?” In 2014, when she was 49, Jayapal was elected to the Washington State Senate, becoming that chamber’s only woman of color. Two years later, after McDermott announced his retirement from Congress, she won the race to succeed him.

Jayapal brought her decades of organizing experience to the work of fortifying the House Progressive Caucus, which has grown from 78 people in 2017 to 96 today. “When I came into Congress, I was kind of stunned by the lack of foundation for the progressive caucus,” she said, though she credits her predecessors with starting to reform it. “There was really no organization. It was more of a social club.”

When she and Mark Pocan, Democrat of Wisconsin, took over the caucus’s leadership in 2019, they sought to create a stronger structure, raising dues and hiring more staff. They instituted requirements that members attend meetings and sign on to a certain number of flagship bills.

Jayapal and Pocan professionalized the caucus’s political action committee. “I think when I came in we were raising maybe $300,000 to elect progressive candidates,” she said, referring to the 2016 cycle. In the most recent cycle, they raised $4.4 million. They built up an outside organization, a nonprofit called the Progressive Caucus Center, which does research, develops policy and coordinates with labor and social justice organizations.

She became the caucus’s sole chair in January. The decision to jettison the caucus’s co-chair structure led some anonymous sources to grouse to Politico about a “[*power grab*](https://www.politico.com/news/2020/10/26/progressive-caucus-eyes-shakeup-to-congress-432587),” but Pocan insisted that it made the caucus more nimble. With two co-chairs, he said, decision-making could be agonizingly slow: “Every press release had to be approved by two offices.”

Jayapal has a reputation as a tough boss; a recent [*BuzzFeed News article*](https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/addybaird/pramila-jayapal-staff-treatment) featured former staff members accusing her of running a “dysfunctional and volatile workplace” with grueling and unrealistic standards. But to many of her peers, she’s an effective leader.

Ro Khanna, a Democrat from California, said that Jayapal and Mike Darner, the caucus’s executive director, “have brought an extraordinary amount of structure to the caucus, and purpose. I can’t imagine if you call around that others wouldn’t share my view that she’s done an extraordinary job.”

NOW, Jayapal has a lot of power to determine if whatever Manchin and Sinema eventually agree to — assuming they eventually agree to something — is good enough.

Ever since Pelosi canceled the vote on the bipartisan infrastructure bill, some pundits have [*compared*](https://thedispatch.com/p/are-house-progressives-the-new-freedom) the House Progressive Caucus to the Freedom Caucus, the claque of far-right representatives whom the former Republican House speaker John Boehner once [*described*](https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/10/29/john-boehner-trump-house-republican-party-retirement-profile-feature-215741/) as “anarchists” who want to “tear it all down and start over.” Chris Stirewalt [*wrote*](https://thedispatch.com/p/are-house-progressives-the-new-freedom) in The Dispatch, “Perhaps both parties in Congress will be held captive by a clutch of performative cable news and social media stars who use their voting bloc’s power to seek attention more than legislation.”

This is a bad analogy, for a few reasons. First and foremost, the House Progressive Caucus is desperate to pass legislation. In the past, said Jayapal, progressives in Congress were seen as ineffectual: “They’re obstructionist, they don’t really know how to drive power. And honestly I kind of felt that way too when I came in.” The last thing Jayapal wants is for progressives to imitate the right in turning politics into a brand-building exercise devoid of policy content.

Further, the House Progressive Caucus isn’t pushing Biden to go beyond the proposals he himself has outlined; Jayapal is always careful to talk about their demands in terms of what the president has said he wants. “This is the president’s agenda, that he delivered in a speech to Congress and told us to bring him legislation that gets that done,” she said. “He himself [*said*](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/10/03/jayapal-rejects-manchin-biden-spending-plan-514973) he wrote the damn bills.”

Nor is the caucus totally at odds with moderates in the House. Yes, plenty of centrists would have liked to pass the infrastructure bill last month, and some have objected to parts of the reconciliation package. But many also see elements of Build Back Better as crucial to their own re-elections.

Last month, the House Democrats Colin Allred, Cindy Axne, Sharice Davids, Andy Kim and Abigail Spanberger, each of whom flipped a Republican district in 2018, published a [*Washington Post op-ed essay*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/09/23/prescription-drug-prices-medicare-negotiate/) calling for Congress to give Medicare the power to negotiate prescription drug prices. That’s a part of the reconciliation package that Sinema [*reportedly objects to*](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/10/09/sinema-prescription-drug-plan-democrats-515749). Allred joined with another group of so-called frontline members to argue for Build Back Better in [*Newsweek*](https://www.newsweek.com/2018-majority-makers-we-know-build-back-better-winning-agenda-opinion-1635389). “We may represent swing districts, but we are firm in our conviction that the passage of both of these bills is what’s best for our constituents,” they wrote.

Speaking of the House Progressive Caucus, Susan Wild, one of the co-authors of the Newsweek piece, told me, “I commend them for being relentless — and I mean that in the kindest possible way — in their pursuit of goals that I do believe will advance this country.”

Wild, a moderate who represents a district in Pennsylvania’s Lehigh Valley, bonded with Jayapal when they were trapped together in the gallery of the House chamber on Jan. 6. They live in the same apartment building and see each other often. Their politics are different, but Wild says that Jayapal “has been very focused on bringing some frontliners into the conversation and understanding what our priorities are that are compatible” with the progressive caucus.

For Wild, those priorities include dental, hearing and vision benefits for Medicare recipients, in addition to price negotiations for prescription drugs. “I would say, we’ve probably never seen the frontline and the progressives as aligned as they are right now, and a lot of that is because many of us are very much aligned with the Biden administration’s agenda,” she said.

The divide in Congress, then, isn’t really between progressives and moderates. It’s between the vast majority of Democrats and a few holdouts in both chambers. Indeed, it’s precisely because Democrats aren’t divided that some progressives find the need to make major concessions to Manchin and Sinema galling.

“If you have a caucus which is divided — you’ve got 25 people who want to do one thing, 25 people who want to do the other thing — you know what you do? You compromise,” said Sanders. But “when you’ve got 48 people who want to do something and two who don’t,” as well as the overwhelming majority of Democratic voters and the president of the United States, “it is not a 50-50 compromise.”

Except the issue isn’t what’s fair, but who has power. Which leads to the question of whether Jayapal will be able to unite her caucus behind something that Manchin and Sinema can accept, even if it seems inadequate.

Reaching a compromise is complicated by the fact that Manchin and Sinema aren’t coordinating their demands, some of which don’t overlap. Manchin has said he wants to undo some of the Trump tax cuts, while Sinema, who has revealed almost nothing publicly about her position, has [*reportedly said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/us/politics/schumer-pelosi.html?action=click&amp;module=Well&amp;pgtype=Homepage&amp;section=US%20Politics) that she won’t accept any corporate or income tax increases.

Manchin has offered a top line number of $1.5 trillion for the reconciliation package, which is far less than the $3.5 trillion in the Build Back Better Act but at least offers a starting point for talks. Sinema hasn’t released a figure, and though she’s speaking to the White House, outsiders are largely in the dark about where she stands. “I think Senator Sinema is in negotiations, I just think we don’t know about it,” said Jayapal. “I know enough to know that she is at the table.”

So far, the progressives have shown flexibility. Jayapal has [*rejected*](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/10/03/jayapal-rejects-manchin-biden-spending-plan-514973) Manchin’s $1.5 trillion figure, but [*according to Politico*](https://www.politico.com/minutes/congress/10-4-2021/), when Biden told her and several other House progressives that the final figure would likely be $1.9 trillion to $2.2 trillion, the progressives didn’t push back. At the same time, while others worry about the price of progressive intransigence, Jayapal is determined not to concede too much preemptively. She’s there to push.

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[***Living the Pandemic as a Broke Student***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YJG-9501-JBG3-602Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 31, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 27

**Length:** 1023 words

**Byline:** By Sydney Goins

**Body**

We need better options. Our rent is due April 1.

SUWANEE, Ga. -- College was supposed to be my ticket to financial security. My parents were the first ones to go to college in their family. My grandpa said to my mom, ''You need to go to college, so you don't have to depend on a man for money.'' This same mentality was passed on to me as well.

I had enough money to last until May-- $1,625 to be exact -- until the coronavirus ruined my finances.

My mom works in human resources. My dad is a project manager for a mattress company. I worked part time at the university's most popular dining hall and lived in a cramped house with three other students. I don't have a car. I either walked or biked a mile to attend class. I have student debt and started paying the accrued interest last month.

I was making it work until the coronavirus shut down my college town. At first, spring break was extended by two weeks with the assumption that campus would open again in late March, but a few hours after that email, all 26 colleges in the University System of Georgia canceled in-person classes and closed integral parts of campus.

UGA professors are currently remodeling their courses and revising their syllabuses for online learning. Students were advised to not return to the campus at Athens from their vacations or hometowns. Our May graduation ceremony was even canceled without any hope of rescheduling it for a future date.

After this news, one of my housemates drove for 12 hours to her mom's house in Chicago. Another gave me a few rolls of toilet paper and left with her boyfriend for a neighboring county.

The dining hall I worked at remained open. UGA allowed to-go meals for those still living in their dorms without a place to go. Student workers who didn't leave for the break could call in and ask to work their usual shifts, but on many occasions, the staff wouldn't answer the phone.

So far, an athletics trainer and honors student have tested positive for the coronavirus. They were last on campus on March 6. As of Tuesday, one person has died in the Athens hospital. Some students are asking for the semester to end with a pass-fail grading scale. This would help those without access to Wi-Fi or a distraction-free environment. I didn't even have a personal laptop to use until a few weeks ago. It broke in November and I couldn't afford to fix it until recently.

What if I had to do intensive schoolwork on a lagging smartphone? For the last three years, I have relied on the libraries and other on-campus resources like interlibrary loans and the bus system in order to complete my coursework. Now, the university is refunding us around $128 for services that we may need for a semester online.

After three years as an undergrad, I will graduate in May. I had applied to two highly selective creative writing programs with the ambitious hopes of acceptance. Brown University sent me an email to check the portal, and Iowa Writers Workshop sent me a letter through the mail. Both were rejections.

I pivoted my plans. I thought I could find another restaurant job in Athens or hopefully an internship during the summer until I could apply to grad school again. Those odds are not in my favor anymore. Many restaurants here have closed indefinitely or only offer takeout options. They are not hiring anytime soon.

A local coffee shop and bar, Hendershots, has started a GoFundMe for their out-of-work employees with around $10,000 raised so far. Just the Tip: Athens Virtual Tip Jar also allows regular customers to send their favorite servers tip money they would normally leave on a night out. Many service industry workers my age have added their names to this list.

Not all college students are gallivanting across the white sand beaches of Florida without a care in the world. This pandemic affects young people too. Our future depends on the efforts of the national and state governments. Coronavirus testing is extremely limited in Georgia. For its 10.52 million residents, only 100-200 state tests are available each day.

''The state does not have the capacity to test those with mild symptoms,'' said Dr. Kathleen Toomey, commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Health, in a news conference call last week.

On Thursday night, Athens-Clarke County unanimously passed an ordinance that enforces social distancing and a ''shelter in place'' rule, eliminating nonessential travel and large gatherings. Over 60 percent of the city's population -- the homeless, elderly, and those with pre-existing conditions -- are susceptible to Covid-19.

Local grocery stores had already limited their hours and lacked essential food items like beans, rice and paper goods, showcasing barren shelves. I had a panic attack, looking at items marked ''out-of-stock'' on the Instacart app and watching peers post photos online. I asked my mom if I could come home.

We drove through the empty Atlanta highway, away from my struggling college town. Now, I am back in Suwanee with dwindling savings, still having to pay rent until the end of my lease in July. I won't have an income to pay it.

For college students like me, the current solutions are: File for unemployment! Find a job at Kroger or Aldi at the detriment of your physical health! Call your potentially toxic parents! Tax refund! Personal loan! Sell your belongings!

These options are not good enough. College was supposed to give us hope for our financial future, not place us back in our parents' houses without jobs.

Mortgage and rent payments must be suspended, so further debt and illness can be avoided, especially for restaurant servers, broke college students and those in the ***working class*** who cannot afford to escape financial crises. Our rent is due April 1.

Sydney Goins (@sydgoins) is a senior English major at the University of Georgia.

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**Graphic**

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[***Gotham Revival***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6286-4JP1-JBG3-610T-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. 1; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1673 words

**Byline:** By Kevin Baker

**Body**

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, NEW YORKFour Decades of Success, Excess, and TransformationBy Thomas Dyja

You will have a hard time getting through Thomas Dyja's ''New York, New York, New York,'' mostly because there is an idea on every page, if not in every paragraph -- and usually attached to a perfect line from the host of sources he has collected for this history of New York City over its last four rollicking decades.

Here is the journalist Michael Tomasky fretting that ''there's only so much wholesomeness New York can take,'' the graphic designer Tibor Kalman advising us that Times Square ''should be a zoo, like the rest of New York, but a well-maintained zoo instead of a depressed, unemployed and crack-smoking kind of zoo,'' and the philanthropist Andrew Heiskell promising a crime-free Bryant Park: ''All the hiding places have been eliminated.'' Here is Spy magazine headlining Rudy Giuliani as ''The Toughest Weenie in America,'' Jules Feiffer calling Elaine's ''a men's club for the literary lonely,'' the writer Lewis Lapham diagnosing money as ''the sickness of the town'' and the architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable calling Harry Helmsley's Palace Hotel tower ''a curtain wall of unforgivable, consummate mediocrity.''

And from Dyja himself: ''In the Meatpacking District, both sides of beef and gay men hung from hooks''; hedge funds ''meant leaving the rich to their own devices; historically, a dangerous idea,'' and ''while the smart money had been going to real estate, so had the stupid money.'' ''Bruce Ratner believed he made money doing good -- the story many in New York had been telling about themselves for a decade''; Richard Ravitch ''had the burly sense of purpose found in fighting mammals of the Upper Midwest''; Jeff Van Gundy ''led the Knicks to the N.B.A. finals with all the ugly luck of finding a winning scratch-off on a bodega floor''; Al Sharpton ''on the face of it ... had a deathbed conversion, but really he'd just rebranded.'' And ''of all the things Abe Beame can be blamed for, Donald J. Trump is by far the worst.''

''New York x 3'' begins on Feb. 14, 1978, designated ''I Love New York Day'' for the ubiquitous jingle introduced that afternoon, part of a last-ditch publicity campaign to revive a city that even those who loved it feared was dying. But New York wasn't dying, and why it wasn't -- the women and men, policies and plans, trends and revolutions in everything from music to technology to public spaces to private desires that transformed it -- is Dyja's story. What he has produced is a tour de force, a work of astonishing breadth and depth that encompasses seminal changes in New York's government and economy, along with deep dives into hip-hop, the AIDS crisis, the visual arts, housing, architecture and finance.

It's quite a high-wire act, and one that Dyja, who has previously written a cultural history of Chicago, pulls off without ever losing the rush of his narrative. He slips in telling statistics with the skill of a banderillero, using them always to secure a point and move his story forward. Thus we learn that 60 percent of the African-American population in Harlem left between 1950 and 1980. That there were about 86 publishing houses in New York at the start of the 1980s and that ''between 1979 and 1989, 2,500 new magazines came out.'' From the start of Ronald Reagan's term to 2000, ''the top 1 percent had gotten 86 percent of the stock gains''; and New York City lost over 100,000 single-room-occupancy units at roughly the same time New York State's psychiatric units dumped 50,000 inmates back on the streets. At the nadir of the crack epidemic, ''some 150,000 New Yorkers were plying the drug trade,'' and in 1990 ''2.28 million Black men were jailed in the U.S. while 23,000 earned a college degree.'' And that ''by the end of 1983, New York's entire contribution to AIDS services and education totaled $24,500.''

Dyja's narrative starts with the decline of what he calls, with only faint irony, ''The Workers' Paradise,'' the legendary ***working-class***/middle-class city that emerged after World War II with a million manufacturing jobs and what was -- for America -- an unrivaled social welfare state. But even this fabled New York, as he notes, ''existed during a period of exclusion'' for most citizens who did not happen to be white, and crumbled under the batterings of deindustrialization, corruption, mismanagement and the usual neglect from Washington and Albany. Its aura lingered on, though, complicating things for those trying to forge a new city. (When a woman urged Ed Koch to ''make the city what it once was,'' the mayor told her with characteristic bluntness, ''Lady, it was never that good.'')

What to do? Dyja frames the struggle as a fundamental shift in how New York operated, ''from mass society to networks,'' with ''the collective world of unions, borough machines, the archdiocese and even the Mob'' giving way ''to one of individuals who define themselves primarily by the networks they belong to.'' As he neatly puts it: ''Information took over from Industry.''

I'm not sure this is as much of a change as Dyja believes it to be -- but then, this is a good book to argue with. I, for one, don't think that Christo and Jeanne-Claude's ''The Gates'' did a thing for Central Park. I believe Dyja exaggerates wildly when he describes New Yorkers as so shellshocked by 1990 that they ''turned their self-imprisonment into a trend; they became couch potatoes.'' And as someone who has lived his entire adult life in New York, beginning almost two years before ''I Love New York Day,'' I vehemently deny the claim, forwarded from the Koch parks commissioner Gordon Davis, that Urban Park Rangers had to ''help New Yorkers relearn how to behave in the city at large.'' The acting out that Dyja and Davis refer to was largely the doing of the young and the crazy, and if the rest of us did not always interfere it was mostly because of a sentimental attachment to things like our teeth.

But go have your own argument with Dyja; you will enjoy it. In our current atmosphere of political fanaticism and fantasy, his reasoning is a joy, as are his sense of nuance and his willingness to question his own assumptions. He elides what he calls the ''morality play'' that has warped most arguments about New York for the last 40 years, giving each mayor his due -- and his skewering -- with astonishing objectivity, and each genuine reformer the benefit of the doubt. He looks at the city from all points of view, from that of the poorest outsiders to the Masters of the Universe, and best of all he brings to life the volunteers, everyday New Yorkers, who stepped forward to save their city when it needed them most.

What they accomplished was remarkable, as Dyja recognizes, a New York that was and is -- at least pre-Covid -- wealthier, healthier, safer, greener, longer-lived and more modern than it has ever been. The city has absorbed an entire Philadelphia's worth of immigrants, from all over the world, more than 1.5 million new Americans since 1978, two-thirds of whom live in Brooklyn and Queens and have transformed those boroughs into the dynamic places they are today. They are ''half of the city's accountants and nurses, 40 percent of its doctors, real estate brokers and property managers.'' Dyja celebrates how the city has indeed managed to monetize its culture in a postindustrial world, between tourist sites, high art and hip-hop, ''New York's most globally influential cultural invention.''

And yet, for Dyja, New York has become in too many ways a victim of its own success, or ''oversuccess,'' as Jane Jacobs called it. In the end, ''too many good ideas, practical strategies and necessary temporary measures became permanent, inflexible policies applied to a place in constant flux.'' A ''proactive'' police department that he credits with helping crush crime has devolved in many cases into what he calls racist ''security guards and mercenaries'' abusing their power. Runaway real estate speculation created a ''Luxury City,'' with more and more of it privatized by parks ''conservancies'' and business improvement districts, housing more and more unaffordable, small businesses steamrollered by chains and mega-developments, and the Upper East Side reduced to ''a kind of jewelry store now,'' with ''a third of the apartments between 49th and 70th between Fifth and Park ... vacant 10 months a year, owned by shell companies and L.L.C.s.''

The original sin was tying so much of New York's fate to Wall Street, a dependence that has grown exponentially over the years, and that has set the city's economy on its seemingly endless roller coaster ride. A trillion dollars ''evaporated'' after the 1987 stock market crash, nearly $4 trillion after the 2000 slump. And at the same time, like a bad dream, the city's poverty levels have remained intractable, today ''around 20 percent, with another 20 percent highly vulnerable'' -- or 3.4 million people in all -- and ''almost 50,000 people sleeping on the streets any given night.''

''The result'' -- well before the pandemic -- ''was a city flush with cash and full of poor people, diverse but deeply segregated, hopeful yet worryingly hollow underneath the shiny surface,'' Dyja declares.

What is to be done? Dyja sees the need for another reinvention of New York, though he offers no easy answers -- probably because there are none. He can counsel only that which has worked best, when it has been tried, which is selflessness, moderation, involvement, empathy, creativity; ''a New York built on a bedrock of justice, not just noblesse oblige.'' But he has already, in this outstanding work, done all that a historian can do to light the way forward, by so vividly illuminating the past.Kevin Baker is the author, most recently, of ''The Fall of a Great American City: New York and the Urban Crisis of Affluence.''NEW YORK, NEW YORK, NEW YORKFour Decades of Success, Excess, and TransformationBy Thomas DyjaIllustrated. 544 pp. Simon & Schuster. $30.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/books/review/new-york-new-york-new-york-thomas-dyja.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/books/review/new-york-new-york-new-york-thomas-dyja.html)

**Graphic**

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SANTI VISALLI, VIA GETTY IMAGES

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[***Eric Adams Has Plans for New York, Beyond Public Safety***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:633V-B821-DXY4-X4PN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1932 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Dana Rubinstein and Jeffery C. Mays Emma G. Fitzsimmons is the City Hall Bureau Chief for The Times, covering Mayor Eric Adams and his administration. Dana Rubinstein covers New York City politics and government for The Times. Jeffery C. Mays is a Times reporter covering politics with a focus on New York City Hall.

**Highlight:** Mr. Adams, the Democratic mayoral nominee, has stances on policing, transportation and education that suggest a shift from Mayor Bill de Blasio.

**Body**

Mr. Adams, the Democratic mayoral nominee, has stances on policing, transportation and education that suggest a shift from Mayor Bill de Blasio.

In the afterglow of winning the Democratic nomination for mayor of New York City, [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html) began to set out his mission if elected in November.

“Safety, safety, safety,” Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html) said in one interview. “Making our city safe,” he said in another.

On Thursday, as a torrential storm flooded the city’s subway stations, Mr. Adams offered another priority: Fast-track the city’s congestion pricing plan, which would charge fees to motorists entering Manhattan’s core, so that the money could be used to make critical improvements to the aging system.

The two initiatives encapsulate Mr. Adams’s self-characterization as a blue-collar candidate: Make the streets and the subway safe and reliable for New York’s ***working-class*** residents.

But they also hint at the challenges that await the city’s next mayor.

To increase public safety, Mr. Adams has said he would bring back a contentious plainclothes anti-crime unit that focused on getting guns off the streets. The unit was effective, but it was [*disbanded last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html) amid criticism of its reputation for using excessive force, and for its negative impact on the relationship between police officers and the communities they serve.

Congestion pricing was opposed by some state lawmakers, who wanted to protect the interests of constituents who needed to drive into Manhattan. But even though state officials approved the plan two years ago, it has yet to be introduced: A key review board that would guide the tolling structure has yet to be named; its six members are to be appointed by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which is controlled by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo.

Mr. Adams, who would be the city’s second Black mayor, would face other steep challenges: steering the city out of the pandemic; navigating the possibility of a new City Council trying to push him to the left; grappling with significant budget deficits once federal recovery aid is spent.

How he intends to accomplish it all is still somewhat theoretical, but he has offered a few concrete proposals — some costly, and with no set ways to pay for them — mixed in with broader ideas.

Some of New York City’s mayoral transitions have reflected wild swings from one ideology to another. The current mayor, Bill de Blasio, ran on a promise to end the city’s vast inequities, which he said had worsened under his billionaire predecessor, Michael R. Bloomberg. The gentle and consensus-building David N. Dinkins was succeeded by Rudolph W. Giuliani, a hard-charging former federal prosecutor.

Privately, Mr. de Blasio [*supported Mr. Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html) in the competitive primary, believing that he was the person best suited to carry on Mr. de Blasio’s progressive legacy, and if Mr. Adams defeats the Republican nominee, Curtis Sliwa, an abrupt change in the city’s direction is unlikely.

But in some ways, Mr. Adams has staked out positions on issues like affordable housing, transportation and education that suggest a shift from Mr. de Blasio’s approach.

On policing, Mr. Adams, who has pledged to name the city’s first female police commissioner, has already spoken to three potential candidates, and is believed to favor Juanita Holmes, a top official who was lured out of retirement by the current police commissioner, Dermot F. Shea. Mr. Adams has also vowed to work with federal officials to crack down on the flow of handguns into the city, and he has expressed concerns about how bail reform laws, approved by state lawmakers in 2019, may be contributing to a recent rise in violent crime.

On education, Mr. Adams is viewed as friendly toward charter schools and he does not want to get rid of the specialized admissions test that has kept many Black and Latino students out of the city’s elite high schools, a departure from Mr. de Blasio’s stance. He has also proposed opening schools year-round and expanding the universal prekindergarten program by offering reduced-cost child care for children under 3.

Transportation and safety advocates hope that Mr. Adams, an avid cyclist, will have a more intuitive understanding of their calls for better infrastructure. He has promised to build 150 new miles of bus lanes and busways in his first term, and 300 new miles of protected bike lanes, a significant expansion of Mr. de Blasio’s efforts.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing was a central goal of Mr. de Blasio’s administration, and Mr. Adams supports the mayor’s highly debated plan to rezone Manhattan’s trendy SoHo neighborhood to allow for hundreds of affordable units.

Mr. Adams also supports a proposal to convert hotels and some of the city’s own office buildings to affordable housing units. The proposal originated with real estate industry leaders, who have watched their office buildings empty out during the pandemic.

Mr. Adams favors selling the air rights above New York City Housing Authority properties to developers, an idea the de Blasio administration [*floated in 2018*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html). Mr. Adams has said the sales might yield $8 billion, which the authority could use to pay for improvements at the more than 315 buildings it manages.

Mr. Adams is viewed as pro-development — he supported a deal for an [*Amazon headquarters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html) in Queens and a rezoning of Industry City in Brooklyn, both abandoned after criticism from progressive activists — and he was supported in the primary by real estate executives and wealthy donors.

During his campaign, Mr. Adams met three times with the Partnership for New York City, a Wall Street-backed business nonprofit, according to Kathryn Wylde, the group’s president. Ms. Wylde expressed appreciation for Mr. Adams’s focus on public safety — a matter of great importance to her members — and confidence that he would be more of a check on the City Council, which she said was constantly interfering with business operations.

“I think with Adams, we’ll have a shot that he will provide some discipline,” Ms. Wylde said. “Why? Because he’s not afraid of the political left.”

Some of Mr. Adams’s stances have drawn criticism from progressive leaders like Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who endorsed Maya Wiley in the Democratic primary.

Alyssa Aguilera, an executive director of VOCAL-NY Action Fund, said that “having a former N.Y.P.D. captain in Gracie Mansion” only means “further protections and funding for failed law enforcement tactics.”

“With that framework, it’s hard to believe he’s going to make any substantial changes to the size and scope of the N.Y.P.D. and that’s what many of us are hoping for,” Ms. Aguilera said.

Mr. Adams insists that even though he has been characterized as a centrist, he views himself as a true progressive who can meld left-leaning concepts with practical policies.

To address poverty, for example, Mr. Adams has [*proposed $3,000 tax credits for poor families*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html) — an idea he said was superior to his primary rival Andrew Yang’s local version of universal basic income.

“There’s a permanent group of people that are living in systemic poverty,” Mr. Adams said recently on “CBS This Morning.” “You and I, we go to the restaurant, we eat well, we take our Uber, but that’s not the reality for America and New York. And so when we turn this city around, we’re going to end those inequalities.”

To deal with the homelessness crisis, Mr. Adams has proposed[*integrating housing assistance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html) into hospital stays for indigent and homeless people, and increasing the number of facilities for mentally ill homeless people, especially those who are not sick enough to stay in a hospital but are too unwell for a shelter.

Mr. Adams did not emphasize climate change or environmental issues on the campaign trail. But in his [*Twitter post*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html) about the subway flooding on Thursday, he called for using congestion pricing funds to “add green infrastructure to absorb flash storm runoff.”

His campaign has pointed to initiatives from his tenure as borough president: helping to expand the Brooklyn Greenway, a coastal bike and walking corridor, not only for recreation but for flood mitigation; and improving accountability for the post-Hurricane Sandy reconstruction process.

Those actions are dwarfed by the sweeping change he will be called on to oversee as mayor — particularly by a City Council with many new members who campaigned on a commitment to mitigate and prepare for the effects of rising seas and extreme weather on a port city with a 520-mile coastline.

Mr. Adams expresses confidence that he can reinstate the plainclothes police squad and use stop-and-frisk tactics without violating people’s rights, contending that his administration can effectively monitor data related to police interactions in real time, and intervene if there are abuses.

“We are not going back to the days where you are going to stop, frisk, search and abuse every person based on their ethnicity and based on the demographics or based on the communities they’re in,” Mr. Adams said on MSNBC last week. “You can have precision policing without heavy-handed abusive policing.”

Mr. Adams seems most likely to differ from Mr. de Blasio on matters of tone and governing style.

He is known for working round-the-clock, while Mr. de Blasio has been pilloried for arriving late to work and appearing apathetic about his job. Mr. de Blasio is a Red Sox fan who grew up in the Boston area and lives in brownstone Brooklyn; Mr. Adams, a lifelong New Yorker, was raised in Jamaica, Queens, by a single mother who cleaned homes. He roots for the Mets.

Mr. Adams will come into office in a powerful position because of the diverse coalition he assembled of Black, Latino and white voters outside Manhattan.

“De Blasio spoke about those communities; Eric speaks to the communities,” said Mitchell Moss, a professor of urban planning at New York University. “There’s a real difference. De Blasio was talented as a campaigner. Eric is going to be a doer.”

Where Mr. de Blasio rode into City Hall as a critic of the police and a proponent of reform, he will end his term buried in criticism that he ultimately pandered to the department — a shift that many attribute to[*a moment, early in his tenure, when members of the Police Department turned their backs on him at an officer’s funeral*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/nyregion/debate-adams-sliwa-mayor-nyc.html).

Officers were upset that Mr. de Blasio spoke about talking to his biracial son about how to safely interact with the police, a conversation that the parents of most Black children have. As mayor, Mr. Adams said he would gather with officers around the city for a different version of “the conversation.”

“I’m your mayor,” Mr. Adams said he would tell officers. “What you feel in those cruisers, I felt. I’ve been there. But let me tell you something else. I also know how it feels to be arrested and lying on the floor of the precinct and have someone kick you in your groin over and over again and urinate blood for a week.”

Mr. Adams will most likely be different from Mr. de Blasio in another way: He mischievously told reporters last week that he would be fun to cover. Indeed, he was photographed on Wednesday getting an ear pierced; the next day, he was seen dining at Rao’s, an exclusive Italian restaurant in Harlem, with the billionaire Republican John Catsimatidis.

“He got his ear pierced and went to Rao’s,” Mr. Moss said. “He’s going to enjoy being a public personality.”

Reporting was contributed by Anne Barnard, Matthew Haag, Winnie Hu, Andy Newman and Ali Watkins.

PHOTO: Eric L. Adams may revive a contentious plainclothes anti-crime unit that was disbanded last year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH BLESENER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2024

**End of Document**



[***‘Insecure’ Broke Ground by Embracing Imperfection***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63VH-H2Y1-DXY4-X2H7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 15, 2021 Friday 16:10 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 2380 words

**Byline:** Salamishah Tillet

**Highlight:** The show, which ends this season, depicted its characters as authentically flawed. “True representation is the ability to show your vulnerability,” said the co-creator and star Issa Rae.

**Body**

“[*Insecure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/31/arts/television/insecure-recap-season-5-episode-2.html)” begins its final season by looking backward.

In the season premiere, which debuts Oct. 24 on HBO, the best friends Issa Dee (Issa Rae) and Molly Carter (Yvonne Orji) meet up at Stanford University for their 10-year college reunion, having spent most of last season fighting and apart. Over an eventful weekend, they reminisce about the origins of their relationship and pledge to move forward together, once again firmly in each other’s corners.

It suggests that for the final stretch, “[*Insecure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/18/t-magazine/yvonne-orji.html)” is returning to the thing that made it so appealing for Black viewers especially, and so subtly groundbreaking for premium cable: consistent focus on the ups and downs of Black women’s friendships. Created by Rae (then known for her web series “The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl”) and the veteran comic and showrunner [*Larry Wilmore*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/11/arts/television/larry-wilmore.html), “Insecure” was only the second comedy created by and starring a Black woman when it debuted in 2016. (The first was Wanda Sykes’s “Wanda at Large,” which premiered in 2003 on Fox.) “Insecure” briefly overlapped on HBO with “Girls,” which ended in 2017 — both descendants of the network’s “Sex and the City,” but which swapped the Blahniks and Birkins for millennial angst and awkwardness.

“Insecure” countered the racial homogeneity of those New York predecessors, but it also stood in contrast to other shows and films set in Los Angeles. Neighborhoods like Baldwin Hills, Windsor Hills and View Park (where Rae grew up) had rarely been seen onscreen; if South Los Angeles was portrayed at all, it tended to happen in movies like [*“Boyz ’N the Hood”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1991/07/12/movies/review-film-a-chance-to-confound-fate.html) and [*“Menace II Society”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1993/05/26/movies/review-film-teen-agers-living-under-the-gun.html) that depicted predominantly Black communities like Watts and Inglewood (where Rae’s father had his dental practice) as plagued by gangs and gun violence. Rae [*has said*](https://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-southla-perception-20170123-story.html) her goal was to make those neighborhoods feel as sexy as any other place in the city.

Part of that sexiness came from the look and sound of the show’s world. Melina Matsoukas, best known when the show debuted for having just [*directed Beyoncé’s “Formation” video*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/28/arts/music/melina-matsoukas-beyonce-formation-interview.html), set a visual tone as a director and executive producer. The experimental R&amp;B singer Solange Knowles served as a [*music consultant*](https://www.vox.com/2016/11/3/13457574/insecure-soundtrack-solange). (The neo-soul legend [*Raphael Saadiq*](https://www.vulture.com/2017/09/raphael-saadiq-on-insecure-solange-and-his-new-album.html) also composed music for the score.)

It also came from the fashion — [*Molly’s couture work wardrobe, Issa’s chic political T-shirts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/03/style/insecure-hbo-fashion-style.html) — and from the dazzling array of [*natural hairstyles*](https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2020/04/9674549/issa-rae-hair-insecure-season-4-interview). The aesthetics made for a sleek, inviting backdrop to the show’s trailblazing casting, which centered two dark-skinned Black women as stars and romantic leads.

But the most revolutionary aspect of “Insecure” was the abundance of decidedly unsexy moments — when Issa and friends messed up, hurt themselves and others, indulged in the kinds of mistakes and bad decisions most of us make as young adults.

“True representation is the ability to show your vulnerability and be able to say, ‘I don’t have it all together, just like the next white person doesn’t have it all together,’” Rae said recently. “I think the show gave Black people permission to also be like, ‘You’re right: We are insecure.’”

Like Rae and Matsoukas, most of the show’s creative team had new jobs or new levels of responsibility when “Insecure” began. The showrunner Prentice Penny and the executive producer Amy Aniobi had never before filled those positions. Playing Molly was the first major acting role for Orji, a stand-up comedian. Five years later, they are a tight-knit group of veterans, proud of what they created together.

For a recent video interview about the end of “Insecure,” Rae and Orji were together in Miami; their co-star Jay Ellis, who plays Issa’s intermittent love interest Lawrence, dialed in from that city’s airport; Aniobi was in New York City; and Matsoukas and Penny were in Los Angeles. Despite being all over the country, their intimacy was genuine and inviting. There was plenty of ribbing — Penny’s oversized Green Bay Packers cap and Ellis’s bad phone reception were popular targets — but after nearly every joke came sincere reflection about a colleague’s talent or insights. These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

Issa, when “Insecure” debuted, you described it as a show that wasn’t exclusively about the struggle of being Black but rather “just regular Black people living life.” Looking back, did it live up to that vision?

ISSA RAE: I think we nailed it. The goal was to elevate regular Black people and make us look as beautiful in our regularness as humanly possible. I think we achieved that.

PRENTICE PENNY: One of the problems we show is that Black people face racial microaggressions at random. Like, in Episode 3 of the first season, when Issa Dee realized that her white co-workers were leaving her out of their emails. Not everybody’s shot by the police, but everybody knows what it feels like when white people are talking about you behind your back. Those are the things that felt regular, right? Or what is life like for a Black person on any given Tuesday? A day that’s not special, but super regular. That was our North Star.

RAE: And when we did include Lawrence getting pulled over by the police, a high tension moment that we know ends up so fatally for so many men and women in our community, we asked ourselves, “How does that encounter affect the next events of your day?” We deal with these things all the time and do not get an opportunity to pause and reflect. Instead, Black people experience microaggression or racism and keep pushing. You may come home mad and yell at your partner, or you might journal. “Insecure” is more interested in those moments and how they affect your day-to-day life.

PENNY: Issa said in the writers’ room at one point: “When you’re white, racism is a period. Like, ‘This is wrong, this needs to stop, period.’ But when you’re Black, it’s a comma.” It’s like, this racist thing happened to me, but I still have to go pay bills, still have to drive and go home and see my kids. Yes, this thing happened, but how are you going to deal with it?

In 2016, “Insecure” and “Atlanta” broke new ground as comedies about Black millennials. Did any of you ever feel pressure to speak for your generation?

MELINA MATSOUKAS: I never felt the burden of having to speak for an entire generation of people. The task we felt was to show these characters and this environment authentically. That meant actually shooting in the neighborhoods these characters are from, speaking to and incorporating those people into our storytelling, using strong female relationships and all the things that are authentic to a real, vibrant community and the world where Issa Dee comes from.

Was representing Black people of varying class statuses part of that honesty? The characters Issa and Lawrence, for example, live in the Dunes, an apartment complex with predominantly ***working-class*** Black residents, even though they graduated from Stanford and Georgetown.

RAE: To Melina’s point, it was authenticity. I graduated from Stanford and didn’t have a job, so I moved back to L.A. into my parents house, and the first place I moved to after that was a Dunes-like apartment complex where you have people of different classes.

PENNY: There’s this expectation that we have to be perfect and excellent all the time. I remember we when we were pitching it with the title “Insecure,” there was push back about that because insecurity is not usually associated with Black people. That was such a moment for Issa, Melina and me, and it made me realize, “No, that’s even more reason we want the show to be that.”

YVONNE ORJI: They were like, “You guys are flawless, you’re fierce, you’re ——”

PENNY: “So dope, you’re so dope.”

MATSOUKAS: I’m literally feeling uncomfortable and insecure right now.

ORJI: This conversation is making me insecure.

JAY ELLIS: That is part of the reason this show never felt like a burden. Because the burden is being excellent all the time. The burden is the expectation that we have for what a Black man or a Black woman who went to Princeton or Stanford is supposed to be like, or what Molly had to go through being in that white law firm, right? But when we got to do the show the way Issa, Prentice, Melina and Amy wanted to do it, we didn’t have to wear a mask for anybody or live up to anybody else’s expectation. This is actual freedom.

For most of you, this was your first time leading a project of this caliber. How do you look back on that risk now?

AMY ANIOBI: I think back to our first production meeting when someone asked a really good question. And then I realized, “Oh, I’m supposed to answer that?” It was a bit like working at a teaching hospital; we were all learning for the first time together. That contributed to why we had each other’s backs so hard.

PENNY: We were trying to create a safe space for failure. We’re going to open the door as fast as possible to get many people in and make a safe space for Black creative people.

ORJI: What Issa has started for me is a chain reaction. With my specials or next projects, I’m pulling in people that I’ve seen doing amazing things but haven’t had that big break yet. I’m giving them a chance. White people are allowed to do that for their friends.

ANIOBI: If you want to get enraged, read the Wikipedia for “Seinfeld.” I’m like, what? It had so many tries.

PENNY: And I’ve worked with writers from “Seinfeld” and “Friends” after those shows ended, and they still get overall deals all the time. Those shows are 20 years old now. They still believe, “I think those white people still got something in them.”

Even though your show was on HBO, it often felt as if it was written for a Black audience. Characters like Issa and Molly started off code-switching and working in predominantly white offices, and they quit. Their worlds and the show itself started getting more and more ——

ANIOBI: Blacker.

RAE: With “We Got Y’all,” we just felt tired of telling those stories. There is this pressure for Black writers to talk about the Black experience within a white context. In Season 1, we were briefly encouraged to tell the point of view of the Frieda character [Issa’s white colleague at the nonprofit, played by Lisa Joyce]. Why would we do that?

ORJI: By Season 4, Issa was out of that environment, and Molly went to a Black firm. And when you put the characters in a Black space, you also told a realistic story of what that looks like, too. When Molly goes from the white firm to the Black firm, it’s not like, “Ah! My people!” It’s like, “Hi, this other place did it differently …” and they were like, “You can go back there.” But at the same time, she’s like, “Whatever I lost coming here, I gained this other thing that you can’t put a price tag on.”

MATSOUKAS: Those story lines really paralleled what was happening to us within the industry. We all came together and we were all coming from a place where we were othered, where we were the only Black person working in white spaces. Then naturally gravitating toward one another and really enjoying the freedom that comes with working with each other, speaking the same language and not having to code switch. Now we just have one code.

RAE: Now we are the code.

Making a complex friendship between two dark-brown complexioned Black women, Molly and Issa, the heart of the show still seems rare, even today.

ORJI: That was very refreshing to see that casting breakdown and realize, “Hold up, she’s talking about me.”

RAE: This is based off my real friendship. So I wasn’t interested in the trope of one light-skinned and one dark-skinned friend. I was very interested in staying true to that authentic friendship, and we often don’t get two dark-skinned Black woman leads. So that was a mandate for us, to make sure that was showcased.

MATSOUKAS: We really wanted to be a part of redefining what beauty looked like. I remember going to film school and them being like, “If you cast a Black woman as your lead, it won’t be a marketable film.” That’s literally what I was taught in school. So to show that beauty exists in all different shades and colors, and that these women and can just be as sexy as anyone else, was really important for all of us.

ANIOBI: Some of the storytelling felt almost like wish fulfillment for us as dark-skinned Black women. It was exciting to be like: “If we were the center of the story, what would happen? How would it happen?” There was so much of it, especially in the early seasons, where we were like, “Well, what would you expect if it were your story?”

RAE: Portraying a desirable dark-skinned lead over the years — this is something I’m only recognizing now — greatly increased my own sense of self, too. My life would be completely different had we not written those characters that way. I don’t think I’ve ever attributed this to the show and to the portrayal of this lead. I wrote myself with more confidence, and now I get to live that out and portray it, too.

“Insecure” is ending in a complicated moment, a year after Black Lives Matter protests ignited the country, and we are still in a pandemic. What do you hope the show’s legacy will be?

ELLIS: There’s security in insecurity. There’s something about the journey that these characters go on by the end of Season 5 that it just feels like, “What happened on Tuesday?” I’m good with what happened Tuesday, and I’m going to keep moving on to Wednesday and not let it ruin my day or my life or whatever.

RAE: I’ve got to credit Amy. We were really trying to find the right way to end the show and she told us, “We keep trying to land the plane.” Instead, she reminded us that the plane ride continues, and these characters are going to live on. That was so freeing to be able to say to each other, “Oh, we’re not ending this show.” These characters that I know and I’ve grown with are going to continue to make decisions and live on.

PHOTOS: Issa Rae says, “True representation is the ability to show your vulnerability and be able to say, ‘I don’t have it all together, just like the next white person doesn’t have it all together.’” (PHOTOGRAPH BY NATALIA MANTINI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (AR14); Above, from left, Amanda Seales, Yvonne Orji, Issa Rae and Natasha Rothwell in “Insecure.” Left, Jay Ellis with Rae in the show. He played her intermittent love interest, Lawrence. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MERIE W. WALLACE/HBO; ANNE MARIE FOX/HBO) (AR15)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How Ronald Reagan Rose -- and Rose***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60XW-7DF1-JBG3-6403-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 9; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1287 words

**Byline:** By Evan Thomas

**Body**

REAGANLANDAmerica's Right Turn, 1976-1980By Rick Perlstein

In 1968, 17-year-old Patrick Caddell polled a ***working-class*** neighborhood in Jacksonville, Fla., about the upcoming presidential race for a high school project. He was surprised to hear, again and again, ''Wallace or Kennedy, either one.'' This seemed to make no sense. Alabama Governor George Wallace, a segregationist, was the ideological opposite and avowed foe of Robert Kennedy, who had pushed civil rights as attorney general in his brother's administration. Young Caddell had an insight: In politics, feelings mattered more than policy. For all their apparent differences, Wallace and Kennedy were both tough guys; they both seemed to be mad at something most of the time. Voters could relate: The feeling abroad in the land in 1968 (not unlike 2020) was alienation.

Later, working out of his college dorm room, Caddell became a paid political consultant. One of his clients in the 1972 election was Joe Biden, then 29, running for the United States Senate from Delaware. Caddell told Biden not to attack his opponent. That would just make him look like another politician. Rather, he should run against Washington. Biden took the advice and won.

Rick Perlstein tells this anecdote early in ''Reaganland,'' his absorbing political and social history of the late 1970s. More than 700 pages later, Perlstein notes that Biden, himself, went on to become ''an exquisitely well-calibrated politician.'' Perlstein doesn't point out the irony, but he doesn't need to. The joy of this book, and the reason it remains fresh for nearly a thousand pages of text, is that personality and character constantly confound the conventional wisdom. Perlstein's broad theme is well known, partly because he has made it so through his three earlier volumes (''Before the Storm,'' ''Nixonland'' and ''The Invisible Bridge'') on the rise of the New Right in American politics. In the 1960s and 70s, liberals overplayed their hand and failed to see the growing disaffection of Americans who felt cut out or left behind. (Sound familiar?) But Perlstein is never deterministic, and his sharp insights into human quirks and foibles make all of his books surprising and fun, if a little smart-alecky at times.

[ Read an excerpt from ''Reaganland.'' ]

One of Perlstein's favorite sports is to poke fun at the cluelessness of establishment commentators from the mainstream media. In the summer of 1977, Perlstein reports, pundits were writing long ''thumbsuckers'' pronouncing the near death of the Republican Party. The Boston Globe's David Nyhan said ''the two party system is now down to one and a half parties.'' That was because, ''the party of Abraham Lincoln forgot its heritage and started neglecting minorities.''

In fact, Perlstein points out, the ''party of Lincoln'' knew exactly what it was doing: marching into the once-Democratic Solid South to convert angry white voters into Republicans. In 1968 and 1972, Richard Nixon had made a start with his Southern Strategy, using code words like ''states' rights'' to appeal to racists, but by 1980, the Republican Party seemed to dispense with subtlety. Ronald Reagan's first major appearance of the 1980 general election campaign was at the Neshoba County Fair in Mississippi. This was Klan country. In 1964, the bodies of three civil rights activists had been found buried in an earthen dam a few miles away. Families came to the Neshoba County Fair every year to enjoy the mule races and beauty and pie-eating contests. ''White families, that is,'' Perlstein archly notes. ''Blacks only participated as employees.''

In the hot sun, before an adoring audience, on a stage crowded with Confederate flags, Reagan began with a football story and some corny jokes, and then plunged into the red meat of his speech, about the wickedness of federal interference in the lives of ordinary Americans. But then, Perlstein notes, a strange thing happened. Reagan, one of the most sure-footed stump speakers ever, began to get ''wobbly.'' Instead of pausing for his punch lines, he rushed ahead. He seemed to want to get the speech over with.

The enthusiasm drained from the crowd. The speech was a bust. Reagan actually dropped in the polls in Mississippi. He recovered later, taking every Southern state but Jimmy Carter's Georgia. Still, the plain fact was that Reagan was not comfortable playing the race card, and he couldn't hide it.

It's a small, redeeming moment in Perlstein's overspilling narrative, but the glimpse into Reagan's conscience is characteristic of Perlstein's storytelling. Reagan is hardly a hero to Perlstein, whose own politics are to the left. But in this description, the former movie actor turned politician is intensely human, and capable of empathy, or at least shame.

Reagan is also sly, especially at outfoxing condescending liberals. In 1980, Jimmy Carter's campaign advisers, along with most of the press corps, underestimated him. ''They presumed the public would see what they saw. Which was that Carter was smart and that Reagan was stupid. And that therefore Reagan would lose any debate,'' Perlstein writes. ''Which overlooked the fact that Reagan had won practically every debate he had participated in -- going back at least to 1967, when he appeared on the same TV hookup with Robert F. Kennedy to discuss the Vietnam War, and twisted his opponent into such knots that Kennedy subsequently yelled, 'Who ... got me into this?' and ordered staffers never to pair him with 'that son-of-a-bitch' ever again.''

At their final debate in late October, virtually tied in the polls, Carter started in on Reagan for having advocated, ''on four different occasions,'' for ''making Social Security a voluntary system, which would, in effect, very quickly bankrupt it.'' After Reagan responded with a wandering anecdote about an orphan and someone's aunt, Carter bore in and attacked Reagan for opposing Medicare. Now, Carter warned, Reagan was trying to block national health insurance.

As Perlstein tells it, Reagan looked at Carter smilingly, his face betraying ''a hint of pity.'' Then the old cowboy rocked back, and with an easy, genial chuckle, delivered the knockout blow. ''There you go again!'' he said, beaming. The audience gave a ''burst of delighted laughter. ... Jimmy Carter was being mean again.''

With one deft jab, Reagan had finished off his opponent. A few days later, the Republican candidate won in an electoral vote landslide.

The 1980 election marks the end of this book, and, Perlstein says in his acknowledgments, the end of his four-volume saga on the rise of conservatism in America, from the early stirrings of Barry Goldwater to the dawn of the Age of Reagan. One hopes Perlstein does not stop there. ''Reaganland'' is full of portents for the current day. Among the fascinating and disturbing echoes is his description of the night the lights went out in New York City in the midsummer of 1977. The city went feral. Looters ran wild. The police force, diminished by huge layoffs, seemed helpless to restore order. At the time, a congressman named Ed Koch was running for mayor. Koch was known as a liberal, but after the mayhem, he ran on a platform that featured bringing back the death penalty. He won. One wonders, in our own uncertain era, what the future will hold for Joe Biden, whom we meet on Page 8 of ''Reaganland'' as a Patrick Caddell-made populist candidate on his way to becoming ''an exquisitely well-calibrated politician.'' Maybe, some day, Rick Perlstein will tell us that story.Evan Thomas is the author, most recently, of ''First: Sandra Day O'Connor.''REAGANLANDAmerica's Right Turn, 1976-1980By Rick PerlsteinSimon & Schuster. 1120 pp. $40.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/books/review/reaganland-rick-perlstein.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/books/review/reaganland-rick-perlstein.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Ronald Reagan campaigning in September 1980. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES HUGHES/NY DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 27, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Trump Travels to New Hampshire to Rally Republicans and Distract Democrats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y60-41C1-DXY4-X0Y1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1157 words

**Byline:** Annie Karni and Maggie Haberman

**Highlight:** On the eve of the state’s presidential primary, he arrived with a team of surrogates who will visit polling places on Tuesday.

**Body**

On the eve of the state’s presidential primary, he arrived with a team of surrogates who will visit polling places on Tuesday.

MANCHESTER, N.H. — In his first rally since the Senate acquitted him on charges that he abused power and obstructed Congress, a triumphant President Trump returned on Monday to [*New Hampshire*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html), the state where he won his first primary in 2016 and that he hopes to carry in 2020.

At a [*rally*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html) in an arena that top officials billed as something of a homecoming, Mr. Trump’s crowd erupted in vintage chants of “Lock her up!” when he referred to Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s behavior at his State of the Union address last week, when she [*tore up a copy of his remarks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html) after he finished. “I’m speaking and a woman is mumbling terribly behind me, angry,” he said. “We’re the ones who should be angry.”

But Mr. Trump also credited Ms. Pelosi and the impeachment trial for an increase in his poll numbers. “Thank you, Nancy,” he said.

Mr. Trump and his top campaign aides made it clear that their immediate goal in coming to Manchester on the eve of the New Hampshire primary was to steal attention from a competitive Democratic primary in which Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., are running almost neck and neck in many surveys.

Mr. Trump dangled the idea that in the open primary, Republicans could try to influence the outcome. “A lot of Republicans tomorrow will vote for the weakest candidate,” Mr. Trump said. “My only problem is I’m trying to figure out who is the weakest candidate. I think they’re all weak.”

And the president claimed, without evidence, that Democrats illegally bussed in voters from Massachusetts to vote in New Hampshire in the 2016 election, when [*Mr. Trump narrowly lost*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html) the state to Hillary Clinton. But even his former campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, who is from New Hampshire, has said that never happened.

“We should have won the election,” Mr. Trump said. “But they had buses being shipped up from Massachusetts hundreds and hundreds of buses, and it was very, very close even though they did.”

In a disjointed speech where he toggled between the teleprompter and his own discursive asides, Mr. Trump played into ***working-class*** fears by warning of the loss of manufacturing jobs and played up his new North American and Chinese trade agreements.

And he stoked the same fears that propelled him to [*victory in the Republican primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html) here four years ago, noting that illegal immigrants coming into the country were “murders, rapists, and some other things. They’re going to be poisoning our children with drugs right here in New Hampshire.”

Four years ago, Mr. Trump benefited from running against a crowded field of traditional Republican candidates. This time around, a field of three challengers has already been whittled down to one — Bill Weld, a former Massachusetts governor who has failed to make any dent in Mr. Trump’s popularity within the party.

But Mr. Trump hopes to deprive Democrats of being the focus of attention; in Iowa, the front page of The Des Moines Register the day after the president’s rally there featured a picture of him, not the Democrats. Trump campaign officials said they were eager to begin running a general election strategy in a state the president lost to Mrs. Clinton by just 2,700 votes and [*where they believe they can expand the map in November*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html).

Mr. Trump’s rally at SNHU Arena brought him back to the place where he shocked voters during the primary with a [*vulgar description of his chief rival*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html) at the time, Senator Ted Cruz of Texas.

A few weeks ago Mr. Trump singled out Mr. Cruz for praise when he signed the United States-Mexico-Canada trade deal. “Thank you, Ted, for everything,” he said. “You’ve been incredible.”

It was a reminder of how far Mr. Trump has come in four years — his onetime foes have become his biggest defenders.

But his remarks also showed how much he relied on the same kit of tricks to rally his supporters. Mr. Trump reprised a 2016 primary campaign staple — reading aloud a poem called “The Snake,” about a woman who was bitten by a pet reptile she took in. In Mr. Trump’s rendering, “The Snake” represented the threat of undocumented immigrants. Mr. Trump, who is deeply superstitious, had not read the poem in months.

Supporters who began lining up in the snow a day ahead of the rally appeared to have forgiven Mr. Trump — if they ever blamed him — for maligning New Hampshire as a “a drug-infested den” in [*a 2017 private call with the president of Mexico*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html), the transcript of which was [*published by The Washington Post*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html).

Before leaving Washington to fly here, Mr. Trump expressed his admiration for authoritarian countries like China, where drug dealers are executed. “Countries with a powerful death penalty, with a fair but quick trial, they have very little if any drug problem,” he said. “That includes China.”

The president’s daughter Ivanka Trump, a senior White House adviser, joined him in Manchester after attending a “Cops for Trump” event in Portsmouth, with Vice President Mike Pence. A team of congressional allies, including Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, Senator Rick Scott of Florida and Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky, were also on hand, and plan to greet voters at polling stations on Tuesday.

Mr. Trump’s 2016 primary victory in New Hampshire, coupled with Mr. Sanders’s trouncing of Mrs. Clinton in the Democratic race, were seen at the time as a sign of the power of two establishment-wrecking candidates. Part of Mr. Trump’s challenge this time around will be channeling the same outsider energy from the seat of the presidency.

Mr. Trump’s campaign is now focused on Mr. Sanders as the candidate [*it would most want to face in a general election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html).

Mr. Trump has not, in the past, been willing to bend to the traditional politicking that New Hampshire voters expect. In 2016, he grumbled to audiences in the state about the time he had to spend in the car to get from one event to another. And he bypassed the traditional flesh-pressing that New Hampshire voters expect from candidates trying to win their votes, instead flying in and out of the state on his private jet and sticking to jumbo rallies.

His campaign style has not changed. Mr. Trump outsourced the diner meet-and-greets to Mr. Pence, who dutifully stopped by Airport Diner in Manchester, N.H., on Monday, where he and Ms. Trump sat with a family eating mozzarella sticks for an early dinner.

And the president left quickly after the rally, departing for Dover Air Force Base in Delaware to participate in a dignified transfer of [*two soldiers killed over the weekend*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-rally-portsmouth-new-hampshire.html) in Afghanistan.

“These were fallen heroes,” Robert O’Brien, the president’s national security adviser, told reporters aboard Air Force One. “And we were close by.”

Katie Rogers contributed reporting.

PHOTO: President Trump at a rally in Manchester, N.H., on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Lives Taken in Atlanta: Dreamer, Striver, Mother***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627Y-S3F1-DXY4-X38Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 20, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1485 words

**Byline:** By Juliana Kim, Corina Knoll and Campbell Robertson

**Body**

Among the eight people killed at Atlanta-area spas this week was a wife going for a massage with her husband, and immigrant mothers working long hours to support their children.

ATLANTA -- From early in the morning until late at night, Hyun Jung Grant was at work. She was a single mother with life's unyielding obligations: two sons who needed college tuition, the rent on the home they all shared, the relentless drumbeat of bills.

An immigrant from South Korea, Ms. Grant, 51, did not talk much about her job at Gold Spa, a massage parlor in a neon-lit stretch of strip malls in northeastern Atlanta. She preferred to tell people that she worked at a makeup store.

''She didn't want us to worry about her ever,'' said her son Eric Park, 20.

Ms. Grant was among eight people shot to death on Tuesday evening. Another victim is still hospitalized.

They had come a long way to the storefronts set inconspicuously amid the crowded commercial unspooling of metro Atlanta. They had come from Korea, from China, from Guatemala, from Detroit, from right up the road in Acworth, Ga. Most had come to work, perhaps to put some aside for children and even grandchildren, to carve out a little bit of security and independence for themselves and their families.

Then a young man with a gun arrived, and over the course of a single violent hour, years of work and accumulated opportunities were put to an abrupt end.

''All I can think about is her,'' said Mr. Park, recalling the days at the mall and aquarium, just him and his brother and his mother, the bowls of soondubu at Korean restaurants, the kimchi jjigae she made herself. Ms. Grant had encouraged Eric in his dreams of becoming a chef. They were a close-knit trio, relying on one another.

''It's just us two now,'' Eric said.

Twenty-five miles up the interstate from Gold Spa, amid the strip malls and parking lots of the Atlanta suburbs, sits Young's Asian Massage, a shop that was kept running through long days and late evenings by Xiaojie Tan.

''She worked from 9 to 9 almost every day,'' said Ashley Zhang, a friend of Ms. Tan's, who like her was a Chinese immigrant. ''We're here for opportunity,'' she said. ''We work so hard. We want the American dream to come true.''

Ms. Tan, a mother and businesswoman who was known to her friends as Emily, owned the spa and had made it into a place where patrons felt at home, said Greg Hynson, a longtime customer who had seen her last weekend. She was ''just the sweetest, kindest, most giving person,'' he said, and she set a tone that the other employees followed.

''They welcomed you,'' Mr. Hynson said. ''If you were a friend of Emily's, you were a friend of theirs.''

One of those workers was Daoyou Feng, 44, who according to Mr. Hynson had started working at the spa a few months ago. She was among those killed on Tuesday.

When the gunman showed up, Delaina Ashley Yaun, 33, was there with her husband, having arrived shortly beforehand. Unlike the others who were killed, Ms. Yaun had been born and raised in the area.

She knew about hard work.

''I've worked with a lot of people in my life,'' said John Beck, 27, who had been Ms. Yaun's manager at a nearby Waffle House. ''Delaina was the most hard-working, most determined, most outspokenly good-hearted person I've ever met.''

She had been a server and master grill operator at the Waffle House, Mr. Beck said, arriving in the morning blasting gospel music and often buying eggs and grits for homeless people who had no money for food. She was raising a son by herself, but she also kept a motherly eye on Mr. Beck, checking in regularly to make sure he was OK.

Her big dream, Mr. Beck said, was to get married. And last year, she did just that, marrying Mario Gonzalez, whom Mr. Beck said she had met at the Waffle House when he showed up as a customer. They soon had a daughter. It was ''real love,'' Mr. Beck said.

Tuesday was a date -- they were going to get massages together.

Paul Andre Michels, 54, an electrician, was also killed at the spa on Tuesday. He was a ''workaholic,'' said his brother Fred Michels. He grew up as the seventh of nine children in a ***working-class*** Catholic family in Detroit that had a long history of building and fixing things. His father painted Cadillacs at a General Motors plant, his mother kept the family fed with pierogies and stuffed cabbage, and he went off to join the Army.

Mr. Michels returned to Detroit but eventually settled in Atlanta, his brother said, marrying and starting his own electrical business.

As the employees met with patrons inside the business, Elcias R. Hernandez-Ortiz, 30, was out front, walking to a money exchange business next door. He had come to the area from Guatemala about 10 years ago, ''like most immigrants living here,'' his wife, Flor Gonzalez, said, leaving home ''to look for a better life.''

He found work as a mechanic, sending some money to his family in Guatemala and taking care of his family here -- the couple had been planning for next week's birthday of their daughter Yoseline.

Mr. Ortiz-Hernandez, who was shot but survived the attack, remains hospitalized in critical condition.

Back in northeastern Atlanta, on the border of one of the most upscale parts of town, sits a small pocket of tattoo shops, strip clubs and massage parlors.

Among these are Gold Spa, where Ms. Grant worked alongside Suncha Kim, 69, and Soon Chung Park, who, at 74, was the oldest person to be killed on Tuesday.

Ms. Kim, a grandmother who enjoyed line dancing in her spare time, had been married for more than 50 years, a family member said. She had immigrated to the United States from Korea ''to provide us a better education and better life,'' said the family member, who asked not to be named for privacy reasons. ''Just a regular American family and worked really hard.''

Ms. Park had lived in New York before moving to Atlanta, a son-in-law, Scott Lee, said in a brief interview on Friday. She had stayed close with her relatives, many of whom still live in New York and New Jersey. ''She got along with her family so well,'' Mr. Lee said in Korean.

Across the street from Gold Spa is Aromatherapy Spa, where Yong Ae Yue worked.

Ms. Yue, 63, moved to the United States from South Korea in the 1970s, coming with her husband, Mac Peterson, whom she had met while he was stationed in the Army. They had one son before moving to Fort Benning, Ga., and having another son, Mr. Peterson said.

Ms. Yue found work as a cashier at a grocery store outside of Fort Benning and the couple stayed there until getting divorced in 1982. Their families had been close -- ''She used to take my sister to the spa,'' Mr. Peterson said -- and they had kept in touch, having lunch together as recently as last summer.

''She was a good mother,'' Mr. Peterson said. ''She was always there for her kids.''

Ms. Yue was the last person killed in the shootings on Tuesday.

Ms. Grant's sons, Eric and his brother Randy, 22, first learned about the attacks from a Gold Spa employee's daughter. They did not know that their mother had died until late that night, after a relative in Korea saw Ms. Grant's name in a news report.

On Friday morning, the brothers were at home, looking through photo albums for their mother's upcoming memorial.

This was a new place for them, relatively. They had moved into the house, a rental, from an apartment last year, a moment of celebration because it was a step closer to Ms. Grant's dream of buying a home.

But Ms. Grant had not spent as much time in it. She was gone for days and weeks on end, Randy Park said. She often stayed at Gold Spa or at a friend's place near the business, he said, because she did not have a car and the commute to work was lengthy and tedious.

Still, Randy Park said his mother called every night after work to check in on him and his younger brother. The last time she called was Monday evening, he recalled. She asked if they were doing OK and if they had eaten, and then wished them good night.

''I knew she was working for us,'' said her youngest son, Eric. ''So I never resented her for when she wasn't around.''

Juliana Kim reported from Atlanta, Corina Knoll from New York, and Campbell Robertson from Pittsburgh. Reporting was contributed by Richard Fausset, Jack Healy, Inyoung Kang, Linda Qiu, Rick Rojas and John Yoon from Atlanta, Giulia McDonnell Nieto del Rio, Sarah Mervosh and Edgar Sandoval from New York, and Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs from Tivoli, N.Y. Susan C. Beachy contributed research.Juliana Kim reported from Atlanta, Corina Knoll from New York, and Campbell Robertson from Pittsburgh. Reporting was contributed by Richard Fausset, Jack Healy, Inyoung Kang, Linda Qiu, Rick Rojas and John Yoon from Atlanta, Giulia McDonnell Nieto del Rio, Sarah Mervosh and Edgar Sandoval from New York, and Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs from Tivoli, N.Y. Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/19/us/atlanta-shooting-victims-spa.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/19/us/atlanta-shooting-victims-spa.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Jami Webb, left, whose mother, Xiaojie Tan, was among those killed. ''She worked from 9 to 9 almost every day,'' a friend recalled. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

PROVIDER: Hyun Jung Grant was close with both of her sons. ''It's just us two now,'' one said. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA RANDY AND ERIC PARK)

GIVER: Delaina Ashley Yaun, a restaurant server, often bought food for homeless people. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA DANA TOOLE)

'WORKAHOLIC': Paul Andre Michels moved from Detroit and started his own electrical business. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNESAW POLICE DEPARTMENT, VIA FACEBOOK)

ENTREPRENEUR: Ms. Tan set a welcoming tone as the owner of Young's Asian Massage. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNESAW POLICE DEPARTMENT, VIA FACEBOOK) (A1)

A memorial set up outside Young's Asian Massage in Acworth, Ga., Thursday, the site of one of the shootings. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

A group rallied outside Gold Spa Thursday to protest escalating racism and sexism against those of Asian descent. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2021

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[***A Surprising Role Model Emerges for Boris Johnson: F.D.R.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:607R-4MP1-DXY4-X476-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 7, 2020 Tuesday 09:33 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1202 words

**Byline:** Mark Landler and Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** The British prime minister, trying to regroup in the coronavirus pandemic, wants to bury Thatcherism and embark on a program of ambitious public works.

**Body**

The British prime minister, trying to regroup in the coronavirus pandemic, wants to bury Thatcherism and embark on a program of ambitious public works.

LONDON — [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/03/world/europe/johnson-brexit-hong-kong.html) and Joseph R. Biden Jr. are hardly political bedfellows. But the British prime minister and the American presidential candidate have one thing in common: both have latched on to Franklin D. Roosevelt as a model for how to lead in an era of economic collapse and social upheaval.

Mr. Johnson, regrouping after [*a rocky three months*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/03/world/europe/johnson-brexit-hong-kong.html) of dealing with the coronavirus pandemic, has invoked Roosevelt’s name and the legacy of the New Deal in promising that the British government will intensify its plans for ambitious public works projects and other spending to recover from the outbreak.

“This is the moment for a Rooseveltian approach to the U.K,” Mr. Johnson said in an interview with Times Radio on Monday. “The country has gone through a profound shock. But in those moments, you have the opportunity to change, and to do things better.”

Mr. Biden, the presumptive Democratic nominee, has talked about the need for an F.D.R.-style federal intervention to lift the United States out of the economic wreckage left by the virus and to address the racial injustice dramatized by the killing of black Americans at the hands of the police.

Neither man is an obvious heir to the mantle of Roosevelt, though Mr. Biden at least comes from the same party. Mr. Johnson is a Conservative populist who ran on a platform of pulling Britain out of the European Union and had, until now, modeled himself on Roosevelt’s wartime ally, Winston Churchill.

Still, there are signs that Mr. Johnson’s flirtation with Roosevelt goes beyond dropping his name. One of his closest advisers, Michael Gove, recently laid out a blueprint for the government that draws heavily on the 32nd president to justify a transformation of the bureaucracy and a new approach to governing.

“Roosevelt recognized that, faced with a crisis that had shaken faith in government, it was not simply a change of personnel and rhetoric that was required, but a change in structure, ambition, and organization,” Mr. Gove said in [*a lecture to the Ditchley Foundation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/03/world/europe/johnson-brexit-hong-kong.html), a nonprofit group that promotes Anglo-American relations.

Mr. Gove recalled the reform-minded outsiders that Roosevelt brought in to design the New Deal — Harry Hopkins, Harold Ickes and others — and lamented the lack of such figures in the British government.

Mr. Johnson and his aides have argued that Britain’s Civil Service is hidebound, risk-averse and hostile to their pro-Brexit ideology. On Sunday, Mr. Johnson announced the departure of the country’s top civil servant, Mark Sedwill, who was cabinet secretary and national security adviser.

His resignation follows that of the top officials at the Home Office and the Foreign Office as well as the [*British ambassador to Washington, Kim Darroch*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/03/world/europe/johnson-brexit-hong-kong.html). It is a victory for Dominic Cummings, Mr. Johnson’s most influential adviser, who views many civil servants as part of what he calls an establishment “blob” that also encompasses the BBC, parts of the judiciary and universities. In a line that has been widely repeated, he has told aides that a “hard rain is coming” for the bureaucracy.

The government wants “to have a more politically directed Civil Service, which is not necessarily a politicized Civil Service, but one that they feel is responsive to political direction,” said Simon Fraser, a former head of the Foreign Office. “Where you have to be wary is if that tips over into an attack on the impartiality of the Civil Service.”

On Tuesday, Mr. Johnson is expected to visit a town in an economically blighted region to outline plans to invest in infrastructure, education and technology, testing his New Deal strategy. He has promised to “level up” places left behind by the British economy, where prosperity has flowed disproportionately to London and the southeast of England.

Fulfilling that promise is critical to Mr. Johnson’s long-term fortunes, since his political base is very different from that of previous Conservative Party prime ministers. Mr. Johnson won with the support of ***working-class*** voters in the Midlands and the north, many of whom historically voted for the Labour Party but favored Brexit and are socially conservative on issues like immigration.

“Boris Johnson won the election by developing a new formula of leaning left on the economy and right on culture, promising to deliver Brexit and reform immigration,” said Matthew Goodwin, an expert on the right and a visiting senior fellow at Chatham House, a research institute in London.

“He is talking about giving them trains, bridges and schools,” Mr. Goodwin said. “But I suspect that what this community wants is more power in decision making, and more of a say in the national conversation.”

Reassuring these voters on social and cultural issues could be just as important as promising them economic benefits, which is why Mr. Johnson’s administration has maintained such a deep-rooted strand of social conservatism. It likes to present itself as the enemy of the London-based political elite that it says is out of touch with vast swaths of the country. Mr. Johnson’s vitriolic defense against the [*protesters who defaced a statue of Churchill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/03/world/europe/johnson-brexit-hong-kong.html) is also part of this strategy.

As the debates over racial injustice continue to reverberate in Britain — and as Mr. Johnson struggles to hold together his electoral coalition — some analysts predict that he might begin to sound more like President Trump than President Roosevelt.

Unlike Mr. Biden, for whom a victory in November would empower a broader liberal agenda in the United States, Mr. Johnson governs as a Conservative, though he is still considered more moderate than Mr. Trump.

Analysts note that Mr. Johnson is trying to transform the party of Margaret Thatcher, with its credo of low taxes, lighter regulation, and less government, into something close to a European-style Social Democratic party, at least on economic matters. How he squares that circle is far from clear.

“A Rooseveltian New Deal strategy would go down fairly well with a large proportion of the electorate, and even with the Conservative electorate,” said Tim Bale, a professor of politics at Queen Mary University. “The problem he has is that this is not what most of his M.P.s joined the Conservative Party to do.”

It is also not clear that Mr. Johnson will have the fortitude to see through a program as revolutionary as the New Deal. Critics note that he is not a politician driven by conviction. His policy agenda is largely the brainchild of Mr. Cummings. While Mr. Johnson had the tactical skills to fashion a winning coalition, some doubt that he has the vision to guide his country through momentous change.

“F.D.R. was someone who had an extraordinary intuitive feel for where the public was and what the mood of the country was,” said Robert Dallek, an American presidential historian who published a biography of Roosevelt in 2017. “Does someone like Boris Johnson have that?”

PHOTO: “This is the moment for a Rooseveltian approach to the U.K,” Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in an interview on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***When the ‘Silent Majority’ Isn’t White; Jay Caspian Kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63GS-GBM1-DXY4-X4W0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 30, 2021 Monday 15:00 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2381 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** The new media obsession with moderate minorities.

**Body**

In her 1990 book “[*Fear of Falling*](https://www.nytimes.com/1989/08/06/books/the-discreet-anxiety-of-the-bourgeoisie.html),” Barbara Ehrenreich detailed how the widely broadcast violence at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago led to an immediate, dramatic paradigm shift in media coverage. In the month before the event, Mayor Richard Daley had denounced the various anti-Vietnam War protest groups who were planning to converge outside the city’s International Amphitheater. When those protesters arrived, Daley fought back with his police force who, on Aug. 28, attacked protesters in Grant Park.

In scenes that would be echoed a half-century later during the George Floyd protests, the [*police beat, detained and intimidated*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/06/remembering-the-walker-report-and-the-first-police-riot.html) everyone from the Yippies to the Young Lords to [*Dan Rather*](https://www.cbsnews.com/video/1968-cbs-news-dan-rather-gets-roughed-up-while-trying-to-interview-a-georgia-delegate/). In both 1968 and 2020, the press heightened its critique against the police and the mayor once they saw their own being attacked in the streets.

Then came the reckoning. Ehrenreich writes:

Polls taken immediately after the convention showed that the majority of Americans — 56 percent — sympathized with the police, not with the bloodied demonstrators or the press. Indeed, what one could see of the action on television did not resemble dignified protest but the anarchic breakdown of a great city (if only because, once the police began to rampage, dignity was out of the question). Overnight the press abandoned its protest. The collapse was abrupt and craven. As bumper stickers began to appear saying “We support Mayor Daley and his Chicago police,” the national media awoke to the disturbing possibility that they had grown estranged from a sizable segment of the public.

Media leaders moved quickly to correct what they now came to see as their “bias.” They now felt they had been too sympathetic to militant minorities (a judgment the minorities might well have contested). Henceforth they would focus on the enigmatic — and in Richard Nixon’s famous phrase — silent majority.

The following months would provide even more evidence that the media had misjudged the moment. A New York Times poll conducted a day after showed an [*“overwhelming”*](https://www.jstor.org/stable/2747878) majority supported the police in Chicago. CBS reported that 10 times as many people had written to them disapproving of their coverage of the events as had written in approval.

In response, the media class spent the next few years, in Ehrenreich’s words, examining “fearfully and almost reverently, that curious segment of America: the majority.” The problem, of course, was that the same people who had just believed the world ended at the Hudson were the same people who now would be tasked with discovering everything beyond its banks. As a result, the media’s coverage of “the silent majority” was abstract and almost mythic, which allowed it to be shaped into whatever was most convenient.

There are a couple of obvious questions here: A year after the nationwide George Floyd protests, has mass media, which I’ll define here as the major news outlets and TV networks, undergone a similar paradigm shift? And if there is a new “silent majority” whose voices must be heard, who, exactly, is it?

Are we seeing a media backlash to the summer of 2020?

A quick caveat before we go much further into this: I am generally skeptical of the types of historical matching games that have become popular these days, especially on social media, where false symmetries can be expressed through heavily excerpted screenshots or video. Just because something looks vaguely like something that happened in the past doesn’t mean that the two events are actually analogous. More important, I do not see the need to take every current injustice by the hand and shop it around to a line of older suitors — if nothing else, the act of constant comparison can take away from the immediacy of today’s problem.

But regardless of whether the comparison between 1968 and 2020 is apt, plenty of people made it. Most notably, Representative Jim Clyburn of South Carolina, who, after what was seen as a disappointing result in a handful of House races, compared the slogan “defund the police” to “burn, baby, burn” from the 1965 Watts riots and said such talk was “cutting the throats of the party.” Omar Wasow’s [*work on voting patterns during the civil rights movement*](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/american-political-science-review/article/agenda-seeding-how-1960s-black-protests-moved-elites-public-opinion-and-voting/136610C8C040C3D92F041BB2EFC3034C)and how the public and media responded to different images of violence also became a central part of opinion discourse.

As was true in 1968, we’ve also seen a shift in public opinion polls, perhaps confirming Wasow’s claim that while images of law enforcement committing violence against protesters will generate a significant upsurge in sympathy, images of looting and rioting will have the opposite effect. A [*Washington Post-Shar School poll*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/big-majorities-support-protests-over-floyd-killing-and-say-police-need-to-change-poll-finds/2020/06/08/6742d52c-a9b9-11ea-9063-e69bd6520940_story.html) conducted in early June of 2020 found that 74 percent of respondents supported the protests, including 53 percent of Republicans­­ — stunning results that suggested a radical shift in public opinion had taken place — and the media followed suit with an enormous amount of coverage.

Writing in The Washington Post, Michael Heaney, a University of Glasgow lecturer, [*wrote*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/07/06/george-floyd-protests-generated-more-media-coverage-than-any-protest-50-years/https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/07/06/george-floyd-protests-generated-more-media-coverage-than-any-protest-50-years/), “Not since the Kent State killings, in which National Guard troops shot and killed four student protesters in May 1970, has there been so much media attention to protest.” Heaney also pointed out that the coverage had been “generally favorable.” But as of this summer, polling of white Americans on support for Black Lives Matter and policing reform had [*reverted*](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-views-on-black-lives-matter-have-changed-and-why-that-makes-police-reform-so-hard/) to pre-2020 levels. Has media coverage followed suit?

We might look at coverage of the recent New York City mayoral race as a kind of case study. The campaign of Eric Adams, a former N.Y.P.D. officer who largely positioned himself against his more progressive opponents on public safety and school issues, was cast as a referendum on last summer. The media attributed Adams’s victory in the Democratic primary almost entirely to his pro-police platform. In June, a [*Reuters headline*](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/defying-defund-police-calls-democrat-adams-leads-nyc-mayors-race-2021-06-23/) read, “Defying ‘Defund Police’ Calls, Democrat Adams Leads NYC Mayor’s Race.” In July, [*The Associated Press*](https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-government-and-politics-209b2feb740ea6db4d3a2277e8fb38d6)wrote that Adams’s win was part of a “surge for moderate Democrats” and said the centerpiece of his campaign was a rejection of activists’ calls to defund the police.

This echoed the coverage of Clyburn’s declarations after the election and fell in with a spate of [*media*](https://thehill.com/homenews/news/542108-poll-finds-only-18-percent-support-defund-the-police) [*coverage*](https://www.vox.com/22372342/police-reform-derek-chauvin) about the shift in opinions on policing. So, some regression of media sympathy toward the summer of 2020 does seem underway — although we shouldn’t believe the media underwent some fundamental change during the summer of 2020, or, for that matter, in the months leading up to the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Those moments should be seen, instead, as flare-ups that subsequently shamed the media into seeking out “the real America” or whatever.

Who is the silent majority in 2021?

In 1968, the turn in opinion came mostly at the expense of Black radicals and young protesters in favor of what was largely then assumed to be white ***working-class*** voters.

Today’s silent majority certainly does include white voters, but this time, recent coverage suggests that the media is reproaching itself for a somewhat different failing: neglecting the perspective of more-moderate voters of color.

The post-mortem of the 2020 election — in which more immigrants than anticipated, whether Latinos in Florida and Texas or Asian Americans in California, voted for Donald Trump — coincided with the need to make some sense of what had happened to public opinion after last summer. Connections were made. By the time Adams gave his victory speech, a narrative about the diverse silent majority had taken hold: People of color supported the police, hated rioting and wanted more funding for law enforcement. They did not agree with the radical demands of the Floyd protests — in fact, such talk turned them off.

There’s a lot of truth to the concerns about how much the mass media actually knows about minority voters. When the Latino vote swings from Texas and Florida came to light on election night, Chuck Rocha, a political strategist who specializes in Latino engagement, went on a media tour and placed the blame on “[*woke white consultants*](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1591677884353053)” who believed that a broad message of antiracism would work for “people of color.” As I wrote in a[*guest essay*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/20/opinion/sunday/immigrants-vote-election-politics.html), a similar pattern held in Asian American communities — it turns out that Vietnamese refugees who reside in Orange County, Calif., might have different opinions on Black Lives Matter, capitalism or abortion rights than, say, second-generation Indian Americans at elite universities.

These mistakes came from a grouping error: Liberal white Americans in power, including members of the media, tended to think of immigrants as huddled masses who all shook under the xenophobic rhetoric of the Republican Party and prayed for any deliverance from Donald Trump. They did not see them as distinct populations who have their own set of political priorities, mostly because they took their votes for granted.

So, if the media is actually overlooking an entire population and sometimes misrepresenting them, what’s the big deal if it’s now correcting for this?

A few things can be true at once: Yes, the media overwhelmingly misconstrued the actual beliefs of minority voters, particularly in Latino and Asian American communities. Yes, those voters tend to have more moderate view on policing.

The problem isn’t one of description, but rather of translation. The media took a normal regression in polling numbers, mixed it with some common sense about how minority populations actually vote and created a new, diverse “silent majority.” This is a powerful tool. These unheard, moderate minorities carry an almost unassailable authority in liberal politics because of the very simple fact that liberals tend to frame their policies in terms of race. If those same objects of your concern turn around and tell you to please stop what you’re doing, what you’ve created is perhaps the most powerful rebuttal in liberal politics. Over the next few years, I imagine we will see an increasing number of moderate politicians and pundits hitch their own hobbyhorses to this diverse silent majority. The nice thing about a vaguely defined, still mysterious group is that you can turn it into anything you want it to be.

Some version of this opinion engineering, I believe, is happening with the police and public safety. There’s not a lot of evidence that Latino and Asian voters care all that much either way about systemic racism or funding or defunding the police. (Black voters, on the other hand, [*listed racism and policing as their top two priorities*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/black-americans-say-racism-policing-top-issues-for-november-favor-biden-by-huge-margin-post-ipsos-poll-finds/2020/06/24/9143b254-b645-11ea-aca5-ebb63d27e1ff_story.html) leading up to the 2020 election.) [*Polls of Asian American voters*](https://aapidata.com/2020-survey/), for example, show that they prioritize health care, education and the economy. Latino voters[*listed the economy, health care and the pandemic*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/09/11/hispanic-voters-say-economy-health-care-and-covid-19-are-top-issues-in-2020-presidential-election/) as their top three priorities. (“Violent crime” ranked about as high as Supreme Court appointments.) If asked, a large number of people in both of these groups might respond that they support the police, but that’s very different from saying they base their political identity on the rejection of, say, police abolition. If they’re purposefully voting against the left wing of the Democratic Party, it’s more likely they are responding to economic or education policy rather than policing.

And so it may be correct to say that within the new, diverse “silent majority,” attitudes about the police and protest might be much less uniform than what many in the mass media led you to believe in the summer of 2020. It may also be worth pointing out that reporters, pundits and television networks should probably adjust their coverage to accurately assess these dynamics, just as I’m sure there were legitimate concerns with media bubbles in 1968. But it also seems worth separating that assessment from the conclusion that the media should now see the summer of 2020 as political kryptonite and cast the millions of people who protested in the streets as confused revolutionaries who had no real support.

After 1968, the mass media’s turn away from the counterculture of the ’60s and its indifference to the dismantling of Black radical groups narrowed the scope of political action. This constriction would be aided over the next decade by lurid, violent events that all got thrown at the feet of anyone who looked like a radical. When Joan Didion wrote of the Manson murders, “Many people I know in Los Angeles believe that the Sixties ended abruptly on Aug. 9, 1969, at the exact moment when word of the murders on Cielo Drive traveled like brushfire through the community, and in a sense this is true. The tension broke that day. The paranoia was fulfilled,” she was saying that all the fears of the so-called silent majority had come to pass.

We are living through some version of that today. But what seems particularly telling about this moment is that the retreat no longer requires Charles Manson, the fearmongering over Watts or the police riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Those images hover above the public’s consciousness as evergreen cautionary tales; the paranoia they fulfilled will do just fine.

The question at the outset of this post, then, has a split answer: Yes, we seem to be reliving a moment of media revanchism in the name of the (diverse) silent majority, but it is also a replay of a replay, akin to filming a television screen with your phone’s camera, with all of its inherent losses in resolution, clarity and immediacy.

What I’m Reading and Watching

“Everyone Knows Your Mother Is a Witch” by Rivka Galchen

A beautifully written, hilarious novel set during a witch hunt in 17th-century Germany. The sentences, as in all of Galchen’s work, go beyond the sometimes dull, narcissistic boundaries of modern fiction and still manage to feel extremely relevant.

“Louis Armstrong: Master of Modernism” by Thomas Brothers

The second of Brothers’s big books on Louis Armstrong and the early years of jazz. Like the first book, “Louis Armstrong’s New Orleans,” this isn’t so much a blow-by-blow retelling of Armstrong’s life, but an ethnography of how his music came to be.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com).

Jay Caspian Kang ([*@jaycaspiankang*](https://twitter.com/jaycaspiankang?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)) writes for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine. He is the author of the forthcoming “The Loneliest Americans.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***In Washington, ‘Free Trade’ Is No Longer Gospel***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627B-80N1-DXY4-X0S9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Highlight:** Like its predecessor, the Biden administration has largely dispensed with the idea of free trade as a goal in and of itself.

**Body**

Like its predecessor, the Biden administration has largely dispensed with the idea of free trade as a goal in and of itself.

WASHINGTON — For decades, the principle of “free trade” inspired a kind of religious reverence among most American politicians. Lawmakers, diplomats and presidents justified their policies through the pursuit of freer trade, which, like the spread of democracy and market capitalism, was presumed to be a universal and worthy goal.

But as the Biden administration establishes itself in Washington, that longstanding gospel is no longer the prevailing view.

Political parties on both the right and left have shifted away from the conventional view that the primary goal of [*trade policy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/business/economy/biden-trade-policy-steel.html) should be speeding flows of goods and services to lift economic growth. Instead, more politicians have zeroed in on the downsides of past trade deals, which greatly benefited some American workers but stripped others of their jobs.

President Donald J. Trump embraced this rethinking on trade by threatening to scrap old deals that he said had sent jobs overseas and renegotiate new ones. His signature pacts, including with Canada, Mexico and China, ended up [*raising some barriers to trade rather than lowering them*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/17/business/trump-trade-deals-free-markets.html), including leaving hefty tariffs in place on Chinese products and more restrictions on auto imports into North America.

The Biden administration appears poised to adopt a similar approach, with top officials like Katherine Tai, President Biden’s nominee to run the Office of the United States Trade Representative, promising to focus more on ensuring that trade deals protect the rights and interests of American workers, rather than exporters or consumers.

Ms. Tai has received broad support from former colleagues in Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, and on Wednesday the Senate confirmed her nomination in a 98-to-0 vote, making her the first of Mr. Biden’s nominees to win unanimous support from those voting.

[*Mr. Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/business/economy/biden-trade-policy-steel.html) and his advisers have promised to review the impact that past trade policies have had on economic and racial inequality, and put negotiating new trade deals on the back burner while they focus on improving the domestic economy. And they have not yet made any moves to scale back Mr. Trump’s hefty tariffs on foreign products, saying that they are reviewing them but that tariffs are a legitimate trade policy tool.

In her hearing before the Senate Finance Committee on Feb. 25, Ms. Tai emphasized that she would help usher in [*a break with past policies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/25/business/economy/us-trade-biden-katherine-tai.html) that would “pit one of our segments of our workers and our economy against another.”

While Ms. Tai reassured senators that she would work with them to promote exports from their districts, she called for a policy that would focus more on how trade affected Americans as workers and wage earners.

When asked by Senator Patrick J. Toomey, a Republican from Pennsylvania and a noted free trader, whether the goal of a trade agreement between two modern, developed economies should be the elimination of tariffs and trade barriers, Ms. Tai declined to agree, saying she would want to consider such agreements on a case-by-case basis.

“Maybe if you’d asked me this question five or 10 years ago, I would have been inclined to say yes,” Ms. Tai responded. But after the events of the past few years — including the pandemic, the Trump administration’s trade wars and a failed effort by the Obama administration to negotiate a Pacific trade deal — “I think that our trade policies need to be nuanced, and need to take into account all the lessons that we have learned, many of them very painful, from our most recent history,” she said.

In [*his first major foreign policy speech*](https://www.state.gov/a-foreign-policy-for-the-american-people/) on March 3, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken also said the calculus on free trade had changed.

“Some of us previously argued for free trade agreements because we believed Americans would broadly share in the economic gains,” he said. “But we didn’t do enough to understand who would be negatively affected and what would be needed to adequately offset their pain.”

“Our approach now will be different,” Mr. Blinken said.

Clyde Prestowitz, a U.S. negotiator in the Reagan administration, called the administration’s statements on trade “a revolution.” While Robert E. Lighthizer, Mr. Trump’s trade representative, also parted with the conventional wisdom on trade, he was seen as an exception, a former steel industry lawyer steeped in protectionism, Mr. Prestowitz said.

“Now here is Ms. Tai, with a mostly government official career behind her, talking without making any of the formerly necessary gestures toward the sanctity and multitudinous bounties of free trade,” Mr. Prestowitz said. “The conventional wisdom on trade no longer has an iron grip on policymakers and thinkers.”

Like Ms. Tai and Mr. Lighthizer, many past presidents and trade officials emphasized fair trade and the idea of holding foreign countries accountable for breaking trade rules. But many also paid homage to the conventional wisdom that free trade itself was a worthy goal because it could help lift the economic fortunes of all countries and enhance global stability by linking economies.

That idea reached the height of its popularity under the presidencies of George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, where the United States negotiated the North American Free Trade Agreement, led the talks that gave the World Trade Organization its modern format, granted China permanent normal trading relations, and sealed a series of trade agreements with countries in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East.

President Barack Obama initially put less emphasis on free trade deals, instead focusing on the financial crisis and the Affordable Care Act. But in his second term, his administration pushed to sign the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which came under criticism from progressive Democrats for exposing American workers to foreign competition. The deal never won sufficient support in Congress.

For Democrats, the downfall of that deal was a turning point, [*propelling them toward their new consensus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/24/business/economy/biden-trade-katherine-tai.html) on trade. Some, like Dani Rodrik, a professor of political economy at Harvard, [*argue that recent trade deals*](https://drodrik.scholar.harvard.edu/publications/what-do-trade-agreements-really-do) have largely not been about cutting tariffs or trade barriers at all, and instead were focused on locking in advantages for pharmaceutical companies and international banks.

David Autor, an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said economic theory had never claimed that trade made everybody better off — it had said trade would raise overall economic output, but lead to gains and losses for different groups.

But economists and politicians alike underestimated how jarring some of those losses could be. Mr. Autor’s [*influential research*](https://www.nber.org/papers/w21906) shows that expanded trade with China led to the loss of 2.4 million American jobs between 1999 and 2011. China’s growing dominance of a variety of global industries, often accomplished through hefty government subsidies, also weakened the argument that the United States could succeed through free markets alone.

Today, “people are much more sensitive to the idea that trade can have very, very disruptive effects,” Mr. Autor said. “There’s no amount of everyday low prices at Walmart that is going to make up for unemployment.”

But Mr. Autor said that while the old consensus was “simplistic and harmful,” turning away from the ideal of free trade held dangers, too. “Once you open this terrain, lots of terrible policies and expensive subsidies can all march in under the banner of the protection of the American worker,” he said.

Some have argued that the approach could forgo important economic gains.

William Reinsch, the Scholl chair in international business at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, [*wrote that*](https://www.csis.org/analysis/trade-going-save-world) Americans had come to understand that the argument that “a rising tide would lift all boats” was not always correct.

“A rising tide does not lift all boats; it only lifts some boats, and for a long time, workers’ boats have been stuck in the muck while the owners’ yachts flow free,” he wrote. However, Mr. Reinsch added, “no tide lifts no boats. In economic terms, if we forgo the expansion of trade, we do not get the benefits trade provides, and there is nothing to distribute.”

It remains to be seen how much the Biden administration will adhere to the Trump administration’s more protectionist policies — like keeping the tariffs on foreign metals and products from China.

While the Biden administration has tried to distance its trade policy from that of the previous administration, many former Trump administration officials say the direction appears remarkably similar.

In an interview in January, Mr. Lighthizer said the Trump administration had reoriented trade policy away from the interests of multinational businesses and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and toward ***working-class*** people and manufacturing, goals that Democrats also support. He said the Biden administration would try to make trade policy look like their own, but ultimately “stay pretty close.”

“The goal is creating communities and families of working people, rather than promoting corporate profits,” Mr. Lighthizer said. “I think the outlines of what we’ve done will stay. They will try to Biden-ize it, make it their own, which they should do, but I’d be surprised if they back away from the great outline of what we’ve done and how we’ve changed the policy.”

Ms. Tai has acknowledged some similarities between the Biden and Trump administrations’ goals, but emphasized the difference in their tactics.

In her confirmation hearing, she said that she shared the Trump administration’s goal of bringing supply chains back to America, but that its policies had created “a lot of disruption and consternation.”

“I’d want to accomplish similar goals in a more effective, process-driven manner,” she said.

PHOTO: Shipping containers at the Port of Oakland. Biden trade officials have promised to continue seeking export opportunities for American companies, but they say they have shifted their focus to protect workers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Justin Sullivan/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Stream These 10 Great Performances by Cloris Leachman***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61W4-CWP1-DXY4-X08N-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The Oscar- and Emmy-winning actress was still pushing comedic boundaries in her 90s. Here’s a guide to some of her most fearless and memorable performances.

**Body**

The Oscar- and Emmy-winning actress was still pushing comedic boundaries in her 90s. Here’s a guide to some of her most fearless and memorable performances.

Onstage, on television and, finally, at the movies, there was no missing the irrepressible Cloris Leachman, who [*died on Wednesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html) at 94. She was an all-purpose entertainer who became best known for her no-holds-barred comedy. But that same openness left room for moments of disarming sensitivity and heart.

She was also the rare performer to reach the prime of her career at middle age, with her role as Phyllis Lindstrom in the groundbreaking “The Mary Tyler Moore Show” and in her Oscar-winning turn in “The Last Picture Show.” Still decades later, she proved durable enough to cut a rug on “Dancing With the Stars” at age 82 and continued acting into her 90s.

Although some of Leachman’s notable roles are currently not available to stream in the United States, like her striking appearance in the 1955 noir classic “Kiss Me Deadly,” most of her major work is easy to sample. While she is perhaps best remembered for her collaborations with James L. Brooks, Mel Brooks and Peter Bogdanovich, Leachman also thrived in voice work for animated films, including two for Studio Ghibli, and seemed willing to push herself to greater comic extremes as she got older. These seven films and three TV series showcase her versatility and moxie.

‘The Mary Tyler Moore Show’ (1970-1975)

In James L. Brooks and Allan Burns’s groundbreaking sitcom about Mary Richards (Mary Tyler Moore), a single, independent woman working behind-the-scenes at a Minneapolis TV news program, Leachman’s Phyllis is an agent of chaos, constantly swooping in and upending Mary’s day. Phyllis and her unseen dermatologist husband are landlords to Mary and her best friend, Rhoda (Valerie Harper), and she has a tendency to poke around in their business, upsetting Rhoda especially with her flighty arrogance. Leachman’s appearances are heavily weighted toward the show’s first two seasons, but her performance was enough to score her a couple of Emmys and the spinoff hit “Phyllis,” which ended the same week the flagship show did.

Stream it on [*Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html). Buy it on [*Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Apple TV*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html) and [*Vudu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html).

‘The Last Picture Show’ (1971)

Leachman won an Oscar for best supporting actress for her shattering performance in “The Last Picture Show,” embodying the sadness and quiet desperation that pervades Peter Bogdanovich’s elegy for a dying North Texas town. As Ruth Popper, the bored wife of an oafish football coach, Leachman plays a Southern flower that’s dying on the vine until she takes up with Sonny (Timothy Bottoms), a high school senior of limited sexual experience. Ruth seems to know her role in Sonny’s coming-of-age story, but she is nonetheless unprepared for the inevitable conclusion, which Leachman registers as the latest in a lifelong series of disappointments.

Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Apple TV*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Google Play*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Vudu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html) and [*YouTube*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html).

‘Daisy Miller’ (1974)

After following “The Last Picture Show” with “What’s Up, Doc?” and “Paper Moon,” Peter Bogdanovich’s hot streak ended with this troubled adaptation of the Henry James novella “Daisy Miller.” But the film’s reputation has improved over time, buoyed by its serio-comic treatment of a brazen American flirt (Cybill Shepherd) in Europe and her trampling of social mores. Leachman’s role as the young woman’s mother carries some of the timidity of her character in “The Last Picture Show,” but here it’s covered by a nervous chattiness that is scarcely less vulgar and conspicuous in their upper-crust surroundings.

Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Apple TV*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Google Play*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Vudu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html) and [*YouTube*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html).

‘Young Frankenstein’ (1974)

The [*running gag most associated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html) with Leachman in Mel Brooks’s Universal monster-movie spoof requires little acting on her part, but it speaks to her presence as a severe German housekeeper that all the horses whinny in terror whenever someone utters the name Frau Blücher. Blücher’s roots in the Frankenstein estate in Transylvania are explained in hilariously dramatic fashion later, but in the meantime, her dedication to the mad vision of Dr. Frankenstein (Gene Wilder) and his monstrous creation (Peter Boyle) is unrivaled. She also stands ready to offer Herr Doctor a brandy before he retires for the night. Or some warm milk. Or Ovaltine.

Stream it on [*Starz*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html).

‘Crazy Mama’ (1975)

A young Jonathan Demme (“Silence of the Lambs”) hadn’t quite matriculated from the Roger Corman school of filmmaking when he agreed to direct this low-budget Corman production on short notice. But he and a brassy Leachman, in a rare lead role, play the material for all it is worth. Although it was a follow-up to the “Bonnie &amp; Clyde” knockoff “Big Bad Mama,” “Crazy Mama” emphasizes comedy over violent mayhem as three generations of Stokes women, led by Melba Stokes (Leachman), embark on a rolling crime spree from California to their ancestral home in Arkansas. Nothing about the film (or Leachman’s performance) is underplayed, but it has an affectionately rollicking spirit, underscored by a terrific ’50s rock soundtrack.

Stream it on [*Amazon Prime Video*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html).

‘Castle in the Sky’ (1986)

Throughout the back half of her career, Leachman was a sought-after voice talent in animated films, with vocal turns in films like “My Little Pony: The Movie,” “The Iron Giant” and “Beavis and Butt-Head Do America.” But Leachman also contributed substantive work on English dubs of Hayao Miyazaki’s 2009 fantasy, “Ponyo,” and of his breakthrough film, “Castle in the Sky,” a bewitching steampunk adventure about the search for a floating castle. As Dola, the bossy leader of a band of air pirates, Leachman initially suggests a menacing adversary. But as more is revealed about Dola’s motives, the character’s hidden nobility turns our heroes (and the viewer) around.

Stream it on [*HBO Max*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html).

‘Spanglish’ (2004)

Over 30 years after they worked together on “The Mary Tyler Moore Show,” Leachman and the writer-director James L. Brooks re-teamed for this romantic comedy about the relationship between a wealthy, laid-back chef (Adam Sandler) and a single mother from Mexico who gets a job as the family’s nanny and housekeeper (Paz Vega). Leachman plays the boozy mother of Sandler’s high-strung wife (Téa Leoni), which mostly gives her the opportunity to sling tart one-liners in the middle of a domestic meltdown. But she sobers up long enough toward the end of the film to give her daughter an urgent piece of advice, and Leachman’s motherly earnestness in this moment is as touching as it is unexpected.

Stream it on [*Crackle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html). Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Apple TV*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Google Play*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Vudu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html) and [*YouTube*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html).

‘Malcolm in the Middle’ (2000-2006)

There are shades of Frau Blücher to Leachman’s recurring and Emmy-winning role as Ida Welker, a comprehensively evil grandmother of vaguely Eastern European descent who occasionally drops in to visit the Wilkersons, irritating and embarrassing them with her nastiness and bigotry. Leachman turned up periodically in episodes from the second season through the series finale in the seventh, and she brought with her an air of toxic, manipulative narcissism that rival Livia Soprano’s. In one episode, she sues her own daughter and son-in-law after slipping on a leaf in their driveway; in another, she reveals all the Christmas presents she has decided to withdraw from the family for minor offenses. Her cartoon villainy suits the tone of this slap-happy sitcom.

Stream it on [*Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html).

‘Beerfest’ (2006)

Throughout her career, Leachman was willing to do absolutely anything for a laugh, so she was right at home in this raunchy comedy from the comedy troupe Broken Lizard (“Super Troopers”) about a secret Oktoberfest competition where teams vie for beer-game supremacy. Dressed up like Heidi gone to seed, Leachman plays Great Gam Gam Wolfhouse, who isn’t ashamed to talk about her past as a prostitute or use a piece of summer sausage to demonstrate some tricks of the trade. It’s a minor part that’s intended for shock, but Leachman’s lack of shame is totally disarming, a sharp contrast to the frat-guy boorishness that surrounds her.

Stream it on [*Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html). Rent it on [*Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Apple TV*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Google Play*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html), [*Vudu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html) and [*YouTube*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/27/arts/television/cloris-leachman-dead.html).

‘Raising Hope’ (2010-2014)

As the dementia-addled “Maw Maw” in this offbeat ***working-class*** comedy, Leachman mostly drifts in and out of the background, chain-smoking cigarettes, eating pickles from the jar and sometimes mistaking her great-grandson Jimmy (Lucas Neff) for her dead husband. Only occasionally is Maw Maw lucid enough to notice that her granddaughter Virginia (Martha Plimpton) and Virginia’s screwed-up family are living in her dilapidated house rent-free, raising the daughter Jimmy got from a one-night stand with a serial killer. The role calls on Leachman as a primary source of its sitcom surrealism, relying on her willingness to play embarrassing flourishes to the hilt.

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PHOTO: Cloris Leachman (right, with Mary Tyler Moore) was only just hitting her stride when she appeared in the groundbreaking “Mary Tyler Moore Show,” a role that earned her two Emmys. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Bettmann, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 28, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What Will It Take to Vote in Milwaukee?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60XF-0WX1-DXY4-X4PY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 25, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1151 words

**Byline:** By Alyssa Schukar

**Body**

What Will It Take to Vote in Milwaukee?

MILWAUKEE -- For 15 years, Johnny Miller worked the polls at a church on Milwaukee's North Side. He was born in Mississippi, where, he said, his family was terrorized by the Ku Klux Klan for attempting to cast ballots. This background makes him feel ''a deep historical tie with trying to get people to vote.''

In 2020, he is aware of a different threat when it comes to working the polls: the coronavirus pandemic. Mr. Miller, who is 70 and has a heart condition, said the risk was too high. Ten of his friends have died from Covid-19, the disease caused by the virus.

The pandemic is making voting more complicated, with higher stakes. But, activists note, it's just one more thing to worry about on top of strict identification and mail-in ballot laws that can disproportionately make it difficult for eligible low-income voters, and Black and Latino voters, to cast their ballots.

In 2016, President Trump won Wisconsin by just 23,000 votes -- the first time a Republican presidential candidate carried the state since 1984. Turnout was down that year by almost 19 percent for Black voters and 6 percent for Latino voters, which is part of the reason turnout groups are focused on those populations this year.

Polls show a close race between Joseph R. Biden Jr., the Democratic nominee, and Mr. Trump, but disapproval by a majority of Mr. Trump's handling of the virus.

Across the city's predominantly Black North Side and Latino South Side, organizers and activists are registering new voters and helping others navigate the system.

''Black people have been intimidated not to vote since we were three-fifths of a man,'' Mr. Miller said, referring to a clause in the original U.S. Constitution. He described a lack of voter education which, in his view, has led to disenfranchisement in the North as a ''a different form of Jim Crow.''

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''The only way we can bring about change is if we do vote,'' she said.

The first time Danita Jackson, who is blind, asked her son Jafari Jackson to help complete her ballot, he was only 9 years old. ''I wanted to show him by example the importance of voting,'' Ms. Jackson said.

Ms. Jackson, who works for the nonprofit Disability Rights Wisconsin, says many of the people she works on behalf of are eligible but not registered to vote.

Wisconsin does not provide an alternative to printed mail-in ballots. And while she could request a Braille form, she said she could not guarantee that her vote would be counted correctly unless she goes in person and assumes the risk. During the state's local primary in August, she had to share a pair of unsanitized headphones with another voter.

Mr. Jackson, who is now 24 and lives in Phoenix, knows his mother will do whatever it takes to vote, but said he worried about other voters with disabilities. ''It's a basic American idea that we should all be able to vote,'' he said. ''Everybody deserves to have their voice heard.''

Most of Milwaukee's 100,000 Latino residents live in a ***working-class*** community on the South Side. The ZIP code where Ramon Moreno has lived his entire life, 53215, accounts for 20 percent of the city's coronavirus cases.

''In our community, we're barely making it as it is, especially with the pandemic,'' Mr. Moreno said.

He said that many of his neighbors were squeezed by the pandemic in ways that could affect their access to voting: They have faced eviction, which means a change of residence and a new ID card, something not everyone in the community can afford. In July, the state Supreme Court increased the number of days a stable address must be kept, to 28 days from 10. If your address has changed, you must re-register to vote.

Mr. Moreno has a list of about 50 people, including family members, he is helping through the voting process. ''We are Americans,'' he said. ''We do have a right to vote.''

Eugenia Medina moved to the United States from Mexico for a housekeeping job in the 1970s, but was naturalized just this summer. She cast her first ballot at an elementary school on the South Side last month.

In her work for Voces de la Frontera Action, a voter advocacy group, she calls and texts community members to make sure they know how to vote.

''You have to push the door until you finally have what you dreamed for,'' she said. For her, that dream includes voting in the presidential election and helping others do the same.

Nadxely Sanchez, 18, and Gissell Vera, 20, are both first-generation Americans who became organizers in their communities.

Ms. Sanchez has spoken to several people who didn't know they could vote by mail in the November election. Many lack information, she said.

Ms. Vera, who was born in the United States but grew up in Mexico, returned to attend Marquette University. Voting this year is so important to her, she said, that she planned to go in person, despite the risks.

''I know that way my vote is being counted,'' she said. ''We're not in times of giving people the benefit of the doubt.''

The line at Joycelyn Taylor's polling place was six blocks long when her cousin Kenneth Morrow Jr. took her to vote in April's presidential primary. They tried his polling place next, but it stretched four blocks. It was also raining. They ended up not voting.

''With this virus, quite a few people are going to say, 'Oh, forget it,''' he said.

Mr. Morrow, who served a year in Vietnam for the Marine Corps and 30 years in the Milwaukee Police Department, said that his generation understood the barriers that have kept Black people from voting, even after being granted that right. ''That's why they take it so seriously.''

Both he and Ms. Taylor plan to mail their ballots for the November election, but are concerned their votes won't be counted.

Before the pandemic, when Sharaka Berry did canvassing on the North Side, he would recognize former students from his overcrowded middle school classrooms. ''I saw where they were from and what the roads were like, saw the lack of places to get healthy food,'' he said.

He said a lot of people feel anger toward the electoral process and question its legitimacy, especially after many never received the absentee ballots they requested for the April primary.

But he is still trying to make sure they participate. When you don't vote, Mr. Berry said, ''you're not hurting the system, you are surrendering to it.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/24/us/politics/milwaukee-voters-2020-black-latino.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/24/us/politics/milwaukee-voters-2020-black-latino.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Members of Black Leaders Organizing for Communities offered masks and encouraged people to vote on Milwaukee's North Side.

Eugenia Medina, who was naturalized over the summer, calls and texts people to make sure they know how to vote.

Sharaka Berry, a former teacher, said a lot of people feel anger toward the electoral process and question its legitimacy. (A16)

At left, Johnny Miller, who was born in Mississippi, said he feels ''a deep historical tie with trying to get people to vote.'' (A16-A17)

Below, from left, Katherine Villanueva, 16, Nadxely Sanchez, 18, Gissell Vera, 20, Cassandra Casas, 17, and Samari Price, 19.

At bottom, Joycelyn Taylor, left, and Kenneth Morrow Jr. plan to mail their ballots for the November election, but are concerned their votes won't be counted.

Danita Jackson, with her son Jafari, works for Disability Rights Wisconsin. She said many eligible voters are not registered.

''In our community, we're barely making it as it is, especially with the pandemic,'' said Ramon Moreno, from the South Side. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALYSSA SCHUKAR) (A17)

**Load-Date:** September 25, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Australia Thought It Tamed the Beast. It Didn't.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:608H-CK51-JBG3-623B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 3, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1176 words

**Byline:** By Livia Albeck-Ripka

**Body**

The authorities have locked down 300,000 people in areas around Melbourne heavily populated by immigrants, reinforcing the coronavirus's outsized impact on disadvantaged communities.

MELBOURNE, Australia -- Ring Mayar spends all day knocking on doors in the western suburbs of Melbourne, asking residents if they have a cough, a fever or chills.

Even if they do not, he encourages them to get tested for the coronavirus, as the authorities race to catch up with a string of outbreaks that is threatening to recast Australia's success story in controlling the spread.

''It's quite daunting,'' said Mr. Mayar, the president of the South Sudanese Community Association in the state of Victoria, who has been volunteering in one of the largely immigrant communities where cases are surging.

The rise in infections -- Victoria reported 77 new cases Thursday, the most since March -- has driven home the outsized impact of the coronavirus on communities in which ***working-class*** immigrants and essential workers are particularly vulnerable to the disease. In these places, people often must venture out for jobs that put them at risk of contracting the virus, and communication by the authorities in residents' native languages can be patchy.

As it has elsewhere in the world, the coronavirus found a hole in Australia's system: It spread in part because of the sharing of a cigarette lighter among security guards working at a hotel where returning international travelers are being quarantined.

It later circulated in low-income neighborhoods in the Melbourne area with sizable migrant populations, including inside a supermarket distribution center.

The surge shows how even in countries that appear to be on track to safely resume normal life, the virus can quickly resurface. The Victoria outbreaks have stalled the reopening of state borders, undercut plans to create travel bubbles with other countries, and forced 300,000 people back into lockdown.

On Tuesday, the authorities said that people in the 10 worst-affected postal codes would be confined to their homes, except for essential travel, for the next four weeks in an effort to stop the virus's spread. International flights have been diverted from Melbourne, a city of almost five million people, and an inquiry has been opened into breaches in quarantine protocols.

Officials continued door-knocking and blitz-testing efforts, warning that if residents did not comply, the whole state of Victoria, Australia's second most populous, could be affected.

''If someone comes to your doorstep and offers you a test, the right answer is yes,'' Daniel Andrews, the premier of Victoria, said at a news conference on Wednesday. ''If this continues to get away from us, we will all be in lockdown,'' he added.

Before the Victoria outbreaks, the country was recording just a handful of new cases each week, and it had begun easing restrictions with the goal of reopening the country by the end of July.

But over the past two weeks, Victoria has had daily double-digit increases in cases. Though this pales in comparison to places like the United States that have tens of thousands of new cases each day, the rise has rattled the Australian authorities, who have held up the country's extensive testing program, and its early lockdowns, as keys to its success.

The surge in Victoria follows a familiar pattern: Public health officials around the globe have warned that flare-ups are inevitable even in countries that have largely suppressed the virus as restrictions on people's movement are loosened.

In China, an outbreak linked to a food market struck Beijing last month, and the authorities responded with targeted lockdowns and widespread testing, a model now being followed in Australia. In Singapore, the virus rapidly multiplied in dormitories crowded with migrant workers.

In Australia, the coronavirus has taken hold in pockets around Melbourne where government messaging has not always been effective because of language barriers and other problems like distrust of the authorities. Fears of testing for the virus run high, and people with low incomes may be less able to stay home from work when ill.

Some of these areas also experience high rates of homelessness and overcrowding, making it difficult for people to adhere to social-distancing guidelines.

''If some of them don't go to work, and they're not on the JobKeeper and JobSeeker, they are left on charity to survive,'' said Eddie Micallef, the chair of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, referring to government subsidy measures.

The dangers were foreshadowed in May, when a panel of doctors and experts warned the Australian government that it had missed an opportunity to protect migrant communities.

Mr. Micallef and other community leaders said communication by the state and federal authorities to high-risk groups had fallen short of what would have been necessary to prevent infections. Some said that translated information took too long to reach them, and was not clear.

''You almost need a university degree to try to understand it,'' Mohammad Al-Khafaji, the chief executive of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, said of a multi-page document on the coronavirus that the government had translated into Arabic.

He and other experts also warned that lockdowns enforced by the police -- especially at a time of global scrutiny of police abuses -- may only harm communities already wary of the authorities and exacerbate their sense of isolation.

''We have to get people to understand the importance of being home. That's not through fines and that's not through over-policing,'' said Rebecca Wickes, an associate professor of criminology and the director of the Migration and Inclusion Center at Monash University in Melbourne. ''That's not going to create the behavior change that we are looking for.''

She added that while a first wave of racism related to the coronavirus had targeted people of Asian descent, a second wave against migrant and ethnic communities was emerging because of misconceptions that these groups did not heed public health advice.

Leaders in the Islamic community also said they worried that anti-Muslim sentiment had risen after reports that one of Melbourne's clusters had originated at an Eid celebration last month.

It is not these disadvantaged communities that deserve blame, Professor Wickes said, but rather the ''global citizens, coming back from their cruises and their ski trips to Aspen. We seem to have forgotten the history of how this virus took hold in Australia.''

For Mr. Mayar, eliminating both the stigma of the virus and the racism that can accompany it comes with every rap on a door: Though he wears gloves, and is careful to keep six feet of distance between himself and the residents, he does not wear a mask.

He acknowledges the risks involved. ''But in the end we are humans, and we don't want to look at one another like aliens,'' he said. ''Even if we do encounter someone who is ill, we need to show our compassion.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/02/world/australia/melbourne-coronavirus-outbreak.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/02/world/australia/melbourne-coronavirus-outbreak.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Health workers speaking with a suburban Melbourne resident last week. A rebound in the number of infections is hitting the state of Victoria, especially in largely immigrant neighborhoods. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ROSS/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** July 3, 2020

**End of Document**



[***What Will It Take to Vote in Milwaukee?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60X6-S0J1-DXY4-X2P6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 24, 2020 Thursday 10:36 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1316 words

**Byline:** Alyssa Schukar

**Highlight:** The coronavirus has added strain to Wisconsin voters already facing challenges to ballot access.

**Body**

What Will It Take to Vote in Milwaukee?

MILWAUKEE — For 15 years, Johnny Miller worked the polls at a church on Milwaukee’s North Side. He was born in Mississippi, where, he said, his family was terrorized by the Ku Klux Klan for attempting to cast ballots. This background makes him feel “a deep historical tie with trying to get people to vote.”

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In 2016, President Trump [*won Wisconsin by just 23,000 votes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/nyregion/absentee-ballot-nyc-brooklyn.html) — the first time a Republican presidential candidate carried the state since 1984. Turnout was down that year by almost 19 percent for Black voters and 6 percent for Latino voters, which is part of the reason turnout groups are focused on those populations this year.

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PHOTOS: Members of Black Leaders Organizing for Communities offered masks and encouraged people to vote on Milwaukee’s North Side.; Eugenia Medina, who was naturalized over the summer, calls and texts people to make sure they know how to vote.; Sharaka Berry, a former teacher, said a lot of people feel anger toward the electoral process and question its legitimacy. (A16); At left, Johnny Miller, who was born in Mississippi, said he feels “a deep historical tie with trying to get people to vote.” (A16-A17); Below, from left, Katherine Villanueva, 16, Nadxely Sanchez, 18, Gissell Vera, 20, Cassandra Casas, 17, and Samari Price, 19.; At bottom, Joycelyn Taylor, left, and Kenneth Morrow Jr. plan to mail their ballots for the November election, but are concerned their votes won’t be counted.; Danita Jackson, with her son Jafari, works for Disability Rights Wisconsin. She said many eligible voters are not registered.; “In our community, we’re barely making it as it is, especially with the pandemic,” said Ramon Moreno, from the South Side. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALYSSA SCHUKAR) (A17)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Covid Fight Gets More Challenging; On Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61VN-MHS1-JBG3-64DF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 26, 2021 Tuesday 08:02 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1633 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** Vaccine distribution and a puzzling variant complicate Biden’s task: This is your morning tip sheet.

**Body**

Biden and the states confront a fast-morphing virus, while Republicans have already started looking to 2022. It’s Tuesday, and this is your politics tip sheet. [*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) to get On Politics in your inbox every weekday.

Where things stand

* President Biden has said that nothing is more important to him right now than containing the [*coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline).

1. But as the rubber meets the road, it’s increasingly clear just how tough it will be to establish a national plan for confronting the pandemic — especially after former President Donald Trump refused to organize a broad federal response.
2. In New York, [*Mayor Bill de Blasio announced*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) that he would delay the openings of mass vaccination sites at Yankee Stadium and Citi Field because the city didn’t have enough doses to distribute. Many New Yorkers have had their inoculation appointments canceled as the city waits on more vaccines.
3. Hopes dimmed yesterday that Merck might become the third pharmaceutical company in the United States to develop a working vaccine that could be approved by the F.D.A. Merck said it was abandoning two experimental vaccines because they did not produce a strong enough immune response against the virus.
4. And there’s growing evidence that the virus is morphing more quickly than experts had thought, with new variants emerging that make it more difficult to contain. Yesterday, two drug makers reported that their vaccines, while still effective, are slightly less potent against the variant from South Africa.
5. With the virus starting to slow down after a weekslong surge, [*California officials announced yesterday*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) that they were lifting stringent restrictions across much of the state.
6. But the announcement came only after the state government had drawn criticism for the apparent inconsistency of its response. Hospitals in Southern California and other parts of the state are still overwhelmed, and experts worry that new variants of the virus — including one that was recently found in more than half of test samples collected in Los Angeles — could lead to another surge.
7. In Chicago, [*the school district and the teachers’ union*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) are locking horns over the city’s plan to bring elementary and middle school students back for in-person learning next week. The union had resisted returning to classrooms until teachers had begun to receive vaccines, or the city’s positive test rate fell below 3 percent.
8. The conflict offers a possible cautionary tale as the Biden administration pursues its stated goal of reopening schools as soon as safely possible.
9. Biden will temporarily bar noncitizens from entering the United States from South Africa, and [*will extend Trump’s similar bans on travel*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) from Brazil, Britain and Europe, his press secretary announced yesterday.
10. The coronavirus variant in South Africa has particularly worried medical experts. A similar one has been detected in Brazil, though it is believed that the two strains developed independently. On Monday, health officials in Minnesota said they had documented the first case of infection with the Brazilian variant; the South African one is not believed to have reached the United States.
11. Senator Mitch McConnell, the Republican leader, [*dropped his demand that Democrats commit to preserving*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) the filibuster, allowing the incoming Democratic leadership to assemble committees and assume full power — but not before observers had begun to wonder whether the chamber had reached a new low in terms of partisan gridlock.
12. McConnell pointed to the statements of two moderate Democratic senators, Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema, who have said they will not vote to do away with the filibuster. “With these assurances, I look forward to moving ahead,” McConnell said in a statement.
13. But the debate is not put to rest. If Democrats are unable to garner the support of at least 10 Republicans for the key elements of their agenda — an unlikely scenario at best — they will come under increasing pressure to do away with the filibuster.

* In an executive order yesterday, Biden reversed Trump’s ban on transgender Americans serving in the military. [*Biden’s order restored the anti-discrimination protections*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) first put in place by former President Barack Obama, and he called for an immediate end to involuntary discharges of transgender troops who were already in the service.

1. Biden signed the order with Lloyd Austin, his newly confirmed secretary of defense, at his side. Later in the day, [*the Senate confirmed Janet Yellen*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) as Treasury secretary in a bipartisan vote, putting her in place to lead the administration’s effort to deliver more economic aid to families and businesses struggling amid the pandemic.

* Last night at 7 p.m., the House presented the Senate with a lone article of impeachment against Trump, [*officially starting*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) the trial process. Senators are expected to be officially sworn in as jurors today.

1. But oral arguments won’t actually start until Feb. 9, under a deal struck last week between Democratic and Republican leaders in the Senate. They agreed to delay the proceedings for two weeks, allowing the chamber to focus on working on confirmations of Biden’s appointments while the defense and prosecution prepare for trial.
2. Senator Patrick Leahy, the Senate’s longest-serving Democrat, [*is expected to preside over the trial*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline), making determinations about the admissibility of evidence and the legitimacy of trying a former president.
3. So far, Senator Mitt Romney is the only Republican in the chamber to have expressed support for the House’s decision to impeach Trump on a charge of incitement to insurrection. Democrats will need at least 17 Republicans to reach the two-thirds majority required to convict Trump.
4. The Justice Department’s inspector general opened an investigation yesterday into [*whether officials there had improperly used their authority*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) to support Trump’s baseless claims of election fraud after his loss in November.
5. The announcement came after a [*Times article*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) had described efforts by Jeffrey Clark, the acting head of the department’s civil division, to push top leaders to falsely and publicly state that ongoing investigations had thrown the Electoral College results into doubt.

Photo of the day

The House impeachment managers walked the article of impeachment to the Senate yesterday.

The early 2022 jockeying is underway.

The 2020 election is barely behind us, but inevitably the talk of 2022 has already begun.

Senator Rob Portman, Republican of Ohio, announced yesterday that [*he would not run for another term next year*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline), setting up a primary fight in a Midwestern G.O.P. stronghold that will inevitably offer clues about the direction of the Republican Party.

But the simple fact of Portman’s decision to retire — and the reasons he gave for doing so — said something about the state of American politics. A veteran of the George W. Bush administration, Portman had developed a reputation in the Senate as a staunch conservative who nonetheless insisted on reaching across the aisle.

He helped push through the new North American trade deal in 2019, and was part of the bipartisan coalition that pushed a pandemic relief package late last year, then pressured House and Senate leadership to finally pass it at the end of December.

Widely seen as a leading contender to replace him is Representative Jim Jordan, a die-hard Trump ally whose heavily gerrymandered district is likely to be redrawn this year — and not in his favor.

If Jordan can win a statewide primary to succeed Portman, it would signal a significant victory for Trumpism in a state where the Republican electorate has historically been well balanced between ***working-class*** white voters and more affluent white suburban Republicans. Think of John Kasich, and before that, William Saxbe: This isn’t supposed to be the most Trump-friendly Republican state.

The opposite is true of Arkansas, where Trump enjoyed some of his strongest support in the 2020 election (62 percent voted for him). That would seem to make it fertile terrain for Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the former White House press secretary for Trump, who yesterday announced her bid for Arkansas governor, her father’s old job.

If she wins, it would plant a clear flag for Trump’s influence, at least in the strongest of Republican strongholds.

Sanders sounded Trumplike in her announcement video, posted on Twitter. “With the radical left now in charge of Washington, your governor is your last line of defense. In fact, your governor must be on the front line,” she said. “So today, I announce my candidacy for governor of Arkansas.”

New York Times Podcasts

‘The Ezra Klein Show’ kicks off with a conversation with Vivek Murthy

Ezra Klein, a founder of Vox.com and newly hired New York Times Opinion columnist, recently recorded the first episode of his podcast for us. In it, he spoke with Dr. Vivek Murthy, Biden’s nominee for surgeon general, a post he previously held from 2014 to 2017.

They spoke about the challenges the coronavirus pandemic continues to pose, the politicization of science and how the country can move past the crisis.

“There are times, you know, when we are 50 states and there are times where we’re one nation,” Murthy said at one point. “This is a time where we have to be one nation. And if we don’t do that, then we are not going to turn this pandemic around and we are going to continue to lose more people to this terrible virus.”

[*Listen to the episode here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline). You can listen and subscribe to “The Ezra Klein Show” on [*Apple Podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline), [*Pocket Casts*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline), [*Spotify*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline), [*Google Podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) and [*Stitcher*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) ([*here’s how to listen*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline)).

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Is there anything you think we’re missing? Anything you want to see more of? We’d love to hear from you. Email us at [*onpolitics@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Hostility Dooms Commerce Hub At Brooklyn Site***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60X7-3G01-JBG3-64G9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Body**

The developers behind Industry City abandoned a rezoning proposal after left-leaning Democrats raised concerns about gentrification.

It was slated to be one of the biggest real estate projects in New York City in years, a major expansion of the Industry City complex on the Brooklyn waterfront that could have created as many as 20,000 jobs at a time when local unemployment has soared because of the pandemic.

But on Tuesday night, the project's owner canceled the expansion in the face of fierce opposition from left-leaning Democrats, ending the biggest clash over development in the city since the collapse of the Amazon deal in Queens last year, and highlighting the growing influence of the left in local politics.

The project, which required the city's approval to rezone the area, had been cast as a way to bring jobs to an underdeveloped industrial section of Sunset Park, and supporters argued that the city's massive job losses in recent months gave them an even more compelling reason to move forward with plans to create a shopping and office behemoth there. New York City's unemployment rate last month was 16 percent, nearly twice the national average.

But the area's councilman and some community groups opposed the rezoning, saying that it would be a ''luxury mall'' that would worsen gentrification, and contending that job estimates were inflated. The proposal divided Democratic officials, and some leaders -- including Mayor Bill de Blasio and the City Council speaker, Corey Johnson -- stayed on the fence, effectively allowing local officials to kill it.

''If a project like this can't succeed, it concerns me very much about the future of New York City -- a place I've spent my whole life,'' the chief executive of Industry City, Andrew Kimball, said in an interview on Wednesday.

Business leaders also expressed dismay over the defeat of the rezoning. Kathryn Wylde, the president of the Partnership for New York City, an influential business group, questioned how elected officials could forsake thousands of jobs when nearly one million New Yorkers were facing unemployment.

''The opponents of Industry City have further damaged the prospects for economic recovery from COVID-19,'' she said in a statement.

But the progressive wing of the Democratic Party saw the proposal as a favor to big business, one that could lead to displacement in Sunset Park, a diverse, ***working-class*** neighborhood on the Brooklyn waterfront.

''People power has triumphed,'' Carlos Menchaca, the area councilman who opposed the deal, wrote on Twitter. ''Our work continues as community voice drives the growth and future of our neighborhood.''

Mr. Menchaca's opposition would have normally been enough to kill the plan: City Council members are unofficially afforded the power to essentially veto any rezoning in their districts. But the Council had been considering the rezoning despite Mr. Menchaca's opposition, and held a hearing on the proposal this month. The city's planning commission had voted to approve the rezoning last month.

The developers decided to withdraw the application on Tuesday night after more elected officials came out against the plan. The decision was first reported by Politico.

Mr. de Blasio, a Democrat who will leave office in 2021, had supported the Amazon deal, but declined to take a position on Industry City. He said on Wednesday that other rezoning proposals were moving forward and he would back ones that benefit the public.

The mayor said that previous mayoral administrations had approved ''sweetheart deals'' for developers that made New Yorkers skeptical of new projects.

''That kind of development really soured people,'' Mr. de Blasio said.

Mr. Johnson, the council speaker who is running for mayor, said on Wednesday that he did not think it was his job to overrule leaders in Brooklyn. ''If you can't convince the local elected officials, then that tells you where things are going to go,'' he said.

Industry City, an industrial area first developed in the 1890s, has been rebranded as a 21st-century hub for small businesses and artists, and its owners have wanted to expand the site with new office and commercial space.

In 2013, Jamestown, the developer that created Chelsea Market, and its partners -- the investment firms Belvedere Capital and Angelo Gordon -- bought a nearly 50 percent stake in the 16-building complex. Jamestown renovated the buildings, which were flooded during Hurricane Sandy. Google bought Chelsea Market in 2018.

The complex grew to include more than 500 businesses, such as a food hall, a film-production company and a training center for the Brooklyn Nets basketball team. Under the rezoning, the developers wanted to expand it further, including by adding space for offices, retail, manufacturing, art studios, academic institutions and parking. An initial plan to add hotels was dropped to try to win over elected officials.

The proposal to rezone the area was stridently opposed by a handful of community groups, most notably Uprose, an environmental justice group, and Protect Sunset Park. The grass-roots opposition helped win over local elected officials, including Representatives Nydia M. Velázquez, Jerrold Nadler, Yvette D. Clarke and Hakeem Jeffries, who sent a letter to the City Council on Tuesday opposing the rezoning and urging council members to listen to residents.

''What the Sunset Park community has made clear is rezoning such a large portion of the waterfront for a single private actor is not in the best interests of the residents,'' the letter said.

Mr. Menchaca said that standing up to the developers took ''immense courage,'' adding that he felt at times like David in a biblical battle against Goliath. He said he hoped the waterfront would remain an industrial area by attracting companies that could provide green jobs.

''This is a victory for communities who have been sidelined by developers and want to drive their own vision of growth in their neighborhoods,'' Mr. Menchaca said in an interview.

Mr. Kimball, the leader of Industry City, said he had worked to address the same concerns that had killed the Amazon deal and had abided by the city's complex land review process. Still, there was resistance to ''a project that any reasonable person would say is an extraordinary project.''

Two factors contributed to the decision to withdraw the application, he said: the lack of political leadership and fears that a contentious battle could harm the developers' reputation. The developers have leased 300,000 feet of commercial space at Industry City since the pandemic hit.

''We can't have that be damaged by a continued political food fight that lacks very little substance,'' Mr. Kimball said.

Critics of the project have questioned the 20,000 jobs figure. Mr. Kimball said there were currently 8,000 jobs at the complex, and the rezoning would allow for 7,000 more at the site. Another 8,000 were expected in the surrounding community.

Business leaders have already expressed their frustration with Mr. de Blasio's response to the pandemic and are pushing him to address concerns about crime, homelessness and trash. They have also been searching for a way to shape the race in 2021 to replace Mr. de Blasio.

Alicia Glen, a former deputy mayor who negotiated the Amazon deal for the de Blasio administration, said she was disappointed by the opposition to the project. The city must grow and add jobs, she said, to generate taxes to create more opportunities for low-income residents.

''A lot of people are jumping on an anti-development bandwagon and not differentiating between good development and bad development,'' she said.

Eric Ulrich, a Republican councilman from Queens, said he had the same sinking feeling upon hearing of Industry City's defeat that he did when Amazon abandoned its plans in Queens. The tech company has since continued its investment in the city, expanding its offices in Manhattan, buying the iconic Lord & Taylor building on Fifth Avenue and opening warehouses in the other boroughs.

Nonetheless, Mr. Ulrich said that the city was suffering because Democrats were ''marching to the beat of the Socialist drum.''

''We are sending such a terrible message to the rest of the country that we're not open for business,'' he said, ''and we're not open to economic development and new jobs.''

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The Industry City complex was hit hard by the pandemic. Developers promised 20,000 new jobs. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BENJAMIN NORMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A24)

**Load-Date:** October 1, 2020

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[***Is Biden Gaining Older Voters, and Losing Young Ones?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YR5-8GH1-DXY4-X1JG-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Even modest differences could prove crucial in an election that begins with numbers and coalitions very similar to those in 2016.

**Body**

Even modest differences could prove crucial in an election that begins with numbers and coalitions very similar to those in 2016.

After impeachment, a coronavirus pandemic and four years of tweets, the early national polls show that the 2020 presidential campaign begins almost exactly where it left off in 2016.

Today, Joe Biden leads Donald Trump by just under six percentage points among registered voters. Nearly four years ago, the final national polls showed that Hillary Clinton led Mr. Trump by around five percentage points among registered voters.

The similarities are even starker on closer examination. The polls depict an electorate that remains split in the same ways, with Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden drawing nearly identical numbers to ones the candidates did four years ago among white voters with or without a college degree.

But not everything is exactly the same, and even modest differences have the potential to alter the race. Mr. Biden shows early strength among older voters; Mr. Trump has made gains among nonwhite voters. There are early signs of an expanded gender gap. All of this could change by November, but all of it could be decisive in a contest with the potential to be closely fought.

Here’s how the coalitions have or haven’t changed in the last four years.

What’s the same

Trump trails by 5 or 6 points

In the compilation of high-quality, methodologically comparable live-interview telephone surveys used for this analysis, Mrs. Clinton led by exactly five points among registered voters in polls conducted after the third presidential debate in October 2016. Mr. Biden, in contrast, leads in methodologically similar polls by 5.8 points.

Of course, state polls struggled in 2016. But the national polls weren’t so bad. The national polls used here showed Mrs. Clinton ahead by 3.7 points among likely voters, or only about 1.6 points more than her final 2.1-point popular vote margin. It’s worth recalling that a 1.6-point shift in Mrs. Clinton’s favor would have probably won her the election, and Mr. Biden will probably be considered a modest if narrow favorite if he enters the election with a five-point lead among registered voters.

A huge split among white voters by college education

The defining feature of the 2016 presidential election was a huge gap between the preferences of white voters with or without a college degree. Four years later, this wide split remains essentially unchanged, with Mr. Trump leading by around 30 points among whites without a college degree and Mr. Biden holding a double-digit lead among whites with a college degree.

It suggests that Mr. Biden, despite his reputed appeal to white ***working-class*** voters, has not succeeded in broadly winning back those in that group who flipped from President Obama in 2012 to Mr. Trump in 2016.

It also suggests that Mr. Biden has not made huge gains among college-educated white voters, as some assume based on Democratic gains in suburban areas. Exit polls in 2016, often used for electoral analysis, showed that Mr. Trump won college-educated white voters. But the exit polls [*were severely biased on this measure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/27/upshot/trump-losing-college-educated-whites-he-never-won-them-in-the-first-place.html). It seems far likelier that Mrs. Clinton won them.

In recent off-year races, Democrats might have won in suburban areas because of a turnout advantage or by persuading traditionally Republican-leaning voters who had already supported Mrs. Clinton to back Democrats down-ballot — not necessarily because they flipped many more college-educated white voters.

A relative Trump advantage in the Electoral College

Mr. Trump’s wide lead among white voters without a college degree means that he has retained his advantage in the relatively white ***working-class*** battleground states that have tended to decide recent American presidential elections.

So far, state polls show that Mr. Biden holds only a narrow lead — perhaps around a combined average of two points — among registered voters in the states likeliest to decide the presidency: Florida, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Arizona. It’s consistent with the data from the 2018 midterm elections, when Democrats won the U.S. House vote in Wisconsin and Arizona narrowly — and lost it in Florida — despite winning the national vote by seven points. It’s also consistent with the major 2018 election surveys, which found Mr. Trump’s approval rating about even in the same states.

Mr. Trump’s persistent relative advantage in the Electoral College gives Republicans a chance to win the presidency without the popular vote for the third time in six elections.

What’s different, so far

A Biden surge among the oldest voters

The similarities between the 2016 and 2020 polls are stark, but there are notable differences, too. One is that Mr. Biden holds a wide lead among voters 65 and older, upsetting for now a nearly two-decade pattern of Republican strength among the oldest voters. Over all, Mr. Biden holds nearly a 10-point lead among registered voters in this age group, while Mrs. Clinton trailed among these voters by five points in the final polls.

This is not a small shift. It is consistent across every live-interview poll; it is not easy to explain; and it is fairly new. As recently as the 2018 midterm elections, the president’s approval rating among seniors was above water, and Republicans won the group.

Part of the difference is compositional: Baby boomers now make up nearly 60 percent of registered voters over 65, up from 40 percent in 2016. As a result, Mrs. Clinton was probably fairly competitive among the group of voters who are 65 and over today, even though four years ago she lost those who were 65 and over. Compositional shifts might explain even more than this, if it turns out that the greater mortality rate of older men compared with women means that Mr. Trump’s older supporters have departed the electorate at a higher rate. But it seems unlikely that compositional change explains it all.

Another factor is a growing bias in polling: Young women respond at a low rate to telephone surveys on cellphones. Pollsters typically adjust their samples to ensure a representative number of women or younger voters over all, but only a few do so in a way that ensures they have the right number of younger or older women. As a result, most pollsters give more weight to women over all, yielding a sample with the right number of women in total but still too few younger ones and, as a consequence, too many older women.

Without any special adjustment, women might represent 60 percent or more of voters over age 65 in a typical high-quality national poll, compared with about 55 percent in reality. This probably expands Mr. Biden’s lead among seniors by about two percentage points — not enough to explain the whole shift but a component.

Together, the polling and compositional explanations might cover nearly half of the shift toward Mr. Biden.

What explains the rest? One possible explanation is Mr. Biden himself. Older voters appear to have a favorable view of him, and it’s not hard to imagine why they might see him in a more favorable light than Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton or even John Kerry.

He is the first white male Democratic nominee since 2004, and he is probably the first one since 2000 or perhaps earlier who won’t easily be dismissed as a liberal. He is not campaigning on the kind of culture war issues, like immigration, racial justice or gay marriage, that have tended to work to conservatives’ advantage with this group for decades. In other words, older voters may like him for many of the same reasons he disappoints young progressives.

Another possible explanation is Mr. Trump — and perhaps especially his coronavirus response. Older people are relatively vulnerable to the coronavirus and relatively insulated from the effects of an economic shutdown. The president’s drive to reopen the economy, and questions about his slow response, may resonate very differently for a retiree who backed Mr. Trump than for a young parent struggling to support children. A recent Morning Consult [*poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/27/upshot/trump-losing-college-educated-whites-he-never-won-them-in-the-first-place.html)found that Mr. Trump’s approval rating on the coronavirus response was lower among seniors than among any other group.

Whatever the explanation, Mr. Biden’s newfound strength among older voters could be a great asset. They represent an above-average share of the electorate in many top battlegrounds, including Florida. They turn out at high numbers, potentially denting the traditional Republican advantage among likely voters. But it remains to be seen whether Mr. Biden’s strength here will prove durable. Mr. Trump could peel back these losses by refocusing on the cultural issues that have long cemented Republican strength among this group.

Trump gains among nonwhite voters

Mr. Trump, on the other hand, has made gains among nonwhite voters, one of his weaknesses. In recent polls, he holds the support of 22 percent of nonwhite registered voters, a higher level for him than in any of the late live-interview polls in 2016.

It is hard to break this down further, since many pollsters do not disaggregate nonwhite voters by race, but there are signs that he is overperforming among both black and Hispanic voters and perhaps especially among young nonwhite voters.

The explanation for Mr. Trump’s improvement among this group isn’t necessarily obvious either, but the evidence for it stretches back much further. Nonwhite voters were conspicuously absent from the “resistance” surge in Democratic turnout during Trump-era special and general elections. National polls have long shown that the president’s approval rating was relatively solid, or perhaps even up slightly compared with his 2016 showing, among nonwhite voters, even when his approval rating was far weaker than it is today. .

As with Mr. Biden’s strength among older voters, it’s hard to know whether Mr. Trump’s improvement among nonwhite voters will prove sustainable over the longer run. Either way, it may argue against a surge in nonwhite turnout. Nonwhite voters are usually less likely to vote if they don’t back a Democratic candidate, and even if some wind up returning to Mr. Biden, it seems to suggest they won’t feel any great imperative to turn out and oust the president if they feel comfortable backing him today.

What’s probably different

Biden weakness among younger voters

There are signs that Mr. Biden is performing worse among younger voters than Mrs. Clinton did four years ago, but this is not entirely clear.

Pollsters are somewhat inconsistent about how they divvy up voters under 65, making it hard to compile a clear picture of one particular age group. And many age groupings of registered voters are smaller than the 65-and-over group, making the results less precise. All of this is muddled even further by compositional changes, with the Republican-friendly group of Reagan-era Gen-Xers aging into the 50-to-64-year-old category, or the more Democratic-friendly baby boomers aging out of it.

The data is reported most consistently on voters under 35, and over all Mr. Biden appears to fare a few points worse among 18-to-34-year-olds than Mrs. Clinton did. This is a small enough margin that it would be hard to be sure of a change under any circumstances, but the possible biases in the gender composition of young voters in public polls add to the uncertainty. In some polls, men represent 60 percent or more of young voters, even though they represent only 49 percent of young registered voters. This might suppress Mr. Biden’s margin among younger voters by three or four points. It might cover much of the apparent gap with Mrs. Clinton, even as the same theory does not explain Mr. Biden’s strength among older voters in full.

In general, it seems somewhat likely that Mr. Biden is doing worse than Mrs. Clinton among voters under 65, given that he’s doing about the same as her over all while doing much better among those 65 and up. But it’s hard to say with confidence, and even harder to say exactly where Mr. Biden is weak or to what extent. It’s possible that Mr. Biden is faring, say, only two percentage points worse across most age groups under 65; it’s also possible he has a narrower and more pronounced weakness among voters under 29. It’s not clear yet.

A wider gender gap

There was a wide gender gap in the 2016 election. So far, polls show it’s even bigger than four years ago, with Mr. Biden leading by a wider margin among women while Mr. Trump has a wider edge among men.

The shifts are not so large or consistent from poll to poll to know that it’s a sure thing. The shifts are also modest enough that it’s not obvious whether gender or another demographic is driving it. For instance, women make up a larger share among the over-65 group than among younger voters, so Mr. Biden’s strength among older voters may be expanding the gender gap, or it could be that his strength among female voters is helping expand his edge among older voters.

Fewer undecided and minor-party voters

In polls four years ago, a relatively large number of voters said they were undecided or backed minor-party candidates like Jill Stein and Gary Johnson. So far, there’s nothing like it in national polls.

Of course, most national polls aren’t naming third-party candidates. It’s possible that a named Libertarian or Green Party candidate will ultimately win a modest share of support in pre-election polls. But it seems unlikely given the higher favorability ratings of the two major candidates, and it’s even possible that minor-party candidates will [*struggle to get on the ballot*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/27/upshot/trump-losing-college-educated-whites-he-never-won-them-in-the-first-place.html) because of the coronavirus. And given the tendency for support among minor-party candidates to dwindle over the course of a campaign, even a modest number of minor-party voters now would not necessarily suggest a similar size vote in November.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sean Rayford/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Progressives Defeat Brooklyn Project That Promised 20,000 Jobs***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60X2-8411-DXY4-X1FW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The developers behind Industry City abandoned a rezoning proposal after left-leaning Democrats raised concerns about gentrification.

**Body**

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It was slated to be one of the biggest real estate projects in New York City in years, a major expansion of the Industry City complex on the Brooklyn waterfront that could have created as many as 20,000 jobs at a time when local unemployment has soared because of the pandemic.

But on Tuesday night, the project’s owner canceled the expansion in the face of fierce opposition from left-leaning Democrats, ending the biggest clash over development in the city since the collapse of the Amazon deal in Queens last year, and highlighting the growing influence of the left in local politics.

The project, which required the city’s approval to rezone the area, had been cast as a way to bring jobs to an underdeveloped industrial section of Sunset Park, and supporters argued that the city’s massive job losses in recent months gave them an even more compelling reason to move forward with plans to create a shopping and office behemoth there. New York City’s unemployment rate last month was 16 percent, nearly twice the national average.

But the area’s councilman and some community groups opposed the rezoning, saying that it would be a “luxury mall” that would worsen gentrification, and contending that job estimates were inflated. The proposal divided Democratic officials, and some leaders — including Mayor Bill de Blasio and the City Council speaker, Corey Johnson — stayed on the fence, effectively allowing local officials to kill it.

“If a project like this can’t succeed, it concerns me very much about the future of New York City — a place I’ve spent my whole life,” the chief executive of Industry City, Andrew Kimball, said in an interview on Wednesday.

Business leaders also expressed dismay over the defeat of the rezoning. Kathryn Wylde, the president of the Partnership for New York City, an influential business group, questioned how elected officials could forsake thousands of jobs when nearly one million New Yorkers were facing unemployment.

“The opponents of Industry City have further damaged the prospects for economic recovery from COVID-19,” she said in a statement.

But the progressive wing of the Democratic Party saw the proposal as a favor to big business, one that could lead to displacement in Sunset Park, a diverse, ***working-class*** neighborhood on the Brooklyn waterfront.

“People power has triumphed,” Carlos Menchaca, the area councilman who opposed the deal, wrote on Twitter. “Our work continues as community voice drives the growth and future of our neighborhood.”

Mr. Menchaca’s opposition would have normally been enough to kill the plan: City Council members are unofficially afforded the power to essentially veto any rezoning in their districts. But the Council had been considering the rezoning despite Mr. Menchaca’s opposition, and held a hearing on the proposal this month. The city’s planning commission had voted to approve the rezoning last month.

The developers decided to withdraw the application on Tuesday night after more elected officials came out against the plan. The decision was [*first reported by Politico*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2020/09/22/industry-city-developers-pull-the-plug-on-yearslong-rezoning-project-1317915).

Mr. de Blasio, a Democrat who will leave office in 2021, had supported the Amazon deal, but declined to take a position on Industry City. He said on Wednesday that other rezoning proposals were moving forward and he would back ones that benefit the public.

The mayor said that previous mayoral administrations had approved “sweetheart deals” for developers that made New Yorkers skeptical of new projects.

“That kind of development really soured people,” Mr. de Blasio said.

Mr. Johnson, the council speaker who is running for mayor, said on Wednesday that he did not think it was his job to overrule leaders in Brooklyn. “If you can’t convince the local elected officials, then that tells you where things are going to go,” he said.

Industry City, an [*industrial area*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2020/09/22/industry-city-developers-pull-the-plug-on-yearslong-rezoning-project-1317915) first developed in the 1890s, has been rebranded as a 21st-century hub for small businesses and artists, and its owners have wanted to expand the site with new office and commercial space.

In 2013, Jamestown, the developer that created Chelsea Market, and its partners — the investment firms Belvedere Capital and Angelo Gordon — bought a nearly 50 percent stake in the 16-building complex. Jamestown renovated the buildings, which were flooded during Hurricane Sandy. Google bought Chelsea Market in 2018.

The complex grew to include more than 500 businesses, such as a food hall, a film-production company and a training center for the Brooklyn Nets basketball team. Under the rezoning, the developers wanted to expand it further, including by adding space for offices, retail, manufacturing, art studios, academic institutions and parking. An initial plan to add hotels was dropped to try to win over elected officials.

The proposal to rezone the area was stridently opposed by a handful of community groups, most notably Uprose, an [*environmental justice group*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2020/09/22/industry-city-developers-pull-the-plug-on-yearslong-rezoning-project-1317915), and Protect Sunset Park. The grass-roots opposition helped win over local elected officials, including Representatives Nydia M. Velázquez, Jerrold Nadler, Yvette D. Clarke and Hakeem Jeffries, who [*sent a letter*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2020/09/22/industry-city-developers-pull-the-plug-on-yearslong-rezoning-project-1317915) to the City Council on Tuesday opposing the rezoning and urging council members to listen to residents.

“What the Sunset Park community has made clear is rezoning such a large portion of the waterfront for a single private actor is not in the best interests of the residents,” the letter said.

Mr. Menchaca said that standing up to the developers took “immense courage,” adding that he felt at times like David in a biblical battle against Goliath. He said he hoped the waterfront would remain an industrial area by attracting companies that could provide green jobs.

“This is a victory for communities who have been sidelined by developers and want to drive their own vision of growth in their neighborhoods,” Mr. Menchaca said in an interview.

Mr. Kimball, the leader of Industry City, said he had worked to address the same concerns that had killed the Amazon deal and had abided by the city’s complex land review process. Still, there was resistance to “a project that any reasonable person would say is an extraordinary project.”

Two factors contributed to the decision to withdraw the application, he said: the lack of political leadership and fears that a contentious battle could harm the developers’ reputation. The developers have leased 300,000 feet of commercial space at Industry City since the pandemic hit.

“We can’t have that be damaged by a continued political food fight that lacks very little substance,” Mr. Kimball said.

Critics of the project have questioned the 20,000 jobs figure. Mr. Kimball said there were currently 8,000 jobs at the complex, and the rezoning would allow for 7,000 more at the site. Another 8,000 were expected in the surrounding community.

Business leaders have already expressed their frustration with Mr. de Blasio’s response to the pandemic and are [*pushing him to address*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2020/09/22/industry-city-developers-pull-the-plug-on-yearslong-rezoning-project-1317915) concerns about crime, homelessness and trash. They have also been searching for a way to [*shape the race*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2020/09/22/industry-city-developers-pull-the-plug-on-yearslong-rezoning-project-1317915) in 2021 to replace Mr. de Blasio.

Alicia Glen, a former deputy mayor who negotiated the Amazon deal for the de Blasio administration, said she was disappointed by the opposition to the project. The city must grow and add jobs, she said, to generate taxes to create more opportunities for low-income residents.

“A lot of people are jumping on an anti-development bandwagon and not differentiating between good development and bad development,” she said.

Eric Ulrich, a Republican councilman from Queens, said he had the same sinking feeling upon hearing of Industry City’s defeat that he did when Amazon abandoned its plans in Queens. The tech company has since [*continued its investment*](https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/city-hall/story/2020/09/22/industry-city-developers-pull-the-plug-on-yearslong-rezoning-project-1317915) in the city, expanding its offices in Manhattan, buying the iconic Lord &amp; Taylor building on Fifth Avenue and opening warehouses in the other boroughs.

Nonetheless, Mr. Ulrich said that the city was suffering because Democrats were “marching to the beat of the Socialist drum.”

“We are sending such a terrible message to the rest of the country that we’re not open for business,” he said, “and we’re not open to economic development and new jobs.”

PHOTO: The Industry City complex was hit hard by the pandemic. Developers promised 20,000 new jobs. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BENJAMIN NORMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A24)

**Load-Date:** September 30, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Masks On in a Near-Empty Hall: Germany’s Theaters Return; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6089-HRT1-JBG3-60K7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 2, 2020 Thursday 08:27 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1226 words

**Byline:** A.J. Goldmann

**Highlight:** Playhouses are finding ways to keep drama going, despite coronavirus restrictions.

**Body**

Playhouses are finding ways to keep drama going, despite coronavirus restrictions.

MUNICH — After months of darkened stages and hundreds of canceled productions, Germany’s theaters have begun to emerge from their corona-induced slumber, cautiously feeling their way back to live performance.

From abridged presentations and monologues to other solutions that seem closer to happenings than plays, theatermakers are adapting to changed circumstances as restrictions are eased. This has meant performing for smaller audiences and devising productions that require few actors and stagehands, to ensure a safe distance between the performance and spectators.

Of the unusual workarounds (which vary across [*Germany*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/21/world/germany-coronovirus-shooting-covid.html)’s 16 states), none has been as jaw-droppingly bizarre as Susanne Kennedy and Markus Selg’s “Oracle,” an immersive production in one of the smaller performance spaces of the Münchner Kammerspiele.

Instead of being led through it in small groups, as the directors had intended before the pandemic, masked spectators entered one at a time to find a fluorescent, high-tech dreamscape and were guided through by actors lip-syncing to flat, emotionless recorded voices.

“Are you ready to meet the oracle?” the actors mouthed, staring wide-eyed through plastic visors.

At times it felt like a curated acid trip. At others, cosmic relaxation music and calming disembodied voices took the edge off its more surreal aspects.

The weirdness continued in another Kammerspiele production, “Wunde R,” by the young playwright Enis Maci. In Felix Rothenhäusler’s staging, the audience wasn’t in the auditorium but on the stage, sharing it with four actors who sat around a glass table while reciting a collage of texts that included Mother Teresa’s 1979 Nobel Prize acceptance speech and beauty tips found on the internet.

Voice-distorting microphones and melting ice sculptures added to the atmosphere of uncanniness and disintegration. I was grateful that the spectators were allowed to ambulate: Sitting down, I might have either gone mad or bolted.

In comparison with Munich, where indoor performances for an audience of up to 100 were recently authorized, theater has been slower to re-emerge in Berlin. State-funded theaters there can’t return to regular operations until August. The only way around the restriction has been open-air performances, though not many theaters have the space.

The Berliner Ensemble, a storied theater with a beer garden in its courtyard, mounted short, nightly performances there for the second half of June. Attendance was limited to 50, and the free tickets were snatched up online.

I was looking forward to seeing the electrifying Stefanie Reinsperger perform excerpts from Ersan Mondtag’s wild production of Bertolt Brecht’s “[*Baal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/19/theater/best-theater-europe.html),” but arrived on a drizzly Saturday evening to find that the performance had been rained out. (Here’s an idea: Why not inform ticketholders, all of whom provided contact details for tracing purposes when booking, of the cancellation in advance?)

The skies were thankfully clear for the following day’s “From Pop to Baroque,” a two-man revue culled from two productions inspired by Thomas Mann’s novel “[*Felix Krull*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/12/arts/liliom-thalia-hamburg-felix-krull-berliner-ensemble.html),” starring Peter Moltzen and Marc Oliver Schulze. Their rapid-fire monologues (including a comically muffled one spoken through a surgical mask), comic banter and slapstick shenanigans had the beer-drinking, pretzel-munching audience in hysterics.

But the series of sketches felt slight: There was acting bravura, but it was short on dramatic purpose. When it was over, the audience roared, in vain, for an encore. More than anything, the 45-minute show seemed to tease those in attendance by reminding them of what they were missing.

The most refreshing part of the Berliner Ensemble’s outdoor theater was being able to take it in without a [*mask*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/21/world/germany-coronovirus-shooting-covid.html). For the time being, face coverings are a mandatory part of theatergoing in Munich.

At the end of June, after three months in darkness, the 800-seat main auditorium of the Residenztheater opened here for an audience of 100, the maximum number of indoor spectators currently allowed. It felt odd sitting in a theater where entire rows of seats had been removed. At the same time, it was nice to be able to spread out, as in first class on an airplane, during a performance of “The Three Musketeers.”

It was easy to see why Antonio Latella’s popular production had been selected to get things going again. On an empty stage, four actors cavort, tap-dance, holler and bellow with gleeful abandon — though the carryings-on have little to do with Alexandre Dumas’s classic novel. The staging is thrilling, good-natured anarchy, simply executed, all at a safe distance from spectators. The playgoers, for their part, mostly abided by the regulations, patiently awaiting for the ushers to escort them to their seats and keeping their faces covered throughout the performance (although two men in front of me spent the two hours unmasked and dangerous).

At the more intimate end of the theatrical spectrum, the theater has also devised a series of solo evenings in a smaller venue. Limited to 26 spectators, these have included monologues drawn from the works of Dostoyevsky and the French writer Édouard Louis.

In “The Dream of a Ridiculous Man,” Max Rothbart slipped into the role of the Dostoyevsky story’s brooding hero with intensity as well as humor, particularly when the staging was beset by technical difficulties. Another wonderful ensemble actor, Vincent Glander, appeared as the autobiographical protagonist of Louis’s 2014 novel, “The End of Eddy,” narrating the author’s harrowing experiences growing up gay in a ***working-class*** town in the north of France.

In normal times, going to the theater is a richly communal experience. Last weekend’s performances of Toshiki Okada’s “The Vacuum Cleaner,” the first production on the Kammerspiele’s main stage, felt lonely when experienced in a theater that could fill only a fraction of its nearly 700 seats.

I think that Okada, a quirky Japanese theatermaker, would have approved. The play is a deadpan and mordantly funny exploration of the phenomenon of the hikikomori, the estimated one million people in Japan who have withdrawn entirely from the outside world, spending their lives locked away in their rooms.

For an audience that had only recently emerged from a strict lockdown, the play’s examination of imposed solitude felt newly relevant. And the production’s relative simplicity — five actors, minimal stagecraft and no set changes — made it easy to present within guidelines that require everyone onstage and behind the scenes to keep a distance.

As I peered around Munich’s sparsely populated auditoriums at my socially distanced fellow audience members, it struck me as absurd that both “The Vacuum Cleaner” and “The Three Musketeers” were sold-out shows — and yet the theaters were nearly empty. But considering that Broadway will remain closed through the end of the year, and there is still no plan to reopen London’s West End, it’s remarkable that German theaters have the artistic drive as well as the means, thanks to generous government subsidies, to insist that the show go on.

PHOTO: A scene from Susanne Kennedy and Markus Selg’s “Oracle,” an immersive production in one of the smaller performance spaces of the Münchner Kammerspiele. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Judith Buss FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 21, 2021

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[***‘Mitch, Please!’ Tours Kentucky and Roasts a Senator***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YGY-J6S1-DXY4-X0W5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 23, 2020 Monday 09:19 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1069 words

**Byline:** Dwight Garner

**Highlight:** Matt Jones drove through each of his state’s 120 counties to understand why Mitch McConnell polls so poorly there yet is serving his sixth full term in the Senate.

**Body**

In times of national crisis, it’s important to put past differences behind us. On the other hand, here’s a new book that trolls Mitch McConnell for 500 pages. Can’t a person have a look?

Let’s be sure we’re talking about the same Mitch McConnell. I’m speaking of that most impartial of important American leaders, that great-souled friend of the common man, that subtle thinker and embodiment of joie de vivre whose visage is easy to imagine on Mount Rushmore. I think we have the same guy in mind.

The author of “Mitch, Please!: How Mitch McConnell Sold Out Kentucky (and America, Too)” is Matt Jones, the young founder of a popular sports radio show in Kentucky. On the air, he mixes basketball talk with a salting of news and his upbeat brand of progressive politics. Jones is so popular in Kentucky that he has been encouraged by some Democratic leaders to run for office. He even considered competing for the United States Senate, with the hope of unseating McConnell in 2020.

While considering this race, and to take the temperature of his home state, Jones decided to drive through each of Kentucky’s 120 counties. (Kentucky, why so many counties?) He wanted to understand why McConnell polls so poorly in Kentucky yet is serving his sixth full term in the Senate. “Mitch, Please!” is an account of that road trip.

You can open to nearly any page of this book and find potent anti-Mitch contumely. “If you are a rational human being with some degree of care for your fellow man,” Jones writes, “then you have to dislike Mitch McConnell and everything he represents.”

He calls McConnell “the most destructive force in American democracy,” a conniver at personal destruction and a night porter furiously intent on making the rich richer. He calls him “America’s most reptilian politician.” He writes that McConnell “will say anything, do anything or take any position if it means helping him gain more political power.”

He notes the ways in which the senator is in thrall to the current president. You get the sense that you would need the Jaws of Life to pry McConnell’s countenance from Donald J. Trump’s fundament.

Some of Jones’s commentary verges on the personal. He calls McConnell a “human sleep aid.” He writes: “To call Mitch a ‘people person’ would be like calling Jared Kushner a ‘self-made man.’” Taking a sip of Ski, a sweet citrus soda popular in Kentucky, “will make your heart beat faster than Mitch McConnell’s when Elaine Chao reads him ‘Robert’s Rules of Order’ over his nightly bath,” Jones writes.

Chao, the secretary of transportation and McConnell’s wife, takes a roasting in this book as well. Together they are portrayed as chthonic ringmasters, the Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gormé of contemptuous partisanship and thoroughgoing bad faith.

Despite the fact that Jones is in a car, this book is not a drive-by shooting. He stops and talks to farmers, coal-town residents, family doctors and many others as prelude to criticizing McConnell’s policies. “When the final history of coal mining in eastern Kentucky is written, McConnell will be one of its chief villains,” he writes.

This book was completed before the spread of the coronavirus. But there are many pages about how McConnell’s health care ideas — “there’s no campaign money in fighting for people’s lives but a lot of money in siding with insurance providers,” Jones writes — could get people killed.

What is “Mitch, Please!” like to read? Here the news is mostly thorns. This is really two books, as if its author were walking a pair of dogs on a bifurcated leash. One of these dogs is dead. This somewhat slows things down.

The live dog, its tail wagging, is the story of Jones’s own life (his single mother is a trailblazing state prosecutor) and his acute, good-natured and often funny impressions about life, culture and politics in his home state. Reading Jones and his co-writer, Chris Tomlin, on Kentucky can be like reading Larry McMurtry on Texas, albeit with more talk about professional wrestling.

The dead dog is the road trip conceit. Once you realize that Jones really is going to drag you through all 120 counties, one at a time, the heart sinks. The trivia piles up; it’s a lawn sale of irrelevancies. He visits a cat-themed used bookstore, the world’s only life-size replica of Noah’s Ark, historical centers, “one of the world’s finest miniatures collections” and a theme park called Dinosaur World.

I was reminded of the scene in one of John Updike’s Henry Bech novels in which Bech, a Jewish writer, is invited on a cultural good-will tour and realizes with horror the sheer number of display cases that his hosts will force him to stare into and murmur politely over.

Jones struggles, terribly, trying to find things to say about each new location. Sample zombie sentences: “I love Whitesburg because it represents the best of America. The people here have very diverse backgrounds and viewpoints yet they work together peacefully and happily for the greater good of the community.” This book, at less than half its size, might have been a minor classic.

Some important things get said. Democrats will always have a hard time in Kentucky, Jones writes, because of the abiding anti-gun control and anti-abortion sentiment. But he fears that his party is abandoning its ***working-class*** roots, and that blue-collar Democrats are a vanishing breed.

He writes, in three crucial sentences: “Name me one Democratic national political figure or media member who currently represents rural America. Can you think of one who lives in a small town? Can you think of a notable Democrat with a Southern accent?”

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Can Kentucky’s politics change? Can America’s? Jones visits Jackson County, where in 2016 Trump took 89 percent of the vote. In a comment that may presage our national moment, an older woman says to Jones about her county’s Republican bent: “I don’t think it’ll ever change unless something big and crazy happens.”

Follow Dwight Garner on Twitter: @DwightGarner. Mitch, Please! How Mitch McConnell Sold Out Kentucky (and America, Too) By Matt Jones with Chris Tomlin 500 pages. Simon & Schuster. $27.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (C1); Matt Jones (C4)

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2020

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[***The McConnell Identity***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YGY-ST01-JBG3-612C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 24, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1074 words

**Byline:** By Dwight Garner

**Body**

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/23/books/review-mitch-mcconnell-matt-jones-mitch-please.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/23/books/review-mitch-mcconnell-matt-jones-mitch-please.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (C1)

Matt Jones (C4)

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2020

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[***Missing Paris? Revisit the City On the Small Screen***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61D9-JFF1-JBG3-637Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 29, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; House & Home/Style Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1437 words

**Byline:** By Jason Farago

**Body**

With trans-Atlantic travel all but suspended, the closest you can get to Paris may be onscreen. These movies will take you there.

While your travel plans may be on hold, you can pretend you're somewhere new for the night. Around the World at Home invites you to channel the spirit of a new place each week with recommendations on how to explore the culture, all from the comfort of your home.

''America is my country, and Paris is my hometown,'' wrote Gertrude Stein. Me too; or, well, almost. For the last few years I was shuttling between New York and the French capital, where my now-husband worked, and in that time Paris came to feel like a city where I had history, whose streets I could navigate by muscle memory. Now that trans-Atlantic travel is all but suspended, the closest I can get to Paris is onscreen -- but, luckily, the view is fantastic.

Paris was the site of the first movie screening, back in 1895 (though the LumiÃ¨re Brothers shot those first pictures in Lyon). It remains the home of Europe's largest, most vibrant film industry -- France exports more movies than any country, bar the United States.

Here I've picked 10 movies that transport me back to Paris, from the early days of sound cinema to the age of streaming. I've omitted many French movies made in English, some shot on soundstages (''An American in Paris,'' ''Moulin Rouge!'') and others on location (''Funny Face,'' ''Midnight in Paris''). Instead I've selected films I rely on when I want to escape America for Paris ... which is quite often these days.

Girlhood (2014)

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Paris today is so much more than its touristic, tree-lined core; it's continental Europe's most diverse city, where French mingles with Arabic and Wolof and you're more likely to hear Afro trap than Ã‰dith Piaf. This assured coming-of-age film by CÃ©line Sciamma follows a young Black teenager as she shuttles across the racial, economic and cultural divides between Paris proper (or ''Paname,'' in the girls' slang) and its suburban housing estates, whose architecture the director films with rare style and sympathy. Aubervilliers, Bondy, Mantes-la-Jolie, Aulnay-sous-Bois: these nodes of Greater Paris, birthplace of singers and stylists and the world's greatest soccer players, deserve the spotlight too.

Amazon, YouTube, Google Play, iTunes

35 Shots of Rum (2008)

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The most intimate and most Parisian film of Claire Denis, very probably France's greatest living director, follows a widowed father, who is a train driver, and his only daughter, a student, as they hesitantly step away from each other and into new lives. The cast (including Mati Diop, who's since become an acclaimed director herself) is almost entirely of African or Caribbean origin, yet this is the rare film that takes Paris's diversity as a given, and its portraits of Parisians in the working-to-middle-class north of the capital have a fullness and benevolence that remain too rare in the French cinema. Just as beautiful as its scenes of family life are Ms. Denis's frequent, lingering shots of the RER, Paris's suburban commuter railway, which appears here as a bridge between worlds.

Amazon

Love Songs (2007)

The near entirety of this gray-steeped musical -- directed by Christophe HonorÃ© and with a dozen tunes written by the singer-songwriter Alex Beaupain -- takes place in the gentrifying but still scruffy 10th Arrondissement, where I put back a few too many drinks in my 20s. As its young lovers sing on some of Paris's least photogenic streets, on their Ikea couches or in their overlit offices, the capital turns into something even more alluring than the City of Light of foreign fantasies. This is the film to watch if you miss everyday life in contemporary Paris, where even the overcast days merit a song.

Hulu, Amazon

Full Moon in Paris (1984)

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Paris had a very good 80s: think Louvre Pyramid, think Concorde, think Christian Lacroix. Ã‰ric Rohmer's tale of an independent young woman, keen to hang onto both her boyfriend and her apartment, offers the most chic dissection of Parisian youth -- big-haired models dancing in Second Empire ballrooms, and lovers philosophizing at cafe tables and one another's beds. There's a killer '80s score by the electropop duo Elli et Jacno, but what makes its beauty so bittersweet is its sublime star Pascale Ogier, who died shortly after the film's completion, age 25.

Amazon, YouTube, iTunes

C'Ã©tait un rendez-vous (1976)

It's just eight minutes long, it has no dialogue, but this is the wildest movie ever made in Paris; it's a miracle that no one died. Early one morning, the director Claude Lelouch got in his Mercedes, fastened a camera to the bumper, and just floored it: down the broad Avenue Foch (where he clocks 125 miles an hour), through the Louvre, past the OpÃ©ra, through red lights and around blind corners and even onto the sidewalks, to the heights of SacrÃ©-CÅ“ur. Every time I watch it I end up covering my eyes and then laughing at the insanity of it all: cinÃ©ma vÃ©ritÃ© at top speed.

YouTube

ClÃ©o from 5 to 7 (1962)

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

It's 5 p.m. on June 21, the longest day of the year, and the pop singer ClÃ©o has gone to a fortune teller to find out: is she dying? And for the rest of AgnÃ¨s Varda's incomparable slice of life we follow her in real time -- one minute onscreen equals one minute in the narrative -- across the capital's left bank. She walks past the cafes of Montparnasse, down the wide Haussmannian boulevards and into the Parc Montsouris, where she meets a soldier on leave from the front in Algeria: another young Parisian uncertain if he'll live another year. As ClÃ©o puts her superstitions aside, the streets of Varda's Paris serve as the accelerant for a woman's self-confidence.

HBO Max, Criterion Channel

Breathless (1960)

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Jean-Luc Godard's first feature is so celebrated for its innovative jump-cuts and careering narrative that we forget: this is, hands down, the greatest film ever made about an American in Paris. As the exchange student hawking the New York Herald Tribune on the Champs-Ã‰lysÃ©es, Jean Seberg invests the movie with a breezy expatriate glamour, feigning French insouciance but hanging onto American wonder. And if her language skills are iffy -- my French husband imitates Seberg's Franglais when he wants to mock my accent -- she embodies the dream of becoming someone new in Paris, even if you fall for the wrong guy.

HBO Max, Criterion Channel, YouTube, iTunes

Bob le flambeur (1956)

The suavest of all Paris gangster films -- and my go-to movie for days sick in bed -- orbits around the handsome narrow streets of hillside Montmartre and, just south, the seedy nightclubs and gambling dens of Pigalle. Bob, the elegant, white-haired ''high roller'' of the title, is a retired bank robber after one last big score, but Paris's old underground, and its old codes of loyalty, are fading away. The cast is undeniably B-list, and genre conventions cling to their roles like barnacles: the world-weary but wise cafe proprietress, the hooker with a heart of gold. But watch as Melville's hand-held camera trails Bob in his trench coat and fedora, or follows a garbage truck around the Place Pigalle like a ball in a roulette wheel. Paris looks like a jackpot.

Amazon, YouTube, iTunes

Casque d'or (1952)

We're in Paris's ***working-class*** northeast in this aching period drama of the belle epoque, directed by Jacques Becker and starring Simone Signoret as the titular golden-haired prostitute caught between two lovers. It's based on a true story of a courtesan and the gang murders she inspired -- but Mr. Becker paints the scene like a dream of the 19th-century capital, of cobblestoned alleyways, smoke-choked bistros and horse-drawn paddy wagons.

Criterion Channel

Boudu Saved From Drowning (1931)

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Jean Renoir's early satire stars Michel Simon as a prodigiously bearded tramp who, one fine morning, walks halfway across the Pont des Arts and jumps into the Seine. Saved by a kindly bookseller, Boudu moves into his apartment and promptly turns his family's life upside down. The movie's skewering of middle-class values has not lost its bite, but its outdoor shots of the Latin Quarter, a university neighborhood not yet overrun by tourist-trap cafes, have become a poignant time capsule.

Criterion Channel, Kanopy

To keep up with upcoming stories in this series, sign up for our At Home newsletter or follow New York Times Travel on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/17/travel/french-movies-paris.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/17/travel/french-movies-paris.html)

**Load-Date:** November 29, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Life in an America Where Some Are Only ‘Conditional Citizens’; nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60WS-TRC1-JBG3-64YH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 22, 2020 Tuesday 22:42 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1308 words

**Byline:** Sonia Nazario

**Highlight:** In her first nonfiction book, the novelist Laila Lalami offers a wrenching look at her experience as a naturalized citizen and the challenges endured by immigrants like her.

**Body**

CONDITIONAL CITIZENS

On Belonging in America

By Laila Lalami

Laila Lalami begins “Conditional Citizens” with the promise of U.S. citizenship: On a steamy day in 2000, she goes to the Pomona Fairplex, a place that also hosts the Los Angeles County Fair, to be sworn in as an American citizen. Moroccan by birth, Lalami came to the United States for graduate studies in linguistics, fully intending to return home. But she met a man, fell in love — and stayed. She and hundreds of other immigrants who have studied and mastered the grand ideals of this country are handed miniature American flags that day and pledge an oath to the United States, its Constitution and its laws. These ceremonies can be deeply moving, and Lalami, [*a novelist who often writes about being an outsider*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5), emerges convinced she is now an equal citizen in a country where everyone shares common values.

“I thought, somewhat naïvely, I admit, that I would be treated no differently than other Americans,” Lalami writes. In joining [*America’s 22 million naturalized citizens*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5), she assumed she had gotten the key to the promised land; she is the bearer of an American passport. It doesn’t take long for her — an immigrant, woman, Arab and Muslim — to grasp the yawning gap between the ideal taught in civics lessons and reality. In many ways, she argues, she is a “conditional citizen,” one who soon understands what it is like “for a country to embrace you with one arm and push you away with the other.”

Conditional citizens, in Lalami’s account, are not allowed to dissent or question the choices of their government; if they do, they are viewed with suspicion, their allegiance to their new country questioned. Conditional citizens also have less freedom of movement. Border patrol agents rely on at least 136 checkpoints (the total number in operation at any given time is not publicly available) that are up to 100 miles inside of U.S. borders to stop and question residents. That territory potentially ensnares two-thirds of this country’s population, and each year, hundreds of U.S. citizens are wrongfully held in immigration jails.

[ Read an excerpt from [*“Conditional Citizens.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5) ]

Lalami shows how our nation’s schizophrenia toward immigrants — Immigrants built this great country! We are a nation of immigrants! Immigrants bring disease, crime and rob us of our jobs! — can give conditional citizens whiplash as they are simultaneously regarded as America’s best hope and its gravest threat, a combination of suspicion and rejection that Asians, Italians and the Irish, among others, have all faced.

Lalami is less insightful when she widens her lens to argue that all minorities in the United States — including people born here but of a race, faith or gender not shared by the dominant majority — are discriminated against by their government and others, a heavily worn argument. Black and Latinx people face greater policing and punishment; they are much more likely to be jailed. According to one study, Black people are less than half as likely to be considered for employment as white applicants with similar qualifications. A Black child involved in a school infraction is more likely to get suspended than a white child. Our government keeps conditional citizens from voting, historically through poll taxes, now through voter ID laws passed by Republican-held state legislatures that target the poor and minorities to suppress liberal votes.

Lalami’s book lands after analyses of Donald Trump’s 2016 victory revealed that it was driven less by angst over losing jobs to immigrants than fear on the part of whites that their group dominance and privileges might slip away as they become a demographic minority. One survey found that white ***working-class*** voters were three and a half times more likely to support Trump if they felt “like a stranger in their own land.”

“Conditional Citizens” is best when Lalami turns inward: How has her treatment by our government and fellow citizens been far from the ideal? Her first interaction with the federal government after she becomes a citizen involves a border agent at Los Angeles Airport who asks her husband: “How many camels did you have to trade in for her?” After 9/11, a mentality of “you’re either with us or you’re against us” causes even colleagues at her office to treat her with suspicion. When she voices dissent about the country’s wars in the Middle East and questions U.S. exceptionalism, her allegiance to America comes under attack.

But I wish Lalami, the author of four novels, including “[*The Moor’s Account*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5),” a Pulitzer Prize finalist, had dug much deeper to show in this, her first nonfiction book, how this inequality affects her. I wondered: As an English professor who lives in Santa Monica, Calif., among the nation’s wealthier and most liberal enclaves, was she buffered from the worst of the inequalities she describes? You don’t have to look far in Los Angeles County, where I also live and where 34 percent of the residents [*were born in another country*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5), to show how these inequalities play out daily. She could have cast a wider narrative net to tell these stories through friends and acquaintances.

When my white husband and I moved to Manhattan Beach, Calif., 24 years ago, the local cops stopped me three times my first year for not signaling a left turn — something my German-American husband, who has white hair, fails to do daily but for which he has never been stopped. “Brown girl can’t get no justice in Manhattan Beach!” I fumed after each police takedown. A Mexican immigrant I know rides his bike along the same route each morning to his factory job, and is stopped and frisked by the same cops several times a week. The unequal treatment can be chilling. In 2010, when I delivered a keynote address at a national convention of the American Bar Association in Phoenix, I kept my U.S. passport in my pocket at all times. This was after Arizona passed [*S.B. 1070*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5), a controversial law awarding local authorities broad new powers to crack down on undocumented immigrants. At the time, Joe Arpaio, the sheriff of Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix, had a penchant for detaining people who were Latinx, including some American citizens, and [*turning many over to immigration agents for deportation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5). As Lalami notes, in the 1930s, the police in the United States rounded up as many as two million people of Mexican heritage and deported them. Half were U.S. citizens.

While her book convincingly lays out the inequalities among citizens, she’s woefully short on remedies and specific ideas for achieving change. How do you make voting accessible to all? What are the best approaches locally, statewide or in other countries that we should fight to have enacted wherever we live?

When Donald Trump is elected president, Lalami hears terror in her daughter’s question: “He can’t make us leave, right?” That the question would even occur to a girl born in the United States is infuriating. Lalami asks us to be better, so no American children feel it’s a question they ever have to ask.

Sonia Nazario, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of “Enrique’s Journey: The Story of a Boy’s Dangerous Odyssey to Reunite With His Mother,” is a board member of Kids in Need of Defense and a contributing opinion writer for The Times. CONDITIONAL CITIZENS On Belonging in America By Laila Lalami 191 pp. Pantheon. $25.95.

PHOTOS: Nuha Baharoun, from Yemen, takes part in a naturalization ceremony in Virginia on July 4, 2017. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC THAYER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Detainees at a U.S. Customs and Border Patrol detention center in El Paso, 2019. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ADRIANA ZEHBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Related Articles**

* [*I’m a Muslim and Arab American. Will I Ever Be an Equal Citizen?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5)

1. [*Laila Lalami: By the Book*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5)
2. [*A Suspicious Death Exposes Painful Fissures in a Mojave Desert Town*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5)
3. [*His Manifest Destiny*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/books/review/laila-lalami-the-other-americans.html?searchResultPosition=5)

**Load-Date:** October 28, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Australia Thought the Virus Was Under Control. It Found a Vulnerable Spot.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6089-GJJ1-DXY4-X05T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 2, 2020 Thursday 09:43 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; australia

**Length:** 1204 words

**Byline:** Livia Albeck-Ripka

**Highlight:** The authorities have locked down 300,000 people in areas around Melbourne heavily populated by immigrants, reinforcing the coronavirus’s outsized impact on disadvantaged communities.

**Body**

The authorities have locked down 300,000 people in areas around Melbourne heavily populated by immigrants, reinforcing the coronavirus’s outsized impact on disadvantaged communities.

MELBOURNE, Australia — Ring Mayar spends all day knocking on doors in the western suburbs of [*Melbourne*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html), asking residents if they have a cough, a fever or chills.

Even if they do not, he encourages them to get tested for the coronavirus, as the authorities race to catch up with a string of outbreaks that is threatening to recast [*Australia’s success story*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html) in controlling the spread.

“It’s quite daunting,” said Mr. Mayar, the president of the South Sudanese Community Association in the state of Victoria, who has been volunteering in one of the largely immigrant communities where cases are surging.

The rise in infections — Victoria reported 77 new cases Thursday, the most since March — has driven home the outsized impact of the coronavirus on communities in which ***working-class*** immigrants and essential workers are particularly vulnerable to the disease. In these places, people often must venture out for jobs that put them at risk of contracting the virus, and communication by the authorities in residents’ native languages can be patchy.

As it has elsewhere in the world, the coronavirus found a hole in Australia’s system: It spread in part because of [*the sharing of a cigarette lighter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html) among security guards working at a hotel where returning international travelers are being quarantined.

It later circulated in low-income neighborhoods in the Melbourne area with sizable migrant populations, including inside a [*supermarket distribution*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html) center.

The surge shows how even in countries that appear to be on track to safely resume normal life, the virus can quickly resurface. The Victoria outbreaks have stalled the [*reopening of state borders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html), undercut plans to create [*travel bubbles with other countries*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html), and forced 300,000 people back into lockdown.

On Tuesday, the authorities said that people in the 10 worst-affected postal codes would be confined to their homes, except for essential travel, for the next four weeks in an effort to stop the virus’s spread. International flights have been diverted from Melbourne, a city of almost five million people, and an inquiry has been opened into breaches in quarantine protocols.

Officials continued door-knocking and blitz-testing efforts, warning that if residents did not comply, the whole state of Victoria, Australia’s second most populous, could be affected.

“If someone comes to your doorstep and offers you a test, the right answer is yes,” Daniel Andrews, the premier of Victoria, said at a news conference [*on Wednesday.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html) “If this continues to get away from us, we will all be in lockdown,” he added.

Before the Victoria outbreaks, the country was recording just a handful of new cases each week, and it had begun easing restrictions with the goal of reopening the country by the end of July.

But over the past two weeks, Victoria has had daily double-digit increases in cases. Though this pales in comparison to [*places like the United States that have tens of thousands*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html) of new cases each day, the rise has rattled the Australian authorities, who have held up the country’s extensive testing program, and its early lockdowns, as keys to its success.

The surge in Victoria follows a familiar pattern: Public health officials around the globe have warned that flare-ups are inevitable even in countries that have largely suppressed the virus as restrictions on people’s movement are loosened.

In China, an outbreak [*linked to a food market*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html) struck Beijing last month, and the authorities responded with targeted lockdowns and widespread testing, a model now being followed in Australia. In Singapore, [*the virus rapidly multiplied in dormitories*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html) crowded with migrant workers.

In Australia, the coronavirus has taken hold in pockets around Melbourne where government messaging has not always been effective because of language barriers and other problems like distrust of the authorities. Fears of testing for the virus run high, and people with low incomes may be less able to stay home from work when ill.

Some of these areas also experience [*high rates of homelessness and overcrowding*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html), making it difficult for people to adhere to social-distancing guidelines.

“If some of them don’t go to work, and they’re not on the JobKeeper and JobSeeker, they are left on charity to survive,” said Eddie Micallef, the chair of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, referring to government subsidy measures.

The dangers were foreshadowed in May, when a panel of doctors and experts [*warned the Australian government*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html) that it had missed an opportunity to protect migrant communities.

Mr. Micallef and other community leaders said communication by the state and federal authorities to high-risk groups had fallen short of what would have been necessary to prevent infections. Some said that translated information took too long to reach them, and was not clear.

“You almost need a university degree to try to understand it,” Mohammad Al-Khafaji, the chief executive of the Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia, said of a multi-page document on the coronavirus that the government had translated into Arabic.

He and other experts also warned that lockdowns enforced by the police — especially at a time of global scrutiny of police abuses — may only harm communities already wary of the authorities and exacerbate their sense of isolation.

“We have to get people to understand the importance of being home. That’s not through fines and that’s not through over-policing,” said Rebecca Wickes, an associate professor of criminology and the director of the Migration and Inclusion Center at Monash University in Melbourne. “That’s not going to create the behavior change that we are looking for.”

She added that while a first wave of racism related to the coronavirus had targeted [*people of Asian descent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html), a second wave against migrant and ethnic communities was emerging because of misconceptions that these groups did not heed public health advice.

Leaders in the Islamic community also said they worried that anti-Muslim sentiment had risen after reports that one of Melbourne’s clusters had originated at [*an Eid celebration*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/world/australia/coronavirus-melbourne-lockdown.html) last month.

It is not these disadvantaged communities that deserve blame, Professor Wickes said, but rather the “global citizens, coming back from their cruises and their ski trips to Aspen. We seem to have forgotten the history of how this virus took hold in Australia.”

For Mr. Mayar, eliminating both the stigma of the virus and the racism that can accompany it comes with every rap on a door: Though he wears gloves, and is careful to keep six feet of distance between himself and the residents, he does not wear a mask.

He acknowledges the risks involved. “But in the end we are humans, and we don’t want to look at one another like aliens,” he said. “Even if we do encounter someone who is ill, we need to show our compassion.”

PHOTO: Health workers speaking with a suburban Melbourne resident last week. A rebound in the number of infections is hitting the state of Victoria, especially in largely immigrant neighborhoods. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ROSS/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** August 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Britain's Johnson Hitches His Wagon to the Legacy of F.D.R. and His New Deal***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:607W-F261-DXY4-X4JN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 30, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9

**Length:** 1184 words

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

**Body**

The British prime minister, trying to regroup in the coronavirus pandemic, wants to bury Thatcherism and embark on a program of ambitious public works.

LONDON -- Boris Johnson and Joseph R. Biden Jr. are hardly political bedfellows. But the British prime minister and the American presidential candidate have one thing in common: both have latched on to Franklin D. Roosevelt as a model for how to lead in an era of economic collapse and social upheaval.

Mr. Johnson, regrouping after a rocky three months of dealing with the coronavirus pandemic, has invoked Roosevelt's name and the legacy of the New Deal in promising that the British government will intensify its plans for ambitious public works projects and other spending to recover from the outbreak.

''This is the moment for a Rooseveltian approach to the U.K,'' Mr. Johnson said in an interview with Times Radio on Monday. ''The country has gone through a profound shock. But in those moments, you have the opportunity to change, and to do things better.''

Mr. Biden, the presumptive Democratic nominee, has talked about the need for an F.D.R.-style federal intervention to lift the United States out of the economic wreckage left by the virus and to address the racial injustice dramatized by the killing of black Americans at the hands of the police.

Neither man is an obvious heir to the mantle of Roosevelt, though Mr. Biden at least comes from the same party. Mr. Johnson is a Conservative populist who ran on a platform of pulling Britain out of the European Union and had, until now, modeled himself on Roosevelt's wartime ally, Winston Churchill.

Still, there are signs that Mr. Johnson's flirtation with Roosevelt goes beyond dropping his name. One of his closest advisers, Michael Gove, recently laid out a blueprint for the government that draws heavily on the 32nd president to justify a transformation of the bureaucracy and a new approach to governing.

''Roosevelt recognized that, faced with a crisis that had shaken faith in government, it was not simply a change of personnel and rhetoric that was required, but a change in structure, ambition, and organization,'' Mr. Gove said in a lecture to the Ditchley Foundation, a nonprofit group that promotes Anglo-American relations.

Mr. Gove recalled the reform-minded outsiders that Roosevelt brought in to design the New Deal -- Harry Hopkins, Harold Ickes and others -- and lamented the lack of such figures in the British government.

Mr. Johnson and his aides have argued that Britain's Civil Service is hidebound, risk-averse and hostile to their pro-Brexit ideology. On Sunday, Mr. Johnson announced the departure of the country's top civil servant, Mark Sedwill, who was cabinet secretary and national security adviser.

His resignation follows that of the top officials at the Home Office and the Foreign Office as well as the British ambassador to Washington, Kim Darroch. It is a victory for Dominic Cummings, Mr. Johnson's most influential adviser, who views many civil servants as part of what he calls an establishment ''blob'' that also encompasses the BBC, parts of the judiciary and universities. In a line that has been widely repeated, he has told aides that a ''hard rain is coming'' for the bureaucracy.

The government wants ''to have a more politically directed Civil Service, which is not necessarily a politicized Civil Service, but one that they feel is responsive to political direction,'' said Simon Fraser, a former head of the Foreign Office. ''Where you have to be wary is if that tips over into an attack on the impartiality of the Civil Service.''

On Tuesday, Mr. Johnson is expected to visit a town in an economically blighted region to outline plans to invest in infrastructure, education and technology, testing his New Deal strategy. He has promised to ''level up'' places left behind by the British economy, where prosperity has flowed disproportionately to London and the southeast of England.

Fulfilling that promise is critical to Mr. Johnson's long-term fortunes, since his political base is very different from that of previous Conservative Party prime ministers. Mr. Johnson won with the support of ***working-class*** voters in the Midlands and the north, many of whom historically voted for the Labour Party but favored Brexit and are socially conservative on issues like immigration.

''Boris Johnson won the election by developing a new formula of leaning left on the economy and right on culture, promising to deliver Brexit and reform immigration,'' said Matthew Goodwin, an expert on the right and a visiting senior fellow at Chatham House, a research institute in London.

''He is talking about giving them trains, bridges and schools,'' Mr. Goodwin said. ''But I suspect that what this community wants is more power in decision making, and more of a say in the national conversation.''

Reassuring these voters on social and cultural issues could be just as important as promising them economic benefits, which is why Mr. Johnson's administration has maintained such a deep-rooted strand of social conservatism. It likes to present itself as the enemy of the London-based political elite that it says is out of touch with vast swaths of the country. Mr. Johnson's vitriolic defense against the protesters who defaced a statue of Churchill is also part of this strategy.

As the debates over racial injustice continue to reverberate in Britain -- and as Mr. Johnson struggles to hold together his electoral coalition -- some analysts predict that he might begin to sound more like President Trump than President Roosevelt.

Unlike Mr. Biden, for whom a victory in November would empower a broader liberal agenda in the United States, Mr. Johnson governs as a Conservative, though he is still considered more moderate than Mr. Trump.

Analysts note that Mr. Johnson is trying to transform the party of Margaret Thatcher, with its credo of low taxes, lighter regulation, and less government, into something close to a European-style Social Democratic party, at least on economic matters. How he squares that circle is far from clear.

''A Rooseveltian New Deal strategy would go down fairly well with a large proportion of the electorate, and even with the Conservative electorate,'' said Tim Bale, a professor of politics at Queen Mary University. ''The problem he has is that this is not what most of his M.P.s joined the Conservative Party to do.''

It is also not clear that Mr. Johnson will have the fortitude to see through a program as revolutionary as the New Deal. Critics note that he is not a politician driven by conviction. His policy agenda is largely the brainchild of Mr. Cummings. While Mr. Johnson had the tactical skills to fashion a winning coalition, some doubt that he has the vision to guide his country through momentous change.

''F.D.R. was someone who had an extraordinary intuitive feel for where the public was and what the mood of the country was,'' said Robert Dallek, an American presidential historian who published a biography of Roosevelt in 2017. ''Does someone like Boris Johnson have that?''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/29/world/europe/johnson-biden-roosevelt-new-deal.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/29/world/europe/johnson-biden-roosevelt-new-deal.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: ''This is the moment for a Rooseveltian approach to the U.K,'' Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in an interview on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 30, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Stimulus Cash Suddenly Has Ailing Cities and States Revisiting Wish Lists***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626P-B6C1-JBG3-61HR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 14, 2021 Sunday

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

**Length:** 1662 words

**Byline:** By Manny Fernandez and Sabrina Tavernise

**Body**

Once fearing fiscal disaster, governments are suddenly awash in their share of $350 billion available for projects and needs that previously seemed out of reach.

Richard F. Cortez, the top elected official in Hidalgo County, at the southern tip of Texas, is so full of anticipation for the federal stimulus money that is about to flow into his county that he has memorized the precise amount and happily recites it: ''$212,702,647.''

Over the past year, Hidalgo, a border community that is one of the country's poorest counties, has lurched from one disaster to another. The coronavirus pandemic hit, unemployment skyrocketed, a hurricane swept through, and then came the winter freeze. So the money, Mr. Cortez said, could not have come at a better time.

''The American Rescue Plan -- that's a proper term for the situation that we're in,'' said Mr. Cortez, a retired C.P.A. ''It's pretty amazing that we're still standing up.''

The biggest infusion of funds in decades will soon start, putting state, local and tribal governments in a situation they have not experienced in years: Items that had long seemed totally unaffordable are now well within reach.

Mr. Cortez says it is too early to know precisely how Hidalgo County will allocate its money, but states can use the money for pandemic-related costs, offsetting lost revenues to provide essential government services, and for water, sewer and broadband infrastructure projects.

The $350 billion that was earmarked for state, local and tribal governments and U.S. territories ''was one of the largest spending items in the entire bill,'' said Dan White, director of fiscal policy research at Moody's Analytics, a financial analysis firm. He said the total was more than quadruple what is needed to plug state and local budget holes through next summer.

Democrats in Congress and local governments who supported the bill said that helping America's states, cities and counties recover from a historic pandemic was about more than simply covering shortfalls and that they were worried about Congress doing too little instead of too much. They note that most of the aid will be available through the end of 2024.

''This bill is a historic investment in local government,'' said Mark Ritacco, director of government affairs for the National Association of Counties.

Republicans and conservatives in Washington called it wasteful overkill.

''Increasingly, federal proposals to provide a cash infusion for state and local governments has become a solution in search of a problem,'' said the Tax Foundation, a right-leaning nonprofit in Washington, D.C.

It is a very different picture from one year ago, when state and local governments predicted collapses in revenue and slashed their spending accordingly, laying off park workers, teachers and sheriff's deputies. But in an unexpected twist, revenue in most states did not drop nearly as much as was predicted, and now governments are going into their budget-making season with a markedly brighter sets of numbers. According to Mr. White, 31 states now have enough cash to fully absorb the economic stress of the pandemic recession on their own.

''The surprises keep on coming,'' he said.

The cash is coming over the objection of Republicans in Congress, none of whom voted for the bill.

But some Republicans in local governments said the choice between people and politics was not particularly difficult.

Mayor Jerry Dyer of Fresno, the largest city in California's San Joaquin Valley, an agriculture-rich region that is a conservative stronghold, was one of the few Republican leaders in the area who supported the bill.

Mr. Dyer said his city had been weighing potential layoffs of more than 200 city employees, including police officers and firefighters, as it faced a $25 million budget deficit. But the bill put an end to any layoff discussions. Fresno, a city of 531,000, was poised to receive $177 million.

''When you make those types of decisions and you go against a party that I'm a part of, it does feel lonely,'' said Mr. Dyer, a former Fresno police chief. ''You start wondering along the way what kind of impact that could have on you in the future. But the reality is, I felt I was making the right decision for the right reason to benefit the people of Fresno, not necessarily a party.''

The aid will be distributed to states according to a formula that is based largely on the state's unemployment rate, officials said. There are a host of rules on how the money can be spent. For example, the money can't be used to pay down pension obligations or for cutting taxes.

Republicans in Congress argued that a funding formula based on unemployment instead of population benefits Democratic-led states and hurts Republican-controlled ones. One analysis from Representative Jason Smith, Republican of Missouri, found that 33 states were getting less money based on the unemployment formula, all but 10 of them led by Republican governors.

But many Democratic officials, and some Republican ones, disputed the notion of a partisan bailout.

''I think my residents know I don't give a hoot about party -- all I care about is making sure the street sweeper runs, the police show up and the water doesn't stop,'' said Acquanetta Warren, a Republican who is the mayor of Fontana, a ***working-class*** suburb east of Los Angeles set to receive $52 million.

Local governments have been hit harder than states. Three-quarters of the more than 1.3 million jobs lost among state and local governments since February 2020 have been at the local level, Mr. White of Moody's found, the vast majority of them from school districts.

Counties, which are critical geographies for public services like emergency services, public health departments and local jails, were ecstatic. Many had complained that funds from previous rounds of pandemic stimulus had not reached them because the funds were routed through states for smaller counties. This time, the checks are coming directly from the United States Treasury Department.

The sheer size of the sums has shifted the scale of what is possible. Erie County, N.Y., which includes Buffalo, has for years struggled with barely functioning internet in its rural areas, which have been mostly bypassed by internet providers.

''People would drive to the library, sit in the car in the parking lot to get on the Wi-Fi,'' said Mark Poloncarz, the county executive.

A plan for the county to lay cable for internet service was scrapped a year ago when Covid-19 blew a hole in the county's budget, but Mr. Poloncarz plans to include the broadband project in the $178 million the county will receive.

''We're going to get that done now,'' he said.

Coroner's offices, usually part of county governments, reflect the ravages of the past year. Dottie Owens, the coroner for Ada County, Idaho, which includes Boise, said the stimulus money could not come soon enough, as a number of coroners in rural counties in the state were still without proper personal protective equipment. The needs go well beyond this moment, she said. The overdose rate in her county is up, as is the suicide rate, and there is an urgent need for more funding for mental health services. Last year, her office had more homicides of children than in the past five years combined, she said.

The suicide rate had been declining ''and then you lock everybody down for a year and what do you expect?'' she said.

One of the reasons the finances of state and local governments emerged better than expected is the way jobs were lost in this recession. According to Mr. White's analysis, fewer than 1 million of the approximately 10 million jobs still missing from before the pandemic are in what are considered high-wage industries. In contrast, during the Great Recession, more than a fifth of the jobs lost were in high-wage industries, he found.

Because most taxes are paid by those in the middle and upper parts of the wage ladder, revenue collection took less of a hit than was expected. This has been good for the revenues of states like California, New York, Connecticut and New Jersey that rely on high-income residents for a substantial share of income tax revenue.

In California, the pot of stimulus money was so large it put state officials on the defensive. The state government's direct stimulus intake: $26 billion. Its January budget surplus projection: $15 billion.

State finance officials said the stimulus money was much needed, because California's bump in revenues was not a sign of a complete economic recovery. The state lost a record 1.6 million jobs in the pandemic in 2020.

''Don't equate where we are on a revenue basis with where we are on an economy basis,'' said H.D. Palmer, a deputy director of the state's Department of Finance. ''It is going to take us at least two years, if not longer, for us to get back to prepandemic employment levels.''

The financial picture is far more grim in California's cities and counties.

''We've been fighting this battle against Covid-19 with our credit cards and our savings account,'' said Mayor Eric Garcetti of Los Angeles.

The city's budget shortfall was estimated last month at $750 million. The stimulus gives Los Angeles a $1.3 billion injection, almost double the budget gap.

Some mayors were still in shock.

''It's unbelievable,'' said Svante Myrick, mayor of Ithaca, N.Y. He said his city would receive $17 million, an amount that is about quadruple the size of the deficit.

Is the stimulus aid too much? No, he said. But the fight for funds will be fierce, with unions and neighborhood organizations and other interest groups all lobbying for a share.

''Honestly, if the federal government sent every community this amount of money every year we'd be living in a cleaner, safer, more prosperous country,'' he said. The looming fight over the money, he said, ''is a small price to pay.''

Nicholas Fandos and Alan Rappeport contributed reporting from Washington.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/13/us/stimulus-biden-states-cities.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/13/us/stimulus-biden-states-cities.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Residents of Erie County, N.Y., which has struggled with internet service in rural areas, often park outside libraries, above, to use the Wi-Fi, said Mark Poloncarz, the county executive, left. The county plans to revive a scrapped broadband project with the $178 million infusion it will receive. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LIBBY MARCH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2021

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[***In Mayor's Race, Adams Wins Union Backing and Sutton Withdraws***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626W-DDD1-JBG3-62YT-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Eric Adams won three big labor union endorsements, confirming his status as a top contender, and Loree Sutton dropped out of the race.

Labor leaders are throwing their weight behind Eric Adams in the New York City mayoral race.

Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, has won three major labor endorsements in the past two weeks, cementing his status as one of the top candidates in the crowded Democratic primary field.

As Mr. Adams rose, one of the first women to join the race dropped out, and the campaigns pushed to qualify for public matching funds. Andrew Yang, the former presidential candidate, announced over the weekend that he had raised an impressive fund-raising haul.

Here is what you need to know:

Adams wins key labor endorsements.

Mr. Adams is making the case that he is the candidate for ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

''We are building a blue-collar coalition that will deliver results for the New Yorkers who need them the most,'' Mr. Adams said last week.

He has received support from three unions: Local 32BJ of the Service Employees International Union, which represents about 85,000 building workers in New York; the Hotel Trades Council, which has nearly 40,000 members in the hotel and gaming industry; and the District Council 37 Executive Board, the city's largest public employees union, representing 150,000 members and 50,000 retirees.

The string of endorsements shows that some Democrats believe Mr. Adams has the best chance of beating Mr. Yang, who has been leading the field in recent polls.

While Mr. Adams has secured some of the city's most coveted labor endorsements, Maya Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio, was recently endorsed by Local 1199 of the S.E.I.U. The powerful United Federation of Teachers has not yet picked a candidate.

Scott Stringer, the New York City comptroller, had been a contender for the 32BJ endorsement, according to the union president, Kyle Bragg.

''But this is more than just about friendships,'' Mr. Bragg said, adding that the union had to consider who had ''the strongest path to victory.''

Sutton's long-shot bid comes to an end.

For Loree Sutton, the retired Army brigadier general who withdrew from the mayor's race on Wednesday, the turning point came in late February when a state judge rejected a lawsuit seeking to limit in-person petition-gathering during the coronavirus pandemic.

Candidates must gather a certain number of signatures in person in order to get their names on the ballot.

''I just would not go out and do in-person petition-gathering under these circumstances,'' Ms. Sutton said. It was, she said, a matter of ''public health principle.''

Her mayoral bid was always a long shot. The former commissioner for the city's Department of Veterans' Services, she had little in the way of political experience or name recognition. She was running as a law-and-order moderate in a Democratic primary that tilts left.

Some advisers had encouraged her to run as a Republican, but doing so would have felt inauthentic, she said. Centrism, she argues, remains an essential part of the Democratic Party.

But early on there were signs that her brand of moderation would be unwelcome.

She was excluded from an early Democratic forum because she had argued that protesters should be required to obtain city permits.

She campaigned on the importance of public safety and rejected calls to defund the police, a posture that seemed out of step with many of her competitors.

''Some of the worst atrocities in human history have taken place under the misconception that somehow we can create a utopian society,'' she said.

In the end, Ms. Sutton pulled out of the race, having raised only $200,000.

She has yet to decide whom she will endorse, but she was complimentary of Kathryn Garcia, the former Sanitation Department commissioner, who is running as a pragmatist. And she has not ruled out running for office again someday.

''It's the journey of a lifetime,'' she said.

Candidates debate how to fix public housing.

At a mayoral forum on housing on Thursday, a tenant leader at a city public-housing complex, Damaris Reyes, challenged the candidates: ''I want to know if you will commit to preservation of public housing, and how you will repair trust and empower resident decision making.''

The 175,000 apartments in the city's public housing system have been sliding into disrepair for decades, with the price tag for replacing leaky roofs, old heating systems, broken elevators and other problems now estimated at $30 billion to $40 billion.

But the city's proposal to fund the repairs by using a program that would hand over management of tens of thousands of apartments to private developers has been greeted with skepticism. Many New York City Housing Authority residents fear their apartments would be privatized, leading to rent increases and evictions.

At the housing forum, hosted by the local news channel NY1, two candidates with experience running housing systems said the city's plans provided a realistic platform.

Ms. Garcia, who served as interim commissioner of NYCHA in 2019, said the blueprint would let the city leverage federal money that was already available. She said she could win over skeptics by taking them on tours of the Ocean Bay complex in Queens, where a private landlord has been making repairs. ''You know who the best spokespeople are?'' she asked. ''The people who have actually had their apartments renovated.''

Shaun Donovan, who ran the city's department of housing preservation under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and who served as President Barack Obama's commissioner of housing and urban development, said that partnering with the federal government provided ''the only pathway where we can truly get to scale.''

Mr. Donovan's plan also calls for the city to kick in $2 billion a year and includes job-training programs for NYCHA residents who would be hired to do much of the work, he said.

Mr. Yang has promoted his own $48 billion -- and entirely federally funded -- ''green new deal'' for NYCHA. To combat NYCHA residents' ''massive trust deficit,'' the city should ''make NYCHA residents the majority of the board of NYCHA itself,'' he has said.

Public money comes rolling in.

Five candidates now say they have qualified for public matching funds, and a sixth may qualify soon.

At the latest donation deadline last week, Mr. Yang proved that he is a strong fund-raiser. He reported that he had met the matching-funds threshold by raising more than $2.1 million from 15,600 individual donors in the 57 days that he has been in the race. Mr. Yang's campaign said it expects to have raised $6.5 million once public dollars are received.

''With 100 days left, we have built the foundation and energy to win,'' Mr. Yang's campaign managers said in a statement.

To qualify for public matching funds, a candidate must raise $250,000 from at least 1,000 New York City residents. Those donations are matched at either an $8 to $1 rate or $6 to $1 rate, depending on which plan the campaign chose for a maximum of $1,400 to $2,000 per contributor.

Mr. Donovan reported meeting the threshold, which would bring his total raised to $4 million. Ms. Garcia reported meeting the threshold by raising over $300,000 in matchable contributions.

The fund-raising leaders have also continued to rake in public dollars. Mr. Adams and Mr. Stringer, the only two candidates who have received matching funds so far, reported having raised a total of more than $9 million each once matching funds were factored in.

Ms. Wiley, who announced that she had met the threshold last period before an audit from the Campaign Finance Board determined that she had not, declined to release fund-raising figures. Her campaign was waiting on a ruling Monday from the board.

Raymond J. McGuire, a former banking executive who shook up the race when he raised $5 million in three months, is not participating in the public funds program. His campaign said he had raised another $2.6 million since the last filing period.

According to campaign finance rules, if a nonparticipating candidate raises or spends more than half of the $7.3 million spending limit, the spending cap could be increased by 50 percent. Matthew Sollars, a spokesman for the board, said a determination on an increased spending cap would be made late next month.

A candidate looks for the Latino vote.

Little known fact about Scott Stringer, who is white and Jewish: His stepfather immigrated from Puerto Rico as a toddler, his stepfamily is Latino and, partly on that basis, he hopes to win the Latino vote in the mayoral election.

''Buenos días a todos,'' Mr. Stringer said on Sunday in Upper Manhattan, as he formally kicked off his ''Latino agenda,'' not far from the Washington Heights neighborhood where he grew up. His stepfamily joined him and lauded his record, character and intelligence. ''Scott is simpático,'' said Carlos Cuevas, Mr. Stringer's stepbrother, a lawyer.

Mr. Stringer's efforts at highlighting his family to identify with a particular constituency is not a novel one. Mr. de Blasio relied heavily on his African-American wife and biracial children in his 2013 run for mayor. At a forum about Jewish issues, Ms. Wiley, whose father was African-American and mother was white, made a point of noting that her partner is Jewish and the son of Holocaust survivors.

The Latino vote -- which is far from monolithic -- is coveted, representing about 20 percent of the New York City electorate.

The mayor's race has several candidates of Latino descent: Dianne Morales, the former executive of a nonprofit, and Carlos Menchaca, a councilman from Brooklyn, both of whom are Democrats; and Fernando Mateo, a Republican. None responded to requests for comment on Mr. Stringer's Latino voter push.

The same day Mr. Stringer was rolling out his agenda, his competitor Mr. Yang made his pitch to Spanish language viewers of Telemundo.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/nyregion/mayors-race-nyc-takeaways.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/nyregion/mayors-race-nyc-takeaways.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, has won three major labor endorsements in the last two weeks. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL M. SANTIAGO/GETTY IMAGES)

The campaign for Maya Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio, declined to release its fund-raising figures. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EDUARDO MUNOZ/REUTERS)

Andrew Yang, the former presidential candidate, announced over the weekend that he had raised more than $2.1 million. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK LENNIHAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2021

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[***A Landmark Reckoning With America’s Racial Past and Present; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6434-S6F1-DXY4-X1S1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 2860 words

**Byline:** Adam Hochschild

**Highlight:** Originally published as a series in The New York Times Magazine and now revised and expanded as a book, “The 1619 Project,” edited by Nikole Hannah-Jones, Caitlin Roper, Ilena Silverman and Jake Silverstein, undertakes an ambitious examination of slavery and its ongoing legacy for Black Americans.

**Body**

THE 1619 PROJECT

A New Origin Story

Edited by Nikole Hannah-Jones, Caitlin Roper, Ilena Silverman and Jake Silverstein

Has a book ever come into the world when at least four other books were already in print attacking it? Admittedly, these broadsides were against earlier incarnations of The New York Times’s 1619 Project, which [*appeared in this newspaper*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html?searchResultPosition=2) two years ago, followed by [*a podcast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/23/podcasts/the-daily/1619-project.html?searchResultPosition=18), public forums, lesson plans for schools and [*a Pulitzer Prize*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/04/business/media/pulitzer-prizes.html?searchResultPosition=13) for the originator, Nikole Hannah-Jones. The project asserted that the full origin story of the United States begins not with the arrival of the Mayflower in 1620, but with that of the White Lion and its cargo of captive Africans in Virginia the year before. This declaration provoked a Twitter firestorm of angry accusations from critics and combative replies from Hannah-Jones. President Trump denounced the project, and lawmakers introduced bills [*in the U.S. Senate*](https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/republicans-want-federal-funding-cuts-to-schools-using-1619-project-but-theres-a-twist/2021/06) and [*at least five state legislatures*](https://www.cnn.com/2021/02/10/us/1619-project-school-funding-cut-bills-trnd/index.html) to strip funds from schools that used its curriculum. The appearance now of an expanded version of the project in book form is sure to provoke yet more assaults.

I picked up “The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story” with some apprehension. Not because I disagree with the project’s basic aim, but because I had been troubled by [*some overstatements*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/11/magazine/an-update-to-the-1619-project.html?searchResultPosition=4) and [*factual errors*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/01/1619-project-new-york-times-wilentz/605152/) in the newspaper version, such as the claim that there were “growing calls to abolish the slave trade” in Britain in 1776. (That country’s abolitionist movement didn’t come to life until a decade later.) A group of respected American history scholars [*later criticized The Times for these*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/20/magazine/we-respond-to-the-historians-who-critiqued-the-1619-project.html?searchResultPosition=1). As the controversy continued, a historian who had been consulted by a fact-checker on the project [*went public to complain*](https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/06/1619-project-new-york-times-mistake-122248) that corrections she had urged [*were ignored*](https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/06/1619-project-new-york-times-mistake-122248). It was disappointing to see work whose intention I admired marred by missteps.

As I read the new book, however, my worries largely melted away. It is not without flaws, which I will come back to, but on the whole it is a wide-ranging, landmark summary of the Black experience in America: searing, rich in unfamiliar detail, exploring every aspect of slavery and its continuing legacy, in which being white or Black affects everything from how you fare in courts and hospitals and schools to the odds that your neighborhood will be bulldozed for a freeway. The book’s editors, knowing that they were heading into a minefield, clearly trod with extraordinary care. They added more than 1,000 endnotes, and in their acknowledgments thank a roster of peer reviewers so long and distinguished as to make any writer of history envious.

The articles in the original Times version have here been extended and revised. There are seven new essays — for a total of 18, by as many contributors — and woven through the book are photographs as well as poems and short fiction inspired by historical events. The contributors have flair: Khalil Gibran Muhammad calls the large slave markets of New Orleans “the Walmart of people-selling”; Wesley Morris speaks of the segregated, all-white nightclubs of a century ago that featured “pasteurized jazz.” “If our dead could speak,” Tracy K. Smith writes in a poem derived from a speech given by the first Black senator, Hiram Rhodes Revels, in 1870, “what a voice, like to the rushing of a mighty wind, would come up.”

Part of the book’s depth lies in the way it offers unexpected links between past and present. New Yorkers, for instance, have long protested that the city Police Department’s “stop and frisk” searches for contraband or guns disproportionally snag people of color. But how many had connected it, as Leslie Alexander and Michelle Alexander do here, to the slave patrols of the old South, in which groups of armed white men routinely barged into the cabins of enslaved men and women to hunt for stolen goods or “anything they judged could be used as a weapon”?

Another contributor, Matthew Desmond, points out that the cotton plantation “was America’s first big business.” On the eve of the Civil War the monetary value “of enslaved people exceeded that of all the railroads and factories in the nation.” That fact alone should silence anyone who claims that slavery is not central to American history.

Moreover, controlling those workers “helped mold modern management techniques.” The plantations’ size allowed for economies of scale. And “like today’s titans of industry, planters understood that their profits climbed when they extracted maximum effort out of each worker. So they paid close attention to inputs and outputs” — easy to do when you compared harvesters according to how far each had progressed down parallel rows of cotton plants. Every fieldworker’s yield was carefully recorded, and rewards or whippings administered accordingly. Spreadsheets tabulated the depreciating value of human property over time. Trade magazines for planters carried management tips on getting the most out of enslaved workers: the best diet, clothing and even the proper tone of voice to use when giving orders.

Again and again, “The 1619 Project” brings the past to life in fresh ways. I knew nothing, for instance, of Callie House, a widowed Tennessee laundress born into slavery who in the early 1900s organized a national movement to demand pensions for the formerly enslaved, like the pensions paid to former Union soldiers. When Congress refused, House sued the federal government, arguing “that the U.S. Treasury owed Black Americans $68,073,388.99 for the taxes it had collected between 1862 and 1868 on the cotton enslaved people had grown. The federal government had identified the cotton and could trace it.” Her boldness so infuriated the white Southerners of Woodrow Wilson’s cabinet that they saw to it that House and her attorney were indicted for mail fraud. She served a year in prison.

Most readers also may not know that a planter could take out mortgages on his enslaved workers. Thomas Jefferson did, to raise the money to build Monticello. If the debtor defaulted, the bank then auctioned off these men and women — adding to slavery’s shattering of families. The book also reminds us that slavery’s stains on our history were not restricted to the South. Nearly 1,000 voyages to Africa to procure captives were made from Rhode Island. Following an 18th-century uprising, 21 enslaved men and women were executed, some burned at the stake and one strapped to a large wheel while his bones were broken with a mallet — in New York City.

Several times, a “1619 Project” writer makes a bold assertion that departs so far from conventional wisdom that it sounds exaggerated. And then comes a zinger that proves the author’s point. For example, Hannah-Jones, who wrote the book’s preface and the first and last of its 18 essays, declares that the way the Constitution allowed Congress to ban the Atlantic slave trade after 20 years (beginning in 1808) is something “often held up as proof of the antislavery sentiment of the framers” but “can be seen in some respects as self-serving.” Self-serving? Virginians, she says, so prominent among the founding fathers, knew that “years of tobacco growing had depleted the soil, and landowners like Jefferson were turning to crops that required less labor, such as wheat. That meant they needed fewer enslaved people to turn a profit” and “stood to make money by cutting off the supply of new people from Africa and . . . selling their surplus laborers” to Southern cotton and sugar growers. Hmm, the reader then wonders; prove it. And she does: Over a 30-year period, “Virginia alone sold between 300,000 and 350,000 enslaved people south, nearly as many as all of the Africans sold into the United States over the course of slavery.”

Another example comes from Ibram X. Kendi, who writes about the “vision of our past as a march of racial progress” from the Emancipation Proclamation to the election of Barack Obama. This has long been a comforting myth, he says, quoting even George Washington as suggesting that slavery was on its way out. But, the reader thinks, can’t celebrating progress coexist with recognizing that we’ve still got a long way to go? How can Kendi claim that the progress narrative “actually undermines the effort to achieve and maintain equality”? Rhetorical overkill? Yes, but then comes the zinger: In 2013, the Supreme Court eviscerated the Voting Rights Act on the grounds, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in his majority opinion, that since it was passed in 1965, “things have changed dramatically.”

In that instance, at least, belief in inevitable progress had tragic results, for that ruling opened the way to the greatest [*wave of voter suppression laws*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/us/politics/supreme-court-arizona-voting.html?searchResultPosition=2) in this country since Southern legislatures swept Blacks off the rolls in the late 19th century — a pivotal period recalled in detail elsewhere in the book. Despite the striking integration of much of the country’s elite over the last half-century — from who’s on TV to who’s in the White House — Hannah-Jones points out that the gap between Black and white household income has [*barely changed*](https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2016/06/27/1-demographic-trends-and-economic-well-being/) for more than half a century. The same is true for the far wider gap in overall household wealth. That wealth gap has vast repercussions for everything from whether you’re likely to be evicted to whether you can send your child to college. No one saw this more clearly than Lyndon B. Johnson, who, interestingly, is quoted in the book almost as often as Martin Luther King Jr. Progress has come mainly for “a growing middle-class minority” of Blacks, he said in a 1965 speech, while for the Black poor “the walls are rising and the gulf is widening.”

The project’s writers tell us why. White Southern Democrats demanded that New Deal programs be crafted to exclude Blacks from most benefits. The systematic “redlining” of Black neighborhoods in both North and South meant that from 1934 to 1962, 98 percent of Federal Housing Administration-backed mortgage loans went to white households. Similarly, only a [*minuscule number of Black people*](https://www.nps.gov/articles/african-american-homesteaders-in-the-great-plains.htm) benefited from the Homestead Act of 1862, under which the government gave away 246 million acres. (Most of that was wrested away from Native Americans, whose part in the country’s “origin story” began well before 1619.) Some 20 percent of American adults today are descended from beneficiaries of that massive affirmative action program for white people.

In a few ways “The 1619 Project” falls short. Hannah-Jones, for instance, still makes too much of Abraham Lincoln’s flirtation with the idea of colonization, or encouraging Black Americans to go to Africa. This surely felt insulting to Black citizens (although colonization had some Black backers), but it did not define him. On another point that earlier also drew scholarly criticism, she has made a few changes but basically remains insistent, claiming that “we might never have revolted against Britain if some of the founders had not . . . believed that independence was required in order to ensure that the institution [of slavery] would continue unmolested.” But this is untenable.

Yes, it’s true that the British colonial governor of Virginia threatened to sabotage the growing independence movement by promising freedom to those enslaved by “rebels” who fled their masters to join the British Army. And yes, this infuriated the likes of George Washington (more than a dozen of whose own enslaved workers took up the offer) and helped persuade some wavering plantation owners to join the revolt against the crown. But the governor was making a fruitless attempt to stanch a rebellion against Britain that, for other reasons, was well underway and had already escalated into open combat at the Battles of Lexington and Concord.

It’s fine to take slavery’s many defenders among the founding fathers off their pedestals. But there is no need to go out on this shaky limb to do so, for their zeal to preserve the system that so enriched them is beyond dispute. Our Constitution, with its three-fifths clause and fugitive slave clause, is shameful testimony to that.

A broader issue in the book is that, with a few exceptions, such as Muhammad’s excellent article about the brutal world of sugar cultivation, the reader can too easily leave with the impression that the heritage of slavery is uniquely American. It’s not. The pervasive presence of slavery throughout the hemisphere strengthened the system here: When Washington had a “Rogue &amp; Runaway” he wanted to get rid of in 1766, he could find a buyer for him where escape was much harder, in the West Indies. And some of the management techniques Desmond describes evolved simultaneously on the large, lucrative British sugar plantations there. From ancient Egypt to czarist Russia, from sub-Saharan Africa to the Aztecs, forms of slavery have blighted nearly every continent. In Brazil and every nation in the Caribbean, descendants of enslaved people are a [*far larger share of the population*](https://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en_programs_diaspora_la) than in the United States — and some of their captured ancestors arrived in chains from Africa well before 1619. As the historian Seymour Drescher has put it, several hundred years ago, “freedom, not slavery, was the peculiar institution.”

A final point: I wish the book had included more about the allies of Black Americans who fought against slavery or its ongoing aftermath. It barely mentions the Underground Railroad, whose conductors were both Black and white, and shortchanges the longtime abolitionist editor William Lloyd Garrison, depicting him largely as a purveyor of the inevitable progress myth. Garrison was not perfect, but the movement he stimulated so enraged his enemies that they burned him in effigy in South Carolina and erected a gallows on his Boston doorstep. And without the deaths of more than 300,000 Union soldiers, most of them white, American slavery would have continued much longer.

Or, to take a more recent example: The Black leader [*Bob Moses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/25/us/bob-moses-dead.html), who died last summer, knew that the country would pay attention to the battle for equal rights in the South only if white people shared some of what Blacks endured. He helped recruit roughly 1,000 volunteers, almost all of them young white Northerners (I was one), to go to Mississippi in 1964 to do such work as registering voters. Two, along with a Black colleague, were murdered. The names of six additional whites who also died in the movement are inscribed along with the many Black names in the granite of the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Ala.

These numbers of course are tiny compared with the [*nearly 6,500 documented lynchings*](https://eji.org/reports/reconstruction-in-america-overview/) of Blacks since the end of slavery and the additional Black victims who continue to be killed in [*disproportionate numbers*](https://www.pnas.org/content/116/34/16793) by police officers today. But they bear mention in a book that I hope will reach a wide audience of high school and college students in a country more than 86 percent of whose people are not Black. Such readers need models to show them that men and women of all ethnicities can try — and have tried — to battle against four centuries of injustice.

To be clear: Eliminating these minor shortcomings would not have prevented the torrent of outrage against this whole venture from Trump and his followers. From people determined to inflame a sense of grievance by proclaiming that any hint of Black advance means white victimization, such venom was inevitable. It may be too much to expect in this deeply divided country of ours, but my hope is that the multifaceted and often brilliant ways in which this book’s authors etch the Black experience will inspire not resentment but empathy. And perhaps emulation: There are other projects about unduly ignored parts of our history to be written. I would love to see one, for example, on how the American ***working class*** — white, Black and brown -— has seen its share of the national bounty first rise and then painfully fall over the last century.

Despite what demagogues claim, honoring the story told in “The 1619 Project” and rectifying the great wrongs in it need not threaten or diminish anyone else’s experience, for they are all strands of a larger American story. Whether that fragile cloth holds together today, in the face of blatant defiance of election results and the rule of law, depends on our respect for every strand in the weave.

Adam Hochschild’s books include “Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire’s Slaves,” a finalist for the National Book Award. THE 1619 PROJECT A New Origin Story Edited by Nikole Hannah-Jones, Caitlin Roper, Ilena Silverman and Jake Silverstein Illustrated. 590 pp. One World. $38.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JACOB LAWRENCE, THE JACOB AND GWENDOLYN KNIGHT LAWRENCE FOUNDATION, SEATTLE/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK) (BR1); An enslaved family in Hanover County, Va., 1862. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE HARPER HOUGHTON, VIA THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS) (BR20); Lyndon B. Johnson and Martin Luther King Jr. at the signing of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. (PHOTOGRAPH BY YOICHI R. OKAMOTO/WHITE HOUSE PRESS OFFICE); New York City police officers detaining a man in the Bronx on July 11, 2017. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK LENNIHAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (BR21)

**Related Articles**

* [*The 1619 Project and the Long Battle Over U.S. History*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/magazine/1619-project-us-history.html)

**Load-Date:** December 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Stimulus Bill Transforms Options For State and Local Governments***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626H-5471-DXY4-X3WC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 13, 2021 Saturday 20:53 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1701 words

**Byline:** Manny Fernandez and Sabrina Tavernise

**Highlight:** Once fearing fiscal disaster, governments are suddenly awash in their share of $350 billion available for projects and needs that previously seemed out of reach.

**Body**

Once fearing fiscal disaster, governments are suddenly awash in their share of $350 billion available for projects and needs that previously seemed out of reach.

Richard F. Cortez, the top elected official in Hidalgo County, at the southern tip of Texas, is so full of anticipation for the federal [*stimulus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/business/economy/biden-stimulus-checks.html) money that is about to flow into his county that he has memorized the precise amount and happily recites it: “$212,702,647.”

Over the past year, Hidalgo, a border community that is one of the country’s poorest counties, has lurched from one disaster to another. The coronavirus pandemic hit, unemployment skyrocketed, a hurricane swept through, and then came the winter freeze. So the money, Mr. Cortez said, could not have come at a better time.

“The American Rescue Plan — that’s a proper term for the situation that we’re in,” said Mr. Cortez, a retired C.P.A. “It’s pretty amazing that we’re still standing up.”

The biggest infusion of funds in decades will soon start, putting state, local and tribal governments in a situation they have not experienced in years: Items that had long seemed totally unaffordable are now well within reach.

Mr. Cortez says it is too early to know precisely how Hidalgo County will allocate its money, but states can use the money for pandemic-related costs, offsetting lost revenues to provide essential government services, and for water, sewer and broadband infrastructure projects.

The $350 billion that was earmarked for state, local and tribal governments and U.S. territories “was one of the largest spending items in the entire bill,” said Dan White, director of fiscal policy research at Moody’s Analytics, a financial analysis firm. He said the total was [*more than*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/business/economy/biden-stimulus-checks.html)quadruple what is needed to plug state and local budget holes through next summer.

Democrats in Congress and local governments who supported the bill said that helping America’s states, cities and counties recover from a historic pandemic was about more than simply covering shortfalls and that they were worried about Congress doing too little instead of too much. They note that most of the aid will be available through the end of 2024.

“This bill is a historic investment in local government,” said Mark Ritacco, director of government affairs for the National Association of Counties.

Republicans and conservatives in Washington called it wasteful overkill.

“Increasingly, federal proposals to provide a cash infusion for state and local governments has become a solution in search of a problem,” said the [*Tax Foundation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/business/economy/biden-stimulus-checks.html), a right-leaning nonprofit in Washington, D.C.

It is a very different picture from one year ago, when state and local governments predicted collapses in revenue and slashed their spending accordingly, laying off park workers, teachers and sheriff’s deputies. But in an unexpected twist, revenue in most states did not drop nearly as much as was predicted, and now governments are going into their budget-making season with a markedly brighter sets of numbers. According to Mr. White, 31 states now have enough cash to fully absorb the economic stress of the pandemic recession on their own.

“The surprises keep on coming,” he said.

The cash is coming over the objection of Republicans in Congress, none of whom voted for the bill.

But some Republicans in local governments said the choice between people and politics was not particularly difficult.

Mayor Jerry Dyer of Fresno, the largest city in California’s San Joaquin Valley, an agriculture-rich region that is a conservative stronghold, was one of the few Republican leaders in the area who supported the bill.

Mr. Dyer said his city had been weighing potential layoffs of more than 200 city employees, including police officers and firefighters, as it faced a $25 million budget deficit. But the bill put an end to any layoff discussions. Fresno, a city of 531,000, was poised to receive $177 million.

“When you make those types of decisions and you go against a party that I’m a part of, it does feel lonely,” said Mr. Dyer, a former Fresno police chief. “You start wondering along the way what kind of impact that could have on you in the future. But the reality is, I felt I was making the right decision for the right reason to benefit the people of Fresno, not necessarily a party.”

The aid will be distributed to states according to a formula that is based largely on the state’s unemployment rate, officials said. There are a host of rules on how the money can be spent. For example, the money can’t be used to pay down pension obligations or for cutting taxes.

Republicans in Congress argued that a funding formula based on unemployment instead of population benefits Democratic-led states and hurts Republican-controlled ones. One analysis from Representative Jason Smith, Republican of Missouri, found that 33 states were getting less money based on the unemployment formula, all but 10 of them led by Republican governors.

But many Democratic officials, and some Republican ones, disputed the notion of a partisan bailout.

“I think my residents know I don’t give a hoot about party — all I care about is making sure the street sweeper runs, the police show up and the water doesn’t stop,” said Acquanetta Warren, a Republican who is the mayor of Fontana, a ***working-class*** suburb east of Los Angeles set to receive $52 million.

Local governments have been hit harder than states. Three-quarters of the more than 1.3 million jobs lost among state and local governments since February 2020 have been at the local level, Mr. White of Moody’s found, the vast majority of them from school districts.

Counties, which are critical geographies for public services like emergency services, public health departments and local jails, were ecstatic. Many had complained that funds from previous rounds of pandemic stimulus had not reached them because the funds were routed through states for smaller counties. This time, the checks are coming directly from the United States Treasury Department.

The sheer size of the sums has shifted the scale of what is possible. Erie County, N.Y., which includes Buffalo, has for years struggled with barely functioning internet in its rural areas, which have been mostly bypassed by internet providers.

“People would drive to the library, sit in the car in the parking lot to get on the Wi-Fi,” said Mark Poloncarz, the county executive.

A plan for the county to lay cable for internet service was scrapped a year ago when Covid-19 blew a hole in the county’s budget, but Mr. Poloncarz plans to include the broadband project in the $178 million the county will receive.

“We’re going to get that done now,” he said.

Coroner’s offices, usually part of county governments, reflect the ravages of the past year. [*Dottie Owens*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/business/economy/biden-stimulus-checks.html), the coroner for Ada County, Idaho, which includes Boise, said the stimulus money could not come soon enough, as a number of coroners in rural counties in the state were still without proper personal protective equipment. The needs go well beyond this moment, she said. The overdose rate in her county is up, as is the suicide rate, and there is an urgent need for more funding for mental health services. Last year, her office had more homicides of children than in the past five years combined, she said.

The suicide rate had been declining “and then you lock everybody down for a year and what do you expect?” she said.

One of the reasons the finances of state and local governments emerged better than expected is the way jobs were lost in this recession. According to Mr. White’s analysis, fewer than 1 million of the approximately 10 million jobs still missing from before the pandemic are in what are considered high-wage industries. In contrast, during the Great Recession, more than a fifth of the jobs lost were in high-wage industries, he found.

Because most taxes are paid by those in the middle and upper parts of the wage ladder, revenue collection took less of a hit than was expected. This has been good for the revenues of states like California, New York, Connecticut and New Jersey that rely on high-income residents for a substantial share of income tax revenue.

In California, the pot of stimulus money was so large it put state officials on the defensive. The state government’s direct stimulus intake: $26 billion. Its January budget surplus projection: $15 billion.

State finance officials said the stimulus money was much needed, because California’s bump in revenues was not a sign of a complete economic recovery. The state lost a record 1.6 million jobs in the pandemic in 2020.

“Don’t equate where we are on a revenue basis with where we are on an economy basis,” said H.D. Palmer, a deputy director of the state’s Department of Finance. “It is going to take us at least two years, if not longer, for us to get back to prepandemic employment levels.”

The financial picture is far more grim in California’s cities and counties.

“We’ve been fighting this battle against Covid-19 with our credit cards and our savings account,” said Mayor Eric Garcetti of Los Angeles.

The city’s budget shortfall was estimated last month at $750 million. The stimulus gives Los Angeles a $1.3 billion injection, almost double the budget gap.

Some mayors were still in shock.

“It’s unbelievable,” said Svante Myrick, mayor of Ithaca, N.Y. He said his city would receive $17 million, an amount that is about quadruple the size of the deficit.

Is the stimulus aid too much? No, he said. But the fight for funds will be fierce, with unions and neighborhood organizations and other interest groups all lobbying for a share.

“Honestly, if the federal government sent every community this amount of money every year we’d be living in a cleaner, safer, more prosperous country,” he said. The looming fight over the money, he said, “is a small price to pay.”

Nicholas Fandos and Alan Rappeport contributed reporting from Washington.

PHOTOS: Residents of Erie County, N.Y., which has struggled with internet service in rural areas, often park outside libraries, above, to use the Wi-Fi, said Mark Poloncarz, the county executive, left. The county plans to revive a scrapped broadband project with the $178 million infusion it will receive. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LIBBY MARCH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Decision by de Blasio To Delay School Return Frustrates City Parents***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60W4-JPK1-JBG3-60VC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 19, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1306 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Jeffery C. Mays and Eliza Shapiro

**Body**

Mayor Bill de Blasio delayed the start of school for a second time, leading to an uproar among parents.

With unease growing in August about New York City's plan to bring children back into public schools, Mayor Bill de Blasio insisted that classrooms would reopen on Sept. 10, saying that he would not ''run away and hide'' from a challenge.

Educators feared that the deadline was too daunting, and they were proven right: Mr. de Blasio was forced to postpone the first day of school.

On Thursday, it happened again. The mayor further delayed the reopening.

The last-minute reversal angered parents and underscored a perception of Mr. de Blasio's leadership style that has built up since he became mayor in 2014: He often mulls decisions until the last moment, keeping his counsel and discounting the views of advisers and outside groups.

Mr. de Blasio is hoping to make New York City one of the few big cities in the country that is returning children to classrooms during the pandemic -- an accomplishment that would help to burnish the city's image after the devastation of the spring, when many thousands of residents died from the coronavirus.

But for many weeks, he has repeatedly appeared to misjudge how difficult reopening schools would be, dismissing the mounting concerns from staffers who had been charged with executing the reopening plan, and who were pushing for a delay.

On Friday, Mr. de Blasio took responsibility for the whiplash that parents were feeling and explained that he had changed his mind over concerns about a teacher shortage.

''We're going to make sure it's safe, and so I ask everyone for some patience here,'' Mr. de Blasio said in a radio interview on WNYC. ''I do feel the frustration that parents are feeling.''

Mr. de Blasio has spoken frequently about being a public school parent and his concern for ***working class*** families that need children back in school. But on Thursday, he downplayed the delay as only ''a few days,'' and irritated some by saying public school parents were ''overwhelmingly outer-borough residents'' who understood the ''realities of life.''

The concerns about a staffing crisis at schools were not new. The union that represents principals had been raising alarm for weeks.

With one week left until schools were expected to open on Sept. 21, Mr. de Blasio had announced on Monday that the city would hire 2,000 additional teachers. Principals knew they needed far more than that: more than 10,000.

Yet when Mr. de Blasio was asked if he was certain that school would open on time, the mayor appeared resolute. ''Of course it will open,'' Mr. de Blasio said then.

Three days later, Mr. de Blasio reversed course, making the decision after a three-hour meeting at City Hall on Wednesday with his schools chancellor, Richard A. Carranza, and the presidents of the unions that represent teachers and principals.

The union leaders warned the mayor that reopening on Monday would not work and that the city was ''headed into a disaster,'' said Michael Mulgrew, the head of the teachers' union.

''We told the mayor, 'If you open school on Monday, it's going to crash and be chaos, and here's why. Here's the reality,''' Mr. Mulgrew said. ''You saw he knew there was a real problem.''

Mr. de Blasio said they discussed a list of 20 separate issues during the meeting.

The principals' union began to publicly raise concerns about teacher shortages in mid-August. The union's president, Mark Cannizzaro, went further on Monday, saying that the mayor's plan to add 2,000 teachers fell ''woefully short'' and urging education officials to be transparent with the public about the mounting challenges.

Under the mayor's new plan, most schools will not open on Monday as scheduled. They will instead reopen on a staggered timeline, with elementary schools opening on Sept. 29, and middle and high schools on Oct. 1.

Mr. de Blasio, a Democrat in his second and final term, has been known for his deliberative approach to governing. He was reluctant to close schools in March as cases of the coronavirus spiked, slow to enact police reforms after recent Black Lives Matter protests and cautious about when to reopen beaches and pools.

Even before he was mayor, Mr. de Blasio was known for taking his time. During Hillary Clinton's Senate race in 2000, he was eventually elbowed out as campaign manager during the final stretch because he took too long to make decisions.

On Friday, Mr. de Blasio said the teacher staffing problem had grown more complicated because of shifting figures for how many staff and students would attend schools in person. Nearly half of the one million schoolchildren who attend public schools could end up learning remotely at home.

But it had been clear for several weeks that more teachers were needed. A report on Thursday from the city's Independent Budget Office said the city needed nearly 12,000 additional teachers.

The staffing challenges were known to the mayor and education officials since at least mid-August, according to an official close to the schools reopening discussion who asked for anonymity in order to not damage working relationships.

''It's been clear for a long time that we have staffing shortages,'' the person said.

When concerns were raised to the mayor, his attitude, this person said, was: ''You guys are acting like bureaucrats; just make it happen.''

It was not just the unions and members of his own administration that raised concerns. Members of the mayor's panel on educational policy met with him during the first week of September to express their doubts about reopening, suggesting a fully remote start to school, except for schools that serve children with disabilities.

Those schools, along with schools for prekindergarten-age children and younger, will still open on Monday, which Bill Neidhardt, the mayor's press secretary, said demonstrated the mayor's ''focus on educational justice.''

''This is the largest school system in the country, and even though we haven't had help from the federal or state government, we've been able to keep our coalition together to deliver in-person education on Monday,'' Mr. Neidhardt said. ''The mayor is leading the city through all these challenges to deliver the best, safest education possible.''

Bruce Gyory, a Democratic political consultant, said Mr. de Blasio sees himself as a policy wonk who is not into the ''nitty-gritty of being a manager.''

That model worked for the mayor at the beginning of his term. He instituted wildly popular early childhood education improvements in his first year and benefited from a strong economy, but the pandemic has changed that.

Mr. de Blasio insisted on Friday that if the city continued to keep the virus at bay, then all public schools would reopen by Oct. 1.

''Based on everything I'm seeing -- based on how well New Yorkers have worn those masks and done the social distancing and fought back the disease, really in a heroic way -- I feel very confident about that date,'' Mr. de Blasio said in an interview on MSNBC.

But the new plan depends on hiring the 2,000 teachers Mr. de Blasio had promised, plus another 2,500 -- for a total of 4,500 new teachers, or about half of what the union requested.

The city needs so many new educators because City Hall and the teachers' union had agreed that educators should not be required to teach both in-person and remote classes, requiring schools to essentially create separate sets of teachers for each method.

Mr. de Blasio said it was worth it to figure out the logistics, instead of moving to all-remote learning like other major school districts across the country.

''If we wanted to take the easy way and cheat our kids, we could have gone all-remote a long time ago,'' the mayor said. ''We're taking the harder path, but it's the right path.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/18/nyregion/schools-reopen-delay-nyc.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/18/nyregion/schools-reopen-delay-nyc.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Whitney Bush, a city teacher, held orientation on Zoom after Mayor Bill de Blasio, left, delayed a return to classrooms for a second time. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

JEENAH MOON)

**Load-Date:** September 19, 2020

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[***House Approves Statehood For the District of Columbia***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6077-1821-JBG3-62BB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 27, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 20

**Length:** 1167 words

**Byline:** By Emily Cochrane

**Body**

It is the first time a chamber of Congress has approved establishing the nation's capital as the 51st state. The measure is all but certain to die in the Republican-led Senate.

WASHINGTON -- The House of Representatives voted nearly along party lines on Friday to grant statehood to Washington, D.C., the first time a chamber of Congress has approved establishing the nation's capital as a state.

The legislation, which is unlikely to advance in the Republican-led Senate, would establish a 51st state -- Washington, Douglass Commonwealth, named in honor of Frederick Douglass -- and allow it two senators and a voting representative in the House. The National Mall, the White House, Capitol Hill and some other federal property would remain under congressional jurisdiction, with the rest of the land becoming the new state.

The vote was 232 to 180, with every Republican and one Democrat voting ''no.''

Republicans have long opposed the move to give congressional representation to the District of Columbia, where more than three-quarters of voters are registered Democrats, but the long-suffering movement for statehood, led by Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, the capital's lone nonvoting delegate, has been pressing for a vote on the matter for years.

When Democrats assumed the House majority last year, Ms. Norton secured a promise from leaders to bring up the bill for the first time in more than a quarter-century.

Anger over the Trump administration's handling of racial justice protests -- particularly the use of federal officers in the city and the violent removal of protesters from Lafayette Square outside the White House -- further galvanized advocates of statehood and cast a national spotlight on how much control the federal government retains over more than 700,000 residents in the District of Columbia.

''Over the last few months, the nation, and even the world, has witnessed the discriminatory and outrageous treatment of D.C. residents by the federal government,'' Ms. Norton said on Friday on the House floor, where she was unable to cast a vote for the bill she championed. ''The federal occupation of D.C. occurred solely because the president thought he could get away with it here. He was wrong.''

The bill, which passed along party lines, is not expected to become law. The White House issued a veto threat against it on Wednesday, declaring the measure unconstitutional.

Republicans in the Senate, where the legislation would have to meet a bipartisan 60-vote threshold to advance, have rejected the idea, arguing that if representation for its citizens was the sole issue, the District of Columbia should simply be absorbed into Maryland, another heavily Democratic state.

''Retrocession wouldn't give the Democrats their real aim: two Democratic senators in perpetuity to rubber-stamp the swamp's agenda, so you won't hear them talk about it,'' Senator Tom Cotton, Republican of Arkansas, said on Thursday in a lengthy diatribe on the floor.

He declared that Wyoming, a state with a smaller population, was a ''well-rounded, ***working-class*** state'' superior to Washington, which would amount to ''an appendage of the federal government'' full of lobbyists and civil servants. Wyoming is more than 80 percent white, while the majority of the District of Columbia is composed of people of color.

The arguments against statehood on the House floor barely shifted since the full chamber last debated the merits of granting statehood to Washington more than a quarter of a century ago. Opponents questioned the constitutional merits, arguing that the founding fathers intentionally did not establish the nation's capital as a state. Others questioned whether the District of Columbia was geographically and economically viable to be a state.

''Our nation's founders made it clear that D.C. is not meant to be a state,'' said Representative Jody B. Hice, Republican of Georgia. ''They thought about it, they debated it, and they rejected it.''

Representative Collin C. Peterson of Minnesota was the sole Democrat to join Republicans in opposing the measure on Friday.

Top Democrats, several wearing masks with a symbol of the statehood movement, took to the floor to argue passionately for its passage, denouncing the disenfranchisement of Washington residents. Applause broke out on the floor as soon as the bill reached the necessary 218 threshold to pass.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi, at her weekly news conference in the Capitol, dismissed as shortsighted the Republican arguments that the new state would simply give Democrats a political advantage. Alaska and Hawaii, she pointed out, had entered the union as overwhelmingly Democratic and Republican states and then flipped politically.

''What the state is, that can change over time,'' Ms. Pelosi said. ''But the fact is, people in the District of Columbia pay taxes, fight wars, risk their lives for our democracy -- and yet in this place, they have no vote in the House and Senate.''

The District of Columbia, where license plates read ''Taxation without representation,'' has long been burdened by a lack of federal representation.

The capital first earned three electoral votes and the right to vote for president in 1961 with the passage of the 23rd Amendment. The right to elect a nonvoting delegate came a decade later, but lawmakers could not agree on whether to give that delegate the right to vote, and the statehood legislation never survived a floor vote.

The disparity has gained renewed national attention during the coronavirus pandemic and the protests over racial injustice. In the $2.2 trillion stimulus law enacted in March, the District of Columbia received a small fraction of the funds doled out to states to help dull the economic effect of the virus because it was treated as a territory, despite customarily being granted funding as if it were a state.

And when the administration flooded the streets of Washington with National Guard forces from elsewhere and troops in riot gear during protests over the death of George Floyd in police custody, Ms. Bowser had few options this month because of how much control Congress maintains over the District of Columbia's finances and laws.

''Denying D.C. statehood to over 700,000 residents, the majority of them black and brown, is systemic racism,'' said Stasha Rhodes, campaign director of the pro-statehood group 51 for 51. ''D.C. statehood is one of the most urgent civil rights and racial justice issues of our time -- and we know we are on the right side of history.''

Ms. Bowser, a fifth-generation Washingtonian, told reporters at a news conference on Thursday that she was ''born here without a vote, but I swear I will not die here without a vote.''

The House vote, she said, would lay the groundwork for another administration to make statehood law. Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, has said he would support the move.

Nicholas Fandos contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/26/us/politics/dc-statehood-house-vote.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/26/us/politics/dc-statehood-house-vote.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Speaker Nancy Pelosi discussing the historic statehood measure on Thursday. The Senate is unlikely to go along.

Mayor Muriel Bowser said the vote would lay the groundwork for another president to act. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 27, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Starr Chamber: The Sequel***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y14-RKV1-JBG3-60BN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 19, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 11

**Length:** 938 words

**Byline:** By Maureen Dowd

**Body**

President Trump reaches deep into the perv barrel for his defense team.

Can a woman be president of the United States?

Hell, yes.

I've covered the men who run the world my whole life. And there have been a lot of screw-ups, from Vietnam to Watergate to Afghanistan to Iraq to pushing the economy off a cliff. There has also been plenty of creepy behavior, culminating in the news that Donald Trump, Ken Starr and Alan Dershowitz have joined together in a pervy, hypocritical cabal to argue that Trump did not smirch the Constitution.

So please, Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar, stop whingeing about sexism and just show how you could wield power like a boss. Ibid: Nancy Pelosi.

When Steve Bannon called Pelosi a ''total assassin,'' according to the hot new book ''A Very Stable Genius,'' by Washington Post writers Phil Rucker and Carol Leonnig, he meant it as the highest compliment. You won't find Pelosi keening about gender; she's too busy taking care of business.

Hillary Clinton did not lose because she was a woman. She faced sexism, of course, just as Barack Obama faced racism. She lost because she ran an entitled, joyless, nose-in-the air campaign and because she didn't emulate her husband's ethos of campaign 'til the last dog dies and the last bowling alley closes, and always make it about the voters. She lost because she and her campaign manager, Robby Mook, didn't listen to Bill Clinton, the world's leading expert on the white, male, rural vote, when he warned them that there was trouble and offered to help out.

Donald Trump operates from the id, which is fitting because he represents a last-gasp primal scream from ***working-class*** Americans threatened by the changes transforming the country. Women are now a majority of the work force and whites are heading toward a minority status. Hollywood cannot cling to its benighted -- and self-defeating -- desire to stay a white male club forever, despite the fact that women have always made up half the audience.

Trump's ascent does not make it harder for women to ascend -- just the opposite. Look at the throng of women who were outraged enough about Trump to march and run and get elected in 2018.

Once a woman electrifies Democrats the way J.F.K., Bill Clinton and Obama did -- and the way Trump does his base -- she will win.

Trump is once more doing his part to energize women voters. On Friday, we learned that the president will get help from Starr and Dershowitz for the impeachment trial in the Senate.

The Starr chamber was a shameful period of American history, with the prissy Puritan independent counsel hounding and virtually jailing Monica Lewinsky and producing hundreds of pages of panting, bodice-ripping prose that read more like bad erotica than a federal report, rife with lurid passages about breasts, stains and genitalia. Like the Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale and other Pharisaic Holy Rollers before him, the prosecutor who read the Bible and sang hymns when he jogged became fixated on sex in an unhealthy, warped way.

Even Trump was appalled. ''Starr's a freak,'' the bloviating builder told me back in 1999. ''I bet he's got something in his closet.'' In other interviews, he called Starr ''a lunatic,'' ''a disaster'' and ''off his rocker,'' and expressed sympathy for Hillary having to stand by her man when he was ''being lambasted by this crazy Ken Starr, who is a total wacko.''

Starr, who once clutched his pearls over Bill Clinton's sexual high jinks, is now going to bat for President ''Access Hollywood.'' After playing an avenging Javert about foreplay in the Oval, Starr will now do his utmost to prove that a real abuse of power undermining Congress and American foreign policy is piffle.

In 2007, he defended Jeffrey Epstein. By 2016, Starr was being ousted as president of Baptist Baylor University for failing to protect women and looking the other way when football players were accused and sometimes convicted of sexual assaults. In other words, he's a complete partisan hack who doesn't give a damn about sexual assault.

And then there's Dershowitz, whose past clients have included such sterling fellows as Epstein, Claus von Bülow, O.J. Simpson and Harvey Weinstein. How did he miss Ted Bundy? Still, Dershowitz has put himself on the side of an impressive pantheon of villainy in the realm of violence against girls and women.

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On Fox News, Dershowitz has made the case that it is Pelosi who put herself above the law by delaying the delivery of the articles of impeachment. Good luck with that one.

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He tweeted that he's nonpartisan because he opposed Bill's impeachment and voted for Hillary, even as he joined up with Bill's persecutor. Dershowitz said that he is participating ''to defend the integrity of the Constitution.''

That assertion may fly in Foxworld. But in the real world, it's ridiculous. You can bet that Trump and his buddies will continue to turn out the women's vote.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: Ken Starr in January 1999, during the impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton. (PHOTOGRAPH BY David Hume Kennerly/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***How N.Y.C.’s Mayor Ignored Warnings and Mishandled Reopening Schools***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60W1-3W11-JBG3-6087-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 18, 2020 Friday 10:52 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1322 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Jeffery C. Mays and Eliza Shapiro

**Highlight:** Mayor Bill de Blasio delayed the start of school for a second time, leading to an uproar among parents.

**Body**

Mayor Bill de Blasio delayed the start of school for a second time, leading to an uproar among parents.

With [*unease growing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/nyregion/schools-reopen-nyc.html) in August about New York City’s plan to bring children back into public schools, Mayor Bill de Blasio insisted that classrooms would reopen on Sept. 10, saying that he would not “run away and hide” from a challenge.

Educators feared that the deadline was too daunting, and they were proven right: Mr. de Blasio was [*forced to postpone*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/nyregion/schools-reopen-nyc.html) the first day of school.

On Thursday, it happened again. The mayor further delayed [*the reopening*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/nyregion/schools-reopen-nyc.html).

The last-minute reversal angered parents and underscored a perception of Mr. de Blasio’s leadership style that has built up since he became mayor in 2014: He often mulls decisions until the last moment, keeping his counsel and discounting the views of advisers and outside groups.

Mr. de Blasio is hoping to make New York City one of the few big cities in the country that is returning children to classrooms during the pandemic — an accomplishment that would help to burnish the city’s image after the devastation of the spring, when many thousands of residents died from the coronavirus.

But for many weeks, he has repeatedly appeared to misjudge how difficult reopening schools would be, dismissing the mounting concerns from staffers who had been charged with executing the reopening plan, and who were pushing for a delay.

On Friday, Mr. de Blasio took responsibility for the whiplash that parents were feeling and explained that he had changed his mind over concerns about a teacher shortage.

“We’re going to make sure it’s safe, and so I ask everyone for some patience here,” Mr. de Blasio said in a radio interview on WNYC. “I do feel the frustration that parents are feeling.”

Mr. de Blasio has spoken frequently about being a public school parent and his concern for ***working class*** families that need children back in school. But on Thursday, he downplayed the delay as only “a few days,” and irritated some by saying public school parents were “overwhelmingly outer-borough residents” who understood the “realities of life.”

The concerns about a staffing crisis at schools were not new. The union that represents principals had been raising alarm for weeks.

With one week left until schools were expected to open on Sept. 21, Mr. de Blasio had announced on Monday that the city would hire 2,000 additional teachers. Principals knew they needed far more than that: more than 10,000.

Yet when Mr. de Blasio was asked if he was certain that school would open on time, the mayor appeared resolute. “Of course it will open,” Mr. de Blasio said then.

Three days later, Mr. de Blasio reversed course, making the decision after a three-hour meeting at City Hall on Wednesday with his schools chancellor, Richard A. Carranza, and the presidents of the unions that represent teachers and principals.

The union leaders warned the mayor that reopening on Monday would not work and that the city was “headed into a disaster,” said Michael Mulgrew, the head of the teachers’ union.

“We told the mayor, ‘If you open school on Monday, it’s going to crash and be chaos, and here’s why. Here’s the reality,’” Mr. Mulgrew said. “You saw he knew there was a real problem.”

Mr. de Blasio said they discussed a list of 20 separate issues during the meeting.

The principals’ union began to publicly raise concerns about teacher shortages in mid-August. The union’s president, Mark Cannizzaro, went further on Monday, saying that the mayor’s plan to add 2,000 teachers fell “woefully short” and urging education officials to be transparent with the public about the mounting challenges.

Under the mayor’s new plan, most schools [*will not open*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/nyregion/schools-reopen-nyc.html) on Monday as scheduled. They will instead reopen on a staggered timeline, with elementary schools opening on Sept. 29, and middle and high schools on Oct. 1.

Mr. de Blasio, a Democrat in his second and final term, has been known for his deliberative approach to governing. He was reluctant to close schools in March as cases of the coronavirus spiked, slow to enact police reforms after recent Black Lives Matter protests and cautious about when to reopen beaches and pools.

Even before he was mayor, Mr. de Blasio was known for taking his time. During Hillary Clinton’s Senate race in 2000, he was [*eventually elbowed out as campaign manager*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/nyregion/schools-reopen-nyc.html) during the final stretch because he took too long to make decisions.

On Friday, Mr. de Blasio said the teacher staffing problem had grown more complicated because of shifting figures for how many staff and students would attend schools in person. Nearly half of the one million schoolchildren who attend public schools could end up learning remotely at home.

But it had been clear for several weeks that more teachers were needed. A [*report*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/nyregion/schools-reopen-nyc.html) on Thursday from the city’s Independent Budget Office said the city needed nearly 12,000 additional teachers.

The staffing challenges were known to the mayor and education officials since at least mid-August, according to an official close to the schools reopening discussion who asked for anonymity in order to not damage working relationships.

“It’s been clear for a long time that we have staffing shortages,” the person said.

When concerns were raised to the mayor, his attitude, this person said, was: “You guys are acting like bureaucrats; just make it happen.”

It was not just the unions and members of his own administration that raised concerns. Members of the mayor’s panel on educational policy met with him during the first week of September to express their doubts about reopening, suggesting a fully remote start to school, except for schools that serve children with disabilities.

Those schools, along with schools for prekindergarten-age children and younger, will still open on Monday, which Bill Neidhardt, the mayor’s press secretary, said demonstrated the mayor’s “focus on educational justice.”

“This is the largest school system in the country, and even though we haven’t had help from the federal or state government, we’ve been able to keep our coalition together to deliver in-person education on Monday,” Mr. Neidhardt said. “The mayor is leading the city through all these challenges to deliver the best, safest education possible.”

Bruce Gyory, a Democratic political consultant, said Mr. de Blasio sees himself as a policy wonk who is not into the “nitty-gritty of being a manager.”

That model worked for the mayor at the beginning of his term. He instituted wildly popular early childhood education improvements in his first year and benefited from a strong economy, but the pandemic has changed that.

Mr. de Blasio insisted on Friday that if the city continued to keep the virus at bay, then all public schools would reopen by Oct. 1.

“Based on everything I’m seeing — based on how well New Yorkers have worn those masks and done the social distancing and fought back the disease, really in a heroic way — I feel very confident about that date,” Mr. de Blasio said in an interview on MSNBC.

But the new plan depends on hiring the 2,000 teachers Mr. de Blasio had promised, plus another 2,500 — for a total of 4,500 new teachers, or about half of what the union requested.

The city needs so many new educators because City Hall and the teachers’ union had agreed that educators should not be required to teach both in-person and remote classes, requiring schools to essentially create separate sets of teachers for each method.

Mr. de Blasio said it was worth it to figure out the logistics, instead of moving to all-remote learning like other major school districts across the country.

“If we wanted to take the easy way and cheat our kids, we could have gone all-remote a long time ago,” the mayor said. “We’re taking the harder path, but it’s the right path.”

PHOTOS: Above, Whitney Bush, a city teacher, held orientation on Zoom after Mayor Bill de Blasio, left, delayed a return to classrooms for a second time. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES; JEENAH MOON)

**Load-Date:** September 21, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Ghost Writer: An Author Imagines a Letter From Her Late Grandmother; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YFG-9WC1-JBG3-60N1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 17, 2020 Tuesday 17:06 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1055 words

**Byline:** Miranda Popkey

**Highlight:** “Nobody Will Tell You This but Me,” a memoir by Bess Kalb, traces her family history from the Russian pogroms to the American dream.

**Body**

NOBODY WILL TELL YOU THIS BUT ME

A True (as Told to Me) Story

By Bess Kalb

Bess Kalb’s grandmother Bobby was born on a dining room table in Brooklyn; her mother, Rose, a ***working-class*** Russian immigrant, “didn’t want to ruin the bed linens.” Nine decades later, not long after Bobby’s death, Kalb is wandering through her grandmother’s apartment in Westchester, N.Y., looking for “tchotchkes” to claim as mementos. But the items she chooses — among them a Limoges egg, a Brooks Brothers shirt, lipsticks by Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent — serve also as a measure of how far her grandmother came in her lifetime: from a “tenement in Brooklyn” to the upscale suburbs; from the bottom of the social ladder to its uppermost rungs.

On Bobby’s wedding day, Rose realizes she doesn’t own any dress shoes, so she paints her brown work boots black. (The rabbi’s secretary later sends Bobby’s father a cleaning bill for the stained synagogue carpet.) Two generations later, it’s hard to imagine any hand-painted shoes among the designer labels in Bobby’s closet.

In her author’s note, Kalb calls her debut memoir, “Nobody Will Tell You This but Me,” an “oral history.” Bobby is the ventriloquized “Me” of the title, telling, from beyond the grave, a version of her life story in four sections: “My Mother,” “Your Mother,” “Our Life Together” and “After Me.” Kalb is the “you,” the audience for her no-nonsense grandmother’s family anecdotes, wisecracks and warnings. Throughout Bobby’s conversational but always assertive narration are interspersed photographs, reconstructed conversations and transcribed voice mail messages, which together create a diaristic record of not just her own but also Kalb’s career and love life.

[ Read an excerpt from [*“Nobody Will Tell You This but Me.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/books/review/nobody-will-tell-you-this-but-me-a-true-as-told-to-me-story-by-bess-kalb-an-excerpt.html) ]

I cried twice reading Kalb’s “representation” of Bobby’s life: once at the end of Bobby’s account of Rose’s improbable migration, as an unaccompanied 12-year-old, from Belarus to America in the 1880s, to flee Russian anti-Semitism (“There is no life here, Rose,” her own mother told her, “only death”), and then again during Bobby’s brother’s law school graduation, when she watches Rose, sweating in a jacket so small on her it’s splitting at the seams, smile through tears and repeat, “My son, my son, my son.” If the second half of Kalb’s narrative is less affecting than the first, perhaps that is simply because everything after escape from a probable pogrom must be.

Bobby’s trajectory is the so-called American dream fulfilled, a story of unqualified first-generation success. Born Barbara Dorothy Otis in 1926 to a 40-year-old mother not 30 years removed from the shtetl, Bobby marries an entrepreneur, Harold “Hank” Bell, who makes his first fortune building houses for veterans on “cheap, low-lying land” on Long Island. (“It wasn’t exactly a swamp — he’ll swear up and down it wasn’t a swamp — but it was soggy here and there.”)

Newly moneyed, the couple moves out of Bobby’s parents’ attic in Greenpoint and into a spacious ranch house in Westchester County; they buy a vacation home on Martha’s Vineyard. Bobby’s suburban malaise is cured by six-week vacations around the world. “My mother fled through Europe,” she marvels, “and half a century later I danced through it, Kir Royale in hand. How do you like that?”

Reading, I delighted in Bobby’s joy. I also thought with sorrow of the Jewish migrants who followed her mother and found the gates to what Rose’s neighbor in Belarus called “the Goldene Medinah, the Promised Land,” barred. I thought of the migrants at our southern border today, and of the promises this land will likely fail to keep to them again.

No surprise, then, that even wealth cannot provide Bobby and her husband complete security. “Every hundred years,” Rose tells her daughter, “they find a new reason to hunt the Jews.” According to Bobby, Rose “worked to erase her ethnic heritage,” refusing to keep kosher as she “shuddered at the Hassids in their wigs.” And Bobby chooses to make a few cosmetic “adjustments” at least in part because she wants to “erase … the shtetl” from her own face, which was her mother’s. “I always detested my nose,” she tells Kalb, whose “deviated septum” she has paid to fix. “I looked in the mirror and I saw Russia.”

It’s not the only indication we have that Bobby was more complicated in life than she tends to appear on Kalb’s page. The author’s hints at her grandmother’s failings make Bobby more character and less caricature, but one longs for a still more fully rounded portrait. Some moments of neglect and even cruelty (the “screaming fights” with Kalb’s mother, Robin; when she criticizes Kalb for having gained “a pound on the wrong side of the scale”) sit uneasily alongside Bobby’s quips and potted family histories.

“Nobody Will Tell You This but Me” is an explicitly matrilineal project: “Bessie,” Bobby reminds her granddaughter early in the first section, “you are the only daughter of an only daughter of an only daughter.” But it’s less about the mother-daughter relationship than about the kind that skips a generation.

A mother projects onto her daughter the hopes and fears she has since abandoned or succumbed to. Bobby studies hard and goes to college and ends up a housewife anyway, because the available careers — secretary, teacher, nurse — are even less attractive to her. When Robin gets a bad grade, Bobby yells at her for wasting the opportunities she never had.

A grandmother, on the other hand, projects onto her granddaughter expectations that the younger woman can only achieve or be thwarted in pursuit of. When Kalb publishes an article in Grantland, Bobby prints it out for her friends at the club and makes them read it in front of her. When Kalb is hired as a writer on “Jimmy Kimmel Live!,” Bobby tells her to get a blowout. “The rest,” she assures Kalb, “you can handle.”

Miranda Popkey is the author of “Topics of Conversation.” NOBODY WILL TELL YOU THIS BUT ME A True (as Told to Me) Story By Bess Kalb Illustrated. 206 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $25.95.

PHOTO: Bess Kalb’s grandmother Bobby fixes her makeup at her wedding rehearsal dinner. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA BESS KALB)

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* [*Their Parents Were Holocaust Survivors. That Wasn’t Their Only Secret.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/books/review/nobody-will-tell-you-this-but-me-a-true-as-told-to-me-story-by-bess-kalb-an-excerpt.html)

1. [*My Grandmother Kept Telling Us About the Nazis. Now I Know Why.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/books/review/nobody-will-tell-you-this-but-me-a-true-as-told-to-me-story-by-bess-kalb-an-excerpt.html)
2. [*‘The Survivors’ Unpacks a Family’s Trauma*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/books/review/nobody-will-tell-you-this-but-me-a-true-as-told-to-me-story-by-bess-kalb-an-excerpt.html)

**Load-Date:** April 27, 2021

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[***Starr Chamber: The Sequel***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y13-BJK1-JBG3-648R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 18, 2020 Saturday 11:01 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

**Length:** 961 words

**Byline:** Maureen Dowd

**Highlight:** President Trump reaches deep into the perv barrel for his defense team.

**Body**

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Can a woman be president of the United States?

Hell, yes.

I’ve covered the men who run the world my whole life. And there have been a lot of screw-ups, from Vietnam to Watergate to Afghanistan to Iraq to pushing the economy off a cliff. There has also been plenty of creepy behavior, culminating in the news that Donald Trump, Ken Starr and Alan Dershowitz have joined together in a pervy, hypocritical cabal to argue that Trump did not smirch the Constitution.

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On Fox News, Dershowitz has made the case that it is Pelosi who put herself above the law by delaying the delivery of the articles of impeachment. Good luck with that one.

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That assertion may fly in Foxworld. But in the real world, it’s ridiculous. You can bet that Trump and his buddies will continue to turn out the women’s vote.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/books/review-very-stable-genius-donald-trump-philip-rucker-carol-leonnig.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/2020/01/16/books/review-very-stable-genius-donald-trump-philip-rucker-carol-leonnig.html). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/books/review-very-stable-genius-donald-trump-philip-rucker-carol-leonnig.html).

Follow The New York Times Opinion section on [*Facebook*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/books/review-very-stable-genius-donald-trump-philip-rucker-carol-leonnig.html),   [*Twitter (@NYTopinion)*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/books/review-very-stable-genius-donald-trump-philip-rucker-carol-leonnig.html) and   [*Instagram*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/16/books/review-very-stable-genius-donald-trump-philip-rucker-carol-leonnig.html).

PHOTO: Ken Starr in January 1999, during the impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton. (PHOTOGRAPH BY David Hume Kennerly/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 24, 2020

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[***To Beat Trump, Put Ideals Before Ideas***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y0F-F2D1-JBG3-626T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 15, 2020 Wednesday 15:45 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 954 words

**Byline:** Charles M. Blow

**Highlight:** Voters in this presidential election are more concerned with the candidates’ values than their proposals.

**Body**

Voters in this presidential election are more concerned with the candidates’ values than their proposals.

Democrats face a real dilemma: The current crop of their party’s presidential candidates are awash in plans and proposals, which in theory is a good thing, but this election will not be decided on that basis.

Donald Trump has transformed the electorate into two camps, sycophants and dissidents, both passionate, both aimed like missiles at November, both with an intent desire to destroy the competition.

This election won’t turn on the definition of “Medicare for all” or its funding mechanisms. It won’t turn on who offers free college and to whom. This election will turn on whether an individual voter sees Trump as a heroic savior or a destructive agent.

This election is about fundamental questions of American ideals: Should foreign countries be invited or welcomed to meddle in our elections? Should a president be allowed to openly obstruct justice without consequence? Should we separate immigrant children from their parents and lock them in cages? Should we have a president who has bragged about assaulting women, paid off women who claim to have been sexually involved with him and been accused by multiple women of being sexually inappropriate with them? Should America have a racist in the White House?

It is issues like these, I believe, that will most animate voters in the election. America is being forced to look itself in the mirror and figure out who it is.

And it seems to me that many of the Democratic candidates are missing that base-level moral conflict, aiming over it or wiggling around it.

The moderate candidates pitch a path to victory to win back white people in the Midwest by being just milquetoast enough not to offend them and to cause them no guilt or consternation about having supported a racist, sexist, transphobe who lies about everything and honors nothing.

The progressives promise us a future with wholesale transformation in every sector: the economy, the military, the health care industry and education. They see a generational opportunity, indeed an existential emergency, to not only alter America’s course, but in some cases to tear down sectors and rebuild them altogether.

But their approaches, I fear, stray too far afield from where most Americans are. Voters simply want to get rid of Trump or to keep him. Liberal voters are not interested in candidates who kowtow to the white nationalists in the Rust Belt who not only voted for Trump but still cheer for him. Whenever I hear candidates talking about their natural appeal to these voters, my spidey senses are activated.

These are those who cheer for a man who saw [*“very fine people on both sides”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/us/politics/trump-press-conference-transcript.html) in Charlottesville, Va. These are people who see no problem with the separation of migrant families. These are people who abide by the president employing white nationalists in his administration.

I am quite frankly suspicious of the candidate who actively appeals to these people. Their continued support for Trump isn’t just some small mistake they made, like picking up a zucchini instead of a cucumber at the market.

No, their Trump support is a value statement, one that turns on the denial of other people’s rights to freedom, equality and safe existence.

How can a person appeal to me and to that person simultaneously and do so with integrity and honor?

At the same time, transformational change sounds good and smart in theory, but it simply isn’t most Trump-resisting Americans’ most urgent concern. Removing Trump is. Furthermore, the federal government is notoriously inefficient and problem-prone. It would most likely take it decades to carry out a single large-scale change and tweak it until it worked properly. It is impossible for me to believe that any candidate could manage major change in multiple areas at the same time.

This is not to say that the proposals of the progressive candidates don’t have merit. They do. Their goals are the right ones for the Democratic Party and the planet. But this election will not likely be the proving ground for these proposals.

In this cycle, it is hard to sell reorganizing the whole country to people who are simply afraid that Trump is going to destroy the whole country.

That is a reason that Tuesday night’s debate got a bit too far down into the weeds for me. Indeed, although the ability of candidates to make sustained arguments has improved and the number of people allowed on the stage has shrunk, there remains a sort of nerdy gladiator feel to them that numbs with numbers.

Trump has laid out his vision for America: It is the racial Hunger Games. It is a dystopian future in which maximum pressure is applied to minority immigrants and trading partners, all to insulate the white ***working class***. Trump is the white nationalist candidate selling the racial romance of reverting America to a time when white workers were virtually guaranteed success and prosperity, often at the expense and exclusion of others.

The Democratic candidates, too, would be well warned to stick to a vision — a diametrically opposite and dynamically animating vision that will activate and energize the targets of Trump’s aggressions.

If I see Trump as a pestilence I may not see in your tome of plans a cure.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/us/politics/trump-press-conference-transcript.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/us/politics/trump-press-conference-transcript.html). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/us/politics/trump-press-conference-transcript.html).

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PHOTO: President Trump at a rally in Toledo, Ohio, last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 17, 2020

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[***In Historic Vote, House Approves Statehood for the District of Columbia***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6073-7401-JBG3-61TK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 26, 2020 Friday 09:08 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1197 words

**Byline:** Emily Cochrane

**Highlight:** It is the first time a chamber of Congress has approved establishing the nation’s capital as the 51st state. The measure is all but certain to die in the Republican-led Senate.

**Body**

It is the first time a chamber of Congress has approved establishing the nation’s capital as the 51st state. The measure is all but certain to die in the Republican-led Senate.

WASHINGTON — The House of Representatives voted nearly along party lines on Friday to grant [*statehood to Washington, D.C.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/politics/biden-dc-statehood.html), the first time a chamber of Congress has approved establishing the nation’s capital as a state.

The legislation, which is unlikely to advance in the Republican-led Senate, would establish a 51st state — Washington, Douglass Commonwealth, named in honor of Frederick Douglass — and allow it two senators and a voting representative in the House. The National Mall, the White House, Capitol Hill and some other federal property would remain under congressional jurisdiction, with the rest of the land becoming the new state.

The vote was 232 to 180, with every Republican and one Democrat voting “no.”

Republicans have long opposed the move to give congressional representation to the District of Columbia, where more than three-quarters of voters are registered Democrats, but the long-suffering movement for statehood, led by Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, the capital’s lone nonvoting delegate, has been pressing for a vote on the matter for years.

When Democrats assumed the House majority last year, Ms. Norton secured a promise from leaders to bring up the bill [*for the first time in more than a quarter-century*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/politics/biden-dc-statehood.html).

Anger over the Trump administration’s handling of racial justice protests — particularly the use of federal officers in the city and [*the violent removal of protesters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/politics/biden-dc-statehood.html) from Lafayette Square outside the White House — further galvanized advocates of statehood and cast a national spotlight on how much control the federal government retains over more than 700,000 residents in the District of Columbia.

“Over the last few months, the nation, and even the world, has witnessed the discriminatory and outrageous treatment of D.C. residents by the federal government,” Ms. Norton said on Friday on the House floor, where she was unable to cast a vote for the bill she championed. “The federal occupation of D.C. occurred solely because the president thought he could get away with it here. He was wrong.”

The bill, which passed along party lines, is not expected to become law. The White House issued a veto threat against it on Wednesday, declaring the measure unconstitutional.

Republicans in the Senate, where the legislation would have to meet a bipartisan 60-vote threshold to advance, have rejected the idea, arguing that if representation for its citizens was the sole issue, the District of Columbia should simply be absorbed into Maryland, another heavily Democratic state.

“Retrocession wouldn’t give the Democrats their real aim: two Democratic senators in perpetuity to rubber-stamp the swamp’s agenda, so you won’t hear them talk about it,” Senator Tom Cotton, Republican of Arkansas, said on Thursday in a lengthy diatribe on the floor.

He declared that Wyoming, a state with a smaller population, was a “well-rounded, ***working-class*** state” superior to Washington, which would amount to “an appendage of the federal government” full of lobbyists and civil servants. Wyoming is more than 80 percent white, while the majority of the District of Columbia is composed of people of color.

The arguments against statehood on the House floor barely shifted since the full chamber last [*debated the merits*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/politics/biden-dc-statehood.html) of granting statehood to Washington more than a quarter of a century ago. Opponents questioned the constitutional merits, arguing that the founding fathers intentionally did not establish the nation’s capital as a state. Others questioned whether the District of Columbia was geographically and economically viable to be a state.

“Our nation’s founders made it clear that D.C. is not meant to be a state,” said Representative Jody B. Hice, Republican of Georgia. “They thought about it, they debated it, and they rejected it.”

Representative Collin C. Peterson of Minnesota was the sole Democrat to join Republicans in opposing the measure on Friday.

Top Democrats, several wearing masks with a symbol of the statehood movement, took to the floor to argue passionately for its passage, denouncing the disenfranchisement of Washington residents. Applause broke out on the floor as soon as the bill reached the necessary 218 threshold to pass.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi, at her weekly news conference in the Capitol, dismissed as shortsighted the Republican arguments that the new state would simply give Democrats a political advantage. Alaska and Hawaii, she pointed out, had entered the union as overwhelmingly Democratic and Republican states and then flipped politically.

“What the state is, that can change over time,” Ms. Pelosi said. “But the fact is, people in the District of Columbia pay taxes, fight wars, risk their lives for our democracy — and yet in this place, they have no vote in the House and Senate.”

The District of Columbia, where license plates read “Taxation without representation,” has long been burdened by a lack of federal representation.

The capital first earned three electoral votes and the right to vote for president in 1961 with the passage of the 23rd Amendment. The right to elect a nonvoting delegate came a decade later, but lawmakers could not agree on whether to give that delegate the right to vote, and the statehood legislation never survived a floor vote.

The disparity has gained renewed national attention during the coronavirus pandemic and the protests over racial injustice. In [*the $2.2 trillion stimulus law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/politics/biden-dc-statehood.html) enacted in March, the District of Columbia received a small fraction of the funds doled out to states to help dull the economic effect of the virus because it was treated as a territory, despite customarily being granted funding as if it were a state.

And when the administration flooded the streets of Washington with National Guard forces from elsewhere and troops in riot gear during protests over the death of George Floyd in police custody, Ms. Bowser [*had few options*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/politics/biden-dc-statehood.html) this month because of how much control Congress maintains over the District of Columbia’s finances and laws.

“Denying D.C. statehood to over 700,000 residents, the majority of them black and brown, is systemic racism,” said Stasha Rhodes, campaign director of the pro-statehood group 51 for 51. “D.C. statehood is one of the most urgent civil rights and racial justice issues of our time — and we know we are on the right side of history.”

Ms. Bowser, a fifth-generation Washingtonian, told reporters at a news conference on Thursday that she was “born here without a vote, but I swear I will not die here without a vote.”

The House vote, she said, would lay the groundwork for another administration to make statehood law. Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, has said [*he would support the move*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/us/politics/biden-dc-statehood.html).

Nicholas Fandos contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Speaker Nancy Pelosi discussing the historic statehood measure on Thursday. The Senate is unlikely to go along.; Mayor Muriel Bowser said the vote would lay the groundwork for another president to act. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 13, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Humans Are the Prey***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YDV-TCP1-DXY4-X50F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 14, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1; CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

**Length:** 1092 words

**Byline:** By Jason Bailey

**Body**

''The Hunt'' puts a satirical, political spin on a premise that has been remade many times. Why is it so attractive to filmmakers?

A young woman awakens in the woods, gagged, confused and afraid. Wandering through the trees and brush, she spots several other people similarly constrained, and together they move toward an open field, where a giant wooden crate awaits them. Inside they find, strangely, a fully clothed pig -- and an arsenal of weapons. No sooner have they armed themselves than the carnage begins, and these confused strangers are picked off in a flurry of gunfire, land mines and hand grenades. They're being hunted.

The opening scenes of Craig Zobel's ''The Hunt'' are pointedly free of all but the vaguest exposition, mostly for dramatic effect; it takes some time to figure out exactly who is doing the hunting, who is being hunted and why -- and these revelations provide much of the narrative fuel for the controversy-soaked picture. The screenwriters Nick Cuse and Damon Lindelof are able to leave their audience in the dark, at least in terms of specifics, because they're drawing on a story that has become common cultural currency.

Richard Connell's short story ''The Most Dangerous Game'' was first published in Collier's magazine in 1924. This grisly little tale concerned a big-game hunter who finds himself on a remote island inhabited by the character General Zaroff, a wealthy eccentric who has grown tired of stalking wild creatures and instead ''had to invent a new animal to hunt'': man.

''Life is for the strong, to be lived by the strong, and, if needs be, taken by the strong,'' Zaroff explains. ''The weak of the world were put here to give the strong pleasure. I am strong. Why should I not use my gift?''

Connell's story and the taboos of its underlying idea have proven surprisingly durable in popular culture -- and, like the best horror narratives, malleable to the political and artistic ideas of changing times. If the original short story was part of the tradition of adventure fiction so prevalent in the era, Zaroff's philosophy smacks of Darwin's ''survival of the fittest'' concept, or at least a misinterpretation of it.

By the time the first film adaptation of ''The Most Dangerous Game'' hit screens eight years later, Zaroff was being shown in a new way. Released in 1932, this B-movie from RKO Radio Pictures and directed by Irving Pichel and Ernest B. Schoedsack (the latter would go on to co-direct ''King Kong,'' using many of the same jungle sets and some of the same cast) was praised by the Times critic Mordaunt Hall, in spite of ''its gruesome ideas and its weird plot.''

The adaptation is fairly faithful, with one key alteration: the screenwriter James Ashmore Creelman changed its villainous mastermind from a Cossack general to a Russian count. Heavily accented dialogue emanating from beneath his knitted brow as he creepily roams his luxurious mansion, Count Zaroff seems less inspired by Connell's text than by Bela Lugosi's performance in Universal's 1931 film ''Dracula'' -- with a dash of the mad scientist from the studio's ''Frankenstein'' (released the same year).

Whatever the source, Zaroff's isolation, accent and insanity (the original ads referred to him as a ''half-mad hunter'') mark him as one thing above all else: an Other. This idea was made more explicit by the next official adaptation, ''A Game of Death'' (1945), which transformed Zaroff into Erich Krieger, a Nazi hiding on his own island in the wake of World War II. Subsequent adaptations, like ''Run for the Sun'' (1956) and ''Bloodlust!'' (1961), maintained this comfortable structure: a madman, targeting and slaughtering innocents in isolation.

But times have changed, audiences have grown more cynical, and filmmakers' approaches to this pliable narrative have adjusted accordingly -- sculpting the broad strokes and basic ideas of ''The Most Dangerous Game'' into pointed social commentary and dystopian hypotheticals in which the hunter of man is not a deranged maniac but the State itself.

One of the earliest (and grisliest) such examples is ''Turkey Shoot'' (1982), from the Australian exploitation director Brian Trenchard-Smith. In a totalitarian state in the near-future, the film's hunted are social rebels and so-called deviants, plucked from a concentration camp and set out in the surrounding wilderness to kill or be killed by guards and elite ''special guests.'' The victims are, of course, ***working class***, their struggle contrasted with images of their hunters drinking from brandy snifters and giggling, ''Beats the hell out of network television.''

Then again, why not televise it? Paul Michael Glaser's ''The Running Man'' (1987), adapted from the pseudonymous Stephen King novel, works from a similar premise: In this police-state future, criminals are promised a chance at pardons if they can outrun and outwit ''stalkers'' bent on killing them. The spectacle is broadcast on live television, in a game-show format. Those elements also come into play in the Japanese film ''Battle Royale'' (2000) and the similar (some would say suspiciously so) ''Hunger Games'' franchise, in which government elites force their lower-class youth to hunt each other for sport -- and for everyone else's entertainment.

But the most effective modern takes are those, like ''The Hunt,'' that shine the narrative through a prism of class (and, to a lesser extent, race). John Woo's ''Hard Target'' (1993) imagines a New Orleans underworld in which ultrarich big-game hunters pay big bucks to stalk homeless veterans. Similar prey sits at the center of Ernest R. Dickerson's ''Surviving the Game'' (1994), as a hunting party -- including a Wall Street titan and a Texas oilman -- hire a resourceful homeless man to be their wilderness guide. Only later does he discover that they've paid $50,000 each for a chance to kill him.

When the predators and their prey have only the elements at their disposal -- without wealth and influence -- the playing field is leveled. That's the situation facing Crystal (Betty Gilpin), the heroine of ''The Hunt,'' in a story that connects itself even more explicitly (clumsily, perhaps) to the current political climate.

But ultimately, the latest twist on ''The Most Dangerous Game'' proves it a timeless story in which a powerful force (be it a rich madman, a hidden Nazi, a fascist government or a wealthy cabal) believes they can violate the ultimate taboo, only to find that morality and civility must prevail. No matter how high the body count may be.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/13/movies/the-hunt-most-dangerous-game.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/13/movies/the-hunt-most-dangerous-game.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ''The Most Dangerous Game'' has been remade many times. Among the most recent is ''The Hunt,'' above. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PATTI PERRET/UNIVERSAL PICTURES) (C1)

Joel McCrea and Fay Wray in the first film version of ''The Most Dangerous Game,'' in 1932. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RKO RADIO PICTURES) (C4)

**Load-Date:** March 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Financial Minefield Awaiting an Ex-President Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61T7-9JY1-DXY4-X2ST-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 19, 2021 Tuesday 07:03 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1492 words

**Byline:** Russ Buettner and Susanne Craig

**Highlight:** Baseless election fraud claims and the Capitol riot have compounded already-looming threats to his bottom line. And the cash lifelines he once relied on are gone.

**Body**

Baseless election fraud claims and the Capitol riot have compounded already-looming threats to his bottom line. And the cash lifelines he once relied on are gone.

Not long after he strides across the White House grounds Wednesday morning for the last time as president, [*Donald J. Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) will step into a [*financial*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) minefield that appears to be unlike anything he has faced since his earlier brushes with collapse.

The tax records that he has long fought to keep hidden, revealed in a New York Times [*investigation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) last September, detailed his financial challenges:

Many of his resorts were losing millions of dollars a year even before the pandemic struck. Hundreds of millions of dollars in loans, which he personally guaranteed, must be repaid within a few years. He has burned through much of his cash and easy-to-sell assets. And a decade-old I.R.S. audit threatens to cost him more than $100 million to resolve.

In his earlier dark moments, Mr. Trump was able to rescue businesses he runs with multimillion-dollar infusions from his father or licensing deals borne of his television celebrity. Those lifelines are gone. And his divisive presidency has steadily eroded the mainstream marketability of the brand that is at the heart of his business.

That trend has only accelerated with his evidence-free campaign to subvert the outcome of the presidential election, which culminated in the Jan. 6 assault on the Capitol. In its wake, his last-ditch lender vowed to cut him off. The [*P.G.A. canceled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) an upcoming championship at a Trump golf course, and New York City moved to [*strip him of contracts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) to run several venues.

Mr. Trump’s family has portrayed his departure from office as opening new opportunities that were closed off while he was president. His son Eric, who has helped run the Trump Organization, recently [*told The Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) that the company expected significant demand for overseas branding deals involving Mr. Trump. The family has also considered starting a [*media company*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) to connect with his supporters.

“There has never been a political figure with more support or energy behind them than my father,” Eric Trump said in a statement. “There will be no shortage of incredible opportunities in real estate and beyond.”

But without a new lender, or a new line of revenue that does not require a large investment of time and money, the soon-to-be-former president is likely to face hard choices, including possibly being pinched into selling underperforming golf courses or his hotel in the Old Post Office Building in Washington.

“Trump is so reputationally toxic that a lot of financial institutions won’t want to do business with him,” said [*Adam J. Levitin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html), a law professor at Georgetown University who focuses on finance and bankruptcy.

And while Mr. Trump maintains a vast and devoted following among ***working-class*** supporters, they are not, for the most part, the future clientele of the resorts that became magnets for suitors seeking to rub shoulders, or win favors, from [*a sitting president*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html).

Even in defeat, Mr. Trump has raised [*more than $250 million in political donations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) since the election. Yet while some of that money could be spent in ways that artfully, or aggressively, intermingle expenses on political work with personal and business costs, campaign finance laws would not allow Mr. Trump to use the entire amount to buttress his businesses.

After prior challenges, Mr. Trump portrayed himself as a comeback kid, someone who independently rose above financial adversity by striking fabulous new deals. What he hid from view was the degree to which his [*father’s fortune*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) and a [*second fortune*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html) of entertainment money — the combined equivalent today of nearly $1 billion — provided a reservoir of cash that could cover repeated failures.

In the late 1980s, as his hodgepodge empire of casinos, hotels, an airline and a football team began to collapse under the weight of excessive debt and high expenses, Mr. Trump’s father secretly stepped in, covering a $3 million interest payment here, a $15 million loss on a new apartment building there.

Later, after the financial crisis that began in 2008, Mr. Trump defaulted on huge loans on [*his Chicago tower*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html), much of his commercial space went empty and his casinos neared another bankruptcy. Though disaster loomed for the businesses he was running, Mr. Trump collected more than $154 million from 2008 through 2011 from “The Apprentice” and licensing his name for use on projects run by other people.

He received the last multimillion-dollar share of his inheritance about two years ago. And the wellspring of entertainment riches had nearly dried up by the time he entered politics, falling from profits in excess of $50 million during peak years to below $3 million in 2018. (Of course, not paying his debts also played a significant role in both turnarounds.)

The Times obtained tax-return data for Mr. Trump spanning more than two decades, including information from his personal returns through 2017, and from his business returns through 2018. The records show that many of his businesses have rarely, if ever, stood on their own.

His three golf resorts in Scotland and Ireland, for example, recorded steep and consistent cash losses. Through 2018, Mr. Trump pumped an additional $66 million of cash into the three resorts in the years since they had reopened, helping keep them afloat.

The Trump International Hotel in Washington, which opened in 2016, posted cash losses each year through 2018. Mr. Trump put $17.6 million more into the hotel during those years, on top of his original investment. And the situation likely grew more bleak last year. Since the pandemic struck, the hotel has opened for overnight guests, but the bar, a popular meeting spot for government officials and Trump supporters, [*remains closed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html).

As his entertainment fortunes faded, Mr. Trump filled part of the resulting gap with a $100 million mortgage on [*Trump Tower*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html)’s commercial space, and by selling off nearly all of his stocks and bonds, a total of more than $270 million for 2014 through 2016.

But now he faces loans coming due: $100 million on Trump Tower next year; $125 million on his Doral golf resort in Florida in 2023; and $170 million on the Washington hotel in 2024. Mr. Trump personally guaranteed most of that debt, which means the lenders could pursue his other assets if he cannot pay or refinance.

His prospects grew more dire after the violence at the Capitol, when Deutsche Bank — the last mainstream bank willing to do business with Mr. Trump in recent years and his lender on Doral and the Washington hotel — said it would [*no longer lend to him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/trump-financial-disclosure.html).

Phillip Braun, a finance professor at Northwestern University’s Kellogg School of Management, expects that Mr. Trump will find another lender, but at a price.

“He will be able to find credit if he is willing to pay higher rates,” Mr. Braun said.

The president’s greatest long-term money producer appears to be one of his first projects: the retail and commercial spaces in and around Trump Tower, in Manhattan, which for years reliably delivered more than $20 million a year in profits. But the downturn in brick-and-mortar retail before the pandemic, combined with the economic effects of the virus, have put even that key piece of his financial success in question.

And though Mr. Trump still has assets he could sell to generate cash, he does not have the authority to unilaterally sell what is perhaps the most valuable: a 30 percent stake in two office buildings controlled by Vornado Realty Trust. The investment, which Mr. Trump practically stumbled into and does not manage, has proved to be one of his greatest and most reliable sources of income, but Mr. Trump cannot sell it without Vornado’s consent.

The decade-old I.R.S. audit poses an additional risk. According to records obtained by The Times, it appears to have begun after Mr. Trump claimed that giving up his stake in his casino business for nothing entitled him to a refund of $72.9 million — all the federal income tax he had paid (plus interest) for 2005 through 2008, when his television celebrity exposed him to large income tax bills for the first time in years.

The refund automatically set off an audit, which remained active at least into last spring. Records suggest that the matter was put on hold while he was in office, but it may resume after he leaves. An unfavorable ruling could cost Mr. Trump more than $100 million, with interest and penalties.

Mr. Trump also faces legal threats that could deepen any financial hardship, including investigations into potential tax fraud being pursued by the Manhattan district attorney and the New York attorney general, as well as civil suits for his role in promoting a multilevel marketing scheme.

Mike McIntire contributed reporting.

Mike McIntire contributed reporting.

PHOTO: President Trump’s options for raising needed money after he leaves office could include selling his hotel in Washington. (POOL PHOTO BY OLIVER CONTRERAS) (A22)

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2021

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[***The A Train and the Macarena: 5 Highlights From the Mayor’s Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625D-3Y01-JBG3-60JJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

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**Byline:** Jeffery C. Mays, Dana Rubinstein and Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Highlight:** Candidates sparred over their subway smarts and did some virtual dancing, while the former sanitation commissioner got support from influential women.

**Body**

Candidates sparred over their subway smarts and did some virtual dancing, while the former sanitation commissioner got support from influential women.

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)]

While Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo’s troubles dominated the headlines, the bevy of candidates running for New York City mayor trudged onward, dutifully showing up for yet more online forums and occasionally taking swings at their opponents’ foibles.

The city’s new ranked-choice voting scheme is supposed to make the mayoral race nicer, since candidates are vying not only for first place, but also for second, third, fourth and fifth place, too. In such a scenario, it doesn’t pay to alienate a competitor’s supporters.

That friendliness was on display after the Hotel Trades Council, a powerful union, endorsed Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president.

Andrew Yang’s co-campaign managers made a point of saying [*nice things*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) on Twitter. But the bonhomie didn’t last long.

Adams and Yang spar over subways

When Mr. Yang wrote on Twitter that he was [*“Bronx bound” while on the A train*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) — a line that ends in Upper Manhattan — he gave new life to criticism that he lacked expertise about the city he hopes to govern.

“Someone get Andrew Yang a subway map,” the New York Daily News wrote.

The ribbing didn’t end there. The next day, Mr. Adams, who has placed second behind Mr. Yang in most polls, posted a photo of himself on Twitter suggesting that he knew how to get to the Bronx by subway.

Chris Coffey, Mr. Yang’s co-campaign manager, quickly responded: “Did your car and driver meet you in the Bronx?”

Mr. Coffey pointed out that Mr. Yang had switched from the A train to the D train at 125th Street and traveled to 167th Street in the Bronx to tour small businesses with Vanessa L. Gibson, a councilwoman from the borough who is running for borough president.

It wasn’t the first time last week that Mr. Adams had targeted Mr. Yang for criticism. The two men are also sparring over universal basic income, Mr. Yang’s signature proposal from his run for the Democratic nomination for president.

Mr. Yang [*introduced a version of the plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) for New York City that calls for providing 500,000 of the city’s poorest residents with an average of $2,000 per year, and would cost about $1 billion.

Speaking Friday at a virtual event hosted by the Association for a Better New York, Mr. Adams [*touted his plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) to boost the city’s earned-income tax credit to provide 900,000 New Yorkers with up to $4,000 per year.

Mr. Adams never mentioned Mr. Yang’s name but his language was caustic: He referred to his opponent’s proposal as “UBLie” and “snake oil,” and said the city did not need “empty promises” from “hollow salesmen.”

Mr. Adams’s criticisms are a sign that he’s worried, Mr. Coffey suggested.

“Hitting Andrew Yang, who is widely credited with making cash relief mainstream, at the same time as stimulus is starting to go out defies logic,” he said. “It’s almost as silly as trying to mock a lifetime subway rider when you have had a car and driver for seven years.”

Truth, dare or dance?

The high school students at the [*Teens Take Charge*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) mayoral forum on Thursday grilled the candidates on tough issues such as summer jobs, funding for the City University of New York and the specialized high school entrance exam. They were ruthless moderators, holding the candidates to the allotted time to answer questions and even cutting them off when necessary.

But that doesn’t mean they didn’t have fun at an event that many participants called the best mayoral forum so far.

During the first “truth, dare or dance” round of the 2021 mayoral election season, the candidates could choose a truth, a dare or a 15-second dance to a song that the students had randomly chosen.

No candidates chose to dance, but as the segment was ending, Shaun Donovan, a former federal housing secretary, was apparently dismayed that he had not gotten a chance to [*bust a move*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html).

“Can we dance now?” Mr. Donovan asked.

One of the hosts, Carmen Lopez Villamil, offered 15 seconds to allow all the candidates to dance at once.

“For real, we’re going to dance?” Dianne Morales, a nonprofit executive, said with a shocked look.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)]

As the song “Macarena” began to play, Mr. Yang was the first one out of his seat, followed closely by Mr. Donovan and Maya Wiley, the former legal counsel for Mayor Bill de Blasio.

“You’ve got to turn it up a little bit,” said Ms. Wiley.

Ms. Morales swayed to the beat with verve and rhythm. Mr. Donovan did a spin. Mr. Yang looked like he was doing a bit of salsa dancing, while Scott Stringer, the New York City comptroller, stuck to a quick two-step while wiggling a bit. Ms. Wiley also looked like she was grooving, but she was too close to the camera for the audience to check out her moves.

“I love to dance but hoped for the Black Eyed Peas,” Ms. Wiley told The Times. “The Macarena isn’t my flava.”

Unfortunately — or maybe fortunately — no one actually [*did the Macarena*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html).

Mr. Donovan admitted to not knowing how to do the dance but said he saw the opportunity as the “antidote” to hours of Zoom conferences.

Adams lands the second big union endorsement

Mr. Adams has taken to saying that he will be a [*“blue-collar mayor.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) He talks about how his mother cleaned houses to support their family when he was growing up. Last week, the Hotel Trades Council endorsed Mr. Adams, calling him the “candidate of and for ***working-class*** New Yorkers.”

The well-connected union has 31,000 workers, 22,000 of whom are registered to vote in the city. That can mean crucial votes in a crowded field, more small-dollar donations and campaign workers on the ground.

It was the second big union endorsement in the race after Ms. Wiley was [*recently endorsed*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) by Local 1199 of the Service Employees International Union. It came as the pandemic has shut many city hotels and left workers unemployed. The number of visitors to New York City [*was down 66 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in 2020 compared with the year before. Even with vaccination numbers on the rise, NYC &amp; Company projects that tourism may not rebound until 2025.

Mr. Adams recently endorsed a plan with another mayoral candidate, Carlos Menchaca, a councilman from Brooklyn, to turn underutilized hotels outside of Manhattan into affordable housing. Many of those hotels are nonunion.

Mr. Adams is also in favor of a special citywide hotel permit for hotel construction, a policy Mr. de Blasio is trying to push through before his term is out. The Hotel Trades Council is backing the measure.

If the city’s hospitality industry is to rebound, it needs tax relief, public safety, real-time reporting on vaccination rates and a “robust marketing effort,” Mr. Adams said.

A biking mayor?

There is a good chance that the next mayor will be a regular cyclist.

The candidates showed off their cycling bona fides at a [*forum last week*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html): Raymond J. McGuire showed off a [*sleek bike perched behind him*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in his elaborate Zoom setup, and Mr. Adams said he goes for a ride when he is feeling stressed.

Mr. Yang said he got a bike when his first son was born and rode it from Hell’s Kitchen to the Financial District to take him to school.

“It was a game changer for me,” Mr. Yang said.

Many of the candidates said they want to continue to add protected bike lanes. Mr. Stringer plans to [*double bike ridership*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), move toward a [*car-free Manhattan*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) and make sure that bike lanes are clearly separated from traffic so that his sons can ride safely.

“We have to use our children as the barometer for whether we think a bike lane is safe,” he said at the forum.

Mr. Donovan was perhaps the most serious cyclist: He once biked through the South to retrace the 1961 Freedom Rides.

“I’m pretty sure no other candidate in this race has cycled 1,000 miles retracing the route of the Freedom Rides,” he said.

Executive women support Garcia

Let one thing be clear: Kathryn S. Wylde, the executive of the Wall Street-backed Partnership for New York City, is not endorsing Kathryn Garcia for mayor. She said she does not endorse because she will have to work with whoever gets elected.

But she does think that Ms. Garcia, along with a couple of other candidates, would make for a very good mayor. That’s why she co-hosted a fund-raiser for Ms. Garcia, the former Sanitation Department commissioner, last week.

So, too, did another business executive — Alicia Glen, a former deputy mayor in the de Blasio administration and one of the few de Blasio officials to earn plaudits from New York’s business class.

Ms. Garcia said she interpreted Ms. Glen’s support as an endorsement, but deferred to Ms. Glen, who didn’t respond to requests for comment.

Ms. Wylde said that she encouraged Ms. Garcia to run, much as she encouraged Mr. Donovan and Mr. McGuire, because she thinks Ms. Garcia would run the city well. She was particularly impressed by Ms. Garcia’s reform of the notoriously dangerous and inefficient commercial garbage collection system.

“She’s somebody that brings people together to solve problems, and I’d like to see our next mayor be that kind of person,” Ms. Wylde said.

Ms. Wylde has been working in politics since the late 1960s, when there were virtually no women in elected government.

No woman has ever been mayor of New York. Ms. Wylde deflected when asked if she thought a woman could win this time around.

“Historically, in any profession in New York City, women have a tough time getting ahead,” she said.

PHOTO: When Andrew Yang wrote on Twitter that he was “Bronx bound” while on the A train, the criticism was immediate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brendan Mcdermid/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 28, 2021

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[***Sherrod Brown Thinks Progressives Will Be ‘Pretty Happy’ With Biden***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61S5-W4G1-DXY4-X0J1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Talmon Joseph Smith

**Highlight:** In an interview, the incoming Senate Banking Committee chairman opened up about bypassing bipartisanship if necessary, the looming housing crisis and more.

**Body**

In an interview, the incoming Senate Banking Committee chairman opened up about bypassing bipartisanship if necessary, the looming housing crisis and more.

Early in the morning on Jan. 6, Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio woke up pleasantly surprised. Democratic victories in both Georgia Senate runoffs the night before meant he was suddenly poised to become chairman of the Senate Banking and Housing Committee, whose expansive purview includes oversight of the nation’s central bank, our financial system, the housing market and a wide network of executive branch agencies.

Only hours later, Mr. Brown found himself sheltering in place in a secure location with 74 other senators as an insurrectionist mob of Trump supporters laid siege to the Capitol building to stop the certification of President-elect Joe Biden’s victory in November’s election.

On Tuesday, six days after the attack on the Capitol, still determined to pursue a populist economic agenda amid impeachment debates and the Covid-19 crisis, Mr. Brown briefed me on his hopes for the next stimulus talks, his willingness to work around the filibuster and his priorities for the committee, one the most powerful lawmaking beachheads in Congress.

In a statement late yesterday, the senator praised Mr. Biden’s announcement of a $1.9 trillion stimulus proposal as a “bold plan” that “would deliver the results Americans voted for by increasing stimulus checks to $2,000, dramatically expanding the Child Tax Credit and Earned-income tax credit, helping families stay in their homes” and “providing critical funding for the massive vaccine distribution effort we need to overcome this pandemic.” And he urged Congress to “work on this plan quickly.”

But evading Republican obstruction and convincing Mr. Biden, an instinctually cautious politician, to go it alone if necessary is certain to put his earnest Midwest optimism to the test.

Talmon Joseph Smith: I wanted to ask if you support reopening any Federal Reserve emergency lending facilities similar to the Municipal Lending Facility and the Main Street Lending Facility that the Trump Treasury Department and Republican senators shut down during the last set of negotiations? Mayors [*have said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-hurricane-katrina-anniversary.html) the interest rate and the three-year payback window that was offered to cities by the Fed was far too onerous.

Sherrod Brown: Yeah, I opposed Secretary Mnuchin’s doing that at the time. And I leave it up to the administration on where they want to go. But the reason I opposed Mnuchin then was that there was no avenue for state and local governments. This new Biden economic proposal will surely include, I would think, hundreds of billions of dollars for state and local governments. So I am really looking to what the administration wants to do, where they want to go on whether to resurrect them.

I would combine that with something we want to do in this committee, but that will not be part of this package: Set up “Fed accounts” so that anybody that wants a bank account in this country — a no-fee bank account, where they don’t get nickeled and dimed and payday lenders don’t swoop down on them — can have basic banking access.

TJS: Looking at so many of your priorities: A lot of it seems impossible unless you all pass things through simple majorities rather than through the bipartisan wrangling needed to get to the 60-vote filibuster-proof threshold required under normal circumstances.

The incoming Senate Budget Committee chairman, [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-hurricane-katrina-anniversary.html), plans to push for using the [*reconciliation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-hurricane-katrina-anniversary.html) process to pass, via simple majorities, a much larger follow-up relief bill than what could be possible with a typical 60-vote threshold. But he also wants to push other major reforms through reconciliation — which will push the process’s legal limits. How far do you think you all can responsibly go?

SB: As far as we can go! I would start with what has unanimous or close to unanimous support in the Democratic Caucus. And, you know, there are many of Bernie’s plans that don’t. So I start with that. But I take it from a different direction, I would say, “What can we get done?”

I’ll illustrate it this way. If we were to bring to the floor the $2,000 direct payment, I think that we could very well get 10 Republicans to vote for that. I would like to do as many of these things as we can through regular order. But we can’t allow this health crisis to turn into even more of a housing crisis and then turn in to a financial-slash-banking crisis, which it will if we don’t address it in a much bigger way than [Senator Mitch] McConnell was willing to.

TJS: Finance experts I spoke to said that, as a consequence of the regulatory rollbacks in the latest relief bill — which allow major banks to [*hide*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-hurricane-katrina-anniversary.html) from the markets the scale of their troubled pandemic-related loan restructuring — even civil servants at the Fed have no clear idea about what’s actually going on with banks’ balance sheets right now.

Is there action that you all on the committee can take — if not through legislation, then through hearings — to get some more insight into what’s going on here?

SB: I’d answer it this way: The days of Wall Street running the banking committee are past, and with Democrats in control of the Banking/Housing Committee, things are going to be different. It will mean hearings to unearth special deals that Wall Street has extricated. When Wall Street runs things, the stock market goes up and C.E.O. pay explodes, but wages barely budge, the middle class shrinks — those days need to be over.

TJS: One of Joe Biden’s plans that didn’t get as much coverage was [*his proposal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-hurricane-katrina-anniversary.html) to greatly expand the Section Eight Housing Choice Voucher Program, by essentially taking that federal rental assistance program and making it available to every family who qualifies.

As you know, around 11 million people who qualify are left out right now. Housing advocates [*say*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-hurricane-katrina-anniversary.html) you all could actually pass this expansion with a simple majority. So is that on the docket?

SB: I don’t really know from a parliamentary aspect whether that can go through with a simple majority or if it can’t. But you’ve heard some of these numbers that, before the pandemic, 25 percent of renters in this country paid more than half their income in rent and utilities — one thing goes wrong, their car breaks down, their child gets sick, they miss a week of work because of a minor injury, and they’re evicted and their lives are turned upside down.

I see it in my city. I was talking to a banker in Cleveland yesterday about how there are a lot of homes that are livable, that with a few $1,000 renovations could be a pretty nice, decent place to live. They would maybe only cost $40,000 or $50,000 to buy. But people can’t get a loan for it because the banks don’t lend for that. And how do we deal with that? We need to figure that out.

Some of it’s what you’re saying — Section 8, some of it’s tax credits of some sort. Some of it’s just how we figure out how to provide loans to make this neighborhood that was a prosperous ***working-class*** neighborhood be that again.

TJS: You saw how there was palpable concern in Washington that a Republican-led Senate would have veto power over President-elect Biden’s appointments.

SB: You did and then we won two runoff elections.

TJS: Exactly. So with that threat now presumably removed, what’s the reason for not, along with others in your caucus, pushing the incoming administration to appoint people with strong progressive track records and clearly projected plans to unlock some of the dormant powers within these agencies? Democrats have had a tendency to hand out some of these roles as rewards for party loyalists.

SB: Progressives like me are going to be pretty happy with some of these regulatory people. I’m thrilled with Janet Yellen. In the coming days, I think that we’re going to see people in a number of these agency offices that are good progressives. I wouldn’t have necessarily done it the same way. But I didn’t run for president.

And people like me are going to put pressure on these agencies to make sure they’re doing the right thing, because they’re getting plenty of pressure from the other side.

TJS: It is almost impossible under current congressional rules to incentivize Senator Joe Manchin, or anybody else who might be a crucial vote, to line up in favor of legislation that they have serious doubts about. That’s because of the current ban on earmarks, which allow lawmakers to add special provisions to bills that fund spending in their local districts and states. Do you support bringing them back?

SB: Yeah, I think earmarks make sense. I think earmarks work for good government. I’m not going to be spending a lot of time advocating for the change in policy, but I’m fine with it.

This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-hurricane-katrina-anniversary.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-hurricane-katrina-anniversary.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-hurricane-katrina-anniversary.html).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Silbiger/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What the ‘Fresh Prince’ of the ’90s Tells Us About Race Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:619T-9MY1-DXY4-X315-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Maria Cramer and Allyson Waller

**Highlight:** A generation ago, sitcoms with largely Black casts were must-see TV, balancing humor and drama. Will the “Bel-Air” reboot resonate in the era of Black Lives Matter?

**Body**

A generation ago, sitcoms with largely Black casts were must-see TV, balancing humor and drama. Will the “Bel-Air” reboot resonate in the era of Black Lives Matter?

Two Black teenagers in a Mercedes-Benz are pulled over by the police.

One, having grown up in West Philadelphia, has the wary look of someone who knows exactly how the situation will unfold. He gets out of the car and flops down on the hood, arms spread, while his sheltered, wealthy cousin from Bel-Air looks on, dumbfounded.

The scene, which played to howls of studio-audience laughter [*in a 1990 episode of “The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) portrayed a scenario that was all too familiar to many people of color: being racially profiled by the police.

Thirty years later, after mass demonstrations thrust the issues of racial injustice and police brutality to the forefront of the national debate, [*the show is being remade as a drama*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) for Peacock, NBCUniversal’s streaming service, and the original cast [*will reunite for a special that arrives on HBO Max on Thursday*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI).

A look back at the original “Fresh Prince” and other sitcoms of its era that focused on the lives of Black Americans shows how, even within confines of the three-camera format, these programs explored complicated issues of racial injustice, often in ways that walked a fine line between comedy and tragedy.

“We were funnier the more real we were,” said [*Jasmine Guy*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), who played a spoiled Southerner on [*“A Different World,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) a spinoff of “The Cosby Show” that ran from 1987 to 1993 and focused on students at Hillman, a fictional historically Black college.

Painful subjects like [*racial profiling*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), [*tokenism*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), [*the daily indignities of racism*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) [*and colorism*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) were mined for laughs that revealed deeper truths, said [*Frederick W. Gooding*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), an associate professor of African-American studies at Texas Christian University.

“Blacks have always had the challenge of playing the role of the jester where humor is used as protection against salient truths the king’s court tends to ignore,” he said.

‘I feel seen and I feel heard’

Morgan Cooper, 28, was in the second grade when he first saw the racial profiling scene in a rerun of “The Fresh Prince.” It was around the same time that his father told him how to react if they were ever stopped by the police.

For a Black boy growing up in Kansas City, Mo., the episode was revelatory, he said.

“I feel seen and I feel heard through this family,” he recalled thinking. “Though ‘Fresh Prince’ was a 30-minute sitcom, it was still planting seeds. It really used comedy as a Trojan Horse into these ideas.”

In 2019, Mr. Cooper filmed [*a three-and-a-half-minute trailer*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) that reimagined the sitcom as a drama called “Bel-Air,” with the principal character, Will, being sent to live with his rich uncle and aunt after he is caught with a gun. Mr. Cooper released it on YouTube, where it has been viewed nearly 6.7 million times.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI)]

The trailer got the attention of Will Smith, who played Will in the original series. He helped Mr. Cooper secure a two-season deal for “Bel-Air” on Peacock. Both men are now executive producers of the new show.

When “The Fresh Prince” premiered in 1990, networks, encouraged by the success of “The Cosby Show” and the rise of hip-hop, were investing in sitcoms featuring Black actors.

The 1990s “represents a moment in television history where you see the introduction of perhaps the greatest or largest number of Black situation comedies to ever be offered up,” said [*Robin Means Coleman*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), a professor who specializes in media, culture and identity at Texas A&amp;M University.

But the shows varied in how they tackled racial tension, if they tackled it all. “The Cosby Show,” for example, steered largely clear of the subject.

In its first season, “A Different World” continued that tradition, featuring conventional plots like one episode in which students carried an egg in a basket to learn about parental responsibility.

Then [*Debbie Allen*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) took over as director and [*the show began exploring more serious topics*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI). “We dealt with everything,” Ms. Allen said. “We dealt with date rape, racism, the L.A. riots.”

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI)]

“A Different World” became so well known for its social awareness [*that it was parodied on the sketch comedy show “In Living Color.”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI)

But there were still limitations.

Ms. Allen said she was not allowed to show a condom in an episode about AIDS. And Ms. Guy recalled that the network remained reluctant to air that episode even after Whoopi Goldberg and [*Tisha Campbell*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), who had appeared in “School Daze” and “Little Shop of Horrors,” agreed to guest star in it. “It always felt like we were so behind and they weren’t letting us free,” she said.

[*Cree Summer*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), who played the free-spirited Freddie on the show, said there “was a time where the censorship went very deep on these sitcoms.” Marveling at Ms. Allen’s determination, she added, “I don’t know how in the hell she got away with it.”

‘We were innocent’

Even the most racially conscious shows maintained a bright outlook that fit the optimistic, glossy tone of the 1990s.

There was no social media to give near daily reminders of racial injustice, said [*Daphne Maxwell Reid*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), who played Vivian, the matriarch on “The Fresh Prince,” from 1993 to 1996.

“We were innocent,” Ms. Reid said. “The economy was just chugging along. People were going about their growth and their lives in a more innocent way. They weren’t worried about the death of democracy.”

So when the shows did confront hard topics, the effect was that much more dramatic, Mr. Cooper said.

[*“Family Matters,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) a softhearted ABC series about a ***working-class*** Black family in Chicago, was known more for the antics of the buffoonish character [*Steve Urkel*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) than for its take on racial politics.

But in 1994, the show aired “Good Cop, Bad Cop,” in which Sergeant Carl Winslow, played by Reginald VelJohnson, confronts two white officers who stopped his son, Eddie, while he was driving.

The episode was written after the actor who played Eddie, Darius McCrary, told the producers he had been racially profiled while driving.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI)]

“The writers always had their hand on the pulse of America and society,” Mr. VelJohnson said. “I applaud them for their bravery and good sense to write an episode like that.”

A ‘Damning Referendum’ on Hollywood

The promise that those early ’90s shows would usher in a new and permanent era of programs with largely Black casts had largely [*fizzled by the early 2000s*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI).

By then, “The Cosby Show,” “A Different World,” “Family Matters” and “Fresh Prince” had all ended their network runs. UPN and WB, two networks that featured shows with Black casts, stopped broadcasting by the mid-2000s.

More recently, shows like “Atlanta,” “Blackish” and “Insecure” have centered their plots around the lives of Black families and young professionals as they contend with [*gentrification*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), [*preferences over skin tone*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), [*racially insensitive colleagues*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) and [*police brutality*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI).

But even those successes come with caveats. [*“Insecure,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI) an HBO comedy about a 20-something trying to navigate love and her career in Los Angeles, came about after its creator, [*Issa Rae*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhqZwXXS3pI), broke through on YouTube, Professor Gooding said.

Mr. Cooper, the creator of “Bel-Air,” used the same medium to get attention from the industry, Professor Gooding said.

“It’s a damning referendum on how difficult it is to penetrate the Hollywood system,” he said.

Ms. Summer, the “Different World” actress, says she still sees too many Black actors playing supporting parts, rather than leads. “I need a reflection of me,” she said, “not the white girl’s best friend.”

“I can count on one hand the shows where we’re the meat,” Ms. Summer added. “That ain’t cool. This is 2020. Get it together.”

PHOTO: Will Smith, left, and the cast of “The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air” reunited for a special that arrives on HBO Max on Thursday. And Peacock is planning “Bel-Air,” a reboot of the ’90s comedy as a drama, with a new cast. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HBO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 18, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Before Rage Flared, a Push to Make Israel’s Mixed Towns More Jewish***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62RN-B0W1-DXY4-X2SY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; middleeast

**Length:** 1856 words

**Byline:** Isabel Kershner

**Highlight:** An eruption of Arab-Jewish violence inside Israeli cities has focused attention on a movement of religious nationalists seeking to strengthen the Jewish presence in areas with large Arab populations.

**Body**

An eruption of Arab-Jewish violence inside Israeli cities has focused attention on a movement of religious nationalists seeking to strengthen the Jewish presence in areas with large Arab populations.

LOD, Israel — Years before the mixed Arab-Jewish city of Lod erupted in mob violence, a demographic shift had begun to take root: Hundreds of young Jews who support a religious, nationalist movement started to move into a mostly Arab neighborhood with the express aim of strengthening the Israeli city’s Jewish identity.

A similar change was playing out in other mixed Arab-Jewish cities inside Israel, such as nearby Ramla and Acre in the north — part of a loosely organized nationwide project known as Torah Nucleus. They say that their intention is to lift up poor and neglected areas on the margins of society, particularly in mixed cities, and to enrich Jewish life there. Its supporters have moved into dozens of Israeli cities and towns.

“Perhaps ours is a complex message,” said Avi Rokach, 43, chairman of the Torah Nucleus association in Lod. “Lod is a Jewish city. It is our agenda and our religious duty to look out for whoever lives here, be they Jewish, Muslim or Hindu.”

But in reality, the newcomers’ presence, at times, created tensions, which built up for years and erupted amid the latest outbreak of warfare between Israelis and Palestinians. Arab and Jewish mobs attacked each other in the worst violence within Israeli cities in decades, raising fears of a civil war. For many, the intensity of the animosity came as a shock.

For decades, hard-line Israeli nationalists have sought to shift the demographics of the occupied West Bank by building Jewish settlements, undermining the prospect of a two-state solution to the long-running Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

With far less attention and fanfare, the Torah Nucleus movement set out with an ideological mission to alter the balance of Israeli cities and promote its brand of Judaism inside the country.

The first families who moved into Acre and Lod 25 years ago came from West Bank settlements, and they aimed to make mixed or predominantly Arab communities more Jewish.

With West Bank settlement firmly entrenched — about 450,000 Jews now live among more than 2.6 million Palestinians — Torah Nucleus supporters see Israeli cities as a new horizon.

Most of the world considers Jewish settlements in the occupied territories a violation of international law, but this was an attempt to create change within Israel’s recognized boundaries. And many cast it as the new [*Zionism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/magazine/israel-american-jews.html).

“Religious Zionism hasn’t abandoned the old mission of Judea and Samaria,” said Reut Gets, who manages the Torah Nucleus association in Acre, referring to the West Bank by its biblical names.

But the focus now was on “the new challenge” within Israel itself, she said.

Lod, a city of about 80,000 people in central Israel, is about 70 percent Jewish and 30 percent Arab. Frictions there had long been kept on a low boil.

But on May 10, Palestinian protests and an Israeli police raid at the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem — one of Islam’s holiest sites — spilled over into a military conflict between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian militant group that controls the Gaza Strip.

It quickly ignited violence between mobs of Arabs and Jews in Israel’s cities, starting in Lod and rapidly spreading across the country as internal fault lines were [*abruptly exposed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/13/world/asia/israel-lod-arab-jewish.html?searchResultPosition=3).

In Lod, hundreds of the city’s Arab citizens took to the streets, throwing stones, burning cars and setting fire to properties, venting their rage against one primary target: The mostly young, Orthodox Jewish families who had arrived in recent years, saying they wanted to lift up the ***working-class*** city and make it more Jewish.

Worst hit were the scores of families who had moved over the last decade into a hardscrabble, crime-ridden neighborhood populated mostly by Arabs. They rented or bought apartments in the dilapidated blocks lining a warren of streets near the city’s old quarter, sharing the stairwells with longtime Arab residents.

The newcomers called it coexistence. But many Palestinian citizens of Lod viewed them as invaders and called them “settlers.”

The violence soon turned lethal. Four Jews are suspected of fatally shooting an Arab resident, Musa Hassouna, and wounding three others during a riot in a nearby neighborhood. A Jewish man, Yigal Yehoshua, died after Arabs threw a heavy rock at him.

Over the past week, the clashes subsided and early Friday, a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas took hold. But the unrest in Lod nonetheless focused attention on the role of the Torah Nucleus movement.

Its representatives vehemently deny that they have any ill intent toward the Arab population, insisting that the opposite is true. Mr. Rokach, the local leader of the movement in Lod, insisted that the program’s volunteer projects, such as distributing food to the needy, benefited Jews and Arabs.

“Coexistence is not standing on the road with a placard,” he said, mocking liberal peace activists. “It is getting up and saying good morning to your Arab neighbor and lending each other milk when necessary. We are living it.”

Rami Salama, a 24-year-old Arab resident of Lod and a building contractor whose apartment complex is now about half Arab and half Torah Nucleus families, said that was not his experience. He said it hurt him that his new Jewish neighbors never answered when he bid them good morning or a happy holiday.

“They want to rule here,” he said. “I blame the Arabs who sold them the apartments,” which he added had since doubled in value. “The violence wouldn’t have happened if it wasn’t for the settlers,” he said.

The Lod neighborhood at the heart of the violence, Ramat Eshkol, was abandoned by many of its Jewish residents decades ago and there, the city’s Jewish-Arab ratio is reversed. About 70 percent of Ramat Eshkol is Arab.

Across all of Israel, there are about 70 active hubs of Torah Nucleus, supported by an umbrella organization, the Community Renewal Foundation, which gets some government funding.

Izhak Lax, the chairman of the foundation, said the idea was for young activists, many of them professionals and graduates of army combat units, to establish homes in the geographical and socioeconomically weak margins of the country and contribute to improving them.

Their presence stretches from the predominantly Jewish desert towns of Yeruham and Dimona in the south to Kiryat Shemona on Israel’s northern border with Lebanon. Of some 10,000 families involved nationally, about 1,200 of them are in Lod.

But Mr. Lax countered claims that they had come “to conquer” Lod and displace the Arabs. “Where can we settle if not in a city in the middle of Israel?” he said.

In Acre, up to 200 Torah Nucleus families have taken up residence. One member of the community was among those injured in the disturbances, a teacher in his 30s who was beaten unconscious by Arabs. Arabs also burned down Jewish-owned tourist sites.

Jewish vigilantes from across the country quickly [*organized on social networks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/19/technology/israeli-clashes-pro-violence-groups-whatsapp.html?searchResultPosition=3) and sought out Arab victims in Lod and other cities, beating an Arab man almost to death in the Tel Aviv suburb of Bat Yam.

Lod, which traces its history to the days of Canaan and is known as Lydda in Arabic, has a particularly fraught history centered around the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Most of the original Palestinian residents of the city were expelled and never allowed to return.

Bedouins — the seminomadic Arabs from Israel’s Negev desert — arrived in the following decades, as did families of Palestinians from the West Bank who had collaborated with Israel, seeking refuge.

Now, Arab rage here is steeped in a smarting sense of inequality born of decades of government neglect and discrimination.

The city’s mayor, Yair Revivo, has pressed in the past [*to tone down the volume on the Muslim call to prayer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/17/world/middleeast/lod-israel-muslim-prayer.html?searchResultPosition=1) from minarets in the city and his right-hand man is a founder of Lod’s Torah Nucleus.

Arab resentment is compounded by a lingering fear of displacement, house by house.

About eight years ago, Torah Nucleus built a pre-army academy and a religious boys’ elementary school next to the long-established school for Arab pupils on Exodus Street in the heart of Ramat Eshkol.

These Jewish institutions were the first to be set on fire on May 10. The trouble started after evening prayers, witnesses said. Arab youths raised a Palestinian flag in the square and demonstrated in solidarity with Palestinians in Jerusalem and Gaza. The [*police*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/24/world/middleeast/israel-police-arrests.html) dispersed them with tear gas and stun grenades.

Angry Arab mobs then went on a rampage, burning synagogues, Jewish apartments and cars in Ramat Eshkol. One group approached another Torah Nucleus neighborhood, where a Jewish crowd had gathered.

There, the four Jewish suspects in the shooting claimed, they fired in the air in self-defense as Arab rioters began to rush at them, throwing stones and firebombs, according to court documents.

The funeral for the victim, Mr. Hassouna, the next day devolved into new clashes as the mourners, the building contractor Mr. Salama among them, insisted on passing through Exodus Street with the body in defiance of police instructions.

That night, gangs of Jewish extremists, some of them armed, came from out of town to attack Arabs and their property, according to witnesses. Mr. Salama said he was hit by a stone while sitting in his garden. Gunshots were heard on both sides.

One Jewish apartment in Ramat Eshkol was burned to cinders after Arab intruders broke open a hole in the wall. The family had already left. A neighbor, Nadav Klinger, said the charred flat would be preserved as a museum.

Elsewhere in Lod, some veteran Jewish and Arab neighbors said their good relations remained intact and agreed that the influx of religious Jewish professionals had lifted the city up.

Ayelet-Chen Wadler, 44, a physicist who grew up in a West Bank settlement, came to Lod with her family 15 years ago to join the Torah Nucleus community.

“I was raised to try to make an impact,” she said. “Just by living here, you make a difference.”

A week after the peak in the violence, about 30 of the 40 Jewish families who had evacuated their homes in the Ramat Eshkol neighborhood had returned.

“I believe we can get back to where we were before, but it might take some time,” said Mr. Rokach, the chairman of the Torah nucleus in Lod, condemning the revenge attacks by Jews from outside.

“Nobody’s leaving. Quite the opposite. As we speak, I just got a WhatsApp message from a family looking for a home here. Nor are the Arabs leaving.”

Myra Noveck contributed reporting from Jerusalem.

Myra Noveck contributed reporting from Jerusalem.

PHOTOS: Jewish residents of Ramat Eshkol, a mostly Arab neighborhood in the mixed Israeli city of Lod, where much unrest has occurred.; Avi Rokach, chairman of the Torah Nucleus association in Lod. “Perhaps ours is a complex message,” he said of the movement.; Above, Ramat Eshkol on Wednesday in the aftermath of violence. Right, Israeli police officers in Lod last week de- tained an Israeli Arab man accused of carrying a knife. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN BALILTY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A9)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***$5 Million Haul Lifts Executive In Mayor's Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61RW-W371-DXY4-X1DR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 13, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1555 words

**Byline:** By Jeffery C. Mays

**Body**

New York's business community is coalescing behind Raymond J. McGuire, an ex-Wall Street executive, but the support may turn off some left-leaning voters.

As thousands of restaurants, Midtown office towers and Broadway theaters lay empty last summer, leaders of New York's business community decided enough was enough: They wrote a scathing letter expressing no confidence in Mayor Bill de Blasio, and intensified efforts to find someone of their liking to replace him.

They drafted Raymond J. McGuire, one of the longest-serving and highest-ranking Black executives on Wall Street, to run for mayor, and promised their assistance.

Now, three months after announcing his candidacy, that support has come: Mr. McGuire's campaign will report this week that it has already raised just over $5 million. It was an unusually high sum for such a short period, approaching the fund-raising totals of established candidates like Scott M. Stringer, the city comptroller, and Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president.

The amount is likely to jolt the race, pushing Mr. McGuire to the forefront of the free-for-all Democratic primary contest, placing pressure on Mr. Adams and Mr. Stringer to keep pace, and damaging the hopes of the other dozen or so candidates still struggling to meet fund-raising minimums to qualify for public matching funds.

Mr. McGuire's donor list reads like an index from corporate America, Wall Street, the entertainment industry and real estate. There are at least 20 billionaires on the list, including owners of sports teams and oil company chief executives. There's old money dating back to the Ottoman Empire, and new money earned with the kings and queens of hip-hop culture.

While the support illustrates the potency of Mr. McGuire's candidacy, the ties to big business may be anathema to many left-leaning Democratic voters in New York, a city where political pressure has torpedoed efforts to expand Industry City in Brooklyn, and discouraged Amazon from pursuing a headquarters in Queens.

Indeed, prominent Republican donors are among Mr. McGuire's supporters, including Ken Langone, one of the founders of Home Depot, and his wife, Elaine, who each donated the maximum amount of $5,100. Kara Ross, a jewelry designer and the wife of Stephen Ross, a friend and fund-raiser of President Trump who founded Related Companies, also donated $5,100, according to campaign finance data shared with The New York Times.

Mr. McGuire also received large donations from James L. Dolan, a major Republican and Trump donor who owns the Knicks and Madison Square Garden; and Richard S. Fuld Jr., the last chief executive of Lehman Brothers, which declared the largest bankruptcy in United States history during the 2008 financial collapse, and his wife, Kathy.

Mr. McGuire, a former vice chairman at Citigroup, did not shy away from his support in the business community.

''New Yorkers of all walks of life have shown they believe in our movement to lead the greatest comeback this city has ever seen, and everyone will be a part of it, no matter your race or religion, ZIP code or bank account, ideology or orientation,'' Mr. McGuire said in a statement this week.

Mr. McGuire raised so much money that it will actually benefit the candidates participating in the city's matching funds program; when a candidate who is not participating in the program -- Mr. McGuire is not -- raises or spends more than half of the spending cap for program participants, the $7.3 million spending limit for primary candidates may be increased by 50 percent, according to Campaign Finance Board regulations. The change would push the primary spending limit to $10.9 million.

Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, and Mr. Stringer, the comptroller, are the only two candidates who have met the threshold for matching funds so far.

Mr. McGuire's campaign has more than 3,700 donors who gave an average amount of $1,100. About 575 donors contributed the maximum amount. At least 75 percent of donors live in New York City, mostly in Manhattan.

Paul T. Schnell, a partner at the law firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom who oversees mergers and acquisitions, has known Mr. McGuire for 38 years and counts himself among the business leaders who nudged Mr. McGuire to run for mayor. Mr. Schnell and his family donated a total of $11,700 to Mr. McGuire. As the head of ''Lawyers for Ray,'' Mr. Schnell held a fund-raiser that raised more than $142,000, much of it from those who work at his law firm.

''He's got a combination of leadership, management and business skills but also great people skills and empathy,'' Mr. Schnell said. ''He will use those skills to restore the city's economy and he's going to do that for small businesses as well as large employers.''

Mr. de Blasio has mostly avoided any relationships with business leaders, long priding himself on being a champion of the ***working class***. When asked in December about equity in education, the mayor said that his ''mission is to redistribute wealth.''

As the 2021 mayoral field began to take shape, it became clear that none of the presumed front-runners seemed interested in working with business leaders, and Mr. McGuire was strongly encouraged to enter the race.

A tipping point came last year, when the mayor was asked whether he worried that the wealthy were abandoning the city during the pandemic. The mayor responded, ''We do not make decisions based on the wealthy few.''

The frustration in the business community has now translated into keen support for Mr. McGuire. He received donations from prominent business leaders such as William A. Ackman, chief executive of Pershing Square Capital Management; Danny Meyer of the Union Square Hospitality Group; Steve Stoute, a former record executive turned marketing executive; and Robert Reffkin, a co-founder and chief executive of the real estate brokerage Compass.

Hutham S. Olayan, a member of one of the wealthiest families in the Arab world, gave two donations of $2,500; there were 11 donations from members of the Tisch family and five donations from members of the Lauder family, including maximum donations from Leonard A. Lauder, the philanthropist and chairman emeritus of the Estée Lauder Companies, and his wife, Judy Glickman Lauder; his son William P. Lauder, executive chairman of the Estée Lauder Companies; and his niece Jane Lauder, who is also a high-ranking executive at the firm.

Voters are not likely to be surprised that Mr. McGuire, a Wall Street executive, would turn to wealthy friends to raise money, though progressives could make an issue of it, said Bruce Gyory, a Democratic strategist.

But with so many people vying for the Democratic nomination, including several progressive-minded candidates, it is not clear how much Mr. McGuire's business ties will damage his chances, especially with ranked-choice voting allowing as many as five candidates to be chosen.

Mr. Gyory said that Mr. McGuire's credibility in the business world could shore up support among Black voters.

''The question is can he take his fund-raising prowess and turn it into support in the Black community in Southeast Queens and the North Shore of Staten Island and create a message that resonates,'' Mr. Gyory said. ''African-American voters may say, we have a candidate who can compete and we should take a second look.''

Mr. McGuire also leaned on his personal business connections. Charles Phillips, Mr. McGuire's campaign co-chairman and the former president of Oracle who sits on several corporate boards, and William M. Lewis Jr., co-chairman of investment banking at Lazard, are both personal friends. They co-hosted the initial fund-raiser for the campaign, which raised more than $400,000. Both also made maximum contributions.

Several well-known people in the entertainment industry also donated money to Mr. McGuire, including the filmmaker Spike Lee and his wife, the producer Tonya Lee Lewis; Mr. Lee provided the narration for Mr. McGuire's campaign launch video.

Others included Michael Ovitz, co-founder of Creative Artists Agency; the ballerina Misty Copeland; Jessica Seinfeld, the cookbook author, philanthropist and wife of the comedian Jerry Seinfeld; Gwyneth Paltrow; Debra L. Lee, the former head of Black Entertainment Television; Valerie Jarrett, a former adviser to President Barack Obama; and the music executive Lyor Cohen.

The campaign has approximately $3.7 million on hand, which means that Mr. McGuire has been spending about $442,000 per month to keep his campaign staff of 25 running. By comparison, Mr. Stringer has $5.7 million on hand and has spent just over $429,000. Mr. Adams has $6.6 million on hand and has spent just over $367,000, according to the most recent campaign finance filings.

Carlos Menchaca, a councilman from Brooklyn, is one of the mayoral candidates who is not expected to reach the threshold for public matching funds. Mr. Menchaca, who was instrumental in turning back the proposed expansion and rezoning of Industry City, said that New York City is now committed to rejecting ''candidates connected to toxic policy around development and Wall Street.''

''I'm incredibly confident that New Yorkers will see through these campaigns that have not distanced themselves,'' he said. ''Viability is not connected to money.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/13/nyregion/ray-mcguire-donors-mayor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/13/nyregion/ray-mcguire-donors-mayor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: At least 20 billionaires have donated to the mayoral campaign of Raymond J. McGuire, above, far left, at an appearance in Harlem with the Rev. Al Sharpton. The pressure is now on other frontrunners like Scott M. Stringer, left, and Eric Adams, bottom left. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SIMBARASHE CHA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A21)

**Load-Date:** January 13, 2021

**End of Document**



[***10 French Movies That Can Transport You to Paris***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:619R-BGB1-DXY4-X1FY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 17, 2020 Tuesday 16:40 EST

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**Section:** TRAVEL

**Length:** 1417 words

**Byline:** Jason Farago

**Highlight:** With trans-Atlantic travel all but suspended, the closest you can get to Paris may be onscreen. These movies will take you there.

**Body**

With trans-Atlantic travel all but suspended, the closest you can get to Paris may be onscreen. These movies will take you there.

While your travel plans may be on hold, you can pretend you’re somewhere new for the night. Around the World at Home invites you to channel the spirit of a new place each week with recommendations on how to explore the culture, all from the comfort of your home.

“America is my country, and Paris is my hometown,” wrote Gertrude Stein. Me too; or, well, almost. For the last few years I was shuttling between New York and the French capital, where my now-husband worked, and in that time Paris came to feel like a city where I had history, whose streets I could navigate by muscle memory. Now that trans-Atlantic travel is all but suspended, the closest I can get to Paris is onscreen — but, luckily, the view is fantastic.

Paris was the site of the first movie screening, back in 1895 (though the Lumière Brothers shot those first pictures in Lyon). It remains the home of Europe’s largest, most vibrant film industry — France [*exports more movies*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema) than any country, bar the United States.

Here I’ve picked 10 movies that transport me back to Paris, from the early days of sound cinema to the age of streaming. I’ve omitted many French movies made in English, some shot on soundstages (“An American in Paris,” “Moulin Rouge!”) and others on location (“[*Funny Face*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema),” “Midnight in Paris”). Instead I’ve selected films I rely on when I want to escape America for Paris … which is quite often these days.

Girlhood (2014)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema)]

Paris today is so much more than its touristic, tree-lined core; it’s continental Europe’s most diverse city, where French mingles with Arabic and Wolof and you’re more likely to hear Afro trap than Édith Piaf. This assured coming-of-age film by Céline Sciamma follows a young Black teenager as she shuttles across the racial, economic and cultural divides between Paris proper (or “Paname,” in the girls’ slang) and its suburban housing estates, whose architecture the director films with rare style and sympathy. Aubervilliers, Bondy, Mantes-la-Jolie, Aulnay-sous-Bois: these nodes of Greater Paris, birthplace of [*singers*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema) and stylists and [*the world’s greatest soccer players*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema), deserve the spotlight too.

Amazon, YouTube, Google Play, iTunes

35 Shots of Rum (2008)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema)]

The most intimate and most Parisian film of [*Claire Denis*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema), very probably France’s greatest living director, follows a widowed father, who is a train driver, and his only daughter, a student, as they hesitantly step away from each other and into new lives. The cast (including [*Mati Diop*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema), who’s since become an acclaimed director herself) is almost entirely of African or Caribbean origin, yet this is the rare film that takes Paris’s diversity as a given, and its portraits of Parisians in the working-to-middle-class north of the capital have a fullness and benevolence that remain too rare in the French cinema. Just as beautiful as its scenes of family life are Ms. Denis’s frequent, lingering shots of the RER, Paris’s suburban commuter railway, which appears here as a bridge between worlds.

Amazon

Love Songs (2007)

The near entirety of this gray-steeped musical — directed by Christophe Honoré and with [*a dozen tunes*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema) written by the singer-songwriter Alex Beaupain — takes place in the gentrifying but still scruffy [*10th Arrondissement*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema), where I put back a few too many drinks in my 20s. As its young lovers sing on some of Paris’s least photogenic streets, on their Ikea couches or in their overlit offices, the capital turns into something even more alluring than the City of Light of foreign fantasies. This is the film to watch if you miss everyday life in contemporary Paris, where even the overcast days merit a song.

Hulu, Amazon

Full Moon in Paris (1984)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema)]

Paris had a very good 80s: think Louvre Pyramid, think Concorde, [*think Christian Lacroix*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema). Éric Rohmer’s tale of an independent young woman, keen to hang onto both her boyfriend and her apartment, offers the most chic dissection of Parisian youth — big-haired models dancing in Second Empire ballrooms, and lovers philosophizing at cafe tables and one another’s beds. There’s a killer ’80s score by the [*electropop duo Elli et Jacno*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema), but what makes its beauty so bittersweet is its sublime star [*Pascale Ogier*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema), who died shortly after the film’s completion, age 25.

Amazon, YouTube, iTunes

C’était un rendez-vous (1976)

It’s just eight minutes long, it has no dialogue, but this is the wildest movie ever made in Paris; it’s a miracle that no one died. Early one morning, the director Claude Lelouch got in his Mercedes, fastened a camera to the bumper, [*and just floored it*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema): down the broad Avenue Foch (where he clocks 125 miles an hour), through the Louvre, past the Opéra, through red lights and around blind corners and even onto the sidewalks, to the heights of Sacré-Cœur. Every time I watch it I end up covering my eyes and then laughing at the insanity of it all: cinéma vérité at top speed.

YouTube

Cléo from 5 to 7 (1962)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema)]

It’s 5 p.m. on June 21, the longest day of the year, and the pop singer Cléo has gone to a fortune teller to find out: is she dying? And for the rest of Agnès Varda’s incomparable slice of life we follow her in real time — one minute onscreen equals one minute in the narrative — across the capital’s left bank. She walks past the cafes of Montparnasse, down the wide Haussmannian boulevards and into the Parc Montsouris, where she meets a soldier on leave from the front in Algeria: another young Parisian uncertain if he’ll live another year. As Cléo [*puts her superstitions aside*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema), the streets of Varda’s Paris serve as the accelerant for a woman’s self-confidence.

HBO Max, Criterion Channel

Breathless (1960)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema)]

Jean-Luc Godard’s [*first feature is so celebrated*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema) for its innovative jump-cuts and careering narrative that we forget: this is, hands down, the greatest film ever made about an American in Paris. As the exchange student hawking the New York Herald Tribune on the Champs-Élysées, Jean Seberg invests the movie with a breezy expatriate glamour, feigning French insouciance but hanging onto American wonder. And if her language skills are iffy — my French husband imitates Seberg’s Franglais when he wants to mock my accent — she embodies the dream of becoming someone new in Paris, even if you fall for the wrong guy.

HBO Max, Criterion Channel, YouTube, iTunes

Bob le flambeur (1956)

The suavest of all Paris gangster films — and my go-to movie for days sick in bed — orbits around the handsome narrow streets of hillside Montmartre and, just south, the [*seedy nightclubs*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema) and gambling dens of Pigalle. Bob, the elegant, white-haired “high roller” of the title, is a retired bank robber after one last big score, but Paris’s old underground, and its old codes of loyalty, are fading away. The cast is undeniably B-list, and genre conventions cling to their roles like barnacles: the world-weary but wise cafe proprietress, the hooker with a heart of gold. But watch as Melville’s hand-held camera trails Bob in his trench coat and fedora, or follows a garbage truck around the Place Pigalle like a ball in a roulette wheel. Paris looks like a jackpot.

Amazon, YouTube, iTunes

Casque d’or (1952)

We’re in Paris’s ***working-class*** northeast in this aching period drama of the belle epoque, directed by Jacques Becker and starring Simone Signoret as the titular golden-haired prostitute caught between two lovers. It’s based on a true story of a courtesan and the gang murders she inspired — but Mr. Becker paints the scene like a dream of the 19th-century capital, of cobblestoned alleyways, smoke-choked bistros and horse-drawn paddy wagons.

Criterion Channel

Boudu Saved From Drowning (1931)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema)]

Jean Renoir’s early satire stars Michel Simon as a prodigiously bearded tramp who, one fine morning, walks halfway across the Pont des Arts and jumps into the Seine. Saved by a kindly bookseller, Boudu moves into his apartment and [*promptly turns his family’s life upside down*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema). The movie’s skewering of middle-class values has not lost its bite, but its outdoor shots of the Latin Quarter, a university neighborhood not yet overrun by tourist-trap cafes, have become a poignant time capsule.

Criterion Channel, Kanopy

To keep up with upcoming stories in this series, [*sign up for our At Home newsletter*](https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/cultural-diplomacy/the-fields-of-action-for-cultural-diplomacy/article/cinema).

PHOTO: Corinne Marchand as Florence ‘Cléo’ Victoire in “Cleo from 5 to 7.”

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Wall Street Favorite Raises $5 Million, Jolting New York Mayor’s Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61RW-BV61-DXY4-X15J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Highlight:** New York’s business community is coalescing behind Raymond J. McGuire, an ex-Wall Street executive, but the support may turn off some left-leaning voters.

**Body**

New York’s business community is coalescing behind Raymond J. McGuire, an ex-Wall Street executive, but the support may turn off some left-leaning voters.

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)]

As thousands of restaurants, Midtown office towers and Broadway theaters lay empty last summer, leaders of New York’s business community decided enough was enough: They [*wrote a scathing letter expressing no confidence*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in Mayor Bill de Blasio, and intensified efforts to find someone of their liking to replace him.

They drafted [*Raymond J. McGuire*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), one of the longest-serving and highest-ranking Black executives on Wall Street, to run for mayor, and promised their assistance.

Now, three months after announcing his candidacy, that support has come: Mr. [*McGuire*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)’s campaign will report this week that it has already raised just over $5 million. It was an unusually high sum for such a short period, approaching the fund-raising totals of established candidates like Scott M. Stringer, the city comptroller, and Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president.

The amount is likely to jolt the race, pushing Mr. McGuire to the forefront of the free-for-all Democratic primary contest, placing pressure on Mr. Adams and Mr. Stringer to keep pace, and damaging the hopes of the other dozen or so candidates still struggling to meet fund-raising minimums to qualify for public matching funds.

Mr. McGuire’s donor list reads like an index from corporate America, Wall Street, the entertainment industry and real estate. There are at least 20 billionaires on the list, including owners of sports teams and oil company chief executives. There’s old money dating back to the Ottoman Empire, and new money earned with the kings and queens of hip-hop culture.

While the support illustrates the potency of Mr. McGuire’s candidacy, the ties to big business may be anathema to many left-leaning Democratic voters in New York, a city where political pressure has [*torpedoed efforts to expand*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) Industry City in Brooklyn, and [*discouraged Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) from pursuing a headquarters in Queens.

Indeed, prominent Republican donors are among Mr. McGuire’s supporters, including Ken Langone, one of the founders of Home Depot, and his wife, Elaine, who each donated the maximum amount of $5,100. Kara Ross, a jewelry designer and the wife of Stephen Ross, a [*friend and fund-raiser of President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) who founded Related Companies, also donated $5,100, according to campaign finance data shared with The New York Times.

Mr. McGuire also received large donations from James L. Dolan, a major Republican and Trump donor who owns the Knicks and Madison Square Garden; and [*Richard S. Fuld Jr*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)., the last chief executive of Lehman Brothers, which declared the [*largest bankruptcy*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in United States history during the 2008 financial collapse, and his wife, Kathy.

Mr. McGuire, a former vice chairman at Citigroup, did not shy away from his support in the business community.

“New Yorkers of all walks of life have shown they believe in our movement to lead the greatest comeback this city has ever seen, and everyone will be a part of it, no matter your race or religion, ZIP code or bank account, ideology or orientation,” Mr. McGuire said in a statement this week.

Mr. McGuire raised so much money that it will actually benefit the candidates participating in the city’s matching funds program; when a candidate who is not participating in the program — Mr. McGuire is not — raises or spends more than half of the spending cap for program participants, the $7.3 million spending limit for primary candidates may be increased by 50 percent, according to Campaign Finance Board regulations. The change would push the primary spending limit to $10.9 million.

Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, and Mr. Stringer, the comptroller, are the only two candidates who have met the threshold for matching funds so far.

Mr. McGuire’s campaign has more than 3,700 donors who gave an average amount of $1,100. About 575 donors contributed the maximum amount. At least 75 percent of donors live in New York City, mostly in Manhattan.

Paul T. Schnell, a partner at the law firm Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher &amp; Flom who oversees mergers and acquisitions, has known Mr. McGuire for 38 years and counts himself among the business leaders who nudged Mr. McGuire to run for mayor. Mr. Schnell and his family donated a total of $11,700 to Mr. McGuire. As the head of “Lawyers for Ray,” Mr. Schnell held a fund-raiser that raised more than $142,000, much of it from those who work at his law firm.

“He’s got a combination of leadership, management and business skills but also great people skills and empathy,” Mr. Schnell said. “He will use those skills to restore the city’s economy and he’s going to do that for small businesses as well as large employers.”

Mr. de Blasio has mostly avoided any relationships with business leaders, long priding himself on being a champion of the ***working class***. When asked in December about equity in education, the mayor said that his “mission is to redistribute wealth.”

As the 2021 mayoral field began to take shape, it became clear that none of the presumed front-runners seemed interested in working with business leaders, and Mr. McGuire was strongly encouraged to enter the race.

A tipping point came last year, when the mayor was asked whether he worried that the wealthy were abandoning the city during the pandemic. The mayor responded, “We do not make decisions based on the wealthy few.”

The frustration in the business community has now translated into keen support for Mr. McGuire. He received donations from prominent business leaders such as William A. Ackman, chief executive of Pershing Square Capital Management; Danny Meyer of the Union Square Hospitality Group; Steve Stoute, a former record executive turned marketing executive; and Robert Reffkin, a co-founder and chief executive of the real estate brokerage Compass.

Hutham S. Olayan, a member of [*one of the wealthiest families in the Arab world*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), gave two donations of $2,500; there were 11 donations from members of the Tisch family and five donations from members of the Lauder family, including maximum donations from Leonard A. Lauder, the philanthropist and chairman emeritus of the Estée Lauder Companies, and his wife, Judy Glickman Lauder; his son William P. Lauder, executive chairman of the Estée Lauder Companies; and his niece Jane Lauder, who is also a high-ranking executive at the firm.

Voters are not likely to be surprised that Mr. McGuire, a Wall Street executive, would turn to wealthy friends to raise money, though progressives could make an issue of it, said Bruce Gyory, a Democratic strategist.

But with so many people vying for the Democratic nomination, including several progressive-minded candidates, it is not clear how much Mr. McGuire’s business ties will damage his chances, especially with ranked-choice voting allowing as many as five candidates to be chosen.

Mr. Gyory said that Mr. McGuire’s credibility in the business world could shore up support among Black voters.

“The question is can he take his fund-raising prowess and turn it into support in the Black community in Southeast Queens and the North Shore of Staten Island and create a message that resonates,” Mr. Gyory said. “African-American voters may say, we have a candidate who can compete and we should take a second look.”

Mr. McGuire also leaned on his personal business connections. Charles Phillips, Mr. McGuire’s campaign co-chairman and the former president of Oracle who sits on several corporate boards, and William M. Lewis Jr., co-chairman of investment banking at Lazard, are both personal friends. They co-hosted the initial fund-raiser for the campaign, which raised more than $400,000. Both also made maximum contributions.

Several well-known people in the entertainment industry also donated money to Mr. McGuire, including the filmmaker Spike Lee and his wife, the producer Tonya Lee Lewis; Mr. Lee [*provided the narration*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) for Mr. McGuire’s campaign launch video.

Others included Michael Ovitz, co-founder of Creative Artists Agency; the ballerina Misty Copeland; Jessica Seinfeld, the cookbook author, [*philanthropist*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) and wife of the comedian [*Jerry Seinfeld*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html); Gwyneth Paltrow; Debra L. Lee, the former head of Black Entertainment Television; Valerie Jarrett, a former adviser to President Barack Obama; and the music executive Lyor Cohen.

The campaign has approximately $3.7 million on hand, which means that Mr. McGuire has been spending about $442,000 per month to keep his campaign staff of 25 running. By comparison, Mr. Stringer has $5.7 million on hand and has spent just over $429,000. Mr. Adams has $6.6 million on hand and has spent just over $367,000, according to the most recent campaign finance filings.

Carlos Menchaca, a councilman from Brooklyn, is one of the mayoral candidates who is not expected to reach the threshold for public matching funds. Mr. Menchaca, who was instrumental in [*turning back*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) the proposed expansion and rezoning of Industry City, said that New York City is now committed to rejecting “candidates connected to toxic policy around development and Wall Street.”

“I’m incredibly confident that New Yorkers will see through these campaigns that have not distanced themselves,” he said. “Viability is not connected to money.”

PHOTOS: At least 20 billionaires have donated to the mayoral campaign of Raymond J. McGuire, above, far left, at an appearance in Harlem with the Rev. Al Sharpton. The pressure is now on other frontrunners like Scott M. Stringer, left, and Eric Adams, bottom left. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SIMBARASHE CHA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES; HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A21)

**Load-Date:** June 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Future of Voting Rights***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6244-HPC1-DXY4-X03K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

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**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** And what else you need to know today.

**Body**

And what else you need to know today.

Want to get The Morning by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Good morning. The struggle over voting rights heads to the Supreme Court.

In dozens of states, the Republican Party has responded to Donald Trump’s defeat by [*trying to change election laws*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), 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*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) [*rollback*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of Americans’ [*voting rights*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) 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*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). But Trump’s defeat and his repeated claims about voter fraud (almost all of them [*false*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)) have lent [*new energy*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to the effort.

Legislators in [*Georgia*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) are pushing bills that would make it harder to register and harder to vote by mail. [*Arizona*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), Pennsylvania and several other states are also considering [*new restrictions on mail voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). The Brennan Center for Justice, a think tank in New York, has counted 253 bills across 43 states seeking to tighten voting rules, as The Times’s Michael Wines [*has noted*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

It’s a reflection of [*a widespread belief*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) among Republican officials that high voter turnout hurts their chances of winning elections. [*They may be wrong about that*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing): As the Republican Party has become more ***working class***, it has attracted many supporters who vote only occasionally.

Still, Republican candidates will probably benefit from any changes that disproportionately affect Black and Latino voters, like the elimination of automatic registration. “The restrictions we’re seeing are going to have a greater impact on the communities that have been most traditionally disadvantaged,” says Myrna Pérez, a voting rights expert at the Brennan Center.

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.

‘The last place you want to be’

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 — to collect absentee ballots for submission. The Democrats argue that these provisions especially affect minority voters and thus violate the Voting Rights Act. (Adam Liptak, The Times’s Supreme Court reporter, [*explains in more depth here.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing))

The Arizona lawsuit is an example of a 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*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

But they have usually lost. The Supreme Court under Chief Justice John Roberts has generally [*ruled against*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) 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*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). “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*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in 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.

The filibuster versus voting rights

Other than the courts, the other two main voting-rights battlegrounds are state governments and Congress.

But state governments are hard places to protect voting rights today, because Democrats [*control only 15 of them*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) — and none in swing states like Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania or Wisconsin. The Democrats’ biggest problem in many states is the failure to develop a message that resonates not only with college graduates and in major metropolitan areas [*but also*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in blue-collar and rural areas. Republicans have compounded that issue through aggressive gerrymandering, including [*in Michigan*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), [*North Carolina*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and [*Wisconsin*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

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*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) 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.

A different G.O.P. approach: In [*Kentucky*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), Republican state legislators are working with Democrats to expand ballot access while also strengthening election security, as Joshua Douglas of the University of Kentucky has [*explained for CNN*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* Elected officials in California will [*encourage schools to reopen*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) by offering fast-tracked vaccinations and money to upgrade ventilation systems.

1. Gila County, Ariz., is a [*vaccine success story*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing): It has been so effective that officials are offering shots to any resident over 18.
2. In a Times survey of 175 experts, most said elementary schools should open. [*They explain why*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
3. Economists worried that the pandemic would wreak havoc on states’ finances. But in much of the country, [*that hasn’t happened*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

U.S. News

* A third woman has [*accused Gov. Andrew Cuomo of misconduct*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), saying he placed his hands on her face and asked if he could kiss her the first time they met. Representative Kathleen Rice became the first Democrat in the New York congressional delegation [*to call for Cuomo’s resignation*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

1. Senator Elizabeth Warren introduced a [*plan for a wealth tax*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), which would apply to anyone with a net worth above $50 million.
2. Bethany Christian Services, one of the country’s biggest adoption and foster care agencies, [*will start providing services to L.G.B.T.Q. parents*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Other Big Stories

* A French court found the former president Nicolas Sarkozy [*guilty of corruption*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and sentenced him to at least a year in prison.

1. Protests against Myanmar’s military coup have entered their second month. [*Here’s a street-level view*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
2. Kidnappers [*released hundreds of girls*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) they abducted last week from a boarding school in Nigeria. Kidnapping has become a growth industry there, [*The Times’s Ruth Maclean reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
3. Aleksei Navalny, the Russian opposition politician, will serve his sentence in a [*notoriously harsh penal colony*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) known for abusive treatment of inmates.

Morning Reads

A Morning Read: “I passed by it on my way to the kitchen a thousand times a day,” she said. “[*I didn’t know I had a masterpiece*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).”

From Opinion: Unhealthy food is among the injustices of mass incarceration. Inmates in Maine [*found a solution*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Lives Lived: After nine years as a defensive back in the N.F.L., Irv Cross made history as the first Black full-time television analyst for a network television sports show. [*He died at 81*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Too big to publish?

Penguin Random House, the biggest book publisher in the U.S., [*is in the process of buying Simon &amp; Schuster*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), a deal that would create a megapublisher responsible for roughly one-third of published books. But the deal requires approval from the Biden administration — and [*some authors’ groups and other organizations*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) are calling on the Justice Department to block it, as a violation of antitrust laws.

Critics say the merger would create multiple problems, as [*our colleague Elizabeth Harris writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Many authors could receive less money, because fewer publishers would exist to bid on their proposals. Writers without a proven track record might struggle to be published at all, and the industry could become even more dependent on blockbuster titles.

“There are projects that would have sold for $150,000 years ago that might not sell at all now to the big five, whereas the book that would have sold for $500,000 might go for a million,” one literary agent [*told The Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Still, many people in publishing consider Amazon the biggest threat to the health of the book business. “If it’s correct to worry about a merged company that publishes perhaps 33 percent of new books,” Franklin Foer [*wrote in The Atlantic,*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) “then surely it’s correct to worry more about the fact that Amazon now sells 49 percent of them.”

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

[*This dessert fuses elements*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) from sholeh zard, a spiced Persian rice pudding, and arroz con leche, a Mexican rice pudding.

What to Read

Tired of winter? [*These thrillers*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) will give you a different kind of chill.

Virtual Travel

Pretend you’re in the scenic [*Riviera Maya in Mexico*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Late Night

The hosts [*looked back at CPAC and the Golden Globes*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was canonization. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and a clue: blue (three letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

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

P.S. One out of every 43 Times articles last year [*included the word “grim.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” is about the Covid-19 relief bill. On “[*The Ezra Klein Show*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing),” Ramesh Ponnuru discusses the future of the G.O.P.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

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PHOTO: Voters during a “souls to the polls” march in Miami in November. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rebecca Blackwell/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2021

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[***To Revive Manufacturing, Weaken the Dollar?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6244-DX21-DXY4-X43B-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1662 words

**Byline:** By Noam Scheiber

**Body**

President Biden has made reviving American manufacturing a top priority. To deliver, he may first have to deal with something even more fundamental to the U.S. economy: the strength of the dollar.

Because a strong dollar lowers the price of imports and raises the price of exports, it gives foreign companies an advantage over American competitors and can drag down U.S. employment.

''Dollar overvaluation is the big problem,'' said Mike Stumo, chief executive of the Coalition for a Prosperous America, which represents small and midsize manufacturers and farmers. Mr. Stumo describes policies that prop up the dollar as a ''war on the ***working class***.''

Few recent presidents have devoted much attention to this issue. Donald J. Trump fulminated against the decline of U.S. manufacturing and occasionally mused about weakening the dollar, but focused his policies more on tariffs than on currency.

But Mr. Biden has hired a handful of senior economic advisers who are concerned about the dollar's strength and have explored ways to reduce it.

''There are a lot of folks who want to try some new things in there,'' said Mr. Stumo, whose group presented ideas for weakening the dollar to three of Mr. Biden's agency transition teams.

The dollar's strength over much of the past few decades has bloated the U.S. trade deficit, which roughly tripled as a share of gross domestic product in the late 1990s and has remained high.

At its simplest level, the trade deficit represents a kind of leakage from the U.S. economy: Americans buy more in goods and services from abroad than the rest of the world buys from the United States, and the country takes on foreign debt to pay for the difference. If Americans bought more domestically made products and fewer imports, the spending would create jobs for U.S.-based workers and require less debt.

Traditionally, most economists have nonetheless taken a blasé posture toward trade deficits, arguing that they reflect underlying economic fundamentals -- namely, a country's appetite to consume or invest rather than save.

A country with a young population may run a large trade deficit because young workers tend to consume more than older workers, who are focused on saving for retirement. An economy growing unusually quickly can also run a larger-than-usual trade deficit, as spending spikes for goods like cars and phones.

The problem for the United States is that its trade deficit appears to be far larger than demographics and other fundamentals would predict. According to an analysis by the International Monetary Fund, a reasonable current account deficit, a somewhat broader measure of the trade deficit, would have been about 0.7 percent of the $21 trillion U.S. economy in 2019. The actual deficit, adjusted for short-term factors like the strength of the economy, was about 2 percent of gross domestic product -- larger by hundreds of billions of dollars.

This divergence between economic models and the actual trade deficit partly reflects the dollar's strength relative to other currencies. In some cases, other countries have suppressed their currencies' value to make their goods cheaper for Americans.

China was the world's leading currency manipulator during roughly the first decade of the 2000s, according to a paper by Joseph E. Gagnon, a former Federal Reserve Board economist now at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, and C. Fred Bergsten, the institute's founding director. The paper estimated that currency manipulation cost the United States one million to five million jobs in 2011. Manufacturing jobs tend to be hit particularly hard by the strong dollar because manufactured goods are easy to import.

Over the past several years, medium-size economies like Switzerland, Taiwan and Thailand have been most active in holding down their currencies, Dr. Gagnon found in a more recent study. Collectively, currency interventions by such countries have been more than half the size of China's earlier interventions, he notes.

But the dollar can appreciate even without currency interventions -- for example, if foreign investors increase their appetite for American bonds, which require dollars to buy, as they have in recent years.

Dr. Gagnon estimates that as a result of these forces, the dollar was 10 to 20 percent above its expected value in 2019, probably costing hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs.

Revere Copper Products in Rome, N.Y., which makes copper strip used in automobiles and air-conditioners, has suffered from these changes. In 2000, Revere had two plants and nearly 600 workers. Today the company, founded in 1801 by that Revere, employs about 300 and operates only one plant.

The strong dollar has made it difficult for the company's customers to compete with imports, said its chairman, Brian O'Shaughnessy. In the 1990s, for example, Revere supplied several American door-lock makers with copper or brass. Today, Mr. O'Shaughnessy said, most of the lock makers have shifted production abroad, undercut by imports made cheaper by the strong dollar.

''The industry moved offshore,'' he said. ''It was currency. It overwhelms everything else.''

The U.S. government could reverse these trends using one of two approaches. It could essentially fight fire with fire -- buying enough foreign currency to lower the value of the dollar by 10 to 20 percent and restoring the equilibrium that would exist without foreigners' excessive dollar-buying. Or it could tax foreign purchases of U.S. assets, like stocks and bonds, an approach prescribed in a bill sponsored by Senators Tammy Baldwin, a Wisconsin Democrat, and Josh Hawley, a Missouri Republican.

A tax would make these investments less attractive to foreigners and therefore reduce their need for dollars. It would also raise revenue for the government.

But a tax would ignite opposition from financial firms, which would see it as driving away customers, and could raise interest rates by reducing the supply of potential lenders to the U.S. government. (John R. Hansen, a former World Bank economist who has designed such a proposal, said the rate increases were not likely to be significant.)

To date, a major obstacle to action on currency and the trade deficit has been resistance from senior economic policymakers in the U.S. government. Mr. Stumo said his group's efforts to persuade the Obama administration of the dangers of an overvalued dollar and a large trade deficit were ''the opposite of fruitful.''

Dr. Gagnon said that institutionally, the Fed and the Treasury Department tended to oppose adjusting the value of the dollar, both on philosophical grounds -- economists there believe that markets should set exchange rates -- and on practical ones. Doing so could require complicated judgments about when a foreign country's efforts to influence the dollar should trigger an intervention, while the Treasury is likely to resist anything that makes U.S. government debt harder to sell, like a tax on purchases of debt by foreigners.

Menzie Chinn, an economist at the University of Wisconsin, said foreign investors could find ways around paying the tax, as they have to some extent in similar instances abroad.

Even experts, like Dr. Bergsten, who acknowledge that the dollar is overvalued and results in job losses for manufacturing workers are reluctant to call for aggressive action. Some argue that the trade deficit is helping sustain economies abroad during a delicate moment for the global economy.

''It would essentially be an act of economic war to aggressively intervene to push the dollar down against the euro, the yen, the Canadian dollar,'' Dr. Bergsten said. ''Those countries are doing worse than we are.''

But the political landscape has shifted in recent years, as reflected in Mr. Trump's rise, and momentum for reining in the dollar and the trade deficit may be building. Though Mr. Trump's tariffs on products like steel and aluminum were ineffective on this front -- tariffs tend to increase the dollar's value, leading to more imports of other goods -- the Trump administration gave the Commerce Department new authority to penalize countries that had weakened their currencies.

It used that authority for the first time in November to impose tariffs on Vietnamese tires, after the A.F.L.-C.I.O. submitted a petition saying Vietnam had used its currency as an unfair subsidy to producers.

Mr. Biden's team may be picking up the baton. One of his top economic advisers, Jared Bernstein, has long expressed concern about the overvaluation of the dollar. A second, Bharat Ramamurti, oversaw economic policy for Senator Elizabeth Warren's presidential campaign, which proposed ''more actively managing our currency value to promote exports and domestic manufacturing.'' And the Biden administration hired Brad W. Setser, a skeptic of the strong dollar, as a counselor to its trade representative.

These aides may face resistance from Biden advisers with more orthodox views. Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen said at her confirmation hearing in January that the dollar's value ''should be determined by markets'' and that ''the United States does not seek a weaker currency to gain competitive advantage.''

But some former Treasury officials interpreted this as a more nuanced position than that of other recent secretaries, who have explicitly supported a strong dollar.

''Secretary Yellen speaks for the administration on the dollar, and her approach fully reflects the president's focus on fostering strong and equitable economic growth,'' a White House spokeswoman said.

Those who have discussed the dollar and the trade deficit with Mr. Biden's advisers have gotten the impression that many see it as a problem and are willing to press for action internally.

''I think they are probably having that conversation,'' Mr. Stumo said. ''Who comes out on top -- we'll see.''

Ana Swanson contributed reporting.Ana Swanson contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/business/economy/biden-currency-trade.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/business/economy/biden-currency-trade.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The former Rome Cable complex in Rome, N.Y. An overvalued dollar means lost jobs for manufacturing workers. (B1)

Revere Copper Products in Rome, N.Y., has shrunk to one plant employing 300, from two plants and 600 workers.

Brian O'Shaughnessy, Revere's chairman, said the strong dollar had made it difficult for his customers to compete. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSHUA RASHAAD McFADDEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2021

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[***How Could Human Nature Have Become This Politicized?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:609K-7CS1-JBG3-6401-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 3021 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** The partisanship of the Trump era has very deep roots.

**Body**

The partisanship of the Trump era has very deep roots.

The nation’s faltering attempt to contain the Covid-19 pandemic has revealed once again the role of political partisanship in every aspect of American society.

[*Academic*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) [*studies*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) show that Republicans were far less willing to adopt safety procedures and were far more skeptical of scientific warnings than their Democratic counterparts.

In “[*Partisan Pandemic*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334): How Partisanship and Public Health Concerns Affect Individuals’ Social Distancing During Covid-19,” published on June 28, [*Joshua Clinton*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), of Vanderbilt University, and three colleagues concluded that

Rampant partisanship in the United States may be the largest obstacle to the social distancing most experts see as critical to limiting the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The four political scientists continue:

All else equal, the relative importance of partisanship for the increasing (un) willingness of Republicans to engage in social distancing highlights the challenge that politics poses for public health.

Along similar lines, [*Christos Makridis*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) of the MIT Sloan School of Management and [*Jonathan Rothwell,*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) principal economist at Gallup and a Brookings senior scholar, reach a devastating conclusion in their June 30 paper, “[*The Real Cost of Political Polarization*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334): Evidence from the Covid-19 Pandemic.”

Based on data collected by Gallup on 45,000 individuals between March and June, the authors conclude

that fear, economic expectations, workplace visits, social-distancing, and mask-wearing are all driven by party identification to a much greater extent than local public-health conditions, state economic conditions, or state public health policies.

With partisanship and polarization holding center stage, the question becomes: What exactly are we talking about when we talk about partisanship and polarization?

Two political scientists, Sean Westwood of Dartmouth and Erik Peterson of Texas A&amp;M, have broken new ground in the study of one of the oldest and most powerful factors in shaping partisanship, race.

In “[*Compound Political Identity*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334): How Partisan and Racial Identities Overlap and Reinforce,” Westwood and Peterson argue that “partisanship and race are so enmeshed in the minds of citizens that experiences which involve only one of the two groups affect evaluations and behavior toward both” — or, put another way, that “views of partisan and racial out-groups are inextricably connected.”

In a series of experiments, Westwood and Peterson found that [*affective polarization*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) — defined as intense partisan animosity or the tendency “[*to view opposing partisans negatively and copartisans positively*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334)” —

is not merely the consequence of a growing sense of partisanship as it is a social identity or a greater alignment between other social identities and partisanships.

Instead, they argue, affective polarization

contributes to racial animosity. To understand affective polarization along partisan lines, our results suggest, requires us to consider partisanship and race not only as related groups but as inseparable in the minds of Americans.

Westwood is a co-author of another [*recent paper*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), “The Origins and Consequences of Affective Polarization in the United States,” along with [*Shanto Iyengar*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) and [*Neil Malhotra*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), both of Stanford, and [*Yphtach Lelkes*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) and [*Matthew Levendusky*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), both of the University of Pennsylvania. In it, the authors offer another helpful analysis of affective polarization:

Democrats and Republicans both say that the other party’s members are hypocritical, selfish, and closed-minded, and they are unwilling to socialize across party lines, or even to partner with opponents in a variety of other activities. This phenomenon of animosity between the parties is known as affective polarization.

How has this come about? The authors argue that:

First, in the last 50 years, the percentage of “sorted” partisans, i.e., partisans who identify with the party most closely reflecting their ideology, has steadily increased.” At the same time, “as partisan and ideological identities became increasingly aligned, other salient social identities, including race and religion, also converged with partisanship.

In addition, they write, campaigns intensify partisanship:

Across recent election cycles, people were between 50 percent and 150 percent more affectively polarized by Election Day than they were a year earlier.

Republican or Democratic allegiance has, the authors continue, become a factor in socializing, consumer choices and in labor markets. They cited a study of responses to résumés sent out to employers in two counties, one Republican, the other Democratic:

In the Democratic county, Democratic resumes were 2.4 percentage points more likely to receive a callback than Republican resumes; the corresponding partisan preference for Republican resumes in the Republican county was 5.6 percentage points.

The intensifying differences between the two parties, particularly over matters of race, sex and the family have created a fertile environment for what amounts to the partisan politicization of human nature.

What had been differences over deeply rooted moral convictions, along with such [*personality traits*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) as openness to experience and the need for closure — which were once distributed in roughly equal proportion among members of the two parties — have become engines of polarization, driving the two parties further apart into warring camps.

The formulation of what has come to be known as [*moral foundations theory*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) has been crucial to a deeper understanding of this process. The theory

proposes that the human mind is organized in advance of experience so that it is prepared to learn values, norms, and behaviors related to a diverse set of recurrent adaptive social problems.

Leading proponents argue that there are

five foundations of intuitive ethics: care/harm; fairness/cheating; loyalty/betrayal; authority/subversion; and sanctity/degradation.

The theory is described in detail in “[*Moral Foundations Theory: The Pragmatic Validity of Moral Pluralism*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334),” a 2013 paper by [*Jesse Graham*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) of the University of Utah; [*Jonathan Haidt*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) of N.Y.U.; [*Sena Koleva*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), a research consultant; [*Matt Motyl*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) of the University of Illinois at Chicago; [*Ravi Iyer*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), chief data scientist for Ranker, a consumer internet platform; [*Sean P. Wojcik*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), a senior data scientist at the news site Axios; and [*Peter H. Ditto*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), of the University of California-Irvine.

What makes moral foundations theory especially relevant now is that in recent decades liberal and conservative partisans have divided over the importance they place on these five moral foundations:

Liberals valued Care and Fairness more than did conservatives, whereas conservatives valued Loyalty, Authority and Sanctity more than did liberals.

These differences mattered little for politics when both parties included liberals and conservatives, but beginning around 1964, this disagreement between left and right on moral values began to coincide more strongly with party affiliation.

A number of scholars have put forth ideas in an effort to understand these developments.

[*Kevin Smith*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), a political scientist at the University of Nebraska whose research explores “the biology and psychology of individual-level differences in political attitudes and behavior,” emailed in response to my inquiry:

Fights about abortion, gay rights, gun rights etc. are less about policy than about underlying core values, values that for many are not up for discussion or compromise because they are deeply held — indeed, given the genetic influences on such attitudes, it’s probably fair to say they are at least partly biologically instantiated.

Smith, who is a co-author of “[*Predisposed*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334): Liberals, Conservatives and the Biology of Political Differences,” argues that as political parties have coalesced along ideologically consistent lines, especially on issues related to race, they have

created a political environment where genetically influenced predispositions, what most people would experience as gut feelings that one side or the other is right or wrong on a given set of issues of the day, made partisanship something that was much more likely to become a central part of someone’s identity.

Smith is quite explicit that he does not posit that there is biological determinism of political views or anything else, but he does contend that

there’s little doubt that ideological orientations are genetically influenced, and to a surprisingly high degree — studies consistently estimate roughly 40-60 percent of the population level variance in ideology is under genetic influence.

The ideological realignment of the parties that has pushed many liberal Republicans into the Democratic camp and conservative Democrats in the opposite direction, Smith writes, has created a political environment in which

those with strong predispositions to lean one way or the other can readily mate those instinctual feelings to a political party that espouses and affirms those predispositions.

At that point, he continues,

You’ve got a recipe for deeply polarized politics that is going to feed on its own dynamics and be hard to change. And that sounds awfully like the political environment we have right now.

In “Predisposed,” Smith and [*John Hibbing*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) and [*John Alford*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), his co-authors, stress “that we are not making a nature versus nurture argument.”

Instead, they write, “innate forces combine with early development and later powerful environmental events to create attitudinal and behavioral tendencies.” A predisposition can be altered. Nonetheless,

predispositions nudge us in one direction or another, often without our knowledge, increasing the odds that we will behave in a certain way, but leaving plenty of room for predispositions to be contravened.

[*Kevin Arceneaux*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), a political scientist at Temple, stressed in an email that

It is important to resist the tendency to see heritability of eye color, for example, as the same thing as the heritability of an attitude. I cannot change my eye color, but I can change my attitudes.

Some of the most interesting work in the field of [*behavioral genetics*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), Arceneaux continues, shows how

context interacts with genetic influences. If you change the context, the heritability of behavioral constructs changes. So, I would caution against drawing a straight line from heritability to unchanging/intractable.

Along the same lines, [*Yuan Chang Leong*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), a postdoctoral fellow in the psychology department at Berkeley, emailed me that

What is heritable is unlikely to be ideology per se, but something more akin to personality traits or a predisposition to respond to certain information in a particular way.

The relationship between these factors and policy positions, Leong continued,

are not set in stone. There is evidence that partisans can be persuaded by political messages, especially when the messages are framed in a manner that appeals to them, so efforts at persuasion are not futile.

[*Ariel Malka*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), a professor of psychology at Yeshiva University, believes that “religiosity, authoritarianism, and conservative cultural attitudes” are rooted in personality traits that have some heritable components.

In an email, Malka noted that

Increased partisan polarization in the U.S. has coincided with the parties placing greater (and opposing) emphases on racial and ‘culture war’ positions. So it’s certainly plausible that American polarization stems from partisan conflict having expanded into the racial and cultural areas, aligning this heritable attitude syndrome with partisanship.

Malka cited the work of [*Amanda Friesen*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) and [*Aleksander Ksiazkiewicz*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), political scientists at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and the University of Illinois-Urbana, who are the authors of “[*Do Political Attitudes and Religiosity Share a Genetic Path*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334)?”

Friesen and Ksiazkiewicz are persuaded that

certain religious, political, and first principle beliefs on social organization can be explained by genetic and unique environmental components, and that the correlation between these three trait structures is primarily due to a common genetic path.

Malka also points to the work of [*Steven Ludeke*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), [*Wendy Johnson*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) and [*Thomas J. Bouchard Jr*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334)., psychologists at the University of Southern Denmark, the University of Edinburgh and the University of Minnesota, whose findings are described in the title of their 2014 paper, “ ‘[*Obedience to traditional authority’: A heritable factor underlying authoritarianism, conservatism and religiousness*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334).”

In Malka’s view, the strength of these predispositions to authoritarianism, religiousness and conservatism has been crucial to the success of Republicans in winning support from white middle-class and ***working-class*** voters, many of whom hold strongly liberal views on economic policy.

Malka’s analysis suggests one possible answer to the question famously posed by [*Thomas Frank*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) in his book, “[*What’s the Matter with Kansas?*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334)”: Why do many white ***working class*** people vote for Republicans, a choice at odds with their economic interests?

These voters “have taken on ‘ideology-appropriate’ economic positions, in order to complete their culturally based political identities,” Malka wrote:

So even if economic attitudes are not genetically constrained to go with cultural attitudes, the polarized political context can certainly bring them along for the ride. And this is very important for Republican elites who want to attract cultural conservatives to their economic agenda.

[*Peter Hatemi*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), a political scientist at Penn State, also makes a case for a constrained degree of heritability in political predispositions.

He is one of the authors of “[*Genetic Influences on Political Ideologies*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334),” a 2014 paper in which he and his colleagues suggest that “between 30-60 percent of the variance in social and political attitudes could be explained by genetic influences.”

To further this line of inquiry, Hatemi and his 14 co-authors analyzed “over 12,000 twins pairs, ascertained from nine different studies conducted in five democracies” and “results from one of the first genome-wide association studies” of 11,388 individuals.

They write that “the combined evidence suggests that political ideology constitutes a fundamental aspect of one’s genetically informed psychological disposition:”

Almost forty years ago, evidence from large studies of adult twins and their relatives suggested that between 30-60 percent of the variance in social and political attitudes could be explained by genetic influences. However, these findings have not been widely accepted or incorporated into the dominant paradigms that explain the etiology of political ideology. This has been attributed in part to measurement and sample limitations, as well the relative absence of molecular genetic studies. Here we present results from original analyses of a combined sample of over 12,000 twins pairs, ascertained from nine different studies conducted in five democracies, sampled over the course of four decades. We provide evidence that genetic factors play a role in the formation of political ideology, regardless of how ideology is measured, the era, or the population sampled. The only exception is a question that explicitly uses the phrase “Left-Right.” We then present results from one of the first genome-wide association studies on political ideology using data from three samples: a 1990 Australian sample involving 6,894 individuals from 3,516 families; a 2008 Australian sample of 1,160 related individuals from 635 families and a 2010 Swedish sample involving 3,334 individuals from 2,607 families. No polymorphisms reached genome-wide significance in the meta-analysis. The combined evidence suggests that political ideology constitutes a fundamental aspect of one’s genetically informed psychological disposition, but as Fisher proposed long ago, genetic influences on complex traits will be composed of thousands of markers of very small effects and it will require extremely large samples to have enough power in order to identify specific polymorphisms related to complex social traits.

[*Jaime Settle*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), a political scientist at the College of William and Mary, has also explored the ambiguities of heritability of psychological traits with political consequences. “While there is a consistent pattern that ideology is heritable, the direction of partisanship typically has not been found to be heritable,” she wrote in an email. However, she continued,

My expectation is that the sorting in American politics that occurred in the post-Civil Rights Era has changed that. Thus, partisanship today might show up to be heritable, but it would be a statistical artifact of the consequence of the alignment of ideology and partisanship.

More expansively, Settle wrote that

Our ideological labels in America have become identities as much as statements about our political beliefs. In the parlance of political scientists, people have much stronger symbolic ideologies than operational ideologies. The intractability of polarization is because of the alignment of many of our social identities, an argument that Lily Mason makes, and the reason “culture war” issues resonate so much is that they are much more threatening to people’s layered identities.

The electorate has been divided into two separate camps based on voters’ preference for key foundational moral principles and the policies that derive from them, their social and cultural identities, and their preference for democratic or illiberal leadership. Politicians understand this intuitively, which means that even as Donald Trump is convinced that [*chaos*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334), confusion and conflict will enhance his prospects for re-election, Joe Biden is working to quell the fires that Trump is lighting.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3630334).

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PHOTO: Joe Biden supporters cheer in the stands before a get-out-the-vote event at Tougaloo College on March 8, in Jackson, Miss. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Courtland Wells for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***Teaching About the Current Conflict in Gaza and Israel; current events***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62PR-P051-DXY4-X1TG-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1857 words

**Byline:** The Learning Network

**Highlight:** In this lesson, students will learn about the roots, causes and impact of the escalating violence in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

**Body**

In this lesson, students will learn about the roots, causes and impact of the escalating violence in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

Students in U.S. high schools can get [*free digital access to The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) until Sept. 1, 2021.

Please note: Some of the articles and videos included here include graphic depictions of violence and suffering.

Lesson Overview

Featured Newsletter: “[*The Morning Newsletter | May 18, 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)” (PDF) by David Leonhardt

The New York Times [*reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess):

As Palestinians and Israelis hunkered down for the second week of an intense conflict, a series of deadly flash points have galvanized both sides in a region where the human cost of war is all too familiar.

Before dawn on Monday, Israeli warplanes bombarded Gaza City, compounding the civilian suffering in the coastal enclave. At the same time, the rocket barrage by Hamas — the militant group that has ruled Gaza since 2007 and does not recognize Israel — continued to take its toll on Israeli cities, including Tel Aviv, the commercial center of the country.

As the civilian casualties grow, the conflict has polarized Israeli society, and the world, as seldom before, and it has spurred unrest within Israel and the occupied territories that has been more intense than any in years.

How can teachers bring the current conflict in the Middle East — one that is rooted in a complex history, that has been inflamed by several recent incidents, and that is overflowing with intense emotions — into the classroom so students can better understand what is happening, and where they stand on the issues?

In this lesson plan, we offer a place for students to start. With a variety of learning activities, we invite you to learn more about the latest fighting in Israel and Gaza, the history of conflict in the region, the perspectives of everyday people and the role that social media has played.

Warm-Up

Part I: Reflect on what you know (or think you know) and what you wonder about the crisis.

What do you know about the latest explosion of violence in the Middle East? Have you been following the news or discussing it with family members or friends or in school? What personal connections, if any, do you have to the conflict?

Before reading the featured article, create a [*K/W/L chart*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) to show what you know, what you want to know and what you’ve learned.

In the left column, “What I Know,” write down everything you think you know about the crisis in the Middle East — past or present — whether it’s key phrases, ideas, facts, names, dates, places or anything else.

Then, in the middle column, “What I Want to Know,” write down any questions you have about the conflict. Share your lists with the class and add to your chart.

Part II: Explore The Times’s multimedia coverage of the current crisis.

Next, take five minutes to explore one or more of the pieces below that illustrate the scale, scope and impact of the fighting in the Middle East:

* [*Maps and a timeline*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)illustrating the toll of eight days of violence in Gaza, Israel and the West Bank.
* One-minute videos ([*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess), [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) and [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)) capturing the events of the past two weeks.

1. The first minute of an [*episode of “The Daily”*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) on the crisis.

As you view these resources, add to your K/W/L chart at least three things you learned in the last column and one question you have in the middle column. What is your reaction to what is happening? Share and explain your responses with a partner.

Questions for Writing and Discussion

Read the [*featured newsletter*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (PDF) and then answer the following questions:

1. Mr. Leonhardt argues that just as important as the specific sparks of the latest conflict is a “larger reality” in the region. What is that reality? Do you agree it is important to take this into account? Why or why not?

2. In your own words, how would you summarize the Palestinian case, as laid out by Mr. Leonhardt? What are two facts or details that best capture this perspective? B’Tselem, a human rights group, has written: “The Israeli regime implements laws, practices and state violence designed to cement the supremacy of one group — Jews — over another — Palestinians.” How persuasive do you find this charge?

3. In your own words, how would you summarize the Israeli case, as laid out by Mr. Leonhardt? What are two facts or details that best capture this perspective? The newsletter poses a question many Israelis ask their critics: “What would you do if a terrorist group (which Hamas is, according to the U.S. and European Union) committed to the elimination of your country fired missiles at it day after day, inducing widespread terror?” How would you address that query?

4. What do many Palestinians see as the way forward? What do many supporters of Israel see as the way forward? What do you think will come next? Do you see the potential for peace and justice or do you believe the conflict will escalate?

5. The newsletter notes that while President Biden has expressed support for a cease-fire, the growing international alarm has not caused either side to pull back. What role do you think the U.S. should play in the present conflict? Do you think recent American leadership and foreign policy has helped or hurt the situation?

6. What are your reactions to the ideas and arguments presented in the newsletter? How did it change or deepen your understanding of and perspective on the current conflict in the Middle East? What else have you learned that you can add to your K/W/L chart? What questions do you still have?

Going Further

1. How did we get here?

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)]

To learn more about the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict explore these resources from around the web:

* Video: [*The Israel-Palestine Conflict: A Brief, Simple History*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Vox, 2016)

1. Article: [*Israel-Gaza Violence: The Conflict Explained*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (BBC)
2. Article: [*In Israel’s Rising Violence, Ripples From 1948*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)(The New York Times)
3. Tweet from the comedian Karan Menon: [*How the Israel-Palestine Conflict Started*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)

To learn more about the recent escalation of violence, explore these New York Times resources:

* Article: [*Israel-Gaza Conflict: What You Need to Know*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)

1. Article: [*After Years of Quiet, Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Exploded. Why Now?*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)
2. Article: [*Gaza War Deepens a Long-Running Humanitarian Crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)
3. Podcast: [*Listen to ‘The Daily’: The Israeli-Palestinian Crisis, Reignited*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)
4. Podcast: [*Listen to ‘The Daily’: Nine Days in Gaza*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)

After reading, watching or listening to at least one source from each section, create a timeline that includes the main events that have shaped the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — from the early 1900s until now. You can continue to follow along with the [*live updates here*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess).

How does knowing more about the history add to your understanding of the current fighting in the region?

2. What is it like living through this current crisis in Gaza and Israel?

First-person accounts of life on the ground in a conflict zone can provide windows into places and experiences we might not be able to see. The essays below reveal how life in Gaza and in Israel has been affected by the current crisis.

Read both of the following essays published in the Opinion section, and then choose one or both to respond to — either by writing a letter back to the author, or by selecting three quotes that made an impression on you and explaining why. We include the first two paragraphs of both below, but click on the link to read the essays in their entirety.

In “[*My Child Asks, ‘Can Israel Destroy Our Building if the Power Is Out?’*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess)” Refaat Alareer, an editor in Gaza City, writes:

On Tuesday night, my wife, six children and I huddled in the living room of our apartment, the place least likely to take a stray hit from Israeli missiles or the debris they scatter. We were watching Al Jazeera’s livestreaming of Israeli warplanes’ [*imminent destruction of al-Jawharah (The Gem)*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess), one of Gaza’s largest buildings, when the power went out.

Linah, 8 years old — or, in Gazan time, two wars old — asked sheepishly if “they” could still destroy our building now that the power had gone out.

In “[*I’m a Trauma Surgeon in Israel. In My Hospital, We Are in This Together*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess),” Adam Lee Goldstein writes:

Late in the evening on Tuesday, I was working in my office in Wolfson Medical Center, the hospital where I am the director of trauma surgery. The sun had set and suddenly the sirens started blaring from every corner of Tel Aviv, warning of rockets headed our way.

Our hospital is on the southern edge of the city, in a ***working-class*** neighborhood filled with Jews and Arabs, recent immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa and the countries of the former Soviet Union. From the hospital’s intercom came a calm, programmed voice: “Red alert,” it said. “Please move away from the windows and into a protected area as soon as possible.”

3. What role does social media play in this conflict?

While the Israeli airstrikes pummel Gaza, and Hamas rockets rain down on Israel, a parallel battle is being fought on social media.

Have you seen anything on social media about the conflict in Israel and Gaza? What have you seen? What messages did these posts communicate? What questions did they raise for you?

Two recent Times articles report on trends in social media — one on [*how solidarity with the Palestinians has shifted online*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) and gone global, and a second on [*how lies and misinformation*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) have inflamed the conflict. Read one or both of the articles and reflect on what you have observed in your own social media feed and how it connects to either of these two articles.

Additional Resources

We’ve selected various Opinion pieces from both inside The New York Times as well as from outside news outlets for students interested in reading a range of different points of view as they research this issue further.

From The New York Times

[*This Moment Is Different*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Yousef Munayyer)

[*What Your Taxes Are Paying For in Israel*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Nicholas Kristof)

[*Kushner’s Absurd Peace Plan Has Failed*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Michelle Goldberg)

[*If the Left Got Its Wish for Israel*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Bret Stephens)

[*For Trump, Hamas and Bibi, It Is Always Jan. 6*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Thomas Friedman)

[*The U.S. Must Stop Being an Apologist for the Netanyahu Government*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Bernie Sanders)

[*Palestinian Refugees Deserve to Return Home. Jews Should Understand.*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Peter Beinart)

From Around the Web

[*What We’re Seeing Now is Just the Latest Chapter in Israel’s Dispossession of the Palestinians*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Rashid Khalidi | Washington Post)

[*Israelis and Palestinians Can’t Go on Like This. Weep For Us.*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Gershom Gorenberg | Washington Post)

[*Let’s Talk About the Israel-Palestine Conflict*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Trevor Noah | The Daily Show)

[*An Open Letter to Trevor Noah*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (David Harris | Times of Israel)

[*Gaza 2021: An Apartheid Déjà Vu*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Haidar Eid | Al Jazeera)

[*No, Israel Is Not an Apartheid State*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Rich Lowry | National Review)

[*Israel Under Attack — from Hamas and Liberals*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (John Podhoretz | Commentary Podcast)

[*On Israel-Palestine, Biden Must Stop the Harm*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) (Mairav Zonszein | American Prospect)

About Lesson of the Day

Find all our Lessons of the Day in this [*column*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess).

Teachers, watch our [*on-demand webinar*](https://www.nytimes.com/initiative/highschoolaccess) to learn how to use this feature in your classroom.

PHOTO: People siting in the rubble of a bombed house in Gaza on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Samar Abu Elouf for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2021

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[***How Can Biden Bring Back Manufacturing Jobs? Weaken the Dollar***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623Y-9431-DXY4-X3NT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 1, 2021 Monday 13:50 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS; economy

**Length:** 1714 words

**Byline:** Noam Scheiber

**Highlight:** Critics of a strong currency say it hurts American factory workers by making imports cheap.

**Body**

President [*Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) has made reviving American manufacturing a top priority. To deliver, he may first have to deal with something even more fundamental to the U.S. economy: the strength of the dollar.

Because a strong dollar lowers the price of imports and raises the price of exports, it gives foreign companies an advantage over American competitors and can drag down U.S. employment.

“Dollar overvaluation is the big problem,” said Mike Stumo, chief executive of the Coalition for a Prosperous America, which represents small and midsize manufacturers and farmers. Mr. Stumo describes policies that prop up the dollar as a “war on the ***working class***.”

Few recent presidents have devoted much attention to this issue. Donald J. Trump fulminated against the decline of U.S. manufacturing and [*occasionally mused*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) about weakening the dollar, but focused his policies more on tariffs than on currency.

But Mr. Biden has hired a handful of senior economic advisers who are concerned about the dollar’s strength and have explored ways to reduce it.

“There are a lot of folks who want to try some new things in there,” said Mr. Stumo, whose group presented ideas for weakening the dollar to three of Mr. Biden’s agency transition teams.

The dollar’s strength over much of the past few decades has bloated the U.S. trade deficit, which roughly tripled as a share of gross domestic product in the late 1990s and has remained high.

At its simplest level, the trade deficit represents a kind of leakage from the U.S. economy: Americans buy more in goods and services from abroad than the rest of the world buys from the United States, and the country takes on foreign debt to pay for the difference. If Americans bought more domestically made products and fewer imports, the spending would create jobs for U.S.-based workers and require less debt.

Traditionally, most economists have nonetheless taken a blasé posture toward trade deficits, arguing that they reflect underlying economic fundamentals — namely, a country’s appetite to consume or invest rather than save.

A country with a young population may run a large trade deficit because young workers tend to consume more than older workers, who are focused on saving for retirement. An economy growing unusually quickly can also run a larger-than-usual trade deficit, as spending spikes for goods like cars and phones.

The problem for the United States is that its trade deficit appears to be far larger than demographics and other fundamentals would predict. According to an [*analysis*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) by the International Monetary Fund, a reasonable current account deficit, a somewhat broader measure of the trade deficit, would have been about 0.7 percent of the $21 trillion U.S. economy in 2019. The actual deficit, adjusted for short-term factors like the strength of the economy, was about 2 percent of gross domestic product — larger by hundreds of billions of dollars.

This divergence between economic models and the actual trade deficit partly reflects the dollar’s strength relative to other currencies. In some cases, other countries have suppressed their currencies’ value to make their goods cheaper for Americans.

China was the world’s leading currency manipulator during roughly the first decade of the 2000s, according to a [*paper*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) by Joseph E. Gagnon, a former Federal Reserve Board economist now at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, and C. Fred Bergsten, the institute’s founding director. The paper estimated that currency manipulation cost the United States one million to five million jobs in 2011. Manufacturing jobs tend to be hit particularly hard by the strong dollar because manufactured goods are easy to import.

Over the past several years, medium-size economies like Switzerland, Taiwan and Thailand have been most active in holding down their currencies, Dr. Gagnon found in a [*more recent study*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden). Collectively, currency interventions by such countries have been more than half the size of China’s earlier interventions, he notes.

But the dollar can appreciate even without currency interventions — for example, if foreign investors increase their appetite for American bonds, which require dollars to buy, as they have in recent years.

Dr. Gagnon estimates that as a result of these forces, the dollar was 10 to 20 percent above its expected value in 2019, probably costing hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs.

Revere Copper Products in Rome, N.Y., which makes copper strip used in automobiles and air-conditioners, has suffered from these changes. In 2000, Revere had two plants and nearly 600 workers. Today the company, founded in 1801 by that Revere, employs about 300 and operates only one plant.

The strong dollar has made it difficult for the company’s customers to compete with imports, said its chairman, Brian O’Shaughnessy. In the 1990s, for example, Revere supplied several American door-lock makers with copper or brass. Today, Mr. O’Shaughnessy said, most of the lock makers have shifted production abroad, undercut by imports made cheaper by the strong dollar.

“The industry moved offshore,” he said. “It was currency. It overwhelms everything else.”

The U.S. government could reverse these trends using one of two approaches. It could essentially fight fire with fire — buying enough foreign currency to lower the value of the dollar by 10 to 20 percent and restoring the equilibrium that would exist without foreigners’ excessive dollar-buying. Or it could tax foreign purchases of U.S. assets, like stocks and bonds, an approach prescribed in a bill sponsored by Senators Tammy Baldwin, a Wisconsin Democrat, and Josh Hawley, a Missouri Republican.

A tax would make these investments less attractive to foreigners and therefore reduce their need for dollars. It would also raise revenue for the government.

But a tax would ignite opposition from financial firms, which would see it as driving away customers, and could raise interest rates by reducing the supply of potential lenders to the U.S. government. (John R. Hansen, a former World Bank economist who has designed [*such a proposal*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden), said the rate increases were not likely to be significant.)

To date, a major obstacle to action on currency and the trade deficit has been resistance from senior economic policymakers in the U.S. government. Mr. Stumo said his group’s efforts to persuade the Obama administration of the dangers of an overvalued dollar and a large trade deficit were “the opposite of fruitful.”

Dr. Gagnon said that institutionally, the Fed and the Treasury Department tended to oppose adjusting the value of the dollar, both on philosophical grounds — economists there believe that markets should set exchange rates — and on practical ones. Doing so could require complicated judgments about when a foreign country’s efforts to influence the dollar should trigger an intervention, while the Treasury is likely to resist anything that makes U.S. government debt harder to sell, like a tax on purchases of debt by foreigners.

Menzie Chinn, an economist at the University of Wisconsin, said foreign investors could find ways around paying the tax, as they have to some extent in similar instances abroad.

Even experts, like Dr. Bergsten, who acknowledge that the dollar is overvalued and results in job losses for manufacturing workers are reluctant to call for aggressive action. Some argue that the trade deficit is helping sustain economies abroad during a delicate moment for the global economy.

“It would essentially be an act of economic war to aggressively intervene to push the dollar down against the euro, the yen, the Canadian dollar,” Dr. Bergsten said. “Those countries are doing worse than we are.”

But the political landscape has shifted in recent years, as reflected in Mr. Trump’s rise, and momentum for reining in the dollar and the trade deficit may be building. Though Mr. Trump’s tariffs on products like steel and aluminum were ineffective on this front — tariffs tend to increase the dollar’s value, leading to more imports of other goods — the Trump administration gave the Commerce Department new authority to penalize countries that had weakened their currencies.

It used that authority [*for the first time in November*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) to impose tariffs on Vietnamese tires, after the A.F.L.-C.I.O. submitted a petition saying Vietnam had used its currency as an unfair subsidy to producers.

Mr. Biden’s team may be picking up the baton. One of his top economic advisers, Jared Bernstein, has [*long expressed*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) concern about the overvaluation of the dollar. A second, Bharat Ramamurti, oversaw economic policy for Senator Elizabeth Warren’s presidential campaign, which [*proposed*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) “more actively managing our currency value to promote exports and domestic manufacturing.” And the Biden administration hired Brad W. Setser, a [*skeptic*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) of the strong dollar, as a counselor to its trade representative.

These aides may face resistance from Biden advisers with more orthodox views. Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen said at her [*confirmation hearing*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) in January that the dollar’s value “should be determined by markets” and that “the United States does not seek a weaker currency to gain competitive advantage.”

But some former Treasury officials [*interpreted*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) this as a more nuanced position than that of other recent secretaries, who have explicitly supported a strong dollar.

“Secretary Yellen speaks for the administration on the dollar, and her approach fully reflects the president’s focus on fostering strong and equitable economic growth,” a White House spokeswoman said.

Those who have discussed the dollar and the trade deficit with Mr. Biden’s advisers have gotten the impression that many see it as a problem and are willing to press for action internally.

“I think they are probably having that conversation,” Mr. Stumo said. “Who comes out on top — we’ll see.”

Ana Swanson contributed reporting.

Ana Swanson contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: The former Rome Cable complex in Rome, N.Y. An overvalued dollar means lost jobs for manufacturing workers. (B1); Revere Copper Products in Rome, N.Y., has shrunk to one plant employing 300, from two plants and 600 workers.; Brian O’Shaughnessy, Revere’s chairman, said the strong dollar had made it difficult for his customers to compete. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSHUA RASHAAD McFADDEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** March 3, 2021

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[***The T List: Five Things We Recommend This Week***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:618P-4YJ1-JBG3-60MK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 12, 2020 Thursday 09:00 EST

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**Section:** T-MAGAZINE

**Length:** 1475 words

**Highlight:** Homeware from the Amalfi coast, a Noah Davis tote — and more.

**Body**

Homeware from the Amalfi coast, a Noah Davis tote — and more.

Welcome to the T List, a newsletter from the editors of T Magazine. Each week, we’re sharing things we’re eating, wearing, listening to or coveting now. [*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline) to find us in your inbox every Wednesday. You can always reach us at [*tlist@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline).

Stay Here

New Orleans’s Columns Hotel Returns in Style

The wide front porch of the Columns Hotel, in New Orleans’s picturesque Garden District, was for many years a neighborhood institution and, for several of those, [*Jayson Seidman*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline)’s favorite college hangout. About two decades later, Seidman, now a hotelier, purchased the Columns, seeing an opportunity to restore it to its Old World grandeur. Built in 1883 as a private home, the Italianate mansion was later converted to a boardinghouse before opening as a hotel in the 1950s. Seidman focused on preserving classic details, such as the central mahogany staircase, the ornate stained-glass skylight above it and the original hardwood floors. Many of the light fixtures, including chandeliers, were dismantled, painstakingly refinished and then retooled to cast a glow that would complement each space’s color scheme and mood; Seidman partnered with professional lighting designers who had been stranded in the city when their film and theater projects were suspended on account of the pandemic. Upstairs, the 20 rooms — all with high ceilings and unique layouts — are appointed with a mix of gilded mirrors, four-poster beds, Chinese and Moroccan rugs, claw-foot tubs and one 1930s-era pink sofa sourced from the South of France. The chef Mike Stoltzfus of the local favorite [*Coquette*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline) leads the hotel’s New American restaurant and its bar. Additionally, the building’s old ballroom has been reimagined as a spacious lounge, though guests can also sip cocktails on the main porch or, if they’re staying at the hotel (which will reopen Dec. 1), on the second-floor porch or rooftop sun deck and take in the views of the neighborhood’s famously lush live oaks below. From $350; 3811 Saint Charles Avenue, New Orleans, La.; [*thecolumns.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline).

Read This

A Queer Los Angeles, Now Lost to Gentrification

The photographer [*Reynaldo Rivera*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline) grew up in the ’70s, moving around from Mexicali, Mexico, to California’s Central Valley to eastern Los Angeles. When Rivera was 12 or 13, he began picking cherries with his father for work. Thrift stores and secondhand bookstores became a portal to art and literature, and Rivera eventually got his hands on a camera and began taking pictures, even though he considered art to be “something white people do,” as he has said. Many of Rivera’s earliest pictures have been lost or destroyed, but a new monograph of his work, “[*Reynaldo Rivera: Provisional Notes for a Disappeared City*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline),” is being published by Semiotext(e) this month. In the 1980s and ’90s, Rivera was living in Echo Park, selling photographs to LA Weekly and documenting the underground life of Latino gay and drag bars such as Mugy’s, the Silverlake Lounge and La Plaza. Most of these nightclubs — and the glamorous-looking girls who populated them — are now gone, washed away by the gentrification that has taken over eastern Los Angeles. “This book is an attempt to leave a record that we were here, since we tend to get erased and leave our neighborhoods without any traces,” writes Rivera of the Latino community he lovingly documented. Comparisons may be easily made between Rivera and his peers, such as Nan Goldin or Larry Clark, but as the writer Chris Kraus points out in her introductory text, Rivera’s photographs reflect “a different kind of collaboration. He sees his subjects less as they ‘are’ than how they most wish to be seen, lending himself to their dreams and illusions of glamour.” Available for preorder, $34.95; [*semiotexte.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline).

Covet This

Bring Some of the Amalfi Coast Into Your Home

If you have ever traveled to the Amalfi Coast, you may very well have ended up at [*Le Sirenuse*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline), an 18th-century villa painted cherry red with white trim and covered in bougainvillea, its poolside and veranda dotted with fragrant lemon trees overlooking the Mediterranean. The property was originally the private home of a member of the Sersales — a noble Neapolitan dynasty of ancient origins — that they transformed into a hotel in 1951. The American writer [*John Steinbeck*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline), visiting in 1953, described it as “an old family house converted into a first-class hotel.” Le Sirenuse still maintains this charming sensibility, even if, today, it is considered an international destination. Now, following the launch of its resort-wear line, Le Sirenuse is offering [*its first home collection*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline), composed of embroidered cushions, handmade glassware and bone-china plates and mugs — allowing you to take some of the place’s European glamour with you. Of particular note is the glassware, all handblown on the Venetian island of [*Murano*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline), in colors such as sea foam, white, sky blue and red, which includes tumblers, water and wine glasses, champagne flutes, a water pitcher and small bowls. The gold-rimmed bone-china plates, meanwhile, have been customized by the English designer Luke Edward Hall, who was inspired by the hotel’s iconic view, as well as by [*Luca Guadagnino*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline)’s Oscar-winning 2017 film “Call Me by Your Name.” From $78; available at [*emporiosirenuse.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline) and [*matchesfashion.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline).

See This

Performa Hosts a Different Sort of Arts Telethon

New York’s interdisciplinary arts organization Performa is known for its biennials, for which it transforms spaces all over the city into venues for boundary-pushing performance art. This month, on Nov. 18, the nonprofit is celebrating its 15th anniversary with an event both pleasingly retro and perfectly suited to these modern, troubled times: a live-edited, eight-hour-long telethon video fund-raiser. Streamed via Performa’s website, it will combine a digital auction with testimonials and live and prerecorded performances. The event will be staged at an ad hoc TV studio in Manhattan’s Pace Gallery, where limited-edition wares such as porcelain vases by [*Barbara Kruger*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline) and body pillows by [*Korakrit Arunanondchai*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline) will be hawked from a cheeky QVC-style set. Performances by Yvonne Rainer, Jacolby Satterwhite and others will be beamed in from all over the world. It’s a little bit Jerry Lewis, but it’s also a little bit [*Nam June Paik*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline), whose early ’80s experiments in live broadcasting changed video art. Performa senior curator Kathy Noble admits that creating a such a long live TV show is an “epic” undertaking, but the organization wouldn’t have it any other way. “The telethon is very much in the spirit of what we do,” she says. “It’s coming up with a new idea, a new way of doing something, and working with a huge number of artists.” Donations and auction proceeds will go toward Performa’s continued programming. To be streamed live on Nov. 18, 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. Eastern Standard Time; [*performa-arts.org*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline).

Shop This

A Tote Honoring the Artist Noah Davis

[*The Underground Museum*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline) was founded eight years ago in the ***working-class*** Los Angeles neighborhood of Arlington Heights by Karon Davis and her husband, the painter [*Noah Davis*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline), who died in 2015 of a rare form of cancer at age 32. The museum, which is composed of three storefronts, and includes a bookshop and community event space, is a destination for Black contemporary art and culture. To help further its mission, all proceeds from the sales of a new edition of MZ Wallace’s Metro tote, featuring a painting by Davis, will benefit the Underground Museum (as will the smaller accompanying Metro pouch, which is sold separately). “Before Noah became ill, he used the money he’d inherited from his father to found the organization,” says the MZ Wallace co-founder Monica Zwirner. “It was an incredible gesture. I believe that art can change your life, and I think Noah deeply believed that, too.” Earlier this year, when Davis was the subject of [*a posthumous retrospective*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline) at David Zwirner Gallery, Monica (who is married to David Zwirner) met Karon. There was an instant connection. “She’s an absolute dynamo,” Zwirner said. “And she said to me, ‘Oh, I have one of your Kerry James Marshall totes!’ I was like, ‘Done and done, let’s do something.’” Though Zwirner and her co-founder, Lucy Wallace Eustice, have released artist editions before, remote work complicated the process this time around. “We’d been just looking at screens, and when the fabric came in, we saw the colors were wrong, so we had to start over,” Zwirner recalled. “But of course, we had to be true to the art.” MZ Wallace x the Underground Museum Medium Metro tote ($265) and Metro pouch ($45); [*mzwallace.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/t-list?module=inline).

From T’s Instagram

11 Hotels to Visit in Your Dreams

PHOTO: Left: the second-story porch at Columns. Right: the former ballroom, now being used as a lounge. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Arnaud Montagard FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 12, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Younger Liberals Carry Markey Past Kennedy In Primary for Senate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60RH-K9F1-DXY4-X505-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 2, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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

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**Byline:** By Jonathan Martin

**Body**

The result was the first loss by a Kennedy in a Massachusetts election and demonstrated the progressive energy that is reshaping the Democratic Party.

Senator Edward J. Markey turned back a primary challenge Tuesday from Representative Joseph P. Kennedy III, handing the Kennedy family its first-ever electoral loss in Massachusetts and demonstrating the growing strength of the progressive left.

Forging a coalition of younger and more liberal Democrats, the sort of voters who once formed the core of the Kennedy base, Mr. Markey was winning about 54 percent of the vote when Mr. Kennedy called him to concede.

By winning renomination in a generational clash -- and the marquee Democratic Senate primary of the year -- Mr. Markey, 74, proved that the ascendant left is not eager to simply throw out long-serving incumbents in favor of younger rivals, such as the 39-year-old Mr. Kennedy. Mr. Markey, who was first elected to Congress in 1976, was able to outflank Mr. Kennedy with progressives, leaving the heir of Massachusetts's most storied political dynasty little opening.

Claiming victory, and wearing the same Nike Air Revolutions that became his signature as a late-in-life hipster, Mr. Markey elevated his millennial supporters and the Green New Deal they rallied around. ''Tonight's victory is a tribute to those young people,'' he said, vowing that ''the age of incrementalism is over.''

It was the sort of exhortation that Robert F. Kennedy could have easily delivered. But even as his grandson highlighted his family name in a final mail and TV blitz, today's liberals were scarcely moved.

Addressing supporters in Watertown, Mass., Mr. Kennedy said he ''would do this again with all of you in a heartbeat.''

He called Mr. Markey ''a good man,'' but hinted at some of the bitterness that overtook the last stages of the race, when the senator invoked Mr. Kennedy's forebears. Addressing his family, and noting that their ''name was invoked far more often than I anticipated in this race,'' Mr. Kennedy said: ''You are my heroes.''

He was uneasy from the start of the campaign about trading on his legacy, a reluctance that mystified some of his allies, who thought he was not wielding his most enviable asset.

Mr. Kennedy's more fundamental problem, however, may have been that he simply never gave voters a coherent reason for why he should replace Mr. Markey, who was generally well-liked and underestimated by many Massachusetts Democrats.

Satisfied with the incumbent, happy to see him embrace a progressive agenda and wary of Mr. Kennedy's ambitions, the state's many liberal voters made the difference. Mr. Markey won with overwhelming margins in the tony suburbs outside Boston, including Mr. Kennedy's Newton, and in the college towns of Western Massachusetts.

In the other most closely watched race of the night, though, the left wing of the party fell short. Representative Richard E. Neal, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and dean of Massachusetts's House delegation, easily fended off Alex Morse, a liberal who is the mayor of Holyoke.

Mr. Neal, who enjoyed a sizable financial advantage, leveraged his clout in Washington and benefited from the relative scarcity of upscale liberals in his Western Massachusetts district. Every progressive primary challenger who has unseated a House Democrat in the last two elections has done so in and around big cities, a trend that worked against Mr. Morse.

In the Boston area, the long-serving Representative Stephen Lynch easily defeated Robbie Goldstein, a physician. A number of Democrats were vying to succeed Mr. Kennedy in his liberal House district, where winning the party's primary is tantamount to claiming the seat.

But it was the Senate primary and the challenge of Mr. Neal that demonstrated the progressive energy that's reshaping the Democratic Party -- and offered a preview of the pressure party leaders could face from the left next year if Democrats win the presidency and both chambers of Congress this fall.

Three long-serving House Democrats this year have already been unseated by a liberal challenger: Representatives William Lacy Clay of Missouri, Daniel Lipinski of Illinois and Eliot Engel of New York. The groundwork for those races was laid in part by the 2018 success of Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts, who both defeated incumbent Democrats in primaries.

Now, a number of House lawmakers are bracing for demands that they push through an ambitious agenda in a Democratic-controlled Washington or face another wave of primaries. Some of them may retire or, should Joseph R. Biden Jr. win the presidency, accept administration posts rather than seek re-election.

Yet others will surely seek to mimic Mr. Markey, who succeeded by channeling the new activism on the left. First elected to the House in 1976, he has been a fairly reliable liberal vote in the House and the Senate, where he moved in 2013 after John F. Kerry became secretary of state.

Mr. Markey was never known as a progressive warrior and he has cast a handful of votes -- including for the 1990s crime bill and the Iraq war -- that are out of step with today's movement to the left.

He has taken a leadership role on issues related to the environment and technology, however, and that linked him to perhaps his most important supporter: Ms. Ocasio-Cortez. Their joint authorship of the Green New Deal offered Mr. Markey access not only to her endorsement but also entree to a new generation of environmental activists. He captured the early support of the Sunrise Movement, the environmental activist group, and built a strong coalition among young progressives.

''If we're going to have a planet for people in my generation to live on, we need someone like Senator Markey,'' said Lindsay Aldworth, 29, who was active with the Sunrise Movement in college and attended a rally for Mr. Markey in New Bedford, Mass., last week.

That enthusiasm frustrated Mr. Kennedy, who was counting on winning votes from young voters. He believes that the state's many white liberal voters did not hold Mr. Markey to account for some of his previous stances, including his long-ago opposition to the integration of Boston's public schools, as they did Mr. Biden.

Mr. Kennedy, however, had built his own coalition of support, winning endorsements from a number of voters of color and ***working-class*** people across racial lines.

''They're not on Twitter,'' he said in an interview Saturday, acknowledging that the ''question is do they vote.''

While some younger and more liberal Massachusetts voters were not enthused about perpetuating the state's most famous political dynasty, the Kennedy name still carries significant punch among older and many Black Democrats.

''The Kennedy family is loved around here, they're champions for labor,'' said Robert Sheehan, the president of a politically powerful chapter of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Boston, which endorsed the congressman.

For much of the race, Mr. Kennedy shied away from running on his family name. It was not until Mr. Markey released a video in which he repurposed perhaps John F. Kennedy's most famous line -- ''With all due respect it's time to start asking what your country can do for you'' -- that his younger rival gave a speech and began advertising invoking his legacy.

Mr. Markey, though, enjoyed a considerable financial advantage at the end of the race. He outspent Mr. Kennedy nearly 4-to-1 on advertising in the Boston market in the final week of the campaign.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/01/us/politics/ed-markey-kennedy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/01/us/politics/ed-markey-kennedy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Senator Edward J. Markey, above, who was first elected to Congress in 1976, built a strong coalition of progressives to outflank his young challenger, Representative Joseph P. Kennedy III, left. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVEN SENNE/ASSOCIATED PRESS

ALLISON DINNER/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 2, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A ‘Community for All’? Not So Fast, This Wisconsin County Says.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62PH-W9J1-JBG3-60FH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Reid J. Epstein

**Highlight:** In Wausau, Wis., the county board has debated a resolution aimed at embracing inclusion for nearly a year, with no agreement. Racial tensions that had simmered beneath the surface are now roiling the community.

**Body**

In Wausau, Wis., the county board has debated a resolution aimed at embracing inclusion for nearly a year, with no agreement. Racial tensions that had simmered beneath the surface are now roiling the community.

WAUSAU, Wis. — A standing-room-only crowd packed a drab courthouse meeting room one recent night and tried to resolve a thorny, yearlong debate over whether Marathon County should declare itself “a community for all.”

The lone Black member of the county board, Supervisor William Harris, stood up and begged his colleagues who opposed the resolution to change their minds.

“I want to feel like I’m a part of this community,’’ he said. “That’s what a lot of our residents are saying. We want to contribute to our community. We want to feel like a part of this community.”

But a fellow board member was just as passionate at the meeting on Thursday in arguing that acknowledging racial disparities is itself a form of racism.

“When we choose to isolate and elevate one group of people over another, that’s discrimination,” said Supervisor Craig McEwen, a retired police officer who is white.

When George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis last May, communities and businesses all over the world engaged in a reckoning over social justice, diversity and inclusion. But while scores of other communities adopted new policies and issued proclamations vowing to make progress, the residents of Marathon County, [*with a population of 135,000 that is 91 percent white*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/marathoncountywisconsin), couldn’t agree on what to say.

A year later, they still can’t.

About the only consensus that has emerged is that the prolonged fight over a four-word phrase has only made things worse, ripping at the communal fabric in this central Wisconsin county and amplifying the tensions that had been simmering before Mr. Floyd’s death.

The racial divisiveness that President Donald J. Trump stoked during his four years in the White House endures in the daily life of towns like Wausau, exacerbated by the deaths of Black Americans at the hands of white police officers, and leading to new battles over whether racism is baked into local institutions. Wausau is an old paper mill town now filled with ***working-class*** manufacturing workers, medical professionals and people who work in the tourism industry, but the schisms here serve as a window into the ways that opposing views of racial equity have roiled American life.

In the end, the executive committee of the county board rejected the resolution by a 6-to-2 vote on Thursday night, a result that both sides say is worse than never having considered it in the first place.

Advocates say the failure to reach an agreement will serve as a civic black eye and convey the message of an unwelcoming community. Opponents argue the fight has been a waste of time that makes the county look racist when they say it is not.

“I don’t have the same type of confidence or faith in the community like I used to,” said Supervisor Ka Lo, a 39-year-old of Hmong descent who said she had received death threats while pushing for the resolution. “I was born and raised here, and I don’t recognize the community that I grew up in right now.”

The “community for all” story began last summer when a small group of county officials began drafting a resolution they hoped would acknowledge disparities faced by local people of color. The original title, No Place for Hate, was deemed too inflammatory, so it was renamed A Community for All.

After six revisions and countless hours of negotiation and debate, they arrived at a document calling for the county to “achieve racial and ethnic equity to foster cross-cultural understanding and advocate for minority populations.”

For the Black and Hmong populations here, the resolution had given them hope that their fight for inclusion would lead to greater unity. They said the protests that followed Mr. Floyd’s death provided them license to reject the daily indignations they suffer — like on occasion needing the help of white friends to rent an apartment, or having white people in the community assume they are on public assistance.

Like many small American cities, Wausau, the Marathon County seat, has evolved into a regional hospital hub. It is surrounded by small towns and villages, dairy farms and land that produces [*95 percent of the nation’s ginseng*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/marathoncountywisconsin). The county has long been competitive politically, swinging between Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and [*Barack Obama*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/marathoncountywisconsin) before [*twice backing Mr. Trump*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/marathoncountywisconsin).

[*The 1970 census*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/marathoncountywisconsin) found Wausau had four Black residents and 76 people listed as “other,” out of a population of nearly 33,000. In 1976, [*local churches began welcoming the Hmong*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/marathoncountywisconsin), refugees from Laos who had aided the American war effort there before fleeing when the United States left Vietnam. The Hmong now make up about 9 percent of Wausau’s population — second only to St. Paul, Minn., by percentage. A statue commemorating the Hmong-American military alliance stands outside the county courthouse.

Among those who proposed the resolution was Supervisor Yee Leng Xiong, the executive director of the Hmong American Center in Wausau.

To older conservative white residents, there hadn’t been any tension over diversity and inclusion in central Wisconsin until the past few years, when a handful of young progressive people of color won county board seats and began demanding more input.

In June 2019, the board for the first time formally recognized Pride Month. A month later, [*supervisors nearly rescinded the recognition*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/marathoncountywisconsin) after an outcry from their conservative constituents. This February, it fell to Mr. Harris, 38, a Florida-born lawyer who in 2020 became the first Black member of the county board, [*to make the case for acknowledging, for the first time, Black History Month*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/marathoncountywisconsin). It passed, narrowly.

Mr. Harris was also quick to point out to the board that officials had a history of pushing for rural initiatives like broadband access and health care that mostly benefited white people.

The white board members who represent rural communities did not appreciate the lecture.

“They’re creating strife between people labeling us as racist and privileged because we’re white,” Supervisor Arnold Schlei, a 73-year-old retired veal farmer who has been on the county board for 11 years, said in an interview. “You can’t come around and tell people that work their tails off from daylight to dark and tell them that they got white privilege and they’re racist and they’ve got to treat the Hmongs and the coloreds and the gays better because they’re racist. People are sick of it.”

He and others opposing the resolution argued that to acknowledge disparities faced by people of color would tilt social advantages to their benefit. The word “equity,” which was included in the resolution, served as a trigger for many, who made the false claim that memorializing it as a goal would lead to the county’s taking things from white people to give them to people of color.

Those opposed to the resolution made far-reaching claims about its potential impact. The local Republican Party chairman, Jack Hoogendyk, said the resolution would lead to “the end of private property” and “race-based redistribution of wealth.” Others have argued that there is, in fact, no racism in Marathon County, and even if there was, it’s not the county board’s business to do anything about it.

James Juedes, a dairy farmer who lives on a farm just east of Wausau that has been in his family for 126 years, has been one of the most public opponents of the resolution. He has also organized counterdemonstrations to local Black Lives Matter protests.

In an interview at his farm, Mr. Juedes, 51, said systemic racism “doesn’t exist here” and suggested those pushing the resolution were doing so to benefit themselves financially.

“I have yet to recall any type of racial instances that has been reported in this community that has caused any type of stress,” he said.

La’Tanya Campbell, a 39-year-old Black social worker who was at the meeting last week, related a different experience. Ms. Campbell works as an advocate for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking, and said she sometimes had to enlist white colleagues to help clients find apartments to rent in Wausau.

As she campaigned for the resolution, Ms. Campbell said, the subtle racism she had long experienced in Wausau became explicit, including hate mail calling Black people “animals.” She sought therapy to deal with the stress.

“Typically, the racism you experience is behind closed doors, but since I’ve started on this resolution I can’t believe some of the things that I’m hearing,” she said. “You feel unsafe being a woman, I feel unsafe being a Black woman. And doing anti-oppression work, it adds up.”

By the day of the meeting to consider the resolution, few were left undecided.

Some white attendees distributed copies of articles from The Epoch Times, a newspaper that has trafficked in pro-Trump conspiracy theories about the 2020 election. A transgender woman in favor of the resolution wore a Black Lives Matter T-shirt.

Twenty-eight people addressed the board for three minutes each; 18 were against the resolution, and 10 supported it.

Bruce Bohr, a retired engineer, called the resolution a giveaway to the county’s people of color. “Government cannot give someone something without taking it away from someone else,” Mr. Bohr said.

Supervisor E.J. Stark, a retired insurance adjuster, said it would leave the county liable for legal damages “if somebody looks cross-eyed at somebody.”

It fell to the board’s people of color to make the case for it.

Mr. Xiong warned of economic calamity if the board rejected the resolution. “If a resolution does not pass, it could have detrimental effect on our hiring, on our economy and other realms of business,” he said.

And Mr. Harris pleaded with his white colleagues to see people of color as equal citizens. “People of color have come here,” he said. “They want to contribute, they want to be accepted and acknowledged.”

The full county board could reconsider the resolution, but it seems clear it won’t pass. John Robinson, a Community for All supporter who has been on the board on and off since 1974, said after the meeting that there were 14 to 16 votes in favor, out of 38, “on a good day.”

Ms. Lo and Ms. Campbell both said they were contemplating moving away from Wausau to someplace more welcoming to people of color.

But though she believes the dispute over the resolution has added to the community’s political polarization and caused her personal trauma, Ms. Campbell said the fight had been worth the effort.

“If you don’t continue to keep having the conversation and keep pushing for that equity and recognition, nothing changes,” she said in the courthouse lobby after the vote. “So it’s not going to happen in my lifetime. But with my children and my grandchildren, I’m fighting for them, for other people’s children and grandchildren. All our forefathers, if they were to have stopped fighting, we wouldn’t have anything.”

PHOTOS: At the Marathon County Courthouse in Wausau, Wis., where the county board has debated a resolution aimed at embracing inclusion for nearly a year.; LA’TANYA CAMPBELL: She said the dispute had led her to consider moving away from Wausau.; WILLIAM HARRIS: A lawyer who became the first Black person elected to the Marathon County Board in 2020, Mr. Harris spoke in favor of the resolution last week. “I want to feel like I’m a part of this community,’’ he said.; YEE LENG XIONG: He said the dispute would lead to widespread economic problems.; A mural in Wausau. The Marathon County Board rejected the “community for all” resolution last week by a vote of 6 to 2. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAUREN JUSTICE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** May 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Biden's Victory Means Demotion for Netanyahu and Less Focus on Israel***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6187-6VC1-JBG3-60SS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By David M. Halbfinger

**Body**

Benjamin Netanyahu has made his closeness to President Trump, who gave him much of what he wanted, central to his political appeal. Things will be different in a Biden administration.

JERUSALEM -- President Trump's defeat has left Israel and its longtime prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, on the receiving end of an abrupt demotion.

Overnight, President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s victory effectively downgraded Israel's ranking on the list of United States foreign-policy priorities, diminished Mr. Netanyahu's stature on the global stage and undercut his argument to restive Israeli voters that he remains their indispensable leader.

After four years of doting treatment by Mr. Trump, who lavished Israel with diplomatic prizes and indulged Mr. Netanyahu with geopolitical backing, the credits are rolling on the buddy movie he promoted endlessly to Israeli audiences.

''He's gone from Trump's wingman to the guy who polishes the canopy of the F-16,'' said Anshel Pfeffer, a Netanyahu biographer.

The stark comedown threatens to weaken Mr. Netanyahu further as he endures abysmal approval ratings, struggles to avoid a third wave of the coronavirus and put Israelis back to work, prepares for trial early next year on felony corruption charges, and contends with an emboldened opposition and embittered allies who have openly talked of joining forces to oust him.

Mr. Netanyahu seemed unusually flummoxed by Mr. Biden's win: It took him 12 hours after the race was called to offer perfunctory congratulations on Twitter, without naming the office Mr. Biden had won, followed quickly by an effusive expression of gratitude to Mr. Trump. There was speculation across the Israeli political spectrum that Mr. Netanyahu feared retribution from Mr. Trump if he complimented Mr. Biden more wholeheartedly.

Shimrit Meir, an Israeli analyst who is well sourced in Mr. Netanyahu's circle, said the prime minister and his allies were in ''deep denial.''

''The psychological and mental leap that people will have to take is huge,'' she said. ''And they didn't prepare themselves. Two weeks ago I wrote an op-ed about how cabinet members were describing in detail all the ways in which Trump was going to win and why Nate Silver was an idiot.''

Most immediately, analysts and officials said, Israel will feel the transition to a Biden administration as a shift of focus away from the conflict with the Palestinians. With a pandemic, a battered economy and deep societal fissures demanding his attention, Mr. Biden, to the extent he looks abroad, is expected to place greater emphasis on tensions with China and Russia, climate change and repairing the frayed trans-Atlantic alliance.

Looming large, however, are questions about Iran. Mr. Biden has spoken of showing Tehran a ''path back to diplomacy,'' offering to re-enter the Obama administration's nuclear deal if Iran returns to strict compliance. Mr. Netanyahu crusaded against the agreement and cheered Mr. Trump's withdrawal from it.

In contrast to Mr. Trump's favoritism toward Israel, Mr. Biden has promised a return to a more balanced approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

That could mean, analysts and former officials suggested, that if Arab states like Morocco, Oman or Saudi Arabia express willingness to normalize ties with Israel, a Biden administration might encourage them to insist on Israeli concessions to the Palestinians in return.

Still, Mr. Biden is under few illusions, his advisers say, that a settlement is achievable with Mr. Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas, the longtime Palestinian president, still in their jobs.

Instead, the new administration is expected to exert a calming influence. That could mean reopening the American consulate in Jerusalem, which Mr. Trump disbanded, as a quasi-embassy to the Palestinians; reopening a Palestinian diplomatic mission in Washington, and restoring U.S. funding for East Jerusalem hospitals, aid projects on the West Bank and Palestinian refugees.

Israeli officials say they also expect Mr. Biden to work to preserve the viability of a future Palestinian state, which is at odds with Mr. Netanyahu's moves to expand Jewish settlements on the West Bank or even annex them.

None of those steps is uncomplicated, however, and any of them could create friction with Mr. Netanyahu's right-wing government and its allies in Congress.

While Palestinians cheered the defeat of Mr. Trump, whom they see as a singular nemesis, they expressed more relief than joy.

Hanan Ashrawi, a senior Palestine Liberation Organization official, said she still expected United States policy to tilt heavily in Israel's favor. ''I don't think we're so naïve as to see Biden as our savior,'' she said.

Left-leaning Israelis said they expected the Biden administration to seek Palestinian concessions for rolling back Mr. Trump's punitive diplomatic moves, like changing the practice of compensating Palestinians who serve time in Israeli prisons, including for violent attacks -- financial benefits that Israel assails as ''pay to slay.''

A Democratic presidency will be a familiar challenge for Mr. Netanyahu, who was prime minister during Bill Clinton's and Barack Obama's administrations. But his own standing is much weaker now. And after assuring Israelis he was in ''a different league'' because of his ties to Mr. Trump, mere diffidence from Mr. Biden could be deeply wounding to Mr. Netanyahu now, analysts said.

Mr. Pfeffer imagined a Biden White House inviting Mr. Netanyahu's rivals, Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi, to Washington for high-profile meetings while snubbing the prime minister.

''Washington is now holding all the cards,'' Mr. Pfeffer said. ''They don't have to pick a fight on settlements or Iran. They can do a lot of damage just by ignoring Bibi. The real question is, do Biden and his team have any interest in making Bibi's life hell?''

There is certainly ample motive: Mr. Netanyahu made enemies of much of the Democratic establishment during the Obama administration, most famously by addressing a joint session of Congress to attack Mr. Obama's nuclear deal -- a speech that Mr. Biden, then vice president, did not attend.

Martin Indyk, a former U.S. ambassador to Israel, wrote acidly on Twitter that while Mr. Netanyahu had indeed known Mr. Biden for nearly 40 years, ''it's also true that @JoeBiden has known @netanyahu for nearly forty years.''

Through allies in right-wing Israeli media, Mr. Netanyahu has portrayed Mr. Biden as beholden to left-wing Democrats who want to punish Israel for its West Bank occupation. But even right-wing Israeli lawmakers say that Mr. Biden cannot be demonized as readily as Mr. Obama, who had little track record in the region and confronted Mr. Netanyahu early on.

Mr. Biden enjoys a decades-old reputation as pro-Israel, and his tales of meeting Golda Meir in the 1970s, and being told by his father that one need not be a Jew to be a Zionist, were long ago committed to memory by Israeli officials.

At the height of tensions with the Obama administration, said Michael Oren, then the Israeli ambassador to Washington, Mr. Biden was Israel's point of contact in the White House. ''He was the good cop, but his good-copness was genuine,'' Mr. Oren said.

Nimrod Novik, who was a senior adviser to Shimon Peres, the former Israeli prime minister, and is now a senior fellow of the Israel Policy Forum, said he hoped that Mr. Biden would quietly move to reset relations with Mr. Netanyahu in a productive way.

A discreet emissary, Mr. Novik suggested, could give the Israeli leader a stern message: ''The party's over. I don't want to fight with you, but I intend to stabilize the situation, and you're going to help me. Forget about annexation. No surprises. No unilateral anything. And I need something constructive from you as well: Make it easier to shore up the Palestinian Authority before it collapses, and Gaza before it explodes. And I promise you I'll bring you into the room when I'm discussing Iran.''

The Trump-Netanyahu relationship has been an extraordinary duet between nationalist leaders whose similarities -- divisive political tactics, denunciations of ''fake news'' and playing to ***working-class*** voters' resentments, among other things -- have drawn countless comparisons.

But without Mr. Trump performing under the big top, Mr. Netanyahu's Trumpian behavior could begin to stick out.

On Saturday night, as blue-state Americans danced in the streets, the street outside Mr. Netanyahu's Jerusalem residence was mobbed, as usual, with protesters demanding his resignation.

Ayala Colle, 53, a farmer from the Negev Desert, said she hoped that ''less legitimacy for the craziness in the United States means there's less legitimacy for the craziness here.''

And Uri Yaakov, 59, said he was tired of Mr. Netanyahu's pointing to Mr. Trump ''to claim that the United States is in his pocket.'' He added: ''That illusion is over.''

Adam Rasgon contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/09/world/middleeast/biden-israel.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/09/world/middleeast/biden-israel.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mr. Netanyahu in 2015 attacked President Barack Obama's nuclear deal with Iran, which Joseph R. Biden Jr. has vowed to re-enter. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2020

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[***Markey Holds Off Joseph Kennedy in Massachusetts Senate Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60RG-B6D1-DXY4-X4RK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1299 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Martin

**Highlight:** The result was the first loss by a Kennedy in a Massachusetts election and demonstrated the progressive energy that is reshaping the Democratic Party.

**Body**

The result was the first loss by a Kennedy in a Massachusetts election and demonstrated the progressive energy that is reshaping the Democratic Party.

Senator Edward J. Markey turned back a primary challenge Tuesday from Representative [*Joseph P. Kennedy III*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/us/politics/massachusetts-primary-auchincloss.html), handing the Kennedy family its first-ever electoral loss in Massachusetts and demonstrating the growing strength of the progressive left.

Forging a coalition of younger and more liberal Democrats, the sort of voters who once formed the core of the Kennedy base, Mr. Markey was [*winning about 54 percent of the vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/us/politics/massachusetts-primary-auchincloss.html) when Mr. Kennedy called him to concede.

By winning renomination in a generational clash — and the marquee Democratic Senate primary of the year — Mr. Markey, 74, proved that the ascendant left is not eager to simply throw out long-serving incumbents in favor of younger rivals, such as the 39-year-old Mr. Kennedy. Mr. Markey, who was first elected to Congress in 1976, was able to outflank Mr. Kennedy with progressives, leaving the heir of Massachusetts’s most storied political dynasty little opening.

Claiming victory, and wearing the same Nike Air Revolutions that became his signature as a late-in-life hipster, Mr. Markey elevated his millennial supporters and the Green New Deal they rallied around. “Tonight’s victory is a tribute to those young people,” he said, vowing that “the age of incrementalism is over.”

It was the sort of exhortation that Robert F. Kennedy could have easily delivered. But even as his grandson highlighted his family name in a final mail and TV blitz, today’s liberals were scarcely moved.

Addressing supporters in Watertown, Mass., Mr. Kennedy said he “would do this again with all of you in a heartbeat.”

He called Mr. Markey “a good man,” but hinted at some of the bitterness that overtook the last stages of the race, when the senator invoked Mr. Kennedy’s forebears. Addressing his family, and noting that their “name was invoked far more often than I anticipated in this race,” Mr. Kennedy said: “You are my heroes.”

He was uneasy from the start of the campaign about trading on his legacy, a reluctance that mystified some of his allies, who thought he was not wielding his most enviable asset.

Mr. Kennedy’s more fundamental problem, however, may have been that he simply never gave voters a coherent reason for why he should replace Mr. Markey, who was generally well-liked and underestimated by many Massachusetts Democrats.

Satisfied with the incumbent, happy to see him embrace a progressive agenda and wary of Mr. Kennedy’s ambitions, the state’s many liberal voters made the difference. Mr. Markey won with overwhelming margins in the tony suburbs outside Boston, including Mr. Kennedy’s Newton, and in the college towns of Western Massachusetts.

In the other most closely watched race of the night, though, the left wing of the party fell short. Representative Richard E. Neal, the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee and dean of Massachusetts’s House delegation, [*easily fended off Alex Morse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/us/politics/massachusetts-primary-auchincloss.html), a liberal who is the mayor of Holyoke.

Mr. Neal, who enjoyed a sizable financial advantage, leveraged his clout in Washington and benefited from the relative scarcity of upscale liberals in his Western Massachusetts district. Every progressive primary challenger who has unseated a House Democrat in the last two elections has done so in and around big cities, a trend that worked against Mr. Morse.

In the Boston area, the long-serving Representative Stephen Lynch [*easily defeated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/us/politics/massachusetts-primary-auchincloss.html) Robbie Goldstein, a physician. [*A number of Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/us/politics/massachusetts-primary-auchincloss.html) were vying to succeed Mr. Kennedy in his liberal House district, where winning the party’s primary is tantamount to claiming the seat.

But it was the Senate primary and the challenge of Mr. Neal that demonstrated the progressive energy that’s reshaping the Democratic Party — and offered a preview of the pressure party leaders could face from the left next year if Democrats win the presidency and both chambers of Congress this fall.

Three long-serving House Democrats this year have already been unseated by a liberal challenger: Representatives William Lacy Clay of Missouri, Daniel Lipinski of Illinois and Eliot Engel of New York. The groundwork for those races was laid in part by the 2018 success of Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts, who both defeated incumbent Democrats in primaries.

Now, a number of House lawmakers are bracing for demands that they push through an ambitious agenda in a Democratic-controlled Washington or face another wave of primaries. Some of them may retire or, should Joseph R. Biden Jr. win the presidency, accept administration posts rather than seek re-election.

Yet others will surely seek to mimic Mr. Markey, who succeeded by channeling the new activism on the left. First elected to the House in 1976, he has been a fairly reliable liberal vote in the House and the Senate, where he moved in 2013 after John F. Kerry became secretary of state.

Mr. Markey was never known as a progressive warrior and he has cast a handful of votes — including for the 1990s crime bill and the Iraq war — that are out of step with today’s movement to the left.

He has taken a leadership role on issues related to the environment and technology, however, and that linked him to perhaps his most important supporter: Ms. Ocasio-Cortez. Their joint authorship of the Green New Deal offered Mr. Markey access not only to her endorsement but also entree to a new generation of environmental activists. He captured the early support of the Sunrise Movement, the environmental activist group, and built a strong coalition among young progressives.

“If we’re going to have a planet for people in my generation to live on, we need someone like Senator Markey,” said Lindsay Aldworth, 29, who was active with the Sunrise Movement in college and attended a rally for Mr. Markey in New Bedford, Mass., last week.

That enthusiasm frustrated Mr. Kennedy, who was counting on winning votes from young voters. He believes that the state’s many white liberal voters did not hold Mr. Markey to account for some of his previous stances, including his long-ago opposition to the integration of Boston’s public schools, as they did Mr. Biden.

Mr. Kennedy, however, had built his own coalition of support, winning endorsements from a number of voters of color and ***working-class*** people across racial lines.

“They’re not on Twitter,” he said in an interview Saturday, acknowledging that the “question is do they vote.”

While some younger and more liberal Massachusetts voters were not enthused about perpetuating the state’s most famous political dynasty, the Kennedy name still carries significant punch among older and many Black Democrats.

“The Kennedy family is loved around here, they’re champions for labor,” said Robert Sheehan, the president of a politically powerful chapter of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in Boston, which endorsed the congressman.

For much of the race, Mr. Kennedy shied away from running on his family name. It was not until Mr. Markey released a video in which he repurposed perhaps John F. Kennedy’s most famous line — “With all due respect it’s time to start asking what your country can do for you” — that his younger rival gave a speech and began advertising invoking his legacy.

Mr. Markey, though, enjoyed a considerable financial advantage at the end of the race. He outspent Mr. Kennedy nearly 4-to-1 on advertising in the Boston market in the final week of the campaign.

PHOTOS: Senator Edward J. Markey, above, who was first elected to Congress in 1976, built a strong coalition of progressives to outflank his young challenger, Representative Joseph P. Kennedy III, left. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVEN SENNE/ASSOCIATED PRESS; ALLISON DINNER/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 4, 2020

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[***How Do You Advertise a Hurricane-Ravaged City?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:617V-5MF1-JBG3-63KX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 8, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 1385 words

**Byline:** By Jeanie Riess

**Body**

Kathryn Shea Duncan, 24, works to promote tourism in Lake Charles, La., which was hit hard by Laura and Delta this year.

As a 24-year-old public relations representative for her city, Kathryn Shea Duncan eats, sleeps and breathes Lake Charles, La.

The ***working-class*** town, home to about 80,000 people and just inland from the Gulf of Mexico, is the big city she grew up visiting, and where she spent Thanksgiving with family. She rented her first home in Lake Charles. She met her boyfriend, Ryan Beeson, at the Panorama Music House downtown. She can tell you the best place to get a po' boy, hold a baby alligator or crab off dry land.

But Ms. Duncan's resolve to stay in the city has been shaken by the series of hurricanes that have devastated the place and much of the surrounding area this year. Thousands of residents remain displaced, and aid -- in the form of charitable giving and volunteers -- has been hard to come by with the whole country struggling with coronavirus outbreaks and distracted by politics. (The mayor, Nic Hunter, has worked to spread awareness of the state of his city, appearing on CNN, Fox News and NPR, where he told listeners, ''I am begging, I am pleading for Americans not to forget about Lake Charles.'')

It has Ms. Duncan questioning how she will continue to do the job of promoting the place she loves.

''The reality is, what product do we have to pitch?'' she said. ''What event? What's open? We know that all of our hotels are going to be filled till the end of the year with utility workers and first responders. And then, sooner or later, with families who have been displaced.''

It has also shifted her thinking about her own future. (Lake Charles is not located on the coast, but it is still affected by frequent storms, a changing coast line and sea level rise.)

''You start thinking, what does your house look like?'' Ms. Duncan said. ''What does your job look like? What is everything that I do for a living, promote for a living, going to look like?''

Hurricanes One and Two

Before the storms, Ms. Duncan's job was to pitch stories to out-of-state writers and reporters about Lake Charles and Southwest Louisiana, including about the Creole Nature Trail, a scenic byway that lets visitors walk through Louisiana tall grasses and alligator habitats, and Adventure Point, an attraction along the trail where kids can don real-life hunting gear and smell spices used in Louisiana cooking.

''We were still pitching stories during Covid-19,'' she said, ''but we couldn't host anyone, because we really just can't do that safely.'' When Hurricane Laura hit, though, her bosses ''mainly cared about our well-being and our health.''

On Aug. 25, the night Laura made landfall, Mr. Beeson and Ms. Duncan were at Ms. Duncan's mother's house in Crowley, La., a town about a quarter of the size of Lake Charles, and about an hour away by car.

Mr. Beeson woke Ms. Duncan in the middle of the night. ''I know you don't want to see this, but I think you should know what's going on,'' he said, handing Ms. Duncan his phone. It revealed a photograph of the Panorama Music House, completely destroyed.

''Literally, it had just fallen,'' Ms. Duncan said. ''Like a waterfall.''

The owners had been in the process of building a small museum on the top floor dedicated to the musical history of Lake Charles, which Ms. Duncan was excited to recommend to visitors. (The country musician Lucinda Williams, for example, was born and raised nearby and named one of her most famous songs after the town.)

''I just sat there, sobbing,'' Ms. Duncan said. ''Grieving for what might be lost.''

That hurricane, a category four storm, ended up displacing more than 6,000 Lake Charles residents. Wind damage left small buildings and big box stores, like Best Buy and Hobby Lobby, in pieces, and tens of thousands of people were without electricity for weeks.

Ms. Duncan's home survived with minimal damage, but her office had to be gutted. Her neighbor had it much worse. ''She had ceiling damage, so they're gutting her side out,'' she said. ''She can't live there. And she's a nurse.''

Then, in October, Hurricane Delta made a turn for Lake Charles. Ms. Duncan boarded up her house once again, storing her television in her laundry room along with framed photographs of her deceased father.

A Changing State

Ms. Duncan's family has lived in this region of Louisiana for generations, and have roots going back to the original group of Cajuns who were exiled from Acadia, in Canada, by the British in the 1700s.

Physically, the state has changed a lot since then. In 2014, the map was redrawn to account for a shrinking coastline, and storms are more frequent -- and more deadly -- than ever. But Ms. Duncan is committed to riding it out.

''We can make it better,'' she said. ''Through economic development and improving our infrastructure, and having a cleaner environment, and better transportation. You can't do all of those big things if you don't stay and work at it day by day.''

''I'm a very future-oriented person,'' Ms. Duncan said, sitting in her den in Lake Charles, under a framed, hand-drawn map of the state of Louisiana. ''I'm always planning the next five years.''

It stands to reason that Ms. Duncan might eventually want to move to a different city. But Lake Charles is her home, she said. And leaving never felt as alluring as staying put.

''If I were to move somewhere with a million people, it would be almost meaningless to try and make a difference,'' she said. ''But if I stay here, and am resilient, living in a city of 80,000, where mostly all of them think and act the same, and I'm a millennial who probably does not have the same thoughts and experiences as those around me, I can make a difference.''

''If I leave,'' she added, ''then who is going to stay? Who is going to be that person?''

October was a different story. With Hurricane Delta baring down on Lake Charles, she and Mr. Beeson evacuated once again, this time to San Antonio to stay with friends. With traffic, the normally five-hour drive took them 12. ''To be completely honest with you, I wanted to move,'' Ms. Duncan said. ''I was frustrated. I was angry that this kept happening.''

But after the storm, Ms. Duncan was overwhelmed with emotion seeing the work her community did together to rebuild. It's exciting, she said, to be a part of that. There's a Facebook group for her neighborhood, where people check in on one another, making sure they all have what they need.

''Even our mail lady is in the group,'' Ms. Duncan said, ''and two days after Laura, she posted that she was on her way home, and that she was going to drop off the mail when she got there.''

It made Ms. Duncan reconsider her frustration. ''I was kind of like, OK, maybe I need to chill out, and stay here a little longer,'' she said, adding she felt that there was a reason she was here.

Coming Attractions

Now, back at the satellite office, Ms. Duncan and her team are working on budgeting for the next fiscal year, trying to come up with a plan to sell Lake Charles again. It's about rebuilding, but rebuilding better, and taking advantage of the new things that might come out of this dark period of the city's history.

''There may be new restaurants, and new attractions that come from this,'' she said. ''There's sort of this unfortunate beauty that might come from this. Maybe the inside of one of our attractions is gutted, and that sucks, but maybe they have an opportunity to reinvent themselves.''

Seeing how Lake Charles has come together in the wake of two hurricanes has only made the decision easier. ''It's more fulfilling now, to be sure,'' she said. ''It validates why I choose to stay here. Yes, everyone's lives are in chaos right now. But we're still checking in on each other, making sure we're OK. We worry about our neighbors, even in the midst of our own struggles.''

Something about the fact that there are many obstacles ahead makes Ms. Duncan more dedicated to the place. ''If I were to leave, I would be a different environment and all that,'' she said. ''But by staying, I'm constantly challenging myself. It's that constant, daily challenge of thinking, what can I do better? How can I make this place better? How can I leave it better for the next generation?''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/07/style/lake-charles-hurricanes-tourism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/07/style/lake-charles-hurricanes-tourism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Kathryn Shea Duncan, 24, pitches stories about tourism in Lake Charles, La.

Hurricanes Laura and Delta devastated the Lake Charles area, displacing thousands. Above, student housing near McNeese University was surrounded by debris. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES BILLEAUDEAU FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 8, 2020

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[***Democrats Saw Texas Within Their Grasp, Until It Slipped Away***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:617V-5MF1-JBG3-63MY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 8, 2020 Sunday

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

**Length:** 1374 words

**Byline:** By James Dobbins and Manny Fernandez

**Body**

In their long-running bid for Texas, Democrats ran into trouble. Trump antagonized immigrants, but he also won new voters who live along the border.

ZAPATA, Texas -- Democrats spent years focusing on how they could finally win Texas. But since Tuesday's election, they have been wrestling with a more pressing question: How did they lose Zapata County?

In the reliably Democratic and majority-Hispanic stronghold of South Texas, Zapata County, population 14,179, had never been a political bellwether. It is a largely rural border community on a narrow stretch of the Rio Grande between Laredo and McAllen, home to oil-field workers and one of the highest poverty rates in Texas.

Mitt Romney lost Zapata County in 2012 by 43 percentage points. Donald J. Trump lost it in 2016 by 33. Ted Cruz lost it in 2018 by 26. On Tuesday, President Trump reversed many years of political history, including his own, and won Zapata County by 5 percentage points.

''When I would tell people I helped a friend sell air fresheners in the shape of Trump's head, I would apologize because I supported Trump,'' said Anna Holcomb, 55, a Latina and former oil-field administrative assistant who lives in Zapata, the county seat.

''Why should I apologize for it? I'm not going to apologize anymore. Just because the president wants people to come into the country the right way, it doesn't make him a racist. He's not a racist and neither am I.''

The flipping of Zapata County was one of many Republican victories in a state that Mr. Trump carried. But it stunned Democrats and reflected their enduring struggle in the country's largest conservative-led state. Not only do Democrats have a problem surging forward, they may be going backward in places.

''When I was running, I'd get 85 percent in Zapata County -- and Trump carried it,'' said Garry Mauro, 72, a Democrat and former state land commissioner who was the chairman of the Hillary Clinton campaign in Texas in 2016. ''The idea that Trump, who has been so overtly racist about Hispanics in particular, was able to do so well has got to be a failure of our party not having a message.''

In the aftermath of Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s victory in the national election, a changing Texas remained largely unchanged.

Mr. Trump defeated Mr. Biden in Texas, winning a more narrow victory than he had in 2016 but winning nonetheless. Senator John Cornyn, a Republican, won re-election. Wendy Davis lost again, one of several Democrats who tried and failed to grab Republican-controlled congressional seats. A push to flip the Texas House foundered, as Republicans held on to their majority.

Texas is more politically and culturally complex than any one poll or election can capture. There were Houston oil-and-gas workers who voted for Mr. Trump, but many in the industry voted for Mr. Biden. There were longtime Democrats who, on the same ballot, voted for Mr. Biden and Mr. Cornyn. The president may have won Zapata County, but Mr. Cornyn lost it.

If there is any one force determining how Texans vote, it is neither party nor politics. It is something that resists party labels but has helped transform Texas from a place to a cause -- an ideology disguised as a brand disguised as a state. It is a cliché to say Texas is filled with mavericks, but the whole notion of mavericks belongs uniquely to Texas -- the word comes from the surname of a Texas rancher and lawyer who left his calves unbranded in the late 1800s, Samuel A. Maverick.

At first glance, Mr. Biden's support in most of South Texas appears solid. He carried all four of the counties that make up the Rio Grande Valley region, next door to Zapata County. But a closer look reveals the emerging Democratic challenge on the border. Mr. Trump broadened his support in all four, plus in other border counties. In one of those communities, rural Starr County, Mrs. Clinton won in 2016 by 60 percentage points. On Tuesday, Mr. Biden carried it by just five.

South Texas has long been a place where a lot of people are politically liberal but culturally conservative.

Mexican-American families have called Brownsville, McAllen, Edinburg and other Rio Grande Valley cities home not for years but for generations. They identify with their Mexican roots just across the river but identify just as strongly with America. At the formal southern line of the nation, patriotism intensifies, and many an American flag waves in yards and on porches. Young Mexican-American men and women eagerly sign up to become Border Patrol agents. Often, their older relatives and neighbors worked for Border Patrol, and they are proud to do so, too, ignoring the perception of the agency among immigrant families elsewhere in the country.

These ***working-class*** and middle-class Mexican-Americans feel compassion for the Central American migrants who have been flooding the border off and on since 2014. Volunteering at migrant shelters and donating clothes and food have become Valley traditions. But many view those migrants as outsiders. The Hispanic migrant in a shelter and the Hispanic longtime Valley resident are culturally and economically disconnected.

Mr. Trump's support in that context was not surprising.

''I believe that many Mexican-Americans who ordinarily vote Democratic are attracted to his personality,'' said State Senator Judith Zaffirini, a Democrat who is Mexican-American and whose district includes Zapata County. ''He's very strong here. I don't find him appealing but I'm fascinated by his appeal to so many Texans.''

The town of Zapata lies along five traffic lights on Highway 83.

Halloween decorations, hay bales and pumpkins were still up on a highway plaza in the aftermath of the election this week. Payday loan, auto parts and pawn shops outnumber gas stations and restaurants. The gentle western slope down to the Rio Grande gives residents spectacular sunsets and views of Mexico. In town and on the more rural roads around the county, where Border Patrol agents can be seen on hilltops gazing through binoculars across the river, there were an equal number of Trump signs and Biden signs.

Two of the few orchestrated Trump events in Zapata happened in September, when stickers and signs were handed out at a local restaurant and a ''Trump Train'' caravan rode through town.

But they did not draw huge crowds, and even now, some people who supported him said they feared retaliation for speaking out.

Many Trump voters in Zapata know one another, and they have formed an unofficial booster club and support group. It includes Ricardo Ramirez, 51, the president of a local bank branch, and Jack Moore, 45, an oil-field construction worker who said the Democrats of 50 years ago ''are not the same Democrats today.''

Many residents in this part of Texas have strong Christian, anti-abortion, pro-gun and back-the-blue views that put them more in line with conservatives than liberals, and in Zapata, there is a strong sense among his supporters that Mr. Trump will bring jobs to the economically struggling region.

In a brief exchange during the final presidential debate, Mr. Biden had said he would ''transition from the oil industry'' because of its pollution, a remark that did not go unnoticed by Zapata residents, including Yvette Gutierrez De Leon, 56, who is a secretary for an oil-field services company and who voted for Mr. Trump.

''At the end of the day, in the little bit of oil field that is still left, if it goes away tomorrow our county will go away,'' Ms. De Leon said. ''Oil is all we have here.''

Isela Gonzalez-Lindquist, 42, a saleswoman at a Laredo mattress store, said she voted for Mr. Trump even though she was opposed to his plans to extend the border wall in the area, because she believed it would hurt wildlife and infringe on the rights of property owners.

''I want to convey that he is not perfect and we know that, but he is the best candidate for the job,'' she said. ''I like Trump's grit and that he's not a career politician.''

James Dobbins reported from Zapata, and Manny Fernandez from Houston. David Montgomery contributed reporting from Austin, Texas.James Dobbins reported from Zapata, and Manny Fernandez from Houston. David Montgomery contributed reporting from Austin, Texas.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/07/us/texas-democrats-red-blue.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/07/us/texas-democrats-red-blue.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, a homecoming parade last week in Zapata, Texas, a Democratic stronghold that went for President Trump. Isela González-Lindquist voted for him despite opposing a border wall. Ricardo Ramírez is part of an unofficial Trump booster club and support group. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VERÓNICA G. CÁRDENAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 8, 2020

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[***Black Lives Matter Is Democracy in Action; Opinion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5PS9-G891-DXY4-X3WH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

**Length:** 1170 words

**Byline:** Barbara Ransby

**Highlight:** A decentralized movement can be effective, even without a Martin Luther King Jr.

**Body**

CHICAGO — Why has this generation of black activists failed to produce a Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. or a Malcolm X — a charismatic, messiah-like figure who can lead a major movement?

The answer is a choice, not a deficiency. The suggestion that the organizations that have emerged from the [*Black Lives Matter*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/10/upshot/black-lives-matter-attitudes.html) protests are somehow lacking because they have rejected the old style of leadership misses what makes this movement most powerful: its cultivation of skilled local organizers who take up many issues beyond police violence.

This is radical democracy in action. The [*Movement for Black Lives*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/10/upshot/black-lives-matter-attitudes.html), a coalition that includes the Black Lives Matter Global Network and other groups, coalesced in response to high-profile police shootings of black people from 2014 to 2016. It is reinvigorating the 21st-century racial-justice movement, and by extension the anti-racist left, by offering a better model for social movements.

The idea behind that model is that when people on the ground make decisions, articulate problems and come up with answers, the results are more likely to meet real needs. And that’s more sustainable in the long run: People are better prepared to carry out solutions they themselves created, instead of ones handed down by national leaders unfamiliar with realities in local communities. Such local work allows people to take ownership of the political struggles that affect their lives.

[*Ella Baker*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/10/upshot/black-lives-matter-attitudes.html), a N.A.A.C.P. field secretary, executive of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and midwife of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, once said, “Strong people don’t need strong leaders.” Today’s black organizers have taken that message to heart.

Ms. Baker considered the top-down, male-centered, charismatic model of leadership a political dead end. It disempowered ordinary people, especially women and low-income and ***working-class*** people, because it told them that they need a savior. If that person is assassinated or co-opted, the movement founders.

At the same time, local leadership is not a magic solution, since local leaders can also be dominant, hierarchical and self-aggrandizing. Group-centered leadership practices, where even celebrities in the movement are responsible to the will of rank-and-file members, help to keep organizations honest.

The lead organizers of the Movement for Black Lives have been influenced by 40 years of work by black feminist and L.G.B.T. scholars and activists. Their writings and practice emphasize collective models of leadership instead of hierarchical ones, center on society’s most marginalized people and focus on how multiple systems of oppression intersect and reinforce one another.

This year, the Movement for Black Lives, with support from a team of strategists called Blackbird, coordinated three major days of action: two to commemorate Dr. King’s “[*Beyond Vietnam*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/10/upshot/black-lives-matter-attitudes.html)” speech and a day of national protests against symbols of white supremacy after the racist attacks in Charlottesville, Va. In each case, national coordinators kept a low profile, offering support while encouraging local groups to set their own agendas.

Critics argue that the Movement for Black Lives needs to tighten control of its messaging, discipline its local affiliates and shore up its “brand.” It’s too bad they can’t see the momentum happening at the grass-roots level. To paraphrase Ms. Baker, leaders who teach following as the only way of fighting weaken the movement in the long run.

Local organizers are not passive followers. They are leading creative campaigns in major cities. For example, the Black Youth Project 100, along with other local groups, is working to overturn the New York City Housing Authority’s “permanent exclusion” policy, under which people convicted of a crime can be barred from living in or visiting public housing.

Seshat Mack, a student at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and a leader of the [*Black Youth Project 100*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/10/upshot/black-lives-matter-attitudes.html)’s New York chapter, explained to me that the campaign, called Housing Over Monitoring and Eviction, has relied heavily on local leadership — in particular, black New Yorkers who live in public housing.

In Chicago, one of the most segregated cities in the country, an “expanded sanctuary” campaign has brought together black people and Latino immigrants to demand an end to punitive practices like the city’s gang database. Activists have argued that the criteria for inclusion is vague and that people often don’t know they’re on the list. A lead organizer in that campaign, Maxx Boykin, underscores the importance of “building trust between people and organizations,” which can happen only on the local level.

The fight to end cash bail was bolstered by [*Mama’s Bail Out Day*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/10/upshot/black-lives-matter-attitudes.html), a campaign that is the brainchild of the Atlanta organizer Mary Hooks, a director of [*Southerners on New Ground*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/10/upshot/black-lives-matter-attitudes.html), a queer social-justice organization. The organizers raised over $1 million to bail out more than 100 low-income black women on Mother’s Day this year. The Movement for Black Lives umbrella group oversaw the effort by pulling in local bail-reform groups.

One of the most intense efforts within the Movement for Black Lives has been to develop an electoral strategy that can be applied locally. Recently, activists started a [*project*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/06/10/upshot/black-lives-matter-attitudes.html) to lay the groundwork for creating local black political power. According to Kayla Reed, a St. Louis organizer who helped develop the project, the goal is to transfer the clarity and radical vision brought to the protest lines to electoral campaigns. The organizers of the project are drawing lessons from the successful progressive mayoral campaigns of Chokwe Lumumba in Jackson, Miss., and Randall Woodfin in Birmingham, Ala., as well as the narrow defeat of Tishaura O. Jones in St. Louis.

Despite progress on many fronts, there is still work to do. The movement does need an easier way for people to get involved and more transparent collective decision-making, as well as space for broader ideological and policy debates.

The Movement for Black Lives is distinctive because it defers to the local wisdom of its members and affiliates, rather than trying to dictate from above. In fact, the local organizers have insisted upon it. This democratic inflection will pay off if they persevere. Brick by brick, relationship by relationship, decision by decision, the edifices of resistance are being built. The national organizations are the mortar between the bricks. That fortified space will be a necessary training ground and refuge for the political battles that lay ahead, as white supremacists inside and outside of our government seek to undermine racial and economic justice.

Barbara Ransby (@BarbaraRansby), a history professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, is the author of “Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement” and the forthcoming “Making All Black Lives Matter.”

PHOTO: Demonstrators in Chicago blocked an intersection during a protest in 2015 related to the killing by the police of Laquan McDonald. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSHUA LOTT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (SR7)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***American Women Shuffle Their Priorities, Delaying Motherhood***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62Y5-2SN1-JBG3-64TV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 18, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1999 words

**Byline:** By Sabrina Tavernise, Claire Cain Miller, Quoctrung Bui and Robert Gebeloff

**Body**

PHOENIX -- Luz Portillo, the oldest daughter of Mexican immigrants, has many plans. She is studying to be a skin care expert. She has also applied to nursing school. She works full time, too -- as a nurse's aide and doing eyelash extensions, a business she would like to grow.

But one thing she has no plans for anytime soon is a baby.

Ms. Portillo's mother had her when she was 16. Her father has worked as a landscaper for as long as she can remember. She wants a career and more control over her life.

''I can't get pregnant, I can't get pregnant,'' she said she tells herself. ''I have to have a career and a job. If I don't, it's like everything my parents did goes in vain.''

For decades, delaying parenthood was the domain of upper-middle-class Americans, especially in big, coastal cities. Highly educated women put off having a baby until their careers were on track, often until their early 30s. But over the past decade, as more women of all social classes have prioritized education and career, delaying childbearing has become a broad pattern among American women almost everywhere.

The result has been the slowest growth of the American population since the 1930s, and a profound change in American motherhood. Women under 30 have become much less likely to have children. Since 2007, the birthrate for women in their 20s has fallen by 28 percent, and the biggest recent declines have been among unmarried women. The only age groups in which birthrates rose over that period were women in their 30s and 40s -- but even those began to decline over the past three years.

''The story here is about young women, whose births are plummeting,'' said Caitlin Myers, an economist at Middlebury College who analyzed county-level birth records for The New York Times. ''All of a sudden, in the last 10 years, there's this tremendous transformation.''

A geographic analysis of Professor Myers's data offers a clue: The birthrate is falling fastest in places with the greatest job growth -- where women have more incentive to wait.

In more than two dozen interviews with young women in Phoenix and Denver, some said they felt they could not afford a baby. They cited the costs of child care and housing, and sometimes student debt. Many also said they wanted to get their careers set first and expressed satisfaction that they were exerting control over their fertility -- and their lives -- in a way their mothers had not.

''I can not have a kid and not have to feel bad about it,'' said Eboni McFadden, 28, who grew up in rural Missouri and is now two weeks from graduating as a medical technician in Phoenix. ''I feel powerful that I can make that decision with my own body. I don't have to have a kid to be successful or to be a woman.''

The annual fertility rate may be dropping -- births have fallen for six straight years and declined precipitously during the pandemic -- but the share of women who have children by the end of their reproductive years has been climbing. Still, in the past decade, births to women over 30 have not offset the decline for women in their 20s, driving down overall births and leaving an open question: Are young women delaying childbirth or forgoing it altogether?

Child care costs, and opportunity costs

The declines in childbearing over the past decade have varied by region, according to the data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Census Bureau. They were greater on the West Coast and in the Mountain West than in the South or Northeast. The large urban counties that have gained the most jobs and population since the recession have seen birthrates fall twice as fast as smaller, rural counties that have not recovered as strongly. The birthrate fell 38 percent in Denver County and 33 percent in Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix.

In economically stagnant places, fertility tends to be higher, and having a child is seen as a primary route to fulfillment.

Kara Schoenherr moved to Maricopa County, Ariz., from a small town south of Seattle a few years ago. She was tired of paying $1,500 a month for a house in a town with no stoplight and a drug epidemic. Her friend lived in Phoenix, and she had heard it had lots of good colleges and jobs.

She married last year, but she and her husband, a sous-chef at a casino, have been holding off on having children. She will graduate this summer as an aesthetician, doing things like facials and waxing. But she wants to have a base of clients before having a baby.

''I still don't think I have everything I want to set myself up for success,'' said Ms. Schoenherr, who is 27. ''I want to have a house and a career first.''

The cost of living is adding to her hesitation. Houses in areas that she likes sell overnight with dozens of offers. Day-care rates gave her sticker shock.

In interviews with women from immigrant families, almost all of them Hispanic, the delay was less about the cost of children than about a desire to set their lives on track.

Ms. Portillo, who is 22, said her immigrant parents had raised her and her three siblings frugally and done fine.

''If they did it, I certainly should be able to,'' she said.

Hispanic women, who once had by far the highest fertility of any major racial or ethnic group, have had the single largest drop in fertility of any group, more than a third since 2007. In Arizona, Hispanic women made up approximately 60 percent of the total decline in births in the state since 2007, according to a University of Arizona analysis.

Miguel Brusuelas, an instructor at GateWay Community College, where Ms. Portillo is a student, said that 20 years ago, most of his students in their 20s were single mothers, struggling to make ends meet. Today, far fewer have children, he said. Many have specific career goals for their education. About half of GateWay's students are Hispanic, and nearly half are the first in their families to go to college.

''What I see now is students looking beyond, 'OK, I have to pay this bill next week,''' Mr. Brusuelas said. ''I see them looking into the future.''

Some women said they wanted to build a career as a way to avoid repeating difficult childhoods. Jakeisha Ezuma grew up on the South Side of Chicago, one of 10 children. Her older sisters, she said, had several children, and for a while in her teens, she wanted nothing more than to become pregnant, too. But she did not. Now 26 and living in Denver, she wants to wait. She is earning her dental hygienist degree, which comes with more money and a more flexible schedule than her current job as a dental assistant.

''I'm trying to go higher,'' she said. ''I grew up around dysfunctional things. I feel like if I succeed, my children won't have to. I'll be breaking the generational cycle.''

Fewer unintended pregnancies

The largest declines in births have been in unintended pregnancies and those to single mothers, Professor Myers found. The birthrate for unmarried women dropped 18 percent, compared with 11 percent for married women.

A major reason women are able to be more intentional about when to have children is better access to birth control. Long-acting reversible contraception, such as arm implants and IUDs, have given women new options, and the Affordable Care Act made many of them free.

The lower rate of unplanned pregnancy is a signal that the decline in births -- despite the hand-wringing about what it portends for the nation's work force and social safety net -- could be good news for individual women.

''One of the big shifts has been fewer people having kids before they wanted to,'' said Amanda Jean Stevenson, a demographer at the University of Colorado. ''Maybe there are fewer babies right now, but people are able to live the lives they want to, and that's a profound thing.''

Demanding jobs, and demanding children

Researchers cannot say for sure if education is a cause of the fertility decline, but there appears to be some connection. What is clear is that women are far more educated than they were in past generations, even since the Great Recession in 2008.

Women's graduation rates are now rising faster than men's. One-third of women in their 20s had a college degree in 2019, up from one-quarter in 2007.

Their place in the labor force has changed, too. Forty-four percent of female workers are in professional or management occupations, compared with 38 percent before 2008. The number of women doing jobs that do not require as much education, like office assistant, has dropped.

The emphasis on career has spread beyond women with bachelor's degrees -- as has a recognition of how children can derail it.

''The perceived price of having children has really increased since I first talked to women in the mid-1990s,'' said Kathryn Edin, a sociologist at Princeton University who has spent years writing about low-income families. ''Even among the poorest women, there's a recognition that a career is part of a life course.''

At the same time, there was more of a glorification of work in American culture, and workplaces began expecting employees to be available around the clock. Yet there is little in the way of policies to help parents combine work and family.

Parenting, too, became more stressful. American parents spend more money and time on their children than any previous generation, and many feel immense pressure to be constantly teaching their children, enrolling them in enrichment classes and giving them their undivided attention. This is known as intensive parenting, and while it used to be an upper-middle-class phenomenon, it is now rising fast across all social classes.

Ms. Schoenherr is acutely aware of how much the demands of parenting have changed. She was born on a bean and corn farm in Illinois. Her parents divorced when she was 2, and her grandmother babysat while her mother was at work. She remembers long days of riding her bike and coming home when the streetlights came on.

''Back then you could let your kids do whatever and you wouldn't be judged,'' she said. ''Now there's so much mom shaming. You are looked down on if you are not fully focused on your kid.''

A number of women said they wanted to avoid the schedules of their ***working-class*** parents because they were inflexible and allowed little time for play or family activities.

Alejandra De Santiago, of Surprise, Ariz., remembers yearning for her mother to stop by school during lunch the way other mothers did, but she was always working. Her parents, a house cleaner and a truck driver, both immigrants from Mexico, divorced when she was 7, and she was raised mostly by her grandmother, while her mother worked.

''I want to know who I am first before having kids,'' she said.

Ms. De Santiago, 23, said she wanted to start a spa business, which would allow her to control her schedule more than hourly work.

''I don't want them to feel closer to their babysitter than to me,'' she said.

It is uncertain whether young women will end up having the children that -- at least so far -- they are putting off. In surveys, they say they still want them, though the number of children they intend to have has fallen. It is possible that the drop over the past decade is a new normal for fertility in America, one that looks more like what has happened in Europe and some Asian nations.

Kristal Wynn, 36, grew up in rural Florida. Her best friend from high school had three children by the time she was 19, and Ms. Wynn knew she did not want that. She eventually became a nurse. Now living in Denver, she is going back to school to earn her bachelor's degree, a longtime dream and something no one in her family has done.

''It was something no one ever expected me to do, I never expected myself to do,'' she said.

As for children, she said she still wants them but that ''it won't be the end of the world if it doesn't happen.'' She loves learning, traveling and living in Denver. ''I'm at the point in my life where I could be fulfilled by other things.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/16/us/declining-birthrate-motherhood.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/16/us/declining-birthrate-motherhood.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: LUZ PORTILLO, 22, who wants more control over her life than her parents have had.

KARA SCHOENHERR, who is married but is also cautious.

EBONI MCFADDEN, who is graduating as a medical technician in July. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA ZEHBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A19)

**Load-Date:** June 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Snapped Poles, Shredded Roofs and a Long Road to Recovery***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60R3-4601-DXY4-X124-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 31, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 1143 words

**Byline:** By Rick Rojas

**Body**

Hurricane Laura ravaged southwestern Louisiana, leaving weary residents to assess the toll and map a way forward. Some communities may be four weeks away from even getting power back.

WESTLAKE, La. -- In a neighborhood along the Calcasieu River, Hurricane Laura transformed the roads into a perilous labyrinth of snapped utility poles, tangles of wires and uprooted trees. In one spot, a broken pine was suspended over the asphalt by a single strained utility line. Yet a parade of vehicles still passed beneath: People desperately wanted to get home.

In past storms, Patricia Broussard had been one of the lucky ones, spared from significant damage. But this time, the hurricane ripped through the mobile home where she lives with her grandson, just as it did to most of her neighbors' homes. She had covered the enormous holes in the side of the house and was wielding a large lopper to cut off damaged siding.

''This trailer probably isn't going to be good anymore,'' said Ms. Broussard, 62, her face reddened by the blistering heat. ''But I'm doing what I can with it.''

She had already been forced to leave her job at a convenience store in March, because of the coronavirus and a list of health issues that made her especially vulnerable. And now, a long year had just gotten longer.

In the ***working-class*** neighborhoods in and around Lake Charles, La., how difficult the path ahead would be was becoming clear. And on Sunday, Louisiana was staring down the toil of rebuilding both their homes and their broader community.

The damage the storm inflicted was so severe that it will be an immense undertaking just to clear debris. But beyond the physical labor, residents were also stepping into the thicket of bureaucracy that follows a hurricane, with insurance claims and applications for government aid. Federal emergency officials said that on Sunday alone, inspectors surveyed more than 200 damaged homes and issued more than $650,000 in assistance.

''We have a long road ahead of us,'' Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana said in a briefing on Sunday.

Officials said that roughly 368,000 customers in the state remained without electricity. Some 17,000 linemen were at work on repairs, but they had a lot to tackle: some 500 transmission towers were destroyed or damaged. In some places, utility companies said, it could be at least four weeks before electricity is restored.

''This is the No. 1 priority for most people who want to resume some normalcy in their life,'' Mr. Edwards said.

When Laura was roaring toward the Louisiana coast last week, officials offered grave warnings of a storm surge that meteorologists said would be ''unsurvivable.'' But the storm failed to deliver catastrophe on quite that scale.

Even so, Laura was the most powerful storm on record to hit Louisiana, swamping Cameron Parish on the coast and moving north with devastating winds, which were measured gusting up to 140 miles an hour near Lake Charles. At least 16 deaths have been attributed to the storm.

CoreLogic, a data analytics firm in Irvine, Calif., estimated that the hurricane had caused insured losses of $8 billion to $12 billion. ''The story here is going to be the wind damage,'' said Curtis McDonald, a meteorologist with the firm. Of the total estimated damage, the firm said, just $500 million was probably attributable to the storm surge.

Much of the devastation has been concentrated in and around Lake Charles, a city of 78,000 heavily dependent on the oil and gas industry.

Rows of small businesses downtown were ransacked by the wind and rain. Windows of the tallest building in the city were blown out. Throughout the city, modest houses had shingles and siding shorn off, and trees that had stood for decades came crashing through roofs or spilled into impassable streets.

The destruction was especially brutal in Westlake, across the Calcasieu River from Lake Charles, with just shy of 5,000 residents and a skyline formed by the galvanized towers and flares of an oil refinery. The storm caused a fire on Thursday at a Biolab chemical plant in Westlake, prompting Governor Edwards to warn residents to ''close your windows and doors and turn off your air conditioning units.''

Some residents acknowledged concerns over the community's industrial surroundings and their unwelcome consequences. But those facilities also offered stable, decent-paying jobs, a kind of promise that might be tough to find in other places.

''You're not going to get rich, but you can work an honest job, support your family, find a church community,'' said Angela Handy, a nurse and lifelong resident of Lake Charles.

Still, a certain exasperation has taken hold, as powerful and destructive cyclones like Hurricane Ike in 2008 and Hurricane Rita in 2005 have hit the region with alarming frequency. Imelda last year was only a tropical storm, yet it led to major flooding.

''You hear it all over,'' said Carl R. Griffith, the former county judge in Jefferson County, Texas, who oversaw the local response to Hurricane Rita and who served on a Louisiana commission for rebuilding after that storm. ''It's people are just frustrated, and trying to do everything they can to protect their property, their lives and their families. But their jobs are here. It's a great place to live.''

The region also remains in the grip of the coronavirus, with officials cautioning that the virus could become more of a threat as residents' attention shifts to recovery work. Calcasieu Parish, which includes Lake Charles, has had 7,439 confirmed cases of the virus and 182 deaths, according to a New York Times database. As of Sunday afternoon, Louisiana as a whole has reported 148,030 cases and 4,931 deaths.

Ms. Handy sat on her front porch on a recent afternoon with her sister and their mother, who until the hurricane went by Willie Laura Williams. Now she's begun editing out her middle name.

''She's disavowed it,'' Ms. Handy's sister, Leah Reed, said.

Snapped limbs covered their lawn. Shingles had been shaved off the roof. The power was out and there was nowhere to go; local hotels had no room or were without electricity.

Ms. Reed had taken a drive around to survey the damage, checking on the homes of relatives and friends who had evacuated before the storm. She was disappointed to see that a buffet restaurant that opened this year was damaged. ''We've been waiting for Golden Corral for forever and a day,'' she said.

As much as she was awed by the destruction she saw on her tour, she was also heartened by the evidence of resilience in her community and a spirit of connection binding it. When her car got stuck in mud, two men walked over and pushed her free. When she approached a fallen limb in the road, strangers lifted it up for her to pass.

Mary Williams Walsh contributed reporting.Mary Williams Walsh contributed reporting.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Train cars derailed when Hurricane Laura struck Lake Charles, La., last week with wind gusts reaching 140 miles an hour. Laura caused insured losses estimated in the range of $8 billion to $12 billion. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES)

The front wall of a beauty supply store in Lake Charles, left, collapsed during the storm, and workers salvaged items from a hard-hit auto parts store in the city of 78,000, right. Rows of small businesses downtown were ransacked by the wind and rain, and windows of the tallest building in the city were blown out. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM WIDMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Drivers had to navigate around fallen utility poles on Friday. Power is expected to be out for four weeks in some places. (PHOTOGRAPHBY JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** September 1, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Snapped Poles, Shredded Roofs: A Long Road to Recovery After Laura***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60PY-FFS1-DXY4-X03W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 30, 2020 Sunday 12:52 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1265 words

**Byline:** Rick Rojas

**Highlight:** Hurricane Laura ravaged southwestern Louisiana, leaving weary residents to assess the toll and map a way forward. Some communities may be four weeks away from even getting power back.

**Body**

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[Follow our [*live Hurricane Sally updates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/15/us/hurricane-sally-live.html) and our [*map tracker*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/15/us/hurricane-sally-live.html).]

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**End of Document**



[***Why American Women Everywhere Are Delaying Motherhood***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62XR-1MY1-JBG3-62G7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US

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**Byline:** Sabrina Tavernise, Claire Cain Miller, Quoctrung Bui and Robert Gebeloff

**Highlight:** The birthrate is falling for American women in their 20s, especially in places where the local economy is booming.

**Body**

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Ms. Portillo’s mother had her when she was 16. Her father has worked as a landscaper for as long as she can remember. She wants a career and more control over her life.

“I can’t get pregnant, I can’t get pregnant,” she said she tells herself. “I have to have a career and a job. If I don’t, it’s like everything my parents did goes in vain.”

For decades, delaying parenthood was the domain of upper-middle-class Americans, [*especially in big, coastal cities*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/08/04/upshot/up-birth-age-gap.html). Highly educated women put off having a baby until their careers were on track, often until their early 30s. But over the past decade, as more women of all social classes have prioritized education and career, delaying childbearing has become a broad pattern among American women almost everywhere.

The result has been the slowest growth of the American population [*since the 1930s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/26/us/us-census-numbers.html), and a profound change in American motherhood. Women under 30 have become much less likely to [*have children*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/30/realestate/the-best-places-to-have-babies.html). Since 2007, the birthrate for women in their 20s has fallen by 28 percent, and the biggest recent declines have been among unmarried women. The only age groups in which birthrates rose over that period were women in their 30s and 40s — but even those began to decline over the past three years.

“The story here is about young women, whose births are plummeting,” said Caitlin Myers, an economist at Middlebury College who analyzed county-level birth records for The New York Times. “All of a sudden, in the last 10 years, there’s this tremendous transformation.”

A geographic analysis of Professor Myers’s data offers a clue: The birthrate is falling fastest in places with the greatest job growth — where women have more incentive to wait.

In more than two dozen interviews with young women in Phoenix and Denver, some said they felt they could not afford a baby. They cited the costs of child care and housing, and sometimes student debt. Many also said they wanted to get their careers set first and expressed satisfaction that they were exerting control over their fertility — and their lives — in a way their mothers had not.

“I can not have a kid and not have to feel bad about it,” said Eboni McFadden, 28, who grew up in rural Missouri and is now two weeks from graduating as a medical technician in Phoenix. “I feel powerful that I can make that decision with my own body. I don’t have to have a kid to be successful or to be a woman.”

The annual fertility rate may be [*dropping*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/05/us/us-birthrate-falls-covid.html) — births have fallen for [*six straight years*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr012-508.pdf) and declined precipitously during the pandemic — but the share of women who have children by the end of their reproductive years [*has been climbing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/18/upshot/the-us-fertility-rate-is-down-yet-more-women-are-mothers.html). Still, in the past decade, births to women over 30 have not offset the decline for women in their 20s, driving down overall births and leaving an open question: Are young women delaying childbirth or forgoing it altogether?

Child care costs, and opportunity costs

The declines in childbearing over the past decade have varied by region, according to the data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Census Bureau. They were greater on the West Coast and in the Mountain West than in the South or Northeast. The large urban counties that have gained the most jobs and population since the recession have seen birthrates fall twice as fast as smaller, rural counties that have not recovered as strongly. The birthrate fell 38 percent in Denver County and 33 percent in Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix.

In economically stagnant places, [*fertility tends to be higher*](https://www.prb.org/resources/u-s-teen-birth-rate-correlates-with-state-income-inequality/), and having a child is seen as a primary route to fulfillment.

Kara Schoenherr moved to Maricopa County, Ariz., from a small town south of Seattle a few years ago. She was tired of paying $1,500 a month for a house in a town with no stoplight and a drug epidemic. Her friend lived in Phoenix, and she had heard it had lots of good colleges and jobs.

She married last year, but she and her husband, a sous-chef at a casino, have been holding off on having children. She will graduate this summer as an aesthetician, doing things like facials and waxing. But she wants to have a base of clients before having a baby.

“I still don’t think I have everything I want to set myself up for success,” said Ms. Schoenherr, who is 27. “I want to have a house and a career first.”

The cost of living is adding to her hesitation. Houses in areas that she likes sell overnight with dozens of offers. Day-care rates gave her sticker shock.

In interviews with women from immigrant families, almost all of them Hispanic, the delay was less about the cost of children than about a desire to set their lives on track.

Ms. Portillo, who is 22, said her immigrant parents had raised her and her three siblings frugally and done fine.

“If they did it, I certainly should be able to,” she said.

Hispanic women, who once had by far the [*highest fertility*](https://www.nytimes.com/1984/12/18/us/hispanic-fertility-in-us-found-above-norm.html) of any major racial or ethnic group, have had the [*single largest drop*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/07/us/us-birthrate-hispanics-latinos.html) in fertility of any group, more than a third since 2007. In Arizona, Hispanic women made up approximately 60 percent of the total decline in births in the state since 2007, according to [*a University of Arizona analysis*](https://www.azeconomy.org/2019/12/demographics-census/arizonas-baby-bust-birth-rates-decline-22-in-a-decade/).

Miguel Brusuelas, an instructor at GateWay Community College, where Ms. Portillo is a student, said that 20 years ago, most of his students in their 20s were single mothers, struggling to make ends meet. Today, far fewer have children, he said. Many have specific career goals for their education. About half of GateWay’s students are Hispanic, and nearly half are the first in their families to go to college.

“What I see now is students looking beyond, ‘OK, I have to pay this bill next week,’” Mr. Brusuelas said. “I see them looking into the future.”

Some women said they wanted to build a career as a way to avoid repeating difficult childhoods. Jakeisha Ezuma grew up on the South Side of Chicago, one of 10 children. Her older sisters, she said, had several children, and for a while in her teens, she wanted nothing more than to become pregnant, too. But she did not. Now 26 and living in Denver, she wants to wait. She is earning her dental hygienist degree, which comes with more money and a more flexible schedule than her current job as a dental assistant.

“I’m trying to go higher,” she said. “I grew up around dysfunctional things. I feel like if I succeed, my children won’t have to. I’ll be breaking the generational cycle.”

Fewer unintended pregnancies

The largest declines in births have been in unintended pregnancies and those to single mothers, Professor Myers found. The birthrate for unmarried women dropped 18 percent, compared with 11 percent for married women.

A major reason women are able to be more intentional about when to have children is better access to birth control. [*Long-acting reversible contraception*](https://www.guttmacher.org/gpr/2021/05/powerful-contraception-complicated-programs-preventing-coercive-promotion-long-acting), such as [*arm implants and IUDs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/18/upshot/set-it-and-forget-it-how-better-contraception-could-be-a-secret-to-reducing-poverty.html), have given women new options, and the Affordable Care Act made many of them free.

The lower rate of unplanned pregnancy is a signal that the decline in births — despite [*the hand-wringing*](https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2021-02-11/everyone-has-to-pay-when-america-gets-too-old) about what it portends for the nation’s work force and social safety net — could be good news for individual women.

“One of the big shifts has been fewer people having kids before they wanted to,” said Amanda Jean Stevenson, a demographer at the University of Colorado. “Maybe there are fewer babies right now, but people are able to live the lives they want to, and that’s a profound thing.”

Demanding jobs, and demanding children

Researchers cannot say for sure if education is a cause of the fertility decline, but there appears to be some connection. What is clear is that women are far more educated than they were in past generations, even since the Great Recession in 2008.

Women’s graduation rates are now rising faster than men’s. One-third of women in their 20s had a college degree in 2019, up from one-quarter in 2007.

Their place in the labor force has changed, too. Forty-four percent of female workers are in professional or management occupations, compared with 38 percent before 2008. The number of women doing jobs that do not require as much education, like office assistant, has dropped.

The emphasis on career has spread beyond women with bachelor’s degrees — as has a recognition of how children can derail it.

“The [*perceived price of having children*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/17/upshot/motherhood-rising-costs-surprise.html) has really increased since I first talked to women in the mid-1990s,” said Kathryn Edin, a sociologist at Princeton University who has spent years writing about low-income families. “Even among the poorest women, there’s a recognition that a career is part of a life course.”

At the same time, there was more of a [*glorification of work*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/26/upshot/women-long-hours-greedy-professions.html) in American culture, and workplaces began expecting employees to be [*available around the clock*](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/08/18/unpredictable-work-hours-and-volatile-incomes-are-long-term-risks-for-american-workers/). Yet there is [*little in the way of policies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/upshot/mothers-choices-work-family.html) to help parents combine work and family.

Parenting, too, became more stressful. American parents spend more money and time on their children than any previous generation, and many feel immense pressure to be constantly teaching their children, enrolling them in enrichment classes and giving them their undivided attention. This is known as [*intensive parenting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/25/upshot/the-relentlessness-of-modern-parenting.html), and while it used to be an upper-middle-class phenomenon, it is now rising fast [*across all social classes*](https://read.dukeupress.edu/demography/article/58/3/1065/173292/Trends-in-Mothers-Parenting-Time-by-Education-and).

Ms. Schoenherr is acutely aware of how much the demands of parenting have changed. She was born on a bean and corn farm in Illinois. Her parents divorced when she was 2, and her grandmother babysat while her mother was at work. She remembers long days of riding her bike and coming home when the streetlights came on.

“Back then you could let your kids do whatever and you wouldn’t be judged,” she said. “Now there’s so much mom shaming. You are looked down on if you are not fully focused on your kid.”

A number of women said they wanted to avoid the schedules of their ***working-class*** parents because they were inflexible and allowed little time for play or family activities.

Alejandra De Santiago, of Surprise, Ariz., remembers yearning for her mother to stop by school during lunch the way other mothers did, but she was always working. Her parents, a house cleaner and a truck driver, both immigrants from Mexico, divorced when she was 7, and she was raised mostly by her grandmother, while her mother worked.

“I want to know who I am first before having kids,” she said.

Ms. De Santiago, 23, said she wanted to start a spa business, which would allow her to control her schedule more than hourly work.

“I don’t want them to feel closer to their babysitter than to me,” she said.

It is uncertain whether young women will end up having the children that — at least so far — they are putting off. In surveys, they say they still want them, though the number of children they intend to have [*has fallen*](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13524-020-00929-w). It is possible that the drop over the past decade is a new normal for fertility in America, one that looks more like what has happened in Europe and some [*Asian nations.*](https://asia.nikkei.com/Spotlight/Comment/East-Asia-faces-population-drop-10-years-earlier-than-anticipated)

Kristal Wynn, 36, grew up in rural Florida. Her best friend from high school had three children by the time she was 19, and Ms. Wynn knew she did not want that. She eventually became a nurse. Now living in Denver, she is going back to school to earn her bachelor’s degree, a longtime dream and something no one in her family has done.

“It was something no one ever expected me to do, I never expected myself to do,” she said.

As for children, she said she still wants them but that “it won’t be the end of the world if it doesn’t happen.” She loves learning, traveling and living in Denver. “I’m at the point in my life where I could be fulfilled by other things.”

PHOTOS: LUZ PORTILLO, 22, who wants more control over her life than her parents have had.; KARA SCHOENHERR, who is married but is also cautious.; EBONI MCFADDEN, who is graduating as a medical technician in July. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA ZEHBRAUSKAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A19)

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**End of Document**



[***In Texas, an Emerging Problem for Democrats on the Border***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:617K-MP51-DXY4-X0MM-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** In their long-running bid for Texas, Democrats ran into trouble. Trump antagonized immigrants, but he also won new voters who live along the border.

**Body**

In their long-running bid for Texas, Democrats ran into trouble. Trump antagonized immigrants, but he also won new voters who live along the border.

ZAPATA, Texas — Democrats spent years focusing on how they could finally win Texas. But since Tuesday’s election, they have been wrestling with a more pressing question: How did they lose Zapata County?

In the reliably Democratic and majority-Hispanic stronghold of South Texas, Zapata County, population 14,179, had never been a political bellwether. It is a largely rural border community on a narrow stretch of the Rio Grande between Laredo and McAllen, home to oil-field workers and one of the [*highest poverty rates in Texas*](https://www.texastribune.org/2016/01/19/poverty-prevalent-on-texas-border-low-in-suburbs/).

Mitt Romney lost Zapata County in 2012 by 43 percentage points. Donald J. Trump lost it in 2016 by 33. Ted Cruz lost it in 2018 by 26. On Tuesday, President Trump reversed many years of political history, including his own, and won Zapata County by 5 percentage points.

“When I would tell people I helped a friend sell air fresheners in the shape of Trump’s head, I would apologize because I supported Trump,” said Anna Holcomb, 55, a Latina and former oil-field administrative assistant who lives in Zapata, the county seat.

“Why should I apologize for it? I’m not going to apologize anymore. Just because the president wants people to come into the country the right way, it doesn’t make him a racist. He’s not a racist and neither am I.”

The flipping of Zapata County was one of many Republican victories in a state that Mr. Trump carried. But it stunned Democrats and reflected their enduring struggle in the country’s largest conservative-led state. Not only do Democrats have a problem surging forward, they may be going backward in places.

“When I was running, I’d get 85 percent in Zapata County — and Trump carried it,” said Garry Mauro, 72, a Democrat and former state land commissioner who was the chairman of the Hillary Clinton campaign in Texas in 2016. “The idea that Trump, who has been so overtly racist about Hispanics in particular, was able to do so well has got to be a failure of our party not having a message.”

In the aftermath of Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s victory in the national election, a changing Texas remained largely unchanged.

Mr. Trump defeated Mr. Biden in Texas, winning a more narrow victory than he had in 2016 but winning nonetheless. Senator John Cornyn, a Republican, won re-election. Wendy Davis lost again, one of several Democrats who tried and failed to grab Republican-controlled congressional seats. A push to [*flip the Texas House*](https://www.texastribune.org/2016/01/19/poverty-prevalent-on-texas-border-low-in-suburbs/) foundered, as Republicans held on to their majority.

Texas is more politically and culturally complex than any one poll or election can capture. There were Houston oil-and-gas workers who voted for Mr. Trump, but many in the industry voted for Mr. Biden. There were longtime Democrats who, on the same ballot, voted for Mr. Biden and Mr. Cornyn. The president may have won Zapata County, but Mr. Cornyn lost it.

If there is any one force determining how Texans vote, it is neither party nor politics. It is something that resists party labels but has helped transform Texas from a place to a cause — an ideology disguised as a brand disguised as a state. It is a cliché to say Texas is filled with mavericks, but the whole notion of mavericks belongs uniquely to Texas — the word comes from the surname of a Texas rancher and lawyer who left his calves unbranded in the late 1800s, Samuel A. Maverick.

At first glance, Mr. Biden’s support in most of South Texas appears solid. He carried all four of the counties that make up the Rio Grande Valley region, next door to Zapata County. But a [*closer look*](https://www.texastribune.org/2016/01/19/poverty-prevalent-on-texas-border-low-in-suburbs/) reveals the emerging Democratic challenge on the border. Mr. Trump broadened his support in all four, plus in other border counties. In one of those communities, rural Starr County, Mrs. Clinton won in 2016 by 60 percentage points. On Tuesday, Mr. Biden carried it by just five.

South Texas has long been a place where a lot of people are politically liberal but culturally conservative.

Mexican-American families have called Brownsville, McAllen, Edinburg and other Rio Grande Valley cities home not for years but for generations. They identify with their Mexican roots just across the river but identify just as strongly with America. At the formal southern line of the nation, patriotism intensifies, and many an American flag waves in yards and on porches. Young Mexican-American men and women eagerly sign up to become Border Patrol agents. Often, their older relatives and neighbors worked for Border Patrol, and they are proud to do so, too, ignoring the perception of the agency among immigrant families elsewhere in the country.

These ***working-class*** and middle-class Mexican-Americans feel compassion for the Central American migrants who have been flooding the border off and on since 2014. Volunteering at migrant shelters and donating clothes and food have become Valley traditions. But many view those migrants as outsiders. The Hispanic migrant in a shelter and the Hispanic longtime Valley resident are culturally and economically disconnected.

Mr. Trump’s support in that context was not surprising.

“I believe that many Mexican-Americans who ordinarily vote Democratic are attracted to his personality,” said State Senator Judith Zaffirini, a Democrat who is Mexican-American and whose district includes Zapata County. “He’s very strong here. I don’t find him appealing but I’m fascinated by his appeal to so many Texans.”

The town of Zapata lies along five traffic lights on Highway 83.

Halloween decorations, hay bales and pumpkins were still up on a highway plaza in the aftermath of the election this week. Payday loan, auto parts and pawn shops outnumber gas stations and restaurants. The gentle western slope down to the Rio Grande gives residents spectacular sunsets and views of Mexico. In town and on the more rural roads around the county, where Border Patrol agents can be seen on hilltops gazing through binoculars across the river, there were an equal number of Trump signs and Biden signs.

Two of the few orchestrated Trump events in Zapata happened in September, when stickers and signs were handed out at a local restaurant and a “Trump Train” caravan rode through town.

But they did not draw huge crowds, and even now, some people who supported him said they feared retaliation for speaking out.

Many Trump voters in Zapata know one another, and they have formed an unofficial booster club and support group. It includes Ricardo Ramirez, 51, the president of a local bank branch, and Jack Moore, 45, an oil-field construction worker who said the Democrats of 50 years ago “are not the same Democrats today.”

Many residents in this part of Texas have strong Christian, anti-abortion, pro-gun and back-the-blue views that put them more in line with conservatives than liberals, and in Zapata, there is a strong sense among his supporters that Mr. Trump will bring jobs to the economically struggling region.

In a brief exchange during the final presidential debate, Mr. Biden had said he would “[*transition from the oil industry*](https://www.texastribune.org/2016/01/19/poverty-prevalent-on-texas-border-low-in-suburbs/)” because of its pollution, a remark that did not go unnoticed by Zapata residents, including Yvette Gutierrez De Leon, 56, who is a secretary for an oil-field services company and who voted for Mr. Trump.

“At the end of the day, in the little bit of oil field that is still left, if it goes away tomorrow our county will go away,” Ms. De Leon said. “Oil is all we have here.”

Isela Gonzalez-Lindquist, 42, a saleswoman at a Laredo mattress store, said she voted for Mr. Trump even though she was opposed to his plans to extend the border wall in the area, because she believed it would hurt wildlife and [*infringe on the rights of property owners*](https://www.texastribune.org/2016/01/19/poverty-prevalent-on-texas-border-low-in-suburbs/).

“I want to convey that he is not perfect and we know that, but he is the best candidate for the job,” she said. “I like Trump’s grit and that he’s not a career politician.”

James Dobbins reported from Zapata, and Manny Fernandez from Houston. David Montgomery contributed reporting from Austin, Texas.

James Dobbins reported from Zapata, and Manny Fernandez from Houston. David Montgomery contributed reporting from Austin, Texas.

PHOTOS: Top, a homecoming parade last week in Zapata, Texas, a Democratic stronghold that went for President Trump. Isela González-Lindquist voted for him despite opposing a border wall. Ricardo Ramírez is part of an unofficial Trump booster club and support group. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VERÓNICA G. CÁRDENAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***Six Shows to Stream From Latin America***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:602H-N7N1-JBG3-63FT-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 14

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**Byline:** By Concepción de León

**Body**

Our writer recommends ''The House of Flowers,'' ''The Queen of Flow'' and four other Spanish- and Portuguese-language shows now on Netflix and Hulu.

If Netflix and chill was once a hackneyed euphemism for hooking up, it's now become a way of life for those staying home to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. And now that cinematic borders on streaming services have all but dissolved, it's easier than ever to experience a different culture by way of a series from around the world, including Latin America. Here are six, in Spanish and Portuguese, from Mexico to Brazil, that you may have missed -- from a dark Mexican comedy that upends the traditional telenovela to a Brazilian crime thriller that highlights injustices within the criminal justice system.

'Nicky Jam: El Ganador'

This dramatization of the reggaeton artist Nicky Jam's life provides a dose of early aughts nostalgia. Fans of ''Gasolina''-era reggaeton probably remember Los Cangris, the Puerto Rican duo made up of Nicky Jam and Daddy Yankee, and their stable of hits, but this show delves deeper to reveal how drugs and violence threatened to derail their rise to stardom.

In flashbacks alternating between the early years of Nicky Jam's career and his younger years as a boy whose mother struggled with drug addiction, the series traces how the shadow of his childhood followed him throughout his life. Back then, Nicky (played by Darkiel as the up-and-coming artist, and by Nicky Jam himself as an adult) was numbing himself with drugs and sex before getting onstage, and tried to balance his passion for music with the pull of street life. In depicting the impossible odds people must sometimes beat to follow their dreams, ''Nicky Jam: El Ganador'' is honest, devastating and full of heart.

'The House of Flowers'

With a vibrant flower shop as its backdrop, this dark Mexican comedy is a soapy escape. An upper-middle-class family's seemingly perfect facade is upended after its patriarch's mistress, Roberta, hangs herself from the ceiling of their flower business, the House of Flowers. That's when the family dysfunction comes to light: their financial struggles, the kids' personal issues and the full extent of the father's parallel life, including a cabaret business called -- wait for it -- the House of Flowers.

The series was a critical success, praised for its inversion of the traditional Mexican telenovela (the drag scene features prominently, and there is some recreational marijuana use). The show, whose three seasons are now available on Netflix, stars some heavy hitters, like Verónica Castro as Virginia de la Mora, the family's image-obsessed matriarch, but the indie film star Cecilia Suárez is the true heartbeat of the series. The memorable staccato speech she developed for her character (Paulina, the family's responsible oldest sibling) is delightfully fitting, and she carries the series after Castro's departure.

'The Queen of Flow'

This compulsively watchable Colombian telenovela follows Yeimi Montoya (María José Vargas), a once-promising singer-songwriter whose dreams were curtailed when she was wrongfully imprisoned as a teenager. She is released 17 years later, bent on seeking revenge against the man responsible for putting her behind bars: the reggaeton singer Charly Flow (Carlos Torres).

In flashbacks, a teenage Yeimi is seen dancing and singing through her colorful Medellín neighborhood, which is overrun by violence and poverty. The highlight of these episodes is the focus on the ***working-class*** characters, like Yeimi's parents, humble bakers who are being extorted by a druglord, or Juancho, a 17-year-old left to raise his siblings after his mother runs off with a lover.

Music is at the heart of the show, and songs help to narrate the various phases of Yeimi's life: ''Reflejo'' is heavy with teenage melodrama, and ''Fenix'' is a redemption narrative about rising from the ashes like a phoenix. Popular Colombian musicians also appear as guest stars, including Karol G and Sebastián Yatra.

'Celia'

Celia Cruz, the Cuban salsa singer who died in 2003 at the age of 77, was known for her vivacious energy, multicolored wigs, flamboyant outfits and, of course, her catchphrase: ''Azucar!'' But this series based on her life introduces us to a quieter Celia (played by the Puerto Rican actress Jeimy Osorio), before she became an international star with an infectious persona.

The show, now streaming on Hulu, follows Celia as a young woman living with her parents in 1950s Havana, working as a teacher but harboring dreams of stardom. Her biggest obstacle is her father, a strict but flawed man who strongly opposes her musical ambitions, which he views as unfit for a respectable lady. Though the story can sometimes move a bit slowly, it's satisfying to watch the determined Celia prevail.

'Brotherhood'

For a grittier watch, this Brazilian crime thriller delivers a blend of social commentary, family drama and heart-pumping action. Set in 1990s São Paulo, it delves into moral ambiguity raised by inequities within the criminal justice system through the story of estranged siblings, Cristina and Edson (Naruna Costa and Seu Jorge).

Cristina is a successful lawyer, while her brother is a felon serving time in prison. When Cristina compromises her job to help Edson, she becomes embroiled in a mission to take down the Brotherhood, a criminal faction he founded. That's when things start to get murky. As Cristina gets deeper into the organization, the lines between right and wrong are blurred. What's most compelling about the series is the juxtaposition of the extreme abuses in prison with the less severe, but equally life-altering injustices facing Brazilians every day.

'La Reina del Sur'

Fans of ''Narcos'' might enjoy this series, based on a book of the same name, which is set in the drug trafficking world but features a strong cast with complex female characters. When a cartel boss kills Teresa Mendoza's husband, she must flee to avoid the same fate. She escapes to Spain, where she ends up running her own drug operation.

This series was Telemundo's most-viewed show when it was released in 2011, and last year the network released a second season that picks up eight years after the first. Both seasons are available on Netflix. ''La Reina del Sur'' (''The Queen of the South'') is a refreshing twist on the drug cartel genre because of its razor sharp focus on women's perspectives and its complex portrayal of a bisexual woman as seen through Patricia O'Farrell (Cristina Urgel), a type of character rarely depicted in Spanish-language television.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/04/arts/television/shows-to-stream-from-latin-america.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/04/arts/television/shows-to-stream-from-latin-america.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from above: Cecilia Suárez, left, and Aislinn Derbez in ''The House of Flowers''

Darkiel, left, as Nicky Jam and José Arroyo as Daddy Yankee in ''Nicky Jam: El Ganador''

and María José Vargas as a once-promising singer trying to reclaim her life after being released from prison in ''The Queen of Flow.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NETFLIX

GIANFRANCO GAGLIEONE/NETFLIX)

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[***6 Shows to Stream From Latin America***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:602C-C8V1-DXY4-X2C9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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If Netflix and chill was once a hackneyed euphemism for hooking up, it’s now become a way of life for those staying home to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. And now that cinematic borders on streaming services have all but dissolved, it’s easier than ever to experience a different culture by way of a series from around the world, including Latin America. Here are six, in Spanish and Portuguese, from Mexico to Brazil, that you may have missed — from a dark Mexican comedy that upends the traditional telenovela to a Brazilian crime thriller that highlights injustices within the criminal justice system.

‘Nicky Jam: El Ganador’

This dramatization of the [*reggaeton artist Nicky Jam*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html)’s life provides a dose of early aughts nostalgia. Fans of “Gasolina”-era reggaeton probably remember Los Cangris, the Puerto Rican duo made up of Nicky Jam and Daddy Yankee, and their stable of hits, but this show delves deeper to reveal how drugs and violence threatened to derail their rise to stardom.

In flashbacks alternating between the early years of Nicky Jam’s career and his younger years as a boy whose mother struggled with drug addiction, the series traces how the shadow of his childhood followed him throughout his life. Back then, Nicky (played by Darkiel as the up-and-coming artist, and by Nicky Jam himself as an adult) was numbing himself with drugs and sex before getting onstage, and tried to balance his passion for music with the pull of street life. In depicting the impossible odds people must sometimes beat to follow their dreams, “[*Nicky Jam: El Ganador*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html)” is honest, devastating and full of heart.

‘The House of Flowers’

With a vibrant flower shop as its backdrop, [*this dark Mexican comedy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html) is a soapy escape. An upper-middle-class family’s seemingly perfect facade is upended after its patriarch’s mistress, Roberta, hangs herself from the ceiling of their flower business, the House of Flowers. That’s when the family dysfunction comes to light: their financial struggles, the kids’ personal issues and the full extent of the father’s parallel life, including a cabaret business called — wait for it — the House of Flowers.

The series was a critical success, praised for its inversion of the traditional Mexican telenovela (the drag scene features prominently, and there is some recreational marijuana use). The show, whose three seasons are now available on Netflix, stars some heavy hitters, like Verónica Castro as Virginia de la Mora, the family’s image-obsessed matriarch, but the indie film star Cecilia Suárez is the true heartbeat of the series. The memorable staccato speech she developed for her character (Paulina, the family’s responsible oldest sibling) is delightfully fitting, and she carries the series after Castro’s departure.

‘The Queen of Flow’

This compulsively [*watchable Colombian telenovela*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html) follows Yeimi Montoya (María José Vargas), a once-promising singer-songwriter whose dreams were curtailed when she was wrongfully imprisoned as a teenager. She is released 17 years later, bent on seeking revenge against the man responsible for putting her behind bars: the reggaeton singer Charly Flow (Carlos Torres).

In flashbacks, a teenage Yeimi is seen dancing and singing through her colorful Medellín neighborhood, which is overrun by violence and poverty. The highlight of these episodes is the focus on the ***working-class*** characters, like Yeimi’s parents, humble bakers who are being extorted by a druglord, or Juancho, a 17-year-old left to raise his siblings after his mother runs off with a lover.

Music is at the heart of the show, and songs help to narrate the various phases of Yeimi’s life: “Reflejo” is heavy with teenage melodrama, and “Fenix” is a redemption narrative about rising from the ashes like a phoenix. Popular Colombian musicians also appear as guest stars, including [*Karol G*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html) and Sebastián Yatra.

‘Celia’

Celia Cruz, the Cuban salsa singer [*who died in 2003*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html) at the age of 77, was known for her vivacious energy, multicolored wigs, flamboyant outfits and, of course, her catchphrase: “Azucar!” But this series based on her life introduces us to a quieter Celia (played by the Puerto Rican actress Jeimy Osorio), before she became an international star with an infectious persona.

The show, [*now streaming on Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html), follows Celia as a young woman living with her parents in 1950s Havana, working as a teacher but harboring dreams of stardom. Her biggest obstacle is her father, a strict but flawed man who strongly opposes her musical ambitions, which he views as unfit for a respectable lady. Though the story can sometimes move a bit slowly, it’s satisfying to watch the determined Celia prevail.

‘Brotherhood’

For a grittier watch, [*this Brazilian crime thriller*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html) delivers a blend of social commentary, family drama and heart-pumping action. Set in 1990s São Paulo, it delves into moral ambiguity raised by inequities within the criminal justice system through the story of estranged siblings, Cristina and Edson (Naruna Costa and Seu Jorge).

Cristina is a successful lawyer, while her brother is a felon serving time in prison. When Cristina compromises her job to help Edson, she becomes embroiled in a mission to take down the Brotherhood, a criminal faction he founded. That’s when things start to get murky. As Cristina gets deeper into the organization, the lines between right and wrong are blurred. What’s most compelling about the series is the juxtaposition of the extreme abuses in prison with the less severe, but equally life-altering injustices facing Brazilians every day.

‘La Reina del Sur’

Fans of “Narcos” might enjoy [*this series*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html), based on a book of the same name, which is set in the drug trafficking world but features a strong cast with complex female characters. When a cartel boss kills Teresa Mendoza’s husband, she must flee to avoid the same fate. She escapes to Spain, where she ends up running her own drug operation.

This series was Telemundo’s most-viewed show when it was released in 2011, and last year the network released a second season that picks up eight years after the first. Both seasons are available on Netflix. “La Reina del Sur” (“The Queen of the South”) is a [*refreshing twist on the drug cartel genre*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/18/arts/music/nicky-jam-fenix-reggaeton-interview.html) because of its razor sharp focus on women’s perspectives and its complex portrayal of a bisexual woman as seen through Patricia O’Farrell (Cristina Urgel), a type of character rarely depicted in Spanish-language television.

PHOTOS: Clockwise from above: Cecilia Suárez, left, and Aislinn Derbez in “The House of Flowers”; Darkiel, left, as Nicky Jam and José Arroyo as Daddy Yankee in “Nicky Jam: El Ganador”; and María José Vargas as a once-promising singer trying to reclaim her life after being released from prison in “The Queen of Flow.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NETFLIX; GIANFRANCO GAGLIEONE/NETFLIX)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2020

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[***They're Unvaccinated, but They're Not Hesitant***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62NG-8S91-DXY4-X0FV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 13, 2021 Thursday

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**Byline:** By Amy Harmon and Josh Holder

**Body**

Much has been said about people opposed to or skeptical of coronavirus vaccines. But there's another group that has yet to get shots, and their reasons are more complex.

It had been weeks since Acy Grayson III, owner of Let It Shine, a home improvement outfit he runs out of his own home in the suburbs of Cleveland, had vowed to get a Covid-19 vaccine.

Appointments were available.

But Mr. Grayson, who never knows how long a job will take or when a new one will come along, had found it hard to commit to a time and a place. The mass vaccination site where appointments were not required was off his beaten path. He did not know that a nearby church, Lee Road Baptist, had been dispensing vaccines on Fridays -- but the truth is, even if he had, it is unlikely he would have made the short trek to get one there, either.

''I know you're trying to find out the reason people aren't doing it,'' Mr. Grayson said on a recent afternoon. ''I'm going to tell you. People are trying to take care of their household. You don't have much time in the day.''

The slowdown in vaccinations across the country has often been attributed to a blend of misinformation and mistrust among Americans known as ''vaccine hesitancy.'' But Mr. Grayson belongs to an overlooked but sizable group whose reasons for remaining unvaccinated are not about opposition to the shots or even skepticism about them.

According to a new U.S. census estimate, some 30 million American adults who are open to getting a coronavirus vaccine have not managed to actually do so. Their ranks are larger than the hesitant -- more than the 28 million who said they would probably or definitely not get vaccinated, and than the 16 million who said they were unsure. And this month, as the Biden administration set a goal of 70 percent of adults getting at least one dose by July 4, they became an official new focus of the nation's mass vaccination campaign.

In addition to ''the doubters,'' President Biden said at a news briefing last week, the mission is to get the vaccine to those who are ''just not sure how to get to where they want to go.''

If the attention has centered on the vaccine hesitant, these are the vaccine amenable. In interviews, their stated reasons for not getting vaccines are disparate, complex and sometimes shifting.

They are, for the most part, America's ***working class***, contending with jobs and family obligations that make for scarce discretionary time. About half of them live in households with incomes of less than $50,000 a year; another 30 percent have annual household incomes between $50,000 and $100,000, according to an analysis of the census data by Justin Feldman, a social epidemiologist at Harvard. Eighty-one percent do not have a college degree. Some have health issues or disabilities or face language barriers that can make getting inoculated against Covid-19 seem daunting. Others do not have a regular doctor, and some are socially isolated.

Technically, they have access to the vaccine. Practically, it is not that simple.

''Hesitancy makes a better story because you've got controversy,'' said Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, a former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ''But there's a bigger problem of access than there is of hesitancy.''

Socioeconomic disparities in vaccination stem partly from the scarcity of supply in the first phases of the vaccine rollout, when Americans lacking the time or ability to scour the internet for appointments lost out: Counties that rank high in a C.D.C. index of ''social vulnerability'' had lower vaccination rates on average by early April, a New York Times analysis shows. But over the last month, even as supplies have exceeded demand, that disparity has grown.

For some socially vulnerable counties -- characterized by high poverty rates, crowded housing and poor access to transportation, among other factors -- low vaccination rates correspond to a high proportion of residents who are reluctant to get vaccinated. The lowest overall vaccination rates are found in counties with both high hesitancy and high vulnerability, with the majority in the South and the Midwest.

But in plenty of disadvantaged places with low vaccination rates, hesitancy is not the full explanation.

In fact, among Americans who said they were willing to get the vaccine, the higher a person's income, the more likely the person was to be vaccinated, according to Dr. Feldman's analysis of the census data.

In that group, 93 percent of adults in households earning between $150,000 and $199,000 a year had been vaccinated as of April 30; while only 76 percent of those earning less than $25,000 a year had gotten at least one shot.

''It helps break this question down of attitude versus access,'' Dr. Feldman said. ''With people who have not been vaccinated, some are disinclined, but others are facing structural barriers.''

In the Cleveland suburb of Bedford Heights where Mr. Grayson and his fiancée, Renea Carnes, live, about 40 percent of adults have had at least one shot, according to an analysis of Ohio Department of Health data. Nationally, about 60 percent of adults have had one shot.

Neither Ms. Carnes's mother nor adult daughter, who live with the couple, has been vaccinated. Like some other Black Americans, family members said they had concerns about the safety of the vaccines when they first came out. But Mr. Grayson said he had come to believe that vaccination was safe after observing enough people getting a shot without incident. And Ms. Carnes, a hospice nurse, had her second shot last week. The issue for many in their circle, she said, was not hesitancy but opportunity.

''If there was someone standing here right now who was saying, 'I have the vaccine for Covid,''' Ms. Carnes said, ''everyone in the house who doesn't have it would be getting it right now.''

''What might help this situation,'' added Mr. Grayson, ''is if it was like Domino's Pizza and you could call someone and say, 'Can I get my shot?' And they come give it to you.''

Vaccine haves and have-nots

If the nation's public health system was ever to offer a pizza-delivery-style vaccine service, now might be that moment. On Tuesday, Mr. Biden said Uber and Lyft, two of the country's largest ride-sharing services, would provide free rides to vaccination sites from May 24 until July 4. Experts say that the collective risk posed by the highly infectious coronavirus has created a rare moment when public health resources are actually being aimed at communities that have long had higher rates of poor health.

A data analysis by researchers at the University of Texas at Austin, for instance, suggests that vaccinating more residents of the Austin ZIP codes hardest-hit by Covid-19 early on in the vaccine rollout would have prevented hospitalizations and deaths across the whole city. In Austin, as in many other areas, there was a large degree of overlap between ZIP codes with the highest social-vulnerability ranking and the highest incidence of Covid-19.

''Putting more resources into protecting high-risk populations can be lifesaving and beneficial to us all,'' said Lauren Ancel Meyers, the epidemic modeler who conducted the study.

The Biden administration has allocated $6 billion to health centers that serve low-income populations and offered a tax break to businesses that give employees paid time off to be vaccinated.

But because of public health's frayed infrastructure, experts said, it may take time to hire health workers, commandeer mobile vaccination units and forge connections with community groups to do needed outreach.

If the country does not reach high levels of vaccination, experts say, the virus is likely to continue circulating in pockets. That may mean a concentration of cases, hospitalizations and deaths in low-income, disproportionately nonwhite populations.

''My concern is that as we get close to 70 percent vaccinated nationally, we are seeing significantly lower vaccination rates for historically disenfranchised communities that are at higher risk,'' said Dr. Luis Daniel Muñoz, a community organizer in Providence, R.I.

The diffuse nature of America's public health system has left some wondering who, if anyone, is accountable for ensuring equal protection from Covid-19.

''The president has said he wants this to happen, but who is the onus on to do it?'' said Keisha Krumm, executive director of the Greater Cleveland Congregations, which has held vaccine clinics at its member churches.

New vaccination site: the parking lot

Vaccine historians say there is no playbook for vaccinating so many adults with a day job -- or, as in the case of Yesenia Guzman, 43, of Mexico, Mo., those who work a night shift.

Ms. Guzman, who works from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. at the same pig farm where her husband works the day shift, said they remained unvaccinated because they could not afford to take time off work if they had side effects. They hope to schedule vaccines during the two days they usually get off after working two weeks straight, she said, but ''we just haven't figured out when.''

Health officials who serve low-income populations said they have been forced to turn vaccine-willing patients away because of packaging that requires them to vaccinate six to 10 people at a time or risk wasting a dose.

''I'm going to see patients this afternoon for diabetes and tell them, 'Hey, do you mind coming back Saturday for this vaccine clinic we're running?' and they're not going to come,'' said Dr. Chad Garven, associate medical director of a community health center in Cleveland.

As public health departments close down mass vaccination clinics because of low turnout, they are seeking new ways to reach people. In Austin, a group of vaccinators that distributed fewer doses than expected at a school festival set up shop in a nearby El Rancho grocery parking lot to offer shots to shoppers. After the store manager learned what was happening, almost three dozen workers went out to be vaccinated.

''Everyone wanted to get vaccinated,'' said Karim Nafal, the store's owner, ''but didn't know how or where.''

And in Cleveland, the alliance between the church group, volunteer vaccinators and the city's public health department led to Mr. Grayson getting a vaccine on a recent morning. Hired to do a paint job at the Lee Road church, he was told that vaccines were available down the hall if he wanted one.

''Come on,'' Mr. Grayson urged two unvaccinated co-workers, who also offered up their arms. ''It's right here.''

About the data: County vaccination data is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Texas Department of State Health Services. Full county vaccination data was not available for Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia, and some counties. These were excluded from the analysis.

High vulnerability is defined as a score above 0.5 on the C.D.C.'s Social Vulnerability Index.

The C.D.C.'s county-level hesitancy estimates are based on data from the Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey from March 3 to March 15, 2021. High hesitancy is defined as more than the national average of 16 percent of a county's population saying they ''probably won't'' or ''definitely won't'' receive a vaccination. Non-hesitant is defined as those saying they ''probably will'' or ''definitely will'' receive a vaccination, or have already been vaccinated. The averages given for each group are a population-weighted median.

National vaccination estimates by household income are based on data from the latest Household Pulse Survey, which was conducted from April 14 to April 26.

Reporting was contributed by Danielle Ivory, Timmy Facciola, Tiffany Wong, Julia Carmel and Emily Schwing.Reporting was contributed by Danielle Ivory, Timmy Facciola, Tiffany Wong, Julia Carmel and Emily Schwing.

**Graphic**

DUSTIN FRANZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES CECILE CLOCHERET/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES

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[***Incumbent House Democrats Win; Turnout Closes In on Record***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6175-VD31-JBG3-61WY-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Tracey Tully

**Body**

Voter turnout was on track to set records, complicating the counting process. Mail ballots may be counted for up to a week after the election.

The Democratic incumbents in two of New Jersey's closest congressional races were declared winners just after midnight on Wednesday in an election that was conducted mostly by mail and that yielded a voter turnout likely to set records. But no winner emerged yet in the state's most closely watched House race.

Representatives Andy Kim and Tom Malinowski, first-term Democrats who were elected two years ago as part of a so-called blue wave aligned against President Trump, beat back spirited challenges, according to preliminary results from The Associated Press.

In a marquee matchup, Amy Kennedy, a former schoolteacher and the wife of a scion of the storied Democratic political dynasty, was narrowly trailing Jeff Van Drew, a party-switching Republican ally of Mr. Trump's, though the race had not been officially called.

As of Wednesday morning, Mr. Van Drew led Ms. Kennedy by about four percentage points with about 75 percent of the estimated vote counted, according to The A.P.

Mr. Van Drew, a retired dentist who was elected as a Democrat in 2018, was a vocal opponent of the president's impeachment. In December, he joined Republicans in a pledge of ''undying support'' to Mr. Trump after it became clear that he could not count on re-election support from Democratic leaders in his South Jersey district.

He had political payback written on his back, and an opponent with a celebrity surname in a conservative-leaning district that stretches from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pennsylvania border. The district is more rural and ***working class*** than suburban regions in the north that have tilted more Democratic in recent years.

Shortly before midnight Tuesday, Mr. Van Drew told supporters he had weathered an aggressive effort to defeat him.

''A lot of money and a lot of power was used against me, quite frankly, to remove me from my seat during a difficult year,'' he said.

''But the truth is, we believed,'' he added. ''We believed in the America that we know, the America that we love, the America that we know is this great place.''

Ms. Kennedy's campaign manager, Josh Roesch, said it was too early for Mr. Van Drew to suggest that he had won.

''Tens of thousands of votes need to be counted over the next few weeks and we will work hard to make sure every vote is counted and every voice is heard,'' he said in a statement.

As of 11 a.m. on Wednesday, 3.89 million mail ballots had been received, representing 98.7 percent of the total voter turnout four years ago. The figure does not include ballots delivered to polling locations or provisional paper ballots that were completed on Tuesday by voters at the polls. Provisional ballots will not be counted until Nov. 11, and only after officials ensure that no one voted twice.

In the days before the election, Saily Avelenda, the executive director of the New Jersey Democratic State Committee, said the organization was taking nothing for granted.

''This is it,'' said Ms. Avelenda, a former bank lawyer whose life as an activist started after the 2016 election. ''This is the Super Bowl. This is the moment I have been working for since the morning after the election when Hillary lost and I cried my eyes out.''

On Wednesday, she said that voters had seen through the ''lies and the extremism of the Republican Party'' to re-elect all 10 Democratic House incumbents.

''New Jersey Democrats turned out in droves and we made sure to protect our delegation -- first and foremost,'' Ms. Avelenda said.

U.S. Senator Cory Booker, a Democrat, was re-elected in his race against the Republican candidate, Rik Mehta, a biotech entrepreneur who fell short in his long-shot bid to unseat the former Newark mayor.

Mr. Booker, in comments delivered on Zoom with his girlfriend, the actress Rosario Dawson, standing behind him, invoked the Women's March in Washington four years ago as the symbolic start of the campaign that culminated on Tuesday.

''This is a state that never, ever gave up or gave in, or even sat down to watch what was happening with Trump,'' Mr. Booker said. ''We were activists. We were organized. We were fighting.''

Just before 10 p.m., Representative Mikie Sherrill, a first-term Democrat and former Navy helicopter pilot, was declared the winner against her Republican challenger, Rosemary Becchi, a tax lawyer, according to The Associated Press.

By early Wednesday, The A.P. had called the races for all 10 of New Jersey's Democratic House incumbents.

The race in the Seventh Congressional District, in northern New Jersey, pitted Mr. Malinowski against State Senator Tom Kean Jr., a fiscal moderate whose father was a beloved Republican governor of New Jersey. The contest was seen as a measure of moderate Republicans' ability to compete in a party overhauled in Mr. Trump's image.

During the campaign, Mr. Malinowski was targeted by QAnon supporters who sent him death threats after the House Republicans' campaign arm falsely accused him of lobbying to protect sexual predators. The harassment began after Mr. Malinowski led a bipartisan resolution condemning the movement, which spreads a baseless conspiracy theory that Mr. Trump is battling a cabal of Democratic pedophiles.

Ms. Kennedy, a first-time candidate who is married to Patrick J. Kennedy, a nephew of the former president, signaled interest in competing for Mr. Van Drew's seat two days after word began to spread that the freshman congressman intended to join the Republicans, a move that prompted a mass exodus of his staff members.

Her entry into the race upended the playing field and ushered in a bruising primary against two formidable challengers: Will Cunningham, a lawyer and former investigator for the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, and Brigid Callahan Harrison, a college professor who was the choice of the South Jersey Democratic political machine.

Ms. Kennedy cruised to an easy victory, buoyed by the star power of her surname and the support of progressive groups that were eager to notch a win against the county power brokers who had long determined the outcome of regional races.

Ms. Kennedy, the education director for a mental health advocacy forum founded by her husband, has tried to play down her famous name, while saying that she is ''grateful for the support of our family.'' The Kennedy connections no doubt helped her generate $4.25 million in contributions, compared with the $3.9 million that Mr. Van Drew raised.

Mr. Trump was never far from mind in the Second Congressional District, which he won by about five percentage points in 2016.

About two hours south of New York City and in the Philadelphia media market, the region was saturated by presidential campaign ads from both sides.

Soon after Mr. Van Drew switched parties, the president came to Wildwood, N.J., for a raucous, campaign-style rally that aimed to solidify the lifelong Democrat's standing in the eyes of the Republican faithful.

As Mr. Van Drew basked in Mr. Trump's glow, David Richter, a wealthy Republican businessman who had planned to run against Mr. Van Drew before he switched parties, chose to run in a neighboring district instead, clearing the path for Mr. Van Drew.

Mr. Richter's race against Mr. Kim was considered one of the most competitive in New Jersey, and one of the best chances for Republicans to regain more of a toehold in Congress.

Before Mr. Van Drew switched parties, only one Republican represented New Jersey in Congress: Chris Smith, who was re-elected to a 21st term on Tuesday.

Mr. Van Drew rose in politics from mayor of Dennis, N.J., to county legislator to state lawmaker, serving in the Assembly and Senate for 16 years before being elected to Congress.

There was nothing typical about the election, which was held during a pandemic that has killed more than 16,000 New Jersey residents and against a backdrop of an alarming statewide uptick in coronavirus cases.

Social distancing restrictions affected the candidates' ability to campaign freely and raise money, and mail voting altered the get-out-the-vote strategy altogether in a state where residents began casting paper ballots in September.

On Monday, Ms. Kennedy was forced to suspend in-person campaigning after being exposed to a person who later tested positive for the virus at an outdoor weekend event.

Ms. Kennedy, in a statement, said she was proud of the race she had run.

''We stood up and spoke out instead of sitting back in silence,'' she said. ''We stayed true to our values and we ran a campaign focused on service and putting forth real plans and solutions that will make a better South Jersey for everyone.''

Patrick McGeehan contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/04/nyregion/nj-congress-kennedy-van-drew-kim-malinowski.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/04/nyregion/nj-congress-kennedy-van-drew-kim-malinowski.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Representative Jeff Van Drew, above, a party-switching Republican, was defending his seat against Amy Kennedy's star power (PHOTOGRAPH BY GAIL WILSON/THE PRESS OF ATLANTIC CITY, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** November 5, 2020

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[***Americans in Search of Normalcy Flee to Mexico City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61NS-J0K1-DXY4-X55S-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Hospitals are at capacity and coronavirus cases are surging, but many foreigners, especially Americans, are heading to the Mexican capital -- some intending to stay awhile.

MEXICO CITY -- At first, life in lockdown was OK, between working from home, exercising with his roommate, and devouring everything on Netflix.

But as the coronavirus pandemic wore endlessly on, Rob George began to find the confinement in his West Hollywood home unbearable.

''There were weeks where I just wouldn't leave my house, just working all day -- my mental health was definitely suffering,'' said Mr. George, 31, who manages business operations for a technology start-up.

So when a Mexican friend said he was traveling to Mexico City in November, Mr. George decided to tag along. Now, he's calling the Mexican capital home -- part of an increasing number of foreigners, mainly Americans, who are heading to Mexico, for a short trip or a longer stay to escape restrictions at home.

They are drawn partly by the prospect of bringing a little normalcy to their lives in a place where coronavirus restrictions have been more relaxed than at home, even as cases of Covid-19 shatter records. Some of them are staying, at least for a while, and taking advantage of the six-month tourist visa Americans are granted on arrival.

''I have no interest in going back,'' Mr. George said.

But while coming to this country may be a relief for many foreigners, particularly those fleeing colder weather, some Mexicans find the move irresponsible amid a pandemic, especially as the virus overwhelms Mexico City and its hospitals. Others say the problem lies with Mexican authorities, who waited too long to enact strict lockdown measures, making places like Mexico City enticing to outsiders.

''If it was less attractive, fewer people would come,'' said Xavier Tello, a Mexico City health policy analyst. ''But what we're creating is a vicious cycle, where we're receiving more people, who are potentially infectious or infected from elsewhere, and they keep mixing with people that are potentially infectious or infected here in Mexico City.''

In November, more than half a million Americans came to Mexico -- of those, almost 50,000 arrived at Mexico City's airport, according to official figures, less than half the number of U.S. visitors who arrived in November last year, but a surge from the paltry 4,000 that came in April, when much of Mexico was shut down. Since then, numbers have ticked up steadily: between June and August, U.S. visitors more than doubled.

Most other U.S. visitors to Mexico flew to beach resorts like Los Cabos and Cancun.

It's unclear how many are tourists and how many are relocating, at least temporarily. Some may be Mexicans who also have American passports, and are visiting family. But walking the streets of Mexico City's trendier neighborhoods these days, it can sometimes seem like English has become the official language.

''A lot of people are either coming down here and visiting to test it out, or have just full-on relocated,'' said Cara Araneta, a former New Yorker who has lived on and off in Mexico City for two years, and came back to the capital in June.

The surge, however, comes as Mexico City enters a critical phase of the pandemic; hospitals are so stretched that many sick people are staying home as their relatives struggle to buy them oxygen. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised Americans to avoid all travel to Mexico.

The capital's health care system ''is basically overwhelmed,'' said Mr. Tello, via WhatsApp message. ''The worst is yet to come.''

In mid-December, authorities escalated Mexico City's alert system to the highest level -- red -- which requires an immediate shutdown of all but essential businesses. But the lockdown came weeks after numbers became critical, even by the government's own figures, leaving stores thronged with Christmas shoppers and restaurants filled with diners.

With its leafy streets and quaint cafes, the upscale Mexico City neighborhoods of Roma and Condesa have attracted expatriates escaping sky-high rents in New York or Los Angeles for years. But with an increasing number of young people now working from home, the so-called axis of cool has become even more attractive, even as Mexico City residents confront a public health crisis.

As in much of the world, the most affluent are often the least affected. In Roma Norte, the contrast has been vivid: On one corner recently, ***working-class*** Mexicans lined up to buy oxygen tanks for their relatives, while just blocks away well-off young people queued up for croissants.

Mexico City is hardly the only Mexican destination seeing a surge of foreign visitors, particularly Americans, who -- with the pandemic raging in the United States -- are barred from traveling to many countries. While some Latin American nations have at times shut their borders completely, Mexico has imposed few restrictions: Mexico was the third most visited country in 2020, up from seventh last year, according to the Mexican government, citing preliminary statistics from the World Tourism Organization.

Much of this travel has been concentrated in the country's popular beach resorts where coronavirus restrictions can be even more relaxed. Los Cabos had nearly 100,000 Americans arrive in November, while Cancun had 236,000 U.S. visitors, only 18 percent fewer than in 2019. The nearby resort town of Tulum made headlines for hosting an art and music festival in November that saw hundreds of revelers dancing maskless inside underground caves.

Authorities in Mexico City have urged residents to avoid parties and gatherings, and even before the most recent lockdown, the government had limited restaurant capacity and banned restaurant alcohol sales after 7 p.m. Still, the measures were a far cry from those in American cities like Los Angeles, which, in late November, banned outdoor dining entirely and prohibited all public gatherings.

''Even with the restrictions here, being able to just be outside, and work from a socially distanced cafe and feel like I'm not on pause has been super helpful,'' said Mr. George, the former Angeleno.

Like most foreigners coming to Mexico, Mr. George said he was aware of the risks of traveling during the pandemic, and takes precautions like wearing a mask. But being able to have some freedom, coupled with the excitement of living in a new country, makes the risk to their health worthwhile for many.

''I know people who have lived in fear for the last year, who haven't left their house, who lost their jobs,'' said Alexander Vignogna, 33, who visited Mexico City in October and is planning on moving here full time, with his partner, in January. ''But instead of doing something adventurous and cool like me and my girlfriend, they just stayed at home, depressed.''

Such laissez-faire attitudes from outsiders have angered many residents, Mexican and foreign alike.

''Tourists (primarily from the US, it seems) have flooded into Mexico to escape the restrictions imposed by their home states,'' said Lauren Cocking, 26, a British blogger who has lived in Mexico for about five years, in an email.

They ''seem to treat Mexico like some kind of lawless adventure land, where they can escape the need to wear masks or stay indoors.''

Others say the rush of foreigners offers the struggling Mexico City economy a welcome boost.

''What Mexico needs most is people so that the economy improves,'' said William Velázquez Yañez, 25, who was working as a valet parking attendant at an upscale eatery in Roma Norte before the latest lockdown was put in place.

He lost his job at the start of the pandemic, and even though he was eventually called back, his pay was cut and his health insurance taken away. With more people dining out, his boss might start paying him more, Mr. Velázquez said.

But enjoying packed dining rooms or other activities once considered normal carries their own risks.

Nicole Jodoin moved to Mexico City from Canada after securing a job here in July. Part of her impetus was that with Canadian borders closed, she had found herself cut off from her Scottish boyfriend. Mexico's open borders and lengthy tourist visas for Europeans offered them a chance to be together.

Then both she and her partner got sick with Covid-19. They had been taking precautions, Ms. Jodoin said, but had dined out several times and taken Ubers before getting sick. The couple self-isolated and have since recovered, but Ms. Jodoin's symptoms have persisted.

Still, most foreigners say life is better in Mexico City than back home. Ms. Araneta, the former New Yorker, went to visit her family in San Diego in November, but found being in the United States a challenge.

''It felt more isolated,'' she said. ''A lot of people are much more on their own.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/02/world/americas/virus-mexico-visitors.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/02/world/americas/virus-mexico-visitors.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A park in Mexico City's Condesa neighborhood, which has long attracted expatriates escaping high rents in New York or Los Angeles -- and is drawing even more foreigners during the pandemic. (PHOTOGRAPH BY REBECCA BLACKWELL/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Pedestrians in the historic center of Mexico City, where an influx of Americans can make it seem as though English has become the official language. Left, a patient in Mexico City believed to have contracted the coronavirus. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLAUDIO CRUZ/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES

PEDRO PARDO/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** January 3, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Goodbye Amazon. I Miss You.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61NS-J0M1-DXY4-X031-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 3, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1591 words

**Byline:** By John Herrman

**Body**

For concerned customers, avoiding one of the world's largest retailers and web service providers is proving harder than expected.

Blaze Cromwell, a 24-year-old cashier living in Washington, D.C., doesn't order from Amazon.com or shop at Whole Foods. He doesn't watch movies or shows on Prime Video. He doesn't own a Ring or a Kindle. And he doesn't use Audible, Twitch or Zappos. He's about as close as one can get to abstaining from Amazon entirely.

Mr. Cromwell began the work of cutting the company out of his life in 2017, after reading reports about Amazon's working conditions and what he saw as generally ''unethical practices.''

''I reasoned that financially withdrawing from Amazon.com, and later on its subsidiaries, was one of the most material things I could do as a ***working-class*** person with disposable income from time to time,'' he said.

Leaving Amazon requires some determination, he said, but it's less daunting once you get started. ''It's a matter of people changing both their habits and expectations for their consumption,'' he said. It's not just a choice, he noted, but an ongoing ''practice.'' (He has, occasionally, looked up titles on IMDb, an Amazon subsidiary since 1998. He's in the process of finding alternatives )

People have been advocating boycotts of Amazon for nearly as long as the company has existed. In 1999, the programmer and activist Richard Stallman led one related to a lawsuit the company filed against Barnes & Noble to protect a patent covering ''1-click'' ordering, which he worried would stifle competition in e-commerce. (The lawsuit against Barnes & Noble was settled, and the patent has since expired.)

There have been countless attempts to shed Amazon since: by authors and book sellers, political activists, labor organizers, my colleagues. (Even the most determined abstainers find their limit when trying to eliminate Amazon Web Services, which counts among its clients thousands of other companies, including popular websites and apps, as well as The New York Times.)

Meanwhile, Amazon has grown into a company larger and more powerful than almost any retailer in the world. It sells everything. It directly employs more than a million people. Its founder is a household name. It undergirds much of the internet. And it's intertwined with politics by default, drawing ire from across the political spectrum. (''My anticapitalist liberal college student and her uber-capitalist conservative grandparents are both boycotting Amazon,'' one Twitter user shared in December.)

Unlike in 1999, or even 2009, today the question of whether or not to interact with Amazon has already been answered for many people. The choice is no longer whether to enter the Everything Store. It's about trying to locate the exit.

''I refused to go to Walmart, and as a small child went to United Farm Worker protests,'' said MaryBeth Haslam, 54, an Amazon abstainer from Philadelphia. Dropping Amazon hasn't been particularly difficult, she said. ''Just inconvenient.''

''I could get certain grocery items there that are hard to obtain elsewhere,'' she said. ''So you just get different stuff, no big deal.'' Not every Amazon alternative is a beloved local business, of course -- ''I have to admit Target has been getting more business out of me,'' she said -- but Ms. Haslam has specific issues with Amazon and in particular with Jeff Bezos, who, she said, ''doesn't need any more of my money.''

Ms. Haslam's abstention is thorough, but she recently hit a snag: Christmas. A niece asked for a specific gift from Amazon. A nephew asked for an Amazon gift card, which would give him the ability to order whatever he wanted, whenever he wanted. ''It kind of hurt to shop there, honestly,'' she said.

Char Wells, a 31-year-old Etsy seller, avoids Amazon as much as possible, for reasons both broadly ideological and personally specific. Mx. Wells, who is disabled and takes non-gendered pronouns, objects to the idea that small vendors on other sites should be ''expected to meet Prime delivery expectations.'' Still, sometimes they need something they can't easily get somewhere else, or for an item to arrive quickly.

Not every Amazon abstainer has a coherent or specific critique of the company -- for some, it's merely the most visible representation of consumerism, concentrated wealth and big business, taking Walmart's place in a variety of broad lamentations about culture and the economy.

''It was Nike for a little while. It's been Nestle, then Coca-Cola,'' said Tim Hunt, an editor of the British nonprofit magazine Ethical Consumer. ''We can add Amazon to the list of corporate boogeymen, and I don't mean that flippantly,'' he said. Most abstainers don't suffer any illusions about what they're doing; Amazon clearly hasn't suffered from their absence, and their numbers aren't large enough to make demands -- many more people are currently turning to Amazon than are turning away. Instead, for some, opting out of an increasingly ubiquitous and assertive Amazon offers a sense of control and agency, however slight.

The sheer scope of Amazon's business interests -- including surveillance devices (Ring), government contracts (through Amazon Web Services), and a work force that includes both low-wage gig workers and the actual richest person in the world -- makes finding a reason to opt out of Amazon nearly as easy as finding something to buy on it. But plenty of Amazon abstainers aren't merely coping with guilt, reclaiming a lost sense of control, or fighting the thought that ''ethical consumption'' sounds oxymoronic.

Chris Smalls is the former Amazon Warehouse worker whose March protest about working conditions at a Staten Island fulfillment center, and subsequent firing, turned him into a leader in the nascent movement to organize Amazon workers. He's an activist, now, with a potent personal story and a long list of specific demands. He's planned marches on Jeff Bezos's homes. Asking people to voice support for his cause is one thing. Asking them to actually leave Amazon, it turns out, is quite another.

''A lot of my own relatives, they used to be frequent customers of Amazon,'' Mr. Smalls, 31, said. ''It was a struggle for them, since they were so accustomed to it. Some of them used to order from Amazon almost every single day.''

Even sympathetic audiences can be hesitant about disentangling themselves from the firm. ''My advice is, do it at your own pace,'' he said. ''I'm always advocating to stand in solidarity with the workers, but I know how hard it is as a customer to stop using the service.'' Amazon's ubiquity, and the millions of habits its customers have formed, put Mr. Smalls in a strange and exhausting position: appealing for empathy for a largely invisible work force laboring through a pandemic, while also sympathizing with Amazon customers accustomed to a relatively new convenience.

''Ten years ago we weren't ordering toilet paper from Amazon,'' Mr. Smalls said. ''Maybe that's how long it will take to get over it, too.''

Harold Pollack, a professor at the University of Chicago, was interviewed by The New York Times in 2012 in a story about customers who were leaving Amazon. Dr. Pollack, who teaches public health, said at the time, ''I don't feel they behave in a way that I want to support with my consumer dollars.'' He has since written critically of Amazon, including, in 2018, an op-ed titled ''Better Ways for Jeff Bezos to Spend $131 Billion,'' recommending that Mr. Bezos divert his ''winnings'' to philanthropy rather than space travel. (In 2020, that figure would be somewhere north of $180 billion.)

Reached by phone, Dr. Pollack said his critiques of Amazon had both widened and deepened, but that he's also now a frequent customer. ''It's chastening,'' he said, when asked to revisit his stance. ''I do use Amazon more in my life than I'm entirely comfortable about. It's part of the infrastructure of my life in the same way it is the infrastructure of others' lives, during Covid especially.''

Dr. Pollack then offered a fresh analysis, one that attempted to incorporate, or at least acknowledge, his ambivalence. ''I think my own trajectory is emblematic of why there need to be public policy solutions to this,'' he said, mentioning concerns about antitrust, Amazon's broader place in the economy, and, as was his focus in 2012, the welfare of the company's work force. Amazon, he said, presents an ''enormous collective action problem.''

The company has seeped further, inexorably, into his life. Using Amazon makes getting work reimbursements simpler. Amazon gift cards have become de facto standard inducements for study participants (notwithstanding the concern of some fellow researchers). Plus, like most people, Dr. Pollack is busy.

''Amazon provides tremendous value to consumers that allows us to look past a lot of things,'' he said. Going forward, he plans to ''do the easy things that allow me to minimize my reliance on Amazon and feel good about it, but I will basically not do the things that are less easy. And if I'm honest, you can't rely on me to discipline the company.''

Mr. Smalls, the former warehouse worker, offered a gentle, practiced take on customers like Dr. Pollack: using Amazon might be like an addiction, or at least something that takes weaning. In an interview earlier this year, though, he was perhaps more candid about the company's habitual consumers. ''You think you need Amazon?'' he said in April, shortly after his firing. ''OK, what were you doing a few years ago?''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/29/style/amazon-abstainers.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/29/style/amazon-abstainers.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A conveyor belt inside Amazon's JFK8 distribution center on Staten Island. (ST1)

A familiar 2020 tableau. ''Ten years ago we weren't ordering toilet paper from Amazon,'' said Chris Smalls, an activist and former Amazon warehouse worker. ''Maybe that's how long it will take to get over it, too.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRENDAN MCDERMID/REUTERS) (ST3)

**Load-Date:** January 3, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Four Decades on, Martin Yan Faces a New Audience and a New World***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62XH-2FS1-DXY4-X23W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** DINING

**Length:** 1896 words

**Byline:** Priya Krishna

**Highlight:** The man who used television to help many North Americans start cooking Chinese food at home is as cheery as ever, but aware of some harsher truths.

**Body**

HILLSBOROUGH, Calif. — Live from his home kitchen in the Bay Area, Martin Yan flashed a smile, raised his cleaver and chanted the catchphrase that the 150 or so people watching him online were clamoring to hear: “If Yan can cook, so can you!”

For Mr. Yan — who over a four-decade career has played the roles of television personality, cookbook author, restaurateur and now YouTube host — this longtime slogan is more than just a shtick. It’s a summary of all he believes in. If a soft-spoken boy from Guangzhou, China, can make it big in America cooking stir-fries and dumplings, he figures, anyone can do just about anything.

Mr. Yan doesn’t have an enormous social media following or a list of viral recipes to his name. But his impact on the culinary sphere is immeasurable. In 1982, at age 33, Mr. Yan became one of the first people of Asian descent to host a cooking show in the United States. “[*Yan Can Cook*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/),” on public television, was a contemporary of programs like “[*Julia Child &amp; More Company*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/)” and later on, “[*Today’s Gourmet*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/),” starring Jacques Pépin. His show is still syndicated around the world, making it one of the longest-running American cooking programs.

Mr. Yan, now 72, introduced legions of people to Chinese flavors, and eventually to other Asian cuisines. In the 1980s and ’90s, he achieved what many nonwhite cooks still struggle to do today — to get Americans to view the cooking of other countries as something they can replicate at home.

Today, Mr. Yan has re-energized his existing fans and found new ones — both on [*Instagram*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/), where he has been posting more frequently, and on [*YouTube*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/), where he livestreams himself cooking from home. KQED, the San Francisco PBS member station, has been releasing old episodes of “Yan Can Cook” to [*YouTube*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/) weekly since January 2020.

His cooking repertoire is more wide-ranging, his style a little more relaxed — and he remains as kinetic as ever.

“Look at this physical specimen,” he exclaimed to an iPhone on a camera rig, standing in a power pose before tossing a piece of ginger into a wok to make adobo. “I haven’t gained weight in 35 years.”

Yet Mr. Yan now inhabits a landscape that is vastly different from the one in which he came up. Food media has been rocked by calls for racial justice and equity, and continuing criticism of how frequently non-Western cuisines and ingredients are appropriated or whitewashed in recipes. And throughout the United States, Asian Americans have become the [*targets of widespread violence*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/).

Mr. Yan, in his perennially cheery way, focuses on the progress that’s been made — pointing to, say, the ubiquity of Chinese restaurants in America, or the availability of ingredients like soy sauce in grocery stores. Asked about his experience with discrimination, he insisted he had been “fortunate.”

But the next day, after thinking about it, he told a story: Forty years ago, he was taking out the trash at his San Francisco apartment, near a lake with ducks. A young white couple, seeing him with a bin, accused him of trying to kill and eat the ducks, saying that Asians like him were destroying the environment.

Mr. Yan assured the couple he had no plan to kill anything, and invited them to come over that evening for Peking duck.

He believes many conflicts can be resolved with a smile, a conversation and a sense of humor. “I cannot change my accent, I cannot change my background, I cannot change the color of my face, I can’t change,” he said. “I truly believe, as long as we are doing things to project a positive image,” that’s enough.

The couple accepted his explanation. They did not come over for duck.

Food television is now [*big business*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/), but when “Yan Can Cook” premiered, Mr. Yan became one of only a few chefs teaching cooking to a national audience.

“It was very weird to see someone like” Mr. Yan onscreen, recalled Hua Hsu, 43, a staff writer for The New Yorker who watched the show with his mother as a child. “You are used to seeing an Asian face in detective stories, as the Dragon Lady, or as a delivery worker or as a scientist,” but not as a home cook.

A few chefs, like [*Joyce Chen*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/) and [*Cecilia Chiang*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/), were already bringing more attention to Chinese food. But Mr. Yan said that when “Yan Can Cook” first appeared, few people foresaw that cooking shows would become a cultural touchstone. He felt simply lucky to be on TV considering where he started, as the child of ***working-class*** parents in Guangzhou.

At 13, he moved to Hong Kong alone, at his mother’s urging, to work at a family friend’s restaurant. He worked long hours filleting fish and chopping chicken, sleeping on the kitchen floor. Once he finished high school, a church elder helped him secure a visa so he could attend college in Calgary, Alberta.

Mr. Yan filled in at the last minute for a cooking segment on the Calgary station CFAC-TV in 1978, then was asked to keep coming in. Those demonstrations became “Yan Can Cook,” which aired daily on CFAC-TV for four years before shifting in 1982 to KQED in San Francisco, which broadcast it weekly.

June Mesina Ouellette, the associate producer of “Yan Can Cook,” remembers that Mr. Yan “had this energy that could have filled the space.”

Before she met him, she didn’t know how to cook. As she worked on his show, “I got over my fear,” she said. “He made it fun.”

Mr. Yan also highlighted local Chinese businesses on his show — he took viewers inside an egg roll factory and the kitchen of a dim sum restaurant. Because he spoke several Chinese dialects and understood the culture, “he had access” that a white host wouldn’t, said Bernie Schimbke, the art director for “Yan Can Cook.”

Still, Mr. Yan was well aware of the xenophobia directed at Chinese people in America, starting with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which banned immigration by laborers from that country.

“Chinese food and Chinese culture were not as well received” when his show debuted, he said. He was hesitant to introduce any dish that people might consider too different or difficult. “I do either steamed, deep-fried or stir-fried.”

The show carefully avoided ingredients like chicken feet, said Gayle Yamada, a former executive producer. “You self-censor,” she said.

Ms. Mesina Ouellette wondered how exhausting it must have been for Mr. Yan to be constantly fighting people’s biases.

But he didn’t see it that way. There weren’t many Chinese cooking classes in America at the time, he said. He started with straightforward dishes so he could draw people in and, over time, introduced more complicated ones.

He tried to keep to traditional ingredients, but always suggested substitutions, said Tina Salter, the former culinary producer at KQED. “He would rather see them cooking and stir-frying than skipping and staying with a hamburger.”

Mr. Yan retained a good deal of control over his show. In fact, he recruited sponsors himself, and set his own compensation — $3,500 to $4,000 per episode, on average, he said. “I made myself indispensable. I said, ‘OK, go find another Martin Yan.’”

From “Yan Can Cook,” he built a lucrative career doing television specials, cooking and speaking at schools, companies and festivals around the world, writing cookbooks and running restaurants in China and California.

But the pandemic forced him to slow down. Last year, he had planned to travel to Vietnam and Malaysia to film a television special titled “Martin Yan’s Mobile Kitchen,” in which he would drive around a food truck and cook with locals. That project has been postponed indefinitely.

In November, he closed his last restaurant, M.Y. China in the Westfield San Francisco Centre, because it didn’t have the space for outdoor dining.

Before the pandemic, he was never a fan of social media — it takes up too much time, he said. But he has been posting more of late. In March, he published [*a photo*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/) to Instagram of himself on a communal walk to stand against Asian hate, with the gentle caption, “How’s that for perfect exercise?” It was one of the first times he used his account for activism.

“The disadvantage of us Asians,” he said, is that “we don’t like to make noise.”

Despite his on-camera bravado, Mr. Yan considers himself a quiet person. It’s easier to give in to the model-minority myth and put one’s head down, he said; but more Asian Americans, himself included, should be speaking out.

He followed the upheavals in the food media last summer, most notably the [*resignation*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/) of Adam Rapoport as editor in chief of [*Bon Appétit*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/), after a photo surfaced of him dressed in an offensive costume.

“I think you and I, all of us in the media, would like to see change faster,” Mr. Yan said. “But the problem is that will never happen.” So, he reasons, it’s best to be happy with whatever shifts do occur.

He pointed to the success of other Asian American chefs like Brandon Jew and Ming Tsai as proof that there has been plenty of advancement.

“They are bringing Asian food to another level,” in a way he was not able to, Mr. Yan said. When, in 2003, Mr. Tsai started hosting “[*Simply Ming*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/)” on public television, Mr. Yan helped him find sponsors. When Mr. Jew’s San Francisco Chinatown restaurant, [*Mister Jiu’s*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/), opened in 2016, Mr. Yan showed up with cleavers for the cooks.

“He is like the Jackie Robinson of Asians,” said Mr. Jew, 41.

But these days Mr. Yan is not a household name in the same way as Jackie Robinson or Julia Child, who has inspired an [*exhibit*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/) in the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History, [*a movie*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/) starring Meryl Streep and several [*biographies*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/).

Both Child and Mr. Yan wrote best-selling cookbooks. Both have led fascinating lives. So where is Mr. Yan’s movie?

A few of his former colleagues pointed to systemic racism as the reason. Mr. Yan disagreed, saying that Child, who lived on the East Coast, benefited from her proximity to the mainstream media.

But he also found the question to be flawed.

“If the public says, ‘Oh, Martin, you are not as famous,’ I really don’t care,’” he said. After all, “how many people in our business can last as long as Martin Yan?”

Follow [*NYT Food on Twitter*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/) and [*NYT Cooking on Instagram*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/), [*Facebook*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/), [*YouTube*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/) and [*Pinterest*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/). [*Get regular updates from NYT Cooking, with recipe suggestions, cooking tips and shopping advice*](https://www.pbs.org/food/chefs/martin-yan/).

PHOTOS: Above left, Martin Yan in 1979, when he was cooking at a Canadian TV station. Since then, he has taught millions of people how to cook a variety of Asian cuisines. Above right, Mr. Yan prepared a dish at his Bay Area home. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARTIN YAN; AYA BRACKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D1); Clockwise, from center: Martin Yan in his home kitchen in the Bay Area, using his branded knife to prepare vegetables; every chef needs an assistant, and this is Mr. Yan’s dog, Stephanie; some of the awards that he’s won; he spends much of his time in his home kitchen, livestreaming his cooking on YouTube, and he says he is pleased by the wide availability of Asian ingredients in grocery stores as a sign of progress since his career started; Mr. Yan has published dozens of cookbooks, and has a library of about 4,000 others. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AYA BRACKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Top, from left, three stages of Mr. Yan. Above, Brandon Jew, the chef and co-owner of the San Francisco restaurant Mister Jiu’s, says Mr. Yan has been very supportive of his career. Above that, June Mesina Ouellette, the associate producer of “Yan Can Cook,” says he taught her how to cook. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA MARTIN YAN) (D7)

**Load-Date:** June 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***I Love My Twin. How Did We End Up So Far Apart?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616Y-R311-JBG3-63M9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1345 words

**Byline:** Jeneen Interlandi

**Highlight:** The Democrats kept me but lost him.

**Body**

The Democrats kept me but lost him.

Once, when we were 5 years old, my twin brother jumped off a seesaw we were riding at the precise moment that we had been told never to do that. I was in the air, and he was on the ground, and when he made his move I came crashing rapidly and horrifically down.

I still remember the short burst of terror I felt, and the body-shaking thud that followed. But I also remember that the crash hurt him more than it hurt me. I wasn’t injured. His guilt was so great that nearly four decades later, he still gets upset when I tell this story.

We are best friends, my twin and I. Our relationship predates our actual lives, and except for the seesaw incident, we have never been on opposite sides of anything that could hurt one of us — until recently.

He believes that Nancy Pelosi and Joe Biden are the biggest threats to our ailing democracy, that Donald Trump is doing a fine job — maybe not great, but definitely not terrible — and that the mainstream media (of which I am a part) is biased in its coverage of the president.

I don’t just disagree with these views, I find them unfathomable. I think that Donald Trump is a liar, a racist, an authoritarian and a criminal. I think he’s a disgrace to the office he holds and to the nation at large, and I’m worried that American democracy would not survive another four years of his leadership. I also think that the entire Republican Party is complicit in his ascension and so bears responsibility for the broader national crisis we are now facing.

My brother and I have tried talking through this divide, but we get too angry too quickly. We have tried not discussing the situation at all, but it keeps bubbling up in text messages and our weekly catch-up sessions. (We make it a point to talk every Saturday, at least.)

I know that we’re not alone in our predicament, that so many people around the country are going through some version of this with their family members. But the loss of common ground between him and me feels singular, sharp and surprisingly devastating given that it does not involve an actual death.

I mean, he is my twin.

I keep trying to understand how we got here. Our parents are lifelong Democrats. Our father was a garment worker, in a union whose roots ran back to the [*Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/26/nyregion/26nyc.html). (He still carries his own father’s union card in his wallet.) In the mid-1990s, though, that union was decimated. The bosses closed the garment factories and shipped the work down to Mexico, and our father, who was in his mid-50s, never found steady employment again. We lost our home to a bank foreclosure in the wake of that shift. We were still teenagers.

I don’t think it ever occurred to our parents to blame the Democratic Party — or President Bill Clinton, or his [*disastrous trade policies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/26/nyregion/26nyc.html) — for what befell us. The way they saw it, the party had fought for the unions that protected them for so long, and for the safety net that helped sustain them when those unions failed.

They had also spent their lives steeped in the notion that hard work and decency were enough to make a good life, and so when hard times came they assumed that the corollary was also true: that if they had failed to maintain their good life, they must not have worked hard enough or lived decently enough. They internalized their failure, in other words. They absorbed it deep into their bones, until it hobbled them.

My siblings and I were too consumed by the sudden challenges of getting by to think much about the larger forces shaping our lives. My brother worked a few odd jobs before becoming a landscaper. I clawed my way through college and graduate school, and eventually became a journalist.

These paths have never felt all that disparate to me. We both love what we do and take great pride in our work; “Do it right, or don’t do it at all,” our father would say. We have both worked long hours for low pay, and we both worry obsessively about maintaining the financial ground we have gained since those times. And who can blame us after what we went through as teenagers?

But lately it seems our differences have become greater than our similarities. I’m a city dweller who spends her days in front of the computer and occasionally travels abroad for work. He’s a suburban homeowner who earns his living through physical labor.

The Democratic Party has kept me, but lost him.

What I still see as the party of labor unions, health insurance and tax policies that favor the middle class, he sees as the party of elitist liberals, out of touch with ***working-class*** folks like him. Part of the problem, a part we both acknowledge, is that our information comes from very different places. I read newspapers; he listens to conservative talk shows and watches cable news — and algorithms ensure that our internet searches never subject us to divergent viewpoints.

But the other problem runs deeper than that: The political norms of the moment compel everyone to pick a side and to then refuse to hear the other side out, on anything.

For liberals, that means that all Trump supporters are at best complete fools who vote against their own interests out of sheer stupidity, and at worst virulent racists not to be engaged with on any level. On one hand, I get those feelings. I have a hard time understanding how anyone could come down on the side of Mr. Trump’s Republicans.

On the other, though, we are talking about a substantial portion of the country — about our friends and neighbors and our own kin.

And while I think my brother is wrong about quite a lot, I know he is not wrong about everything. After decades of politicians talking, he still doesn’t have health insurance; he earns too much to qualify for an Obamacare subsidy but too little to afford his own comprehensive coverage. He worries, rightly, about what liberal immigration policies, minimum-wage laws and health insurance mandates will do to the small business where he works, and he is anxious about tax increases of any kind and what they would do to his own monthly balance sheet.

He has heaved himself from a life of mere subsistence into the middle class, bought a home and built a life, through the sheer force of his own will. And he is terrified of losing that.

In the past two weeks, I’ve read a deluge of stories about friendships [*dissolving*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/26/nyregion/26nyc.html) over political differences, about people disowning their flesh and blood. I can’t bear the thought of that. I still send my twin articles, including ones my colleagues have written, about Mr. Trump’s [*foreign policy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/26/nyregion/26nyc.html), which I think makes us less safe in the world, about his [*grift and graft*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/26/nyregion/26nyc.html), and about how his tax policies favor the very rich at the expense of people like us.

In turn, he has sent me podcasts and web videos denouncing Joe Biden’s connections to China and Hunter Biden’s doings in Ukraine. We aren’t penetrating each other’s realities. But we haven’t fully lost each other yet, either. In our last call before election night, we screamed about who was selling who out to which foreign country, in one breathless exchange. In the next, I reminded him to order eyeglasses and he begged me to stay safe if I ventured out after dark.

I’m not sure how we get through this moment, but I don’t think it will end when the election is called, or when the new year begins, or when the next president is sworn in. I have prayed as hard as a person can these past few months that Democrats will win in big sweeping landslides and that American democracy will prevail.

But I’ve known for much longer than that — for my entire life, in fact — that I can never truly win anything if it means losing my twin. I don’t know where that leaves us. I only know that he is my brother, and I love him.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/26/nyregion/26nyc.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/2010/03/26/nyregion/26nyc.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/26/nyregion/26nyc.html).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Nicholas Konrad/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Israel Ground Forces Shell Gaza as Fighting Intensifies***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62NJ-9PP1-DXY4-X1C0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; middleeast

**Length:** 1976 words

**Byline:** Declan Walsh

**Highlight:** The surge in fighting left Israel in an unprecedented position — fighting Palestinian militants on its southern flank as it sought to head off its worst civil unrest in decades.

**Body**

The surge in fighting left Israel in an unprecedented position — fighting Palestinian militants on its southern flank as it sought to head off its worst civil unrest in decades.

Israel launched an intense air and ground assault on the [*Gaza*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-disinformation.html) Strip early Friday, pounding targets with warplanes, artillery and tank fire in the largest single operation of a four-day conflict with Palestinian militants that had been waged by [*airstrikes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-disinformation.html) from Israel and [*rockets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-disinformation.html) from Gaza.

An Israeli military spokesman, Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus, said that the 40-minute assault targeted an underground network of tunnels used by Hamas militants to evade airstrikes and surveillance. Colonel Conricus initially said that ground troops were “attacking in Gaza,” but he later clarified that Israeli troops had not entered the territory.

Residents of Gaza reported a terrifying barrage of explosions that shook buildings across the densely populated territory, where many fled their homes for United Nations-run schools on Friday morning.

The Israel military called it “the largest focused operation against a focused target that we have conducted so far.”

The surge in fighting highlighted the unprecedented position Israel finds itself in — battling Palestinian militants on its southern flank as it seeks to head off its worst civil unrest in decades.

It followed another day of clashes between Arab and Jewish mobs on the streets of Israeli cities, with the authorities calling up the army reserves and sending reinforcements of armed border police to the central city of Lod to try to head off what Israeli leaders have warned could become a civil war.

Taken together, the two theaters of turmoil pointed to a step change in the grinding, decades-old conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. While violent escalations often follow a predictable trajectory, this latest bout, the worst in seven years, is rapidly evolving into a new kind of war — faster, more destructive and capable of spinning in unpredictable new directions.

In Gaza, an impoverished coastal strip that was the crucible of a devastating seven-week war in 2014, Palestinian militants fired surprisingly large barrages of enhanced-range rockets — some 1,800 in three days — that reached far into Israel.

Israel intensified its campaign of relentless airstrikes against Hamas targets there on Thursday, pulverizing buildings, offices and homes in strikes that have killed 119 people including 31 children, according to the Gaza health authorities.

Seven civilians and a soldier have been killed by Hamas rockets inside Israel.

Egyptian mediators arrived in Israel Thursday in a sooner-than-usual push to halt the spiraling conflict.

Most alarming for Israel, though, was the violent ferment on its own sidewalks and streets, where days of rioting by Jewish vigilantes and Arab mobs showed no sign of abating.

The unrest in several mixed-ethnicity cities, where angry young men stoned cars, set fire to mosques and synagogues, and attacked each other, signaled a collapse of law and order inside Israel on a scale not seen since the start of the second Palestinian uprising, or intifada, 21 years ago.

The violence follows a month of boiling tensions in Jerusalem, where the threatened eviction of Palestinian families from their homes coincided with a spate of Arab attacks against Israeli Jews, and a march through the city by right-wing extremists chanting “Death to Arabs.”

The jarring violence this week caused Israeli leaders, led by President Reuven Rivlin, to evoke the specter of civil war — a once unthinkable idea. “We need to solve our problems without causing a civil war that can be a danger to our existence,” Mr. Rivlin said. “The silent majority is not saying a thing, because it is utterly stunned.”

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Lod, a ***working-class*** city with a mixed Arab-Israeli population that has emerged as the center of the upheaval. Hulks of burned-out cars littered the streets where, a few nights earlier, Arab youths burned synagogues and cars, threw stones and let off sporadic rounds of gunfire, before gangs of Jewish vigilantes counterattacked and set their own fires.

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On Thursday, a Jewish man was stabbed as he walked to a synagogue there, but survived.

“There is no greater threat now than these riots,” said Mr. Netanyahu, who vowed to deploy the Israel Defense Forces to keep the peace in Lod. A day earlier, he described the violence as “anarchy” and said: “Nothing justifies the lynching of Jews by Arabs, and nothing justifies the lynching of Arabs by Jews.”

To secure Lod, the government brought in thousands of armed border police from the occupied West Bank, and imposed an 8 p.m. curfew, but to little effect.

Arab residents, who account for about 30 percent of the town’s 80,000 people, continued a campaign of stone-throwing, vandalism and arson, while Jewish extremists arrived from outside Lod, burning Arab cars and property. Arab protesters erected flaming roadblocks.

As night fell there were signs that the violence might escalate when a large convoy of armed Jews in white vans moved into town.

Palestinian leaders, however, said the talk of civil war by Jewish leaders was a distraction from what they called the true cause of the unrest in Lod — police brutality against Palestinian protesters and provocative actions by right-wing Israeli settler groups.

“The police shot an Arab demonstrator in Lod,” said Ahmad Tibi, the leader of the Ta’al party and a member of Israel’s Parliament. “We don’t want bloodshed. We want to protest.”

Mr. Tibi said that Mr. Netanyahu, who has frequently aligned with far-right and nationalist parties to stay in power, had only himself to blame for the political tinderbox that has exploded with such ferocity across Israel.

On Thursday evening, the State Department urged American citizens to reconsider traveling to Israel and warned against going to the occupied West Bank or Gaza. [*In an advisory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/world/middleeast/israel-gaza-disinformation.html), the department noted rocket attacks that could reach Jerusalem, protests and violence throughout Israel and a “dangerous and volatile” security environment in the Gaza Strip and on its borders.

The trouble started on Monday, when a heavy-handed police raid at Jerusalem’s Al Aqsa Mosque — the third-holiest site in Islam, located atop a site also revered by Jews — set off an instant backlash.

But beyond the images of police officers flinging stun grenades and firing rubber bullets inside the mosque, Palestinian outrage was also fueled by much wider, decades-old frustrations.

Human Rights Watch recently accused Israel of perpetrating a form of apartheid, the racist legal system that once governed South Africa, citing a number of laws and regulations that it said systematically discriminate against Palestinians. Israel vehemently rejected that charge. But its security forces are now confronted with a swelling wave of fury from the country’s Arab Israeli minority, which complains of being treated as second-class citizens.

“‘Coexistence’ means that both sides exist,” said Tamer Nafar, a famous rapper from Lod. “But so far there is only one side — the Jewish side.”

The rocket attacks from Gaza are also quantitatively and qualitatively different from the last war in 2014. The more than 1,800 rockets Hamas and its allies have fired at Israel since Monday already represent a third of the total fired during the seven-week war in 2014.

Israeli intelligence has estimated that Hamas, Islamic Jihad and other Palestinian militant groups have about 30,000 rockets and mortar projectiles stashed in Gaza, indicating that despite the Israeli-Egyptian blockade of the coastal territory, the militants have managed to amass a vast arsenal.

The rockets have also demonstrated a longer range than those fired in previous conflicts, reaching as far as Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

They have also proven more effective. In the 2014 war, they killed a total of six civilians inside Israel, the same number killed in the last three days.

Those casualties appeared to be a product of Hamas’s new tactic of firing more than 100 missiles simultaneously, thwarting the American-financed Iron Dome missile-defense system, which Israeli officials say is 90 percent effective at intercepting rockets before they land inside Israel.

Gaza residents have no such protection against Israeli airstrikes, which crushed three multistory buildings in the strip after residents were warned to evacuate. Israeli officials said that the buildings housed Hamas operations and that they were striving to limit civilian casualties, but many Gaza residents viewed the Israeli attacks as a form of collective punishment.

Thursday was supposed to be a day of celebration for Palestinians as they marked the end of the holy month of Ramadan, a day when Muslims typically gather to pray, wear new clothes and share a family meal. In Jerusalem, tens of thousands of worshipers gathered at dawn outside the Aqsa Mosque, some waving Palestinian flags and a banner showing an image of Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of Hamas.

In Gaza, though, it was a somber day of funerals, fear and missile strikes. Some families buried their dead, others laid out prayer mats beside buildings recently destroyed in Israeli airstrikes, and still others came under attack from Israeli drones hovering overhead.

“Save me,” pleaded Maysoun al-Hatu, 58, after she was wounded in a missile strike outside her daughter’s house in Gaza, according to a witness. An ambulance arrived moments later, but it was too late. Ms. al-Hatu was dead.

American and Egyptian diplomats were heading to Israel to begin de-escalation talks. Egyptian mediators played a key role in ending the 2014 war in Gaza, but this time there is little optimism they can achieve a quick result.

Israeli military officials have said their mission is to stop the rockets from Gaza, and the military moved tanks and troops into place along the border with Gaza on Thursday in preparation for a possible ground invasion.

The decision to extend the campaign is ultimately political. Analysts said that a ground operation would likely incur high casualties, and it was unclear if the troop deployment was anything more than a threat.

But the political calculation grew more complicated on Thursday after the collapse of negotiations between opposition parties seeking to form a new government.

Naftali Bennett, an ultranationalist former settler leader who opposes Palestinian statehood, pulled out of the talks, citing the state of emergency in several Israeli cities.

His withdrawal increases the likelihood of Israel holding a general election later this summer — in what would be its fifth in just over two years. And the collapse of the talks appears to benefit Mr. Netanyahu, making it impossible for opposition parties to form an alliance large enough to oust him from office.

Mr. Netanyahu, who is on trial on corruption charges, is serving as caretaker prime minister until a new government can be formed.

On the Palestinian side, the indefinite postponement last month of elections by the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, created a vacuum that Hamas is more than willing to fill.

Isabel Kershner contributed reporting from Lod, Israel; Iyad Abuheweila from Gaza City; Patrick Kingsley, Irit Pazner Garshowitz and Myra Noveck from Jerusalem; Gabby Sobelman from Rehovot, Israel; Mona el-Naggar and Vivian Yee from Cairo; Megan Specia from London; Steven Erlanger from Brussels; and Lara Jakes from Washington.

PHOTOS: FROM ISRAEL: Israeli troops firing an artillery piece on Thursday at the Gaza border. Egyptian mediators arrived in Israel on Thursday in a sooner-than-usual push to halt the spiraling conflict. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAN BALILTY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12); FROM GAZA: Rockets fired from Gaza flew toward Israel, as seen from Gaza City, late on Thursday night. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MOHAMMED SABER/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK) (A13)

**Load-Date:** May 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Developer Eyes Wetlands That Helped Stop Flooding During Sandy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616Y-WCD1-JBG3-63WC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 4, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 29

**Length:** 1472 words

**Byline:** By Anne Barnard

**Body**

A group of Staten Island residents concerned about climate change is challenging the project.

It is an unlikely centerpiece for a save-the-wetlands campaign: a patch of woods and swamps surrounded by strip malls and service roads on the densely populated, industrial northern shore of Staten Island.

To nearby residents fighting to preserve it, the parcel is a bulwark against disaster. The 28 acres are part of a network of wetlands that in 2012 helped protect the area from the deadliest floods of Hurricane Sandy, which devastated New York City and killed 43 residents, more than half of them in Staten Island.

But the land's developer has a different vision: a giant BJ's Wholesale Club. His company has said the project will create at least 200 local jobs, protect 11 acres of the wetlands and include rain gardens and holding tanks to curb flooding.

State and city authorities agree, having approved plans for the membership-only warehouse club chain and an 800-car parking lot on the site, part of the Graniteville Swamp. The decision has set off new wrangling over how best to handle development on Staten Island's diverse, ***working-class*** northern tip.

The fight has also taken on wider resonance as record-setting hurricane and wildfire seasons raise doubts that decades-old environmental, zoning and building rules can produce safe, farsighted decisions.

''Where does it stop? It's like Manifest Destiny for developers,'' said Gabriella Velardi-Ward, who lives in the Mariners Harbor neighborhood surrounding the site and leads a group of residents challenging the project in court. ''In torrential rains, the water moves through our condo community to the wetlands.''

The case also points to potential challenges for Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio, who have positioned themselves as national climate leaders and pushed back against the Trump administration's gutting of environmental rules. They have staked out ambitious climate goals -- a state law requires net carbon neutrality by 2050 -- but do not always have the tools to make local decisions line up with big-picture intentions.

The project's supporters -- including the Staten Island borough president, James S. Oddo, and the area's City Council representative, Debi Rose -- said in recent interviews that they shared concerns about building on natural areas. But they contend that the developer had a legal right to build -- a view that opponents dispute -- so their only way to protect the wetlands was to support his plan in exchange for measures to reduce ecological damage.

''In a perfect world, I would love for that place to remain as it is,'' said Ms. Rose, a Democrat who, like Mr. Oddo, backed a special permit required to build a store as large as a BJ's, despite objections from the local community board. ''But it was going to be developed. I did the best I could to negotiate more responsible development.''

Mr. Oddo, a Republican, said: ''I did emotionally understand the community's arguments -- I lived through Sandy. But legally, where would I stand if I wanted to oppose it?''

The city's Department of Planning and the state's Department of Environmental Conservation both agreed that the proposal was better for the environment, and the community, than if the developer, Charles Alpert, had built unchecked.

Wetlands regulation, which got underway in the 1970s, has not prevented heavy development in this section of Staten Island. The BJ's would be the latest of the warehouses, housing developments and big-box stores that have proliferated around the Graniteville Swamp, a mix of freshwater and tidal wetlands that flow into Old Place Creek and out to the Arthur Kill.

On the site, on South Avenue next to a multiplex cinema, tall trees shade fallen logs and rotting leaves. Ferns sprout amid bits of trash and broken machinery. Dark watermarks on tree trunks show where knee-deep vernal pools -- seasonal freshwater wetlands -- fill up in springtime, nurturing salamanders and frogs. One end slopes to a tidal marsh fringed with rushes.

The Alpert family bought the land in two pieces, in 1977 and 1984, just before the state started mapping wetlands and adjacent areas where development would be restricted. It fought for years to keep their land off those maps.

In 2012 came an agreement: The owners agreed to not build residential blocks and to seek a wetlands permit, and the conservation department designated less of the property as protected areas than its experts had initially recommended.

Two months later, Sandy hit.

In 2017, the local community board rejected the BJ's plan, citing concerns about flooding and traffic. It was overruled by Mr. Oddo, planning officials and the City Council. A Hail-Mary search for endangered mud turtles, which would have held up the development, came up empty. Over a thousand people sent comments to the conservation department, nearly all opposing the project.

The department, in approving the ruling, noted that climate concerns fell outside the scope of its powers.

Ms. Velardi-Ward's group, the Staten Island Coalition for Wetlands and Forests, is now suing to force the conservation department to redo its assessment. It is arguing that the right to build on the land was never guaranteed, and that regulators should have compared the project's impact with unbuilt land -- not a hypothetical, less environmentally sensitive development.

The conservation department declined to comment, citing the lawsuit. Mitchell Korbey, a lawyer for the holding company incorporated by Mr. Alpert, which owns the land, said the project would proceed and bring well-paid jobs and convenient shopping.

The case has wider significance for some elected officials and groups like the Waterfront Alliance and the Natural Areas Conservancy, which are pushing for more coordinated planning across the New York region in the face of climate change. As in many parts of the country, land-use decisions in the area fall to municipalities; they are typically hashed out according to local political-power dynamics and a mix of arcane -- and often outdated -- zoning and permitting rules.

''We're acting at cross purposes: preparing for sea-level rise and trying to slow climate change with one set of policies, and taking actions elsewhere that undercut those efforts,'' said Elena Conte, deputy director of the Pratt Center for Community Development in Brooklyn.

Some climate and planning experts say the case shows why rules should be updated to reduce the 80,000 acres of U.S. wetlands lost to development annually: Outdated regulatory maps miss wetlands that have migrated, and decades-old rules underestimate wetlands' value in buffering hurricanes, absorbing storm water runoff and capturing carbon from the air.

New York State law does not protect freshwater wetlands that are smaller than 11 acres, like most of those in cities.

New York's sweeping climate law requires that in every decision they make, state agencies must consider the impact on the climate. But the rules for weighing that impact have not yet been written, and the Staten Island case predates the law, passed last year.

The law also includes provisions to redress historically disproportionate environmental harm to low-income and Black and Latino neighborhoods, designated as ''environmental justice communities.'' Northern Staten Island has several such neighborhoods, with some of New York City's highest asthma rates, according to state and federal data.

''Nothing has been updated to address the climate-change issues our environmental justice communities face,'' said Beryl Thurman, who had been a longtime resident of a neighborhood near Mariners Harbor, Port Richmond, where a viral video in 2019 captured a flash flood swamping a city bus.

''You can white-water raft in every downpour,'' said Ms. Thurman, who heads a local environmental group. ''To turn around and say this wetland or any other wetland is not significant for water retention, it just lacks all practicality, all sense of reason.''

Ms. Rose, the City Council member, said smarter planning rules were needed. Still, Mr. Oddo, the borough president, said, ''I prefer to take my chances case by case than give more power to unelected regulators who don't have Staten Islanders' interests at heart.''

Gabrielle Dylag, a law student on the residents' legal team, the Pace Environmental Litigation Clinic, blamed outdated regulations and developers' budgets and clout: ''This would never happen in a neighborhood of wealthy or powerful people with resources to fight, not just legally but politically.''

Ms. Velardi-Ward, 73, exhaled as she stepped onto the shady site on a recent day. A woodpecker hammered nearby.

''New York City has come to the end of the land,'' she said. ''That's why they're coming for the wetlands.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/28/nyregion/wetlands-staten-island-bjs.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/28/nyregion/wetlands-staten-island-bjs.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A BJ's Wholesale Club and 800-car parking lot is planned on 28 acres of wetlands on Staten Island's northern shore. The plan would protect 11 acres of the property.

Gabriella Velardi-Ward, who lives in Mariners Harbor, S.I., leads a local group opposed to the project. ''It's like Manifest Destiny for developers'' when it comes to the wetlands, she said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Fleeing Lockdown, Americans Are Flocking to Mexico City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61NJ-HYT1-JBG3-631T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1554 words

**Byline:** Oscar Lopez

**Highlight:** Hospitals are at capacity and coronavirus cases are surging, but many foreigners, especially Americans, are heading to the Mexican capital — some intending to stay awhile.

**Body**

Hospitals are at capacity and coronavirus cases are surging, but many foreigners, especially Americans, are heading to the Mexican capital — some intending to stay awhile.

MEXICO CITY — At first, life in lockdown was OK, between working from home, exercising with his roommate, and devouring everything on Netflix.

But as the coronavirus pandemic wore endlessly on, Rob George began to find the confinement in his West Hollywood home unbearable.

“There were weeks where I just wouldn’t leave my house, just working all day — my mental health was definitely suffering,” said Mr. George, 31, who manages business operations for a technology start-up.

So when a Mexican friend said he was traveling to [*Mexico City*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/05/04/world/mexico-train-metro-crash) in November, Mr. George decided to tag along. Now, he’s calling the Mexican capital home — part of an increasing number of foreigners, mainly [*Americans, who are heading to Mexico*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/16/travel/mexico-covid.html), for a short trip or a longer stay to escape restrictions at home.

They are drawn partly by the prospect of bringing a little normalcy to their lives in a place where [*coronavirus restrictions*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/coronavirus-travel-restrictions.html) have been more relaxed than at home, even as [*cases of Covid-19 shatter records*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/world/americas/mexico-coronavirus-cases.html). Some of them are staying, at least for a while, and taking advantage of the six-month tourist visa Americans are granted on arrival.

“I have no interest in going back,” Mr. George said.

But while coming to this country may be a relief for many foreigners, particularly those fleeing colder weather, some Mexicans find the move irresponsible amid a pandemic, especially as the virus overwhelms Mexico City and its hospitals. Others say the problem lies with Mexican authorities, who waited too long to enact strict lockdown measures, making places like Mexico City enticing to outsiders.

“If it was less attractive, fewer people would come,” said Xavier Tello, a Mexico City health policy analyst. “But what we’re creating is a vicious cycle, where we’re receiving more people, who are potentially infectious or infected from elsewhere, and they keep mixing with people that are potentially infectious or infected here in Mexico City.”

In November, more than half a million Americans came to Mexico — of those, almost 50,000 arrived at Mexico City’s airport, according to official figures, less than half the number of U.S. visitors who arrived in November last year, but a surge from the paltry 4,000 that came in April, when much of Mexico was shut down. Since then, numbers have ticked up steadily: between June and August, U.S. visitors more than doubled.

Most other U.S. visitors to Mexico flew to beach resorts like Los Cabos and Cancun.

It’s unclear how many are tourists and how many are relocating, at least temporarily. Some may be Mexicans who also have American passports, and are visiting family. But walking the streets of Mexico City’s trendier neighborhoods these days, it can sometimes seem like English has become the official language.

“A lot of people are either coming down here and visiting to test it out, or have just full-on relocated,” said Cara Araneta, a former New Yorker who has lived on and off in Mexico City for two years, and came back to the capital in June.

The surge, however, comes as Mexico City enters a critical phase of the pandemic; hospitals are so stretched that many sick people are staying home as their relatives struggle to buy them oxygen. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised Americans to [*avoid all travel*](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/covid-4/coronavirus-mexico) to Mexico.

The capital’s health care system “is basically overwhelmed,” said Mr. Tello, via WhatsApp message. “The worst is yet to come.”

In mid-December, authorities escalated Mexico City’s alert system to the highest level — red — which requires an immediate shutdown of all but essential businesses. But the lockdown [*came weeks after numbers became critical,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/21/world/americas/mexico-city-covid.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) even by the government’s own figures, leaving stores thronged with Christmas shoppers and restaurants filled with diners.

With its leafy streets and quaint cafes, the upscale Mexico City neighborhoods of Roma and Condesa have attracted expatriates escaping sky-high rents in New York or Los Angeles for years. But with an increasing number of young people now working from home, the so-called [*axis of cool*](https://www.gq.com/story/neighborhood-guide-condesa-mexico-city) has become even more attractive, even as Mexico City residents confront a public health crisis.

As in much of the world, the most affluent are often the least affected. In Roma Norte, the contrast has been vivid: On one corner recently, ***working-class*** Mexicans lined up to buy oxygen tanks for their relatives, while just blocks away well-off young people queued up for croissants.

Mexico City is hardly the only Mexican destination seeing a surge of foreign visitors, particularly Americans, who — with the pandemic raging in the United States — are [*barred from traveling to many countries*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/coronavirus-travel-restrictions.html). While some Latin American nations have at times shut their borders completely, Mexico has imposed few restrictions: Mexico was [*the third most visited country in 2020*](https://www.gob.mx/sectur/prensa/ascenderia-mexico-de-manera-coyuntural-al-tercer-lugar-mundial-en-recepcion-de-turistas), up from seventh last year, according to the Mexican government, citing preliminary statistics from the World Tourism Organization.

Much of this travel has been concentrated in the country’s popular beach resorts where coronavirus restrictions can be even more relaxed. [*Los Cabos*](https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2020-12-13/unwelcome-in-other-countries-and-amid-lockdowns-at-home-americans-are-flocking-to-mexico) had nearly 100,000 Americans arrive in November, while Cancun had 236,000 U.S. visitors, only 18 percent fewer than in 2019. The nearby resort town of Tulum [*made headlines*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the_americas/coronavirus-mexico-tulum-parties/2020/12/21/507bc932-3fca-11eb-9453-fc36ba051781_story.html) for hosting an art and music festival in November that saw hundreds of revelers dancing maskless inside underground caves.

Authorities in Mexico City have urged residents to avoid parties and gatherings, and even before the most recent lockdown, the government had limited restaurant capacity and banned restaurant alcohol sales after 7 p.m. Still, the measures were a far cry from those in American cities like Los Angeles, which, in late November, [*banned outdoor dining*](https://la.eater.com/2020/11/22/21590433/coronavirus-los-angeles-covid-19-closure-restaurants-outdoor-dining-public-health-order) entirely and prohibited all public gatherings.

“Even with the restrictions here, being able to just be outside, and work from a socially distanced cafe and feel like I’m not on pause has been super helpful,” said Mr. George, the former Angeleno.

Like most foreigners coming to Mexico, Mr. George said he was aware of the risks of traveling during the pandemic, and takes precautions like wearing a mask. But being able to have some freedom, coupled with the excitement of living in a new country, makes the risk to their health worthwhile for many.

“I know people who have lived in fear for the last year, who haven’t left their house, who lost their jobs,” said Alexander Vignogna, 33, who visited Mexico City in October and is planning on moving here full time, with his partner, in January. “But instead of doing something adventurous and cool like me and my girlfriend, they just stayed at home, depressed.”

Such laissez-faire attitudes from outsiders have angered many residents, Mexican and foreign alike.

“Tourists (primarily from the US, it seems) have flooded into Mexico to escape the restrictions imposed by their home states,” said Lauren Cocking, 26, a British [*blogger*](https://northernlauren.com/) who has lived in Mexico for about five years, in an email.

They “seem to treat Mexico like some kind of lawless adventure land, where they can escape the need to wear masks or stay indoors.”

Others say the rush of foreigners offers the struggling Mexico City economy a welcome boost.

“What Mexico needs most is people so that the economy improves,” said William Velázquez Yañez, 25, who was working as a valet parking attendant at an upscale eatery in Roma Norte before the latest lockdown was put in place.

He lost his job at the start of the pandemic, and even though he was eventually called back, his pay was cut and his health insurance taken away. With more people dining out, his boss might start paying him more, Mr. Velázquez said.

But enjoying packed dining rooms or other activities once considered normal carries their own risks.

Nicole Jodoin moved to Mexico City from Canada after securing a job here in July. Part of her impetus was that with Canadian borders closed, she had found herself cut off from her Scottish boyfriend. Mexico’s open borders and lengthy tourist visas for Europeans offered them a chance to be together.

Then both she and her partner got sick with Covid-19. They had been taking precautions, Ms. Jodoin said, but had dined out several times and taken Ubers before getting sick. The couple self-isolated and have since recovered, but Ms. Jodoin’s symptoms have persisted.

Still, most foreigners say life is better in Mexico City than back home. Ms. Araneta, the former New Yorker, went to visit her family in San Diego in November, but found being in the United States a challenge.

“It felt more isolated,” she said. “A lot of people are much more on their own.”

PHOTOS: A park in Mexico City’s Condesa neighborhood, which has long attracted expatriates escaping high rents in New York or Los Angeles — and is drawing even more foreigners during the pandemic. (PHOTOGRAPH BY REBECCA BLACKWELL/ASSOCIATED PRESS); Pedestrians in the historic center of Mexico City, where an influx of Americans can make it seem as though English has become the official language. Left, a patient in Mexico City believed to have contracted the coronavirus. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLAUDIO CRUZ/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES; PEDRO PARDO/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** October 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Pushing Change, Student Union Touches a Nerve in France***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62CC-FDS1-JBG3-6064-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 5, 2021 Monday

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**Byline:** By Norimitsu Onishi and Constant Méheut

**Body**

To its critics, the 114-year-old Unef is the incarnation of the American-inspired ideas that threaten France's founding principles. Its leaders say it is the future.

PARIS -- A powerful government minister recently condemned it as an organization whose activities are racist and could lead to ''fascism.'' Lawmakers accused it of promoting ''separatism'' and of aligning with ''Islamo-leftism'' before demanding its dissolution.

France's 114-year-old university student union, Unef, has a long history of drawing the ire of the political establishment -- most notably over the years when it lobbied for the independence of the country's most important colony, Algeria, or took to the streets against employment contracts for youths.

But the recent harsh attacks zeroed in on something that resonates just as deeply in a France struggling to adapt to social change: its practice of limiting some meetings to racial minorities to discuss discrimination.

In recent days, the controversy over Unef -- its French acronym standing for the National Union of Students of France -- spilled into a third week, melding with larger explosive debates roiling the country.

On Thursday, the Senate endorsed banning the group and others that organize restricted meetings, attaching a ''Unef amendment'' to President Emmanuel Macron's law against Islamism, a political ideology the government blames for inspiring recent terrorist attacks. The National Assembly, controlled by Mr. Macron's party, still needs to ratify the bill, expected to be one of the defining pieces of legislation of his presidency.

At the same time, the campaign before coming regional elections was turned upside down when Audrey Pulvar, a Black deputy mayor of Paris and a high-profile candidate, drew widespread condemnation after defending the restricted meetings.

The student union's leaders defend the use of ''safe space'' forums, saying they have led to powerful and frank conversation; critics say the exclusion amounts to racism against white people and is an American-inspired betrayal of France's universalist tradition.

To its critics, Unef is the incarnation of the threat coming from U.S. universities -- importing ideas that are fundamentally challenging relations between women and men, questioning the role of race and racism in France, and upsetting society's hierarchies of power.

There is no doubt that in recent years the union has undergone the kind of profound and rapid transformation seldom seen in a country where institutions tend to be deeply conservative and some, like the French Academy or literary prize juries, are structured in ways that stifle change.

The union's transformation has reflected widespread changes among French youths who have much more relaxed attitudes toward gender, race, sexual orientation and, as recent polls have shown, religion and France's strict secularism, known as laïcité.

Unef's change -- some hope and others fear -- may portend larger social change.

''We scare people because we represent the future,'' said Mélanie Luce, 24, Unef's president and the daughter of a Black woman from Guadeloupe and a Jewish man from southern France.

In an organization dominated by white men until just a few years ago, Unef's current leadership shows a diversity rarely seen in France. Ms. Luce is only its fifth female president and the first who is not white. Its four other top leaders include two white men, a woman whose parents converted to Islam, and a Muslim man whose parents immigrated from Tunisia.

''Unef is a microcosm that reveals the debates in the society,'' said Lilâ Le Bas, a former president. That debate in France is just starting to address issues like discrimination in earnest, she said, ''and that's why it crystallizes so many tensions and pressures.''

Like other student unions, Unef operates on government subsidies, about $540,000 a year in its case. Among its tasks, it addresses student living conditions, recently organizing, for example, food banks for students hit hard by the coronavirus epidemic.

But its increasingly outspoken social positions have drawn criticism from the political establishment, the conservative news media and even some past members.

In interviews with more than a dozen current and former Unef leaders, including all seven presidents in the past 20 years, not even they were uniformly comfortable with Unef's recent stances, which have placed combating discrimination at the heart of its mission.

Its new focus, critics say, has led to a decline in the union's influence and membership -- it was once the largest but is now the second-largest in France. Supporters say that, unlike many other struggling left-leaning organizations in France, the union has a clear new vision.

In 2019, in a protest against blackface, Unef leaders helped stop the staging of a play by Aeschylus at the Sorbonne to denounce the wearing of masks and dark makeup by white actors, leading to accusations of infringing on freedom of expression.

More recently, local officials in Grenoble posted on social media anonymous campus posters that included the names of two professors accused of Islamophobia; Ms. Luce later called it a mistake, but many politicians brandished it as evidence of Unef's ''Islamo-leftism'' or sympathies with Islamism.

The attacks rose to a new level last month after Ms. Luce was challenged in a radio interview about Unef's practice of holding meetings limited to racial minorities.

A decade ago, Unef's leaders started women-only meetings where members for the first time talked about sexism and sexual harassment in the organization. The discussions have since extended to racism and other forms of discrimination internally.

Ms. Luce explained to her radio host that no decisions were made at the restricted meetings, which were used instead to allow women and racial minorities to share common experiences of discrimination. But the interview led to a flood of sexist and racist death threats.

In a subsequent radio interview of his own, the national education minister, Jean-Michel Blanquer, agreed with the host's characterization of the restricted meetings as racist.

''People who claim to be progressive and who, in claiming to be progressive, distinguish people by the color of their skin are leading us to things that resemble fascism,'' Mr. Blanquer said.

Mr. Blanquer has led the government's broader pushback against what he and conservative intellectuals describe as the threat from progressive American ideas on race, gender and postcolonialism.

France's culture wars have heated up as Mr. Macron shifts to the right to fend off a looming challenge from the far right before elections next year. His government recently announced that it would investigate universities for ''Islamo-leftist'' tendencies that ''corrupt society.''

Now even relatively obscure social theory terms like ''intersectionality'' -- an analysis of multiple and reinforcing forms of discriminations -- are drawing fierce attacks by politicians.

''There is a battle to wage against an intellectual matrix that comes from American universities and from intersectional theories set on essentializing communities and identities,'' Mr. Blanquer said in an interview with a French newspaper.

Mr. Blanquer declined interview requests, as did Frédérique Vidal, the minister of higher education.

Aurore Bergé, a lawmaker from Mr. Macron's party, said that Unef's actions lead to identity politics that, instead of uniting people in a common cause, excludes all but ''those who suffer from discrimination.''

''We're driving out the others as if they don't have the right of expression,'' said Ms. Bergé, who recently unsuccessfully submitted an amendment that would have barred Muslim minors from wearing the veil in public.

Unef's current top leaders say that in focusing on discrimination, they are fighting for France's ideals of liberty, equality and human rights.

They view the recent attacks as rear-guard moves by an establishment that refuses to squarely face deep-rooted discrimination in France, cannot come to terms with the growing diversity of its society, and brandishes universalism to silence new ideas and voices, out of fear.

''It's a problem that, in our society, in the country of the Enlightenment, we restrict ourselves from speaking about certain subjects,'' said Majdi Chaarana, Unef's treasurer and the son of Tunisian immigrants.

As the student union has spoken out more boldly, Unef's influence, like that of other left-leaning organizations -- including the Socialist Party, with which it was long allied, and labor unions -- has diminished, said Julie Le Mazier, an expert on student unions at the European Center of Sociology and Political Science.

''It's a major crisis, but it's not at all specific to Unef,'' she said.

Bruno Julliard headed the union when it forced a sitting president, Jacques Chirac, to drop a contested youth employment contract in 2006. Back then, the union was more concerned with issues like tuition and access to jobs, said Mr. Julliard, the first openly gay president of the union.

Mr. Julliard said that the union's restricted meetings and its opposition to the Aeschylus play left him uncomfortable, but that young people were now ''much more sensitive, in the good sense of the word,'' to all forms of discrimination.

''We have to let each generation lead its battles and respect the way it does it, though it doesn't prevent me from having an opinion,'' he said.

William Martinet, a former president, said that the focus on gender eventually led to an examination of racism. While Unef's top leaders tended to be economically comfortable white men from France's ''grandes écoles,'' or prestigious universities, many of its grass-roots activists were of ***working-class***, immigrant and nonwhite backgrounds.

''Once you put on glasses that allow you to see discrimination, in fact, there's a multitude that appears before you,'' Mr. Martinet said.

Once started, change happened fast. More women became leaders. Abdoulaye Diarra said that he became Unef's first Black vice president in 2017. That same year, the union recruited a hijab-wearing woman whose parents had converted to Islam, Maryam Pougetoux, now one of the union's two vice presidents.

''I don't think that if I'd arrived 10 years earlier, I would have been felt as welcome as in 2017,'' Ms. Pougetoux said.

But the reception was far different on the outside.

Last fall, when a hijab-wearing Ms. Pougetoux appeared in the National Assembly to testify on the Covid epidemic's impact on students, four lawmakers, including one from Mr. Macron's party, walked out in protest.

The wearing of the Muslim veil has fueled divisions in France for more than a generation. But for Unef, the issue was now settled.

Its leaders had long considered the veil a symbol of female oppression. Now they saw it simply as a choice left to women.

''To really defend the condition of women,'' said Adrien Liénard, the other vice president, ''is, in fact, giving them the right to do what they want.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/04/world/europe/france-student-union-unef-racism.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/04/world/europe/france-student-union-unef-racism.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Leaders in the National Union of Students of France, Maryam Pougetoux, left

Quentin Bourgeon, center

and Adrien Liénard, at a demonstration in Paris.

The union, known by the French acronym Unef, and another group, Collectif Aclefeu, organized a food distribution for students at Univer- sity Sorbonne Paris Nord last month. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***An Outspoken Student Union Positions Itself at the Vanguard of a Changing France***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62C5-P681-JBG3-64CW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Norimitsu Onishi and Constant Méheut

**Highlight:** To its critics, the 114-year-old Unef is the incarnation of the American-inspired ideas that threaten France’s founding principles. Its leaders say it is the future.

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“People who claim to be progressive and who, in claiming to be progressive, distinguish people by the color of their skin are leading us to things that resemble fascism,” Mr. Blanquer said.

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PHOTOS: Leaders in the National Union of Students of France, Maryam Pougetoux, left; Quentin Bourgeon, center; and Adrien Liénard, at a demonstration in Paris.; The union, known by the French acronym Unef, and another group, Collectif Aclefeu, organized a food distribution for students at Univer- sity Sorbonne Paris Nord last month. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Vaccine Alarmism***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:621S-VNG1-JBG3-60GV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1679 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** And what else you need to know today.

**Body**

And what else you need to know today.

Want to get The Morning by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Good morning. We look at the costs of vaccine alarmism.

If you’re a regular reader of this newsletter, you’re probably familiar with [*the idea of vaccine alarmism*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). It goes something like this:

The coronavirus vaccines aren’t 100 percent effective. Vaccinated people may still be contagious. And the virus variants may make everything worse. So don’t change your behavior even if you get a shot.

Much of this message has some basis in truth, but it is fundamentally misleading. [*The evidence so far*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) suggests that a full dose of the vaccine — with the appropriate waiting period after the second shot — [*effectively eliminates the risk of Covid-19 death*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), nearly eliminates the risk of hospitalization and drastically reduces a person’s ability to infect somebody else. All of that is also true about the virus’s new variants.

Yet the alarmism continues. And now we are seeing its real-world costs: Many people don’t want to get the vaccine partly because it sounds so ineffectual.

About one-third of members of the U.S. military [*have declined vaccine shots*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). When shots first became available to Ohio nursing-home workers, about 60 percent [*said no*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Some N.B.A. stars [*are wary*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of appearing in public-services ads encouraging vaccination.

Nationwide, nearly half of Americans would refuse a shot if offered one immediately, [*polls suggest*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Vaccination skepticism is [*even higher*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) among Black and Hispanic people, white people without a college degree, registered Republicans and lower-income households.

Kate Grabowski, an epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins, told me that she has heard from relatives about their friends and co-workers choosing not to get a shot because they keep hearing they can still get Covid and pass it on to others — and will still need to wear masks and social distance. “What’s the point?” she said, describing their attitude.

The message from experts, Grabowski said, is “being misinterpreted. That’s on us. We’re clearly doing something wrong.”

“Our discussion about vaccines has been poor, really poor,” [*Dr. Muge Cevik*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), a virologist, told me. “As scientists we need to be more careful what we say and how that could be understood by the public.”

The cost of confusion

Many academic experts — and, yes, journalists too — are instinctively skeptical and cautious. This instinct has caused the public messaging about vaccines [*to emphasize*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) uncertainty and potential future bad news.

To take one example: The initial research trials of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines did not study whether a vaccinated person could get infected and infect another person. But the accumulated scientific evidence suggests the chances are very small that a vaccinated person could infect someone else with a severe case of Covid. (A mild case is effectively the common cold.) You wouldn’t know that from much of the public discussion.

“Over and over again, I see statements that in theory one could be infected and spread the virus even after being fully vaccinated,” Dr. Rebecca Wurtz of the University of Minnesota told me. “Is the ambiguous messaging contributing to ambivalent feelings about vaccination? Yes, no question.”

The messaging, as Dr. Abraar Karan of Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston said, has a “somewhat paternalistic” quality. It’s as if many experts do not trust people to understand both that the vaccines make an enormous difference and that there are unanswered questions.

As a result, the public messages err on the side of alarmism: The vaccine is not a get-out-of-Covid-free card!

In their own lives, medical experts — and, again, journalists — tend to be cleareyed about the vaccines. Many are getting shots as soon as they’re offered one. They are urging their family and friends to do the same. But when they speak to a national audience, they deliver a message that comes off very differently. It is dominated by talk of risks, uncertainties, caveats and possible problems. It feeds pre-existing anti-vaccine misinformation and anxiety.

No wonder that the experts’ own communities (which are disproportionately white, upper-income and liberal) are [*less skeptical*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of the vaccines than Black, Latino, ***working class*** and conservative communities.

Over the next several weeks, [*the supply of available vaccines will surge*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). If large numbers of Americans say no to a shot, however, many will suffer needlessly. “It makes me sad,” Grabowski told me. “We’ve created this amazing technology, and we can save so many lives.”

What should the public messaging about the vaccines be? “They’re safe. They’re highly effective against serious disease. And the emerging evidence about infectiousness looks really good,” Grabowski said. “If you have access to a vaccine and you’re eligible, you should get it.”

Virus developments:

* The number of confirmed Covid deaths in the U.S. is on pace [*to exceed 500,000*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in the next few days.

1. Officials in some states have expanded the supply of available vaccine doses by [*redistributing unused shots*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) from nursing homes and hospitals.
2. The U.S. will help finance a global push to [*distribute vaccines*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to low- and middle-income countries.

THE LATEST NEWS

Winter Storm

* Most people in the state have power again, but millions of Texans [*are without drinkable water*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) as pipes cracked, wells froze and the storm knocked water treatment plants offline.

1. The power failure and lack of water have caused havoc [*in some Texas hospitals*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing): frigid temperatures, a dearth of generators and a spike in emergency room visits.
2. Here’s [*how you can help*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) affected communities.
3. Senator Ted Cruz and his wife [*hastily planned a family trip*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to a luxury resort in Cancún, Mexico, while the storm battered Texas. After intense criticism, Cruz flew back home.

Other Big Stories

* Perseverance, NASA’s advanced new rover, touched down on Mars. Here’s [*what you need to know*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) about its mission and [*the experimental “Marscopter” on board*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

1. The Biden administration offered to [*restart nuclear talks with Iran*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), a potential step toward restoring the 2015 accord that Donald Trump abandoned. It’s unclear if Tehran will accept.
2. A British court ruled that [*Uber drivers are entitled*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to minimum wage and vacation days.
3. Facebook [*has blocked all news*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in Australia. The country is preparing to make tech companies pay for the news on their platforms.
4. An experimental program enrolled students from high-poverty high schools in a Harvard poetry course, [*and the students excelled*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). The results suggest that elite colleges could do substantially more to increase diversity.
5. Alex Trebek’s family [*donated his “Jeopardy!” wardrobe*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to a nonprofit group that provides clothes to formerly homeless and incarcerated men.

Morning Reads

A Morning Read: With their daughters off to college, an Iranian-American couple decided to return to the homeland they had left as children. The decision [*upended their lives*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Modern Love: For this man, [*a thin line between enabling and love*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

From Opinion: What’s the [*cost of racism*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), for everyone?

Lives Lived: Prince Markie Dee, who as a member of the trio Fat Boys released some of hip-hop’s most commercially successful albums of the 1980s and helped speed the genre’s absorption into pop culture, [*died at 52*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Nicknamed the “Master Caster,” Lynn Stalmaster was an Oscar-winning casting director who helped make the careers of many famous actors. [*He died at 93*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Take a trip to Carnival

Booming music, glittering costumes, a feeling of freedom: From Brooklyn to London and other places, Carnival has become a full-tilt joyfest of renewal, resistance and remembering for Caribbean immigrants.

As the singer Justine Skye, who usually participates in the West Indian American Day Parade in Brooklyn, put it: “Honestly, that’s the one time of the year I feel like anybody, doesn’t matter what shape, size, color you are, you just come together and you just let it all loose, and you just feel so confident within yourself.”

Because the festivities [*are canceled this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), The Times [*put together a project commemorating the event*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and detailing its history. We recommend going through [*these dazzling photos*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of the blinged-out swimsuits and colorful plumage from Caribbean Carnivals around the world.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

[*This baked spinach-artichoke pasta*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)takes 10 minutes of active cooking before you put it in the oven. Here’s what members of The Times’s Food team [*make when they’re too tired to cook*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

What to Watch

The Netflix film “I Care a Lot” weaves between horror and comedy, and Rosamund Pike plays a villainous legal guardian who preys on retirees. [*Read The Times’s review*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Late Night

The hosts had a lot to say [*about Cruz’s trip to Mexico*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Take the News Quiz

How many vaccine shots has the European Union administered per 100 residents? [*Take this week’s News Quiz*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and compete with other Times readers.

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was adapting. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and a clue: Misleading ploy (four letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you Monday. — David

P.S. [*On NPR’s “Fresh Air,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) The Times’s Claire Cain Miller discussed the strain the pandemic has placed on mothers.

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” asks when kids will receive coronavirus vaccines. On “[*The Ezra Klein Show*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing),” the novelist George Saunders discusses meditation.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: Community Health Center, Inc., is inoculating Connecticut residents with the COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine at Rentschler Field, as they idle in their cars on the old runway at the Pratt and Whitney campus. The state&#39;s largest COVID-19 vaccination site is now inoculating frontline health care workers, first responders and residents 75 and older. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Christopher Capozziello for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 19, 2021

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[***Cracked Pipes, Frozen Wells, Offline Treatment Plants: A Texan Water Crisis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:621R-3851-JBG3-607C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US

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**Byline:** Jack Healy, Richard Fausset and James Dobbins

**Highlight:** Electricity was restored to most Texans who had lost power after a winter storm, but water systems for nearly two-thirds of residents were disrupted, leaving millions without drinkable water.

**Body**

Electricity was restored to most Texans who had lost power after a winter storm, but water systems for nearly two-thirds of residents were disrupted, leaving millions without drinkable water.

DALLAS — Power began to flicker back on across much of [*Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/20/us/texas-winter-storm-explainer.html) on Thursday, but millions across the state confronted another dire crisis: a shortage of drinkable water as pipes cracked, wells froze and water treatment plants were knocked offline.

The problems were [*especially acute at hospitals*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/20/us/texas-winter-storm-explainer.html). One, in Austin, was forced to move some of its most critically ill patients to another building when its faucets ran nearly dry. Another in Houston had to haul in water on trucks to flush toilets.

But for many of the state’s residents stuck at home, the [*emergency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/20/us/texas-winter-storm-explainer.html) meant boiling the tap water that trickled through their faucets, scouring stores for bottled water or boiling icicles and dirty snow on their stoves.

For others, it meant no water at all. Denise Gonzalez, 40, had joined a crowd at a makeshift relief center in a ***working-class*** corner of West Dallas on Thursday where volunteers handed out food from the luggage compartment of a charter bus.

Back at her apartment, she said, the lights were finally back on. But her pipes were frozen solid. She could not bathe, shower or use the toilet. She said she had been calling plumbers all day, but one of the few who answered told her it would be $3,000 to come out to assess the damage.

“If I had $3,000,” Ms. Gonzalez said, “I wouldn’t be getting food from people on the bus.”

Major disruptions to the Texas power grid left more than four million households without power this week, but by Thursday evening, only about 347,000 lacked electricity. Much of the statewide concern had turned to water woes.

More than 800 public water systems serving 162 of the state’s 254 counties had been disrupted as of Thursday, affecting 13.1 million people, according to a spokeswoman for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

In Harris County, which includes Houston, the nation’s fourth-largest city, more than one million people have been affected by local water systems that have either issued notices to boil water so it is safe to drink or that cannot deliver water at all, said Brian Murray, a spokesman for the county emergency management agency.

Residents in the Texas capital, Austin, [*were also told to boil water*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/20/us/texas-winter-storm-explainer.html) because of a power failure at the city’s largest water-treatment facility. The director of Austin Water, Greg Meszaros, said that plummeting temperatures caused water mains to break and pipes to burst, spurring an increase in water usage and allowing water to leak out of the system.

He said on Thursday that power had been restored, and that restoring water service to hospitals and other health care facilities was a priority. The city’s reservoirs, which can hold about 100 million gallons of water — or a day’s worth of water for Austin — had been nearly emptied because of the leaks or the increased use by residents.

“We never imagined a day where hospitals wouldn’t have water,” he said.

For many Texans, the disruptions were a staggering inconvenience that seemed to push them back to the state’s frontier past. People hunted for firewood across suburban yards, shivered in dark homes, lived off canned food, and went without electronics.

Others faced more dire consequences. At St. David’s South Austin Medical Center, officials were trying Wednesday night to fix a heating system that was failing because of low water pressure. They were forced to seek portable toilets and distribute bottles of water to patients and employees so they could wash their hands.

In San Antonio, Jesse Singh, 58, a Shell gas station owner, said his 80-year-old father was turned away from regularly scheduled dialysis treatments Tuesday and Thursday because his clinic was having water access issues.

“It’s a dangerous situation,” Mr. Singh said.

Compounding the problem was the fact that much of Texas was still experiencing cold weather and snowstorms on Thursday, part of a havoc-inducing bout of winter weather that also dumped snow and prompted winter storm warnings in parts of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut through Friday night.

Corey Brown, an employee at Tyler Water Utilities — which serves the city of Tyler in the northeast part of Texas — said the temperature was in the 20s on Thursday, which complicated efforts to restore water service. Mr. Brown guessed that half of the utility’s 110,000 customers were completely without water.

“They had freezing water lines,” he said. “We have two water plants — one of them went down, and we also have power outages. And then we had a hard freeze the last couple of days, so as a result a lot of the pipes are freezing over and that is stopping flow to some people’s houses or causing low pressure.”

Days of glacial weather have left at least 38 people dead nationwide, made many roads impassable, disrupted vaccine distribution and blanketed nearly three-quarters of the continental United States in snow. Federal Emergency Management Agency officials said they had made 60 generators available “to support critical infrastructure” in Texas and were providing the state blankets, bottled water and meals.

The head of the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which operates the state’s power grid, warned on Thursday that the state was “not out of the woods yet,” due largely to the enduring cold.

“We’re still in very cold conditions, so we’re still seeing much higher than normal winter demand,” Bill Magness, the council’s president and chief executive, said at a news conference. That meant, he said, that planned outages could be necessary in coming days to keep the grid stable.

“If we do hit a bump and have some generation have to come back off, we may have to ask for outages,” he said. “But if we do, we believe they will be at the level where they could be rotating outages, not the larger numbers that we faced earlier this week.”

There were other signs of progress. William P. Hobby Airport in Houston, which had been forced to shut down on Wednesday because of water supply issues, [*announced*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/20/us/texas-winter-storm-explainer.html) early Thursday morning that it had restored water in a limited capacity, and that flights would resume.

But even as the power flickered back on for many Texans, thousands more continued on with neither light nor water. For Angelina Diaz and her four children, Thursday was yet another day of shuttling between their cold house in West Dallas and the cramped S.U.V. idling in the driveway.

It was Day 4 without a shower or baths. Day 4 with no toilet. Day 4 of warming up bottled water on a barbecue grill to make the formula for Ms. Diaz’s 6-month-old daughter, Jimena.

The family has spent nearly a year zealously washing their hands to avoid contracting the coronavirus, and they worried that a week without water would undo those efforts.

“How do we keep our hands clean?” Ms. Diaz, 25, asked.

Most of their neighbors had electricity by Thursday afternoon, but as utility trucks drove through the slush, Ms. Diaz was losing her patience with sleeping in the car and shivering under blankets. She was enticed by hotels or city-run warming centers but worried too much about exposing her family to the virus. So it was back to the S.U.V. to wait.

At the Family Place, a domestic violence shelter in Dallas, the power had been out for two days when the waterlogged ceiling caved in, unleashing a freezing waterfall onto the 120 women and children seeking refuge there.

The water soaked their clothes and the few possessions they had brought, spoiling hard-to-replace legal documents. The hallways became streams. The residents and staff members tried to sweep out the water and piled up bedsheets to create dams, but soon gave up and hurriedly piled into five city buses to seek shelter at a church.

“They lost basically everything,” Shelbi Driver, a resident advocate at the shelter, said.

Advocates said at least three other domestic violence shelters around Dallas were also evacuated after pipes burst and flooded their hallways with frigid water, displacing hundreds of vulnerable people who did not have the option of going home.

“They went through one horrible trauma, came to our organization to get safe and had another trauma,” Paige Flink, chief executive of the Family Place, said. “It makes me want to cry just to say it,” she said. “It is a total nightmare.”

Jack Healy reported from Dallas, Richard Fausset from Atlanta, and James Dobbins from San Antonio. Maria Jimenez Moya contributed reporting from Houston, and Lucy Tompkins from New York.

Jack Healy reported from Dallas, Richard Fausset from Atlanta, and James Dobbins from San Antonio. Maria Jimenez Moya contributed reporting from Houston, and Lucy Tompkins from New York.

PHOTOS: A family in San Antonio burning furniture to stay warm. More than four million Texans lost power when the state’s grid collapsed. (A1): From left, Ziam Ghaznavi, Will Conte, Trish Cope and Matthew Snyder heading home after buying bottled water and other items from a convenience store in Austin. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14); Downed trees in Austin, where residents were told to boil water because of a power failure at the city’s largest water-treatment plant. More than 800 public water systems in the state had been disrupted as of Thursday. Near right, St. David’s South Austin Medical Center was forced to move some patients Wednesday after losing water pressure. Far right, stocking up on propane in San Antonio. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ILANA PANICH-LINSMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; CHRISTOPHER LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14-A15)

**Load-Date:** February 20, 2021

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[***White Riot***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61RW-P171-JBG3-62GG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3385 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** How racism, grievance, resentment and the fear of diminished status came together to fuel violence and mayhem on Jan. 6.

**Body**

How racism, grievance, resentment and the fear of diminished status came together to fuel violence and mayhem on Jan. 6.

There is no question that out-and-out racism and a longing to return to the days of white supremacy were high on the list of motivations of the pro-Trump mob that ransacked the Capitol on Jan. 6.

That should not end the discussion about why it happened, though. There are other questions we need to ask that do not (and could never) justify the violence and mayhem but seek instead to help us gain further insight into the lethal force that attacked Congress a week ago and is poised to strike again.

It may sound trivial at first, in light of what happened, but how important is the frustration among what pollsters call non-college white men at not being able to compete with those higher up on the socioeconomic ladder because of educational disadvantage? How critical is declining value in marriage — or mating — markets? Does any of that really matter?

How toxic is the combination of pessimism and anger that stems from a deterioration in standing and authority? What might engender existential despair, this sense of irretrievable loss? How hard is it for any group, whether it is racial, political or ethnic, to come to terms with losing power and status? What encourages desperate behavior and a willingness to believe a pack of lies?

I posed these questions to a wide range of experts. This column explores their replies.

[*Bart Bonikowski*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor of sociology at N.Y.U., was forthright:

Ethnonationalist Trump supporters want to return to a past when white men saw themselves as the core of America and minorities and women “knew their place.” Because doing so requires the upending of the social order, many are prepared to pursue extreme measures, including racial violence and insurrection. What makes their actions all the more dangerous is a self-righteous belief — reinforced by the president, the Republican Party, and right-wing conspiracy peddlers — that they are on the correct side of history as the true defenders of democracy, even as their actions undermine its core institutions and threaten its stability.

There is evidence that many non-college white Americans who have been undergoing what psychiatrists call “[*involuntary subordination*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html)” or “[*involuntary defeat*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html)” both resent and mourn their [*loss of centrality*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html) and what they perceive as their growing invisibility.

[*Andrew Cherlin*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a sociologist at Johns Hopkins University, wrote by email:

They fear a loss of attention. A loss of validation. These are people who have always had racial privilege but have never had much else. Many feel passed over, ignored. Trump listened to them and spoke their language when few other politicians did. He felt their pain and was diabolical enough to encourage their tendency to racialize that pain. They fear becoming faceless again if a Democrat, or even a conventional Republican, were to take office.

Cherlin pointed to the [*assertion*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html) of a 67-year-old retired landscaper from North Carolina who joined the Trump loyalists on Jan. 6 on the steps of the Capitol: “We are here. See us! Notice us! Pay attention!”

White supremacy and frank racism are prime motivators, and they combined with other elements to fuel the insurrection: a groundswell of anger directed specifically at elites and an [*addictive lust for revenge*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html) against those they see as the agents of their disempowerment.

It is this admixture of factors that makes the insurgency that wrested control of the House and Senate so dangerous — and is likely to spark [*new forms of violen*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html)ce in the future. Each of the forces at work has helped drive millions of white voters to the right: working in tandem, they collectively provide the tinder for the destructive behavior we saw last week in the chambers of the United States Congress.

“It is very, very difficult for individuals and groups to come to terms with losing status and power,” [*Cameron Anderson*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor at Berkeley’s Haas School of Business, wrote by email. While most acute among those possessing high status and power, Anderson said,

People in general are sensitive to status threats and to any potential losses of social standing, and they respond to those threats with stress, anxiety, anger, and sometimes even violence.

[*Dacher Keltner*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor of psychology at Berkeley, agrees in large part with Anderson, describing the fury and disappointment contributing to the takeover of Congress as concentrated among whites who see their position in the social order on a downward path. In an email, Keltner wrote:

The population of U.S. Citizens who’ve lost the most power in the past 40 years, who aren’t competing well to get into college or get high paying jobs, whose marital prospects have dimmed, and who are outraged, are those I believe were most likely to be in on the attack.

When pressed to give up power, he added, “these types of individuals will resort to violence, and to refashioning history to suggest they did not lose.”

In a September 2020 paper, “[*Theories of power*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html): Perceived strategies for gaining and maintaining power,” Keltner and [*Leanne ten Brinke*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor of psychology at the University of British Columbia, argue that “lower class individuals experience greater vigilance to threat, relative to high status individuals, leading them to perceive greater hostility in their environment.”

This increased vigilance, Brinke and Keltner continue, creates

a bias such that relatively low socio-economic status individuals perceive the powerful as dominant and threatening — endorsing a coercive theory of power. Indeed, there is evidence that individuals of lower social class are more cynical than those occupying higher classes, and that this cynicism is directed toward out-group members — that is, those that occupy higher classes.

In other words, resentment toward successful white elites is in play here, as evidenced by the attack on Congress, an overwhelmingly white seat of power.

Before Trump, many of those who became his supporters suffered from what [*Carol Graham*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a senior fellow at Brookings, describes as pervasive [*“unhappiness, stress and lack of hope*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html)” without a narrative to legitimate their condition:

When the jobs went away, families fell apart. There was no narrative other than the classic American dream that everyone who works hard can get ahead, and the implicit correlate was that those who fall behind and are on welfare are losers, lazy, and often minorities.

In a December 2020 [*Brookings Paper*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), Graham and [*Sergio Pinto*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a doctoral student at the University of Maryland, wrote that

Despair — and the associated mortality trends — is concentrated among the less-than-college educated and is much higher among whites than minorities. The trends are also geographically dispersed, with populations in racially and economically diverse urban and coastal places more optimistic and with lower premature mortality.

What, however, could prompt a mob — including not only members of the Proud Boys and the Boogaloo Bois but also many seemingly ordinary Americans drawn to Trump — to break into the Capitol?

One possible answer: a mutated form of moral certitude based on the belief that one’s decline in social and economic status is the result of unfair, if not corrupt, decisions by others, especially by so-called elites.

In “[*The Social and Political Implications of Moral Conviction*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html),” [*Linda J. Skitka*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html) and [*G. Scott Morgan*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), psychology professors at University of Illinois-Chicago and Drew University, wrote that “although moral conviction motivates any number of normatively positive behaviors (e.g., voting, political engagement), moral conviction appears to also have a potential dark side.”

Skitka and Morgan argued that:

The terrorist attacks on 9/11, the Weatherman bombings in protest of the Vietnam War, ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, or the assassination of abortion providers, may be motivated by different ideological beliefs but nonetheless share a common theme: The people who did these things appear to be motivated by strong moral conviction. Although some argue that engaging in behaviors like these requires moral disengagement, we \xAC\x81nd instead that they require maximum moral engagement and justi\xAC\x81cation.

[*Alan Page Fiske*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor of anthropology at U.C.L.A., and [*Tage Shakti Rai*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a research associate at the MIT Sloan School of Management, make a parallel argument in their book “[*Virtuous Violence*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html),” in which they write that violence is:

considered to be the essence of evil. It is the prototype of immorality. But an examination of violent acts and practices across cultures and throughout history shows just the opposite. When people hurt or kill someone, they usually do it because they feel they ought to: they feel that it is morally right or even obligatory to be violent.

“Most violence,” Fiske and Rai contend, “is morally motivated.”

A key factor working in concert to aggravate the anomie and disgruntlement in many members of Trump’s white ***working-class*** base is their inability to obtain a college education, a limitation that blocks access to higher paying jobs and lowers their supposed “value” in marriage markets.

In their paper “[*Trends in Educational Assortative Marriage From 1940 to 2003*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html),” [*Christine R. Schwartz*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html) and [*Robert D. Mare*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), professors of sociology at the University of Wisconsin and the University of California-Los Angeles, wrote that the “most striking” data in their research, “is the decline in odds that those with very low levels of education marry up.”

In the bottom ranks of educational achievement, they continued, trends in inequality are

consistent with the decline in the odds of marriage between high school dropouts and those with more education since the 1970s, a period over which the real wages of men in this education group declined.

[*Christopher Federico*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor of political science and psychology at the University of Minnesota, described the key roles of education and employment opportunity in the right-wing mobilization of less-educated white men:

A major development since the end of the “Great Compression” of the 30 years or so after World War II, when there was less inequality and relatively greater job security, at least for white male workers, is that the differential rate of return on education and training is now much higher.

In this new world, Federico argues, “promises of broad-based economic security” were replaced by a job market where

you can have dignity, but it must be earned through market or entrepreneurial success (as the Reagan/Thatcher center-right would have it) or the meritocratic attainment of professional status (as the center-left would have it). But obviously, these are not avenues available to all, simply because society has only so many positions for captains of industry and educated professionals.

The result, Federico notes, is that “group consciousness is likely to emerge on the basis of education and training” and when “those with less education see themselves as being culturally very different from an educated stratum of the population that is more socially liberal and cosmopolitan, then the sense of group conflict is deepened.”

None of these forces diminishes the key role of racial animosity and racism. Instead, they intensify racial resentment.

[*Jennifer Richeson*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor of psychology at Yale, wrote by email that there is

very consistent and compelling evidence to suggest the some of what we have witnessed this past week is a reflection of the angst, anger, and refusal to accept an “America”’ in which White (Christian) Americans are losing dominance, be it political, material, and/or cultural. And, I use the term dominance here, because it is not simply a loss of status. It is a loss of power. A more racially, ethnically, religiously diverse US that is also a democracy requires White Americans to acquiesce to the interests and concerns of racial/ethnic and religious minorities.

Trump, Richeson continued,

leaned into the underlying White nationalist sentiments that had been on the fringe in his campaign for the presidency and made his campaign about re-centering Whiteness as what it actually means to be American and, by implication, delegitimizing claims for greater racial equity, be it in policing or any other important domain of American life.

[*Michael Kraus*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor at the Yale School of Management, argued in an email that

Racism is the key construct here in understanding why this sort of violence is possible. The other explanations would be the pathways through which racism creates these conditions. An individual experiences their standing in society as relative and comparative, so sometimes the gains of other groups feel like losses to Whites. Whites in the last 60 years have seen minoritized folks gain more political power, economic and educational opportunity. Even though these gains are grossly exaggerated, Whites experience them as a loss in group status.

[*Emily G. Jacobs*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor of psychological and brain sciences at the University of California-Santa Barbara, argued that all the rights revolutions — civil rights, women’s rights, gay rights — have been key to the emergence of the contemporary right wing:

As the voices of women, people of color, and other traditionally marginalized communities grow louder the frame of reference from which we tell the story of American is expanding. The white male story is not irrelevant but it’s insufficient, and when you have a group of people that are accustomed to the spotlight see the camera lens pan away, it’s a threat to their sense of self. It’s not surprising that QAnon support started to soar in the weeks after B.L.M. QAnon offers a way for white evangelicals to place blame on (fictional) bad people instead of a broken system. It’s an organization that validates the source of Q-Anoners insecurity — irrelevance — and in its place offers a steady source of self-righteousness and acceptance.

[*Jane Yunhee Junn*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor of political science at the University of Southern California, was outspoken in her view:

People of color in political office, women controlling their fertility, L.G.B.T.Q. people getting married, using their bathrooms, and having children go against the state of nature defined by white heteropatriarchy. This is a domain in which men and white men in particular stand at the apex of power, holding their “rightful position” over women, nonwhites, perhaps non-Christians (in the U.S.), and of course, in their view, sexual deviants such as gay people.

[*Herbert P. Kitschelt*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a professor of political science at Duke, wrote in an email that “compared to other advanced countries caught up in the transition to knowledge society, the United States appears to be in a much more vulnerable position to a strong right-wing populist challenge.”

Kitschelt’s listing of some of the reasons for American vulnerability to right-wing forces illuminates current events.

First, Kitschelt noted,

The difference between economic winners and losers, captured by income inequality, poverty, and illiteracy rates within the dominant white ethnicity, is much greater than in most other Western countries, and there is no dense welfare state safety net to buffer the fall of people into unemployment and poverty.

Another key factor, Kitschelt pointed out, is that

The decline of male status in the family is more sharply articulated than in Europe, hastened in the U.S. by economic inequality (men fall further under changing economic circumstances) and religiosity (leading to pockets of greater male resistance to the redefinition of gender roles).

Unlike most European countries, Kitschelt wrote,

The United States had a civil war over slavery in the 19th century and a continuous history of structural racism and white oligarchical rule until the 1960s, and in many aspects until the present. Europe lacks this legacy.

On top of that, in the United States.

Many lines of conflict mutually reinforce each other rather than crosscut: Less educated whites tend to be more Evangelical and more racist, and they live in geographical spaces with less economic momentum.

Coming days will determine how far this goes, but for the moment the nation faces, for all intents and purposes, the makings of a civil insurgency. What makes this insurgency unusual in American history is that it is based on Trump’s false claim that he, not Joe Biden, won the presidency, that the election was stolen by malefactors in both parties, and that majorities in both branches of Congress no longer represent the true will of the people.

At the same time, hostility to Trump on the left can make it easy to overlook the shortcomings, such as they are, of the center-left political coalition in this country — and I think it is important that liberals, among whom I count myself, keep this in mind.

[*Bernard Grofman*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html), a political scientist at the University of California, Irvine, put it this way in an email:

We would not have Trump as president if the Democrats had remained the party of the ***working class***. The decline of labor unions proceeded at the same rate when Democrats were president as when Republicans were president; the same is, I believe, true of loss of manufacturing jobs as plants moved overseas.

President Obama, Grofman wrote,

responded to the housing crisis with bailouts of the lenders and interlinked financial institutions, not of the folks losing their homes. And the stagnation of wages and income for the middle and bottom of the income distribution continued under Obama. And the various Covid aid packages, while they include payments to the unemployed, are also helping big businesses more than the small businesses that have been and will be permanently going out of business due to the lockdowns (and they include various forms of pork.

The result, according to Grofman, was that “white less well-educated voters didn’t desert the Democratic Party, the Democratic Party deserted them.”

At the same time, though, and here I will quote Grofman at length:

More religious and less well-educated whites see Donald Trump as one of their own despite his being so obviously a child of privilege. He defends America as a Christian nation. He defends English as our national language. He is unashamed in stating that the loyalty of any government should be to its own citizens — both in terms of how we should deal with noncitizens here and how our foreign policy should be based on the doctrine of “America First.”

He speaks in a language that ordinary people can understand. He makes fun of the elites who look down on his supporters as a “basket of deplorables” and who think it is a good idea to defund the police who protect them and to prioritize snail darters over jobs. He appoints judges and justices who are true conservatives. He believes more in gun rights than in gay rights. He rejects political correctness and the language-police and woke ideology as un-American. And he promises to reclaim the jobs that previous presidents (of both parties) allowed to be shipped abroad. In sum, he offers a relatively coherent set of beliefs and policies that are attractive to many voters and which he has been better at seeing implemented than any previous Republican president. What Trump supporters who rioted in D.C. share are the beliefs that Trump is their hero, regardless of his flaws, and that defeating Democrats is a holy war to be waged by any means necessary.

In the end, Grofman said,

Trying to explain the violence on the Hill by only talking about what the demonstrators believe is to miss the point. They are guilty, but they wouldn’t be there were it not for the Republican politicians and the Republican attorneys general, and most of all the president, who cynically exaggerate and lie and create fake conspiracy theories and demonize the opposition. It is the enablers of the mob who truly deserve the blame and the shame.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/bart-bonikowski.html).

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PHOTO: The crowd looks on as President Trump speaks on the ellipse in front of the White House on Jan. 6. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Pete Marovich for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***The Long Shadow of Eugenics in America***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65NR-2S61-DXY4-X08X-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

I keep a sepia-tone photograph of the Relf sisters folded up and tucked in my wallet. It's from a 1973 issue of Ebony magazine. The older of the two sisters, Minnie Lee, stares hard at the camera, her gaze direct and unsmiling but pleasant, almost quizzical. Her hair is freshly pressed, hot-curled and brushed into place, making her look older than 14. In a clean white dress with lacy zigzags, she seems ready for Sunday school. Her left arm is draped around her baby sister, Mary Alice, age 12, anchoring her in place. The younger Relf sister cracks a big, playful smile, her hair in braids -- and not the usual three unruly braids from other pictures of the sisters during this time. Instead they are pinned down, neat and tidy for the Ebony shoot. The bottom of Mary Alice's schoolgirl dress is hiked up as she reaches up to rest her right arm, the one that's not fully formed, a disability she was born with, on her sister's shoulder.

That same picture lay on the passenger seat of my rental car in February 2020 as I turned into the Westport Apartments, a cluster of brick homes situated behind a strip mall near the Mobile Highway in south Montgomery, Ala. When I knocked on the door of the Relfs' home -- a cramped single-story apartment that looks like all the others in the public-housing complex -- Mary Alice yanked it open with a big smile, the same one in that picture from 49 years ago. She pulled me into the house and said something I didn't quite understand, though after spending time with her, I would come to better comprehend what on that day was a raspy collection of sounds, resulting from a speech impediment and an intellectual disability that make communication difficult for her.

On that afternoon, Minnie Lee sat resting her elbows on their dining-room table, which was covered with glass to keep it from getting scratched. ''I'm sorry, ma'am, I can't stand up for you,'' she said politely, pointing down to her right foot. It was in a bulky gray cast. While reaching for a can of string beans in her kitchen cabinet the week before, she lost her balance and fractured it in three places.

Mary Alice pulled a chair close to her sister, so they were nestled next to each other as in the Ebony photo and nearly every other photo of the Relf sisters. They are now 61 and 63; looking at them pressed together as though attached, I could still see the faces of the two young girls forever memorialized a half century ago beneath the headlines ''Suit Says Girls Were Sterilized'' in The New York Times; ''Sterilized, Why?'' in Time magazine; and, in Ebony, ''Sterilization: Newest Threat to the Poor.''

In the summer of 1973, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice were taken from their home in Montgomery, cut open and sterilized against their will and without the informed consent of their parents by a physician working in a federally funded clinic. The Relf case would change the course of history: A lawsuit filed on their behalf, Relf v. Weinberger, helped reveal that more than 100,000 mostly Black, Latina and Indigenous women were sterilized under U.S. government programs over decades. It also officially ended this practice and forced doctors to obtain informed consent before performing sterilization procedures -- though as it would turn out, forced sterilizations by state governments would continue into the 21st century.

From 1907 to 1932, 32 states passed explicit eugenics laws that allowed for the government to sterilize the ''insane,'' the ''feebleminded,'' the ''dependent'' and the ''diseased'' -- all of whom were deemed incapable of making their own decisions about reproduction. Nearly all of these laws have been repealed (in Washington State, a version of the law still remains on the books). Indiana, Virginia and North Carolina have created historical markers to commemorate those who were sterilized through government-sanctioned programs. Eight states have issued official apologies.

''While eugenics practices and policies are no longer in existence, the impact and the legacy deeply remains today,'' Jill Krowinski, speaker of Vermont's House of Representatives, said on the Statehouse floor in Montpelier last October. Vermont state legislators apologized for using forced sterilizations and other practices to reduce populations deemed unfit to have children -- including Indigenous and mixed-race people, people with disabilities and low-income families. ''For those that were directly impacted, for their descendants, and for all of the communities involved, we cannot undo the trauma that this moment has caused, but we can start by formally acknowledging this dark period in our state's history. Today, we publicly apologize for the Legislature's role in ever allowing this to occur.''

Some states have begun to go beyond apologies. Three so far, Virginia, North Carolina and California, have established programs to compensate victims of forced sterilization. But Alabama, where the Relf sisters were forcibly sterilized and which has been their home all their lives, is not one of those states, and the federal government has made no such moves. The Relf sisters subsist in obscurity on meager Social Security checks.

''I can show you what they did to me,'' Minnie Lee said. She lifted up her T-shirt and revealed a jagged horizontal scar that rips across her abdomen. ''That's where they cut me.'' As she lowered her shirt -- which had the word ''courage'' printed three times on the front -- she dropped her head. Mary Alice, sitting on a floral-patterned chair next to her, with a poster of the Last Supper displayed in an ornate plastic frame on a nearby wall, watched intently, her glasses pushed up on her face. Her half arm rested lightly on her thigh as she leaned in to listen to her sister. ''It might have happened a long time ago, but it still brings back memories,'' Minnie Lee said, looking at Mary Alice. ''We're still thinking about it.''

The history of legalized forced sterilization by the government begins in 1907, when Indiana became the first state to pass a eugenics law providing for the involuntary sterilization of ''confirmed criminals, idiots, imbeciles and rapists.'' Those affected early on were mainly men viewed as criminalistic, including those whose ''defect'' was supposedly excessive masturbation or homosexuality.

''That first law focused on vasectomizing poor white men who were identified as being sexually deviant,'' says Dr. Alexandra Minna Stern, a professor of American history and culture at the University of Michigan and co-director of the Sterilization and Social Justice Lab. Her research team studies the history of eugenic sterilization in the United States and has collected the records of more than 60,000 survivors in California, Iowa, Michigan, North Carolina and Utah. ''We're talking about sterilizing populations that are being seen as hypersexualized or as sexually inappropriate, as promiscuous, as not having middle-class sexual respectability.''

By the 1930s, women became a majority of the victims, sterilized in mental hospitals and prisons and under court orders. This shifting gender pattern resulted from a rising concern about the fitness to parent, with a focus on mothering, as well as the development of a safer, standardized tubal-ligation procedure for sterilizing women. The movement was codified in 1927, when the Supreme Court upheld the right of the state of Virginia to sterilize Carrie Buck, a 20-year-old white woman. Born in 1906 to a mother living in poverty in Virginia, Buck was sent to a ***working-class*** foster home, where at age 16 she was raped by an extended-family member. Her foster parents took custody of Buck's daughter and successfully petitioned a local court to confine Buck at the Virginia State Colony for Epileptics and Feeble-Minded -- though she was neither epileptic nor intellectually disabled. There she was sterilized without her consent. Writing for the majority in the landmark Supreme Court case Buck v. Bell, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. stated, ''It is better for all the world, if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime, or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind.'' He added, ''Three generations of imbeciles are enough.''

More than 60,000 men, women and children would be sterilized under these state laws, which would also inform Nazi Germany: The Third Reich sterilized approximately 400,000 children and adults, mostly Jews and other ''undesirables,'' using a 1933 law modeled after legislation in the United States. Germany's Law for the Prevention of Offspring and Hereditary Diseases focused on people with a high probability of having a child with a serious ''defect,'' including blindness, deafness and manic depression. The last eugenics legislation in the United States was passed in Georgia in 1937, and eventually the laws would be rolled back in a series of repeals. But that didn't stop local governments from sterilizing many more people, mostly women of color. The voting rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer was given a hysterectomy without her consent in 1961 when undergoing removal of a uterine tumor by a white physician. The practice of being sterilized, including during unrelated surgery, grew so common among poor Black women in the South that it came to be known as a ''Mississippi appendectomy.''

''You start seeing people sterilized in the '40s, '50s, '60s and beyond as a population-control measure, as a means of decreasing the dependent population, which was the same idea the eugenicists had, but now without the laws,'' says Paul A. Lombardo, a professor at the Georgia State University College of Law in Atlanta, author of ''Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court and Buck v. Bell'' and editor of ''A Century of Eugenics in America: From the Indiana Experiment to the Human Genome Era.''

''It generally came down to sex and money, which means, 'Who's having babies that I don't want my tax dollars to go to?''' Lombardo says. ''So then you start identifying people like the Relfs.'' He continues, ''Those young girls represented the perfect storm of race, poverty and alleged disability.''

Jessie Bly, a 30-year-old Black social worker, was working in Montgomery when she received a call from a local city councilman in 1972. Her employer, the City of St. Jude Catholic Church, was founded by a progressive Catholic priest in the 1930s to serve as a ''center for the religious, charitable, educational and industrial advancement of the Negro people.'' Bly was born and raised in Montgomery; her mother was a housekeeper and her father a gravedigger. They understood early that their seventh child was bright and engaged, and they sent her to private school. She was the only one of eight siblings to finish college. Her work at City of St. Jude included checking on the condition of the elderly and the poor to make sure they had necessities and basic services.

Now the councilman was asking her to take a ride with him to a poor Black community in Montgomery called Flatwood to go see a family. When she asked, ''What kind of family?'' she recalled that he replied, ''Trust me, in the day that we're living, I never thought that we would see anything like this in the United States of America.''

In Flatwood, Bly was shocked by what she witnessed. ''I was waiting to see a house,'' she said, ''but I never saw one.'' The Relfs, a husband, wife and six children, were living as squatters in a field, sheltered in a shanty built from cardboard boxes. ''They had no running water, no electricity,'' Bly, now 80, said, closing her eyes and shaking her head. ''I was really taken aback, because I just couldn't believe that anybody would be living in those conditions. But they were.''

Bly, a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and ordained minister who still lives in Montgomery, said what crushed her heart most were the girls, teenage Katie and her two younger adolescent sisters, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice. Bly couldn't shake the image of the youngest girl, who was physically and intellectually disabled. ''She was born with an automatic amputation, with the umbilical cord wrapped around her right arm,'' Bly said. ''She had no hand, and the arm was just a little stub.''

Like many Black families at the tail end of the Great Migration in the 1950s and 1960s, the children's parents, Lonnie and Minnie Relf, both illiterate, were forced out of rural Macon County, Ala., where mechanization had caused jobs in the fields to dry up. Some former field workers went North, but others crowded into Southern cities like Montgomery, the state capital. Census data shows that in 1960, for the first time, Alabama's urban population exceeded the rural population, in a state that was nearly one-third Black. This influx of rural Black residents, most unskilled and lacking education, increased poverty in the Black communities in a number of Southern cities. But even if Lonnie Relf had been able to find a job in Montgomery, he was disabled in an accident and was unable to work.

Bly arranged with the director of the Montgomery Housing Authority for the Relfs to live in a three-bedroom apartment in Smiley Court, a public-housing project on the west side of the city. Once the family moved into their new home, Bly took them to the Salvation Army and Goodwill to buy used furniture and put out a call for donations of linens, cooking utensils and other household items to the people in her church and network. She taught Minnie, who was used to preparing meals on a rudimentary oil burner in old burned pots, the basics of keeping house and how to use a stove. ''They didn't know how people really lived,'' Bly says. ''Life had passed them by.''

The girls had no idea about hygiene, so Bly showed them how to wash and care for their bodies and got the two older daughters enrolled in public school. She took Mary Alice to a pediatrician who specialized in developmental disabilities for evaluation. He declared her ''mentally incompetent,'' not teachable but trainable, and recommended the McInnis School for Retarded Children. Bly worries, years later, that visiting the government-funded diagnostic facility put the Relf girls on the radar of the family-planning clinic that would eventually arrange the sterilizations. More likely, they were flagged by the government services they were receiving: food stamps, a $156 monthly check from the Alabama Department of Pensions and Security, medical benefits and a subsidized apartment in public housing.

These services were administered through the Office of Economic Opportunity, the federal agency established in 1964 as part of the U.S. government's proclaimed war on poverty. That year, President Lyndon Johnson initiated his ambitious multibillion-dollar Great Society agenda, which would lead to Medicare, Medicaid, Head Start, the distribution of food stamps and other programs in an effort to end poverty and hunger, reduce crime, abolish inequality and racial barriers and improve the environment. Also under the auspices of the O.E.O., in 1967 the U.S. government created its family-planning program, which was intended to help poor people prevent unwanted births through contraception and other reproductive-health services.

After Richard Nixon was elected president in 1968, his Republican administration set out to dismantle Great Society programs, while also increasing funding for family-planning services in an effort to target the so-called population bomb. This term, popularized by the Stanford University professor Paul Ehrlich -- and the title of his 1968 best-selling book -- referred to an exaggerated population explosion that he incorrectly predicted would lead to global famine in the 1970s and 1980s. Nixon championed the Family Planning Services and Population Research Act of 1970, also known as the Birth Curb Bill, a $382 million federal program to control population growth, which had ballooned into a national obsession.

Efforts like this took particular aim at poor women, arguing that poverty bred more poverty, so keeping the poor from having babies -- particularly ''illegitimate'' children born out of wedlock -- offered a solution. Though the initial O.E.O. regulations of 1967 stated that ''no project funds shall be expended for any surgical procedures intended to result in sterilization or to cause abortions,'' the prohibition on funding voluntary sterilization ended in 1971. ''The '70s and '80s were this kind of interesting moment where at the same time state sterilization laws were being repealed, America was creating the conditions for the sterilization of the Relf sisters,'' says Dr. Stern of the University of Michigan Sterilization and Social Justice Lab. ''The federal government funneled money into county family-planning programs, especially in the South,'' she continues. ''These facilities were twisted by racial and eugenic logics and pre-existing, longstanding racism and disempowerment of Black mothers and Black girls. Yet there were no checks on anything.''

According to the Relf v. Weinberger lawsuit, not long after the family moved into public housing, the Relf sisters were directed to the family-planning clinic of the Montgomery Community Action Committee, which was funded and controlled by the federal O.E.O. The process began with Katie, the oldest of the three girls, who was about 16 when she was first injected with the contraceptive Depo-Provera. At that time, the drug was still in the investigational phase and not yet approved by the F.D.A. for administration to adult women, let alone minor teenagers. Between 1967 and 1978, during a clinical trial of Depo-Provera, the Grady Memorial Hospital Family Planning Clinic in Atlanta administered the drug to 11,400 mostly poor Black women despite serious side effects, including heavy or interrupted menstrual bleeding and near suicidal depression.

The staff at the family-planning clinic in Montgomery never obtained permission to perform the injections or adequately explained the shots to Katie or her mother. Sometime later, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice were also injected with Depo-Provera. Bly remembers that a member of the staff would later explain the decision by saying that she was worried that ''boys are hanging around the house, and we don't want no more of their kind,'' though there was no evidence that any of the girls were sexually active. The Relf sisters were judged to be intellectually inferior, though only Mary Alice would be diagnosed with an actual disability. The other two girls lacked formal education and were struggling to catch up to their peers. In March 1973, Katie, then 17, was again taken to the family-planning clinic, this time for insertion of an IUD, after the Food and Drug Administration denied approval of Depo-Provera because of its link to cancer in animals. Though Katie was under the age of consent, her parents would later insist that they were not consulted about the IUD.

On June 13, 1973, at least one nurse employed by the family-planning clinic came to the Relfs' apartment and informed Minnie that her daughters would need to see a doctor for what she understood to be more shots. Minnie's two younger girls, then 14 and 12, were driven first to a doctor's office and then to the Professional Center Hospital in downtown Montgomery. Later, when she met them at the hospital, health care providers told Minnie she needed to sign a paper. It is unclear what Minnie Relf understood, but she trusted her daughters in the hands of the staff at this clinic, sponsored by the same government that had given her family a home, food, money and an education for her children. Still, it is very clear from her later Senate testimony that she had no idea that signing the piece of paper would mean that her daughters would never be able to bear children. Because she could not read or write, Minnie signed what turned out to be a surgical consent form with an X and was then escorted out to be driven home while the younger girls remained alone in the ward.

Before Minnie got back home, one of the same family-planning nurses returned to the Relfs' apartment to pick up Katie and take her to the hospital. Katie refused to go, locking herself in her room. The following day, when Jessie Bly stopped by, a frantic Katie told her what had happened. ''Where are your sisters?'' Bly asked. ''I can show you, Miss Bly,'' Katie told her, and they got in Bly's car and drove to the Professional Center Hospital.

Nearly half a century later, Bly has no trouble recalling the younger Relf girls in the hospital, huddled together, looking small and scared in cotton surgical gowns. The second they saw the social worker, they both began to cry. Clinging to Minnie Lee, Mary Alice sobbed and repeated over and over: ''I just hurt so bad. I just hurt so bad, Miss Bly, help me. Help me, Miss Bly.''

Bly was shaken. She recalls being unable to sleep, haunted by the image of the young girls crying and calling her name as they stood in the hospital ward. She also feared she was somehow at fault, though she had not been informed about the contraceptive shots or the sterilizations. ''I knew I wouldn't be able to rest, knowing that this kind of an injustice had been perpetrated upon these young ladies and nobody was speaking for them,'' she says. ''It happened because of where I am, so I felt like God wanted me to be the mouthpiece for them. I was going to do what I had to do.''

Jessie Bly found her way to a law office in a small, old house on Washington Avenue in Montgomery, where the Southern Poverty Law Center was founded two years earlier by two young civil rights lawyers, Morris Dees and Joe Levin, with the civil rights leader Julian Bond as its first president. Bly shared the Relfs' story with Levin and Dees, who decided to take the case.

In early summer 1973, they filed a case in Federal District Court in Montgomery, and then weeks later refiled the case as Relf v. Weinberger in D.C. District Court, claiming that government officials ''have failed to promulgate constitutionally acceptable guidelines by which federally funded and directed agencies can determine who should or should not be sterilized. Further, there are no constitutionally acceptable guidelines to determine what persons are capable of giving knowledgeable, informed consent to the administration upon them of any birth control measures.'' Caspar Weinberger, the director of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, now the Department of Health and Human Services, from 1973 to 1975, who would later become Ronald Reagan's defense secretary, was named as a respondent in the suit. The case also named two former Nixon White House aides, John W. Dean III and John D. Ehrlichman.

Just before the official filing, Levin called Bond to brief him on the Relf case. Bond immediately saw it as ''a horrendous attack on privacy, innocence and the right of motherhood,'' he would tell The New York Times in an article published on July 2, 1973. He encouraged Levin and Dees to contact the news media, and soon articles in The Times and Time magazine and a report on NBC News revealed the plight of the Relfs and the issue of forced sterilization to a national audience. ''The suit all of a sudden attracted a great deal of attention,'' Levin, now 79, remembers. ''And it's not that we hadn't had attention, but this was actually at a scale that we hadn't seen before.''

After Bly was interviewed by reporters from The Washington Post and Jet magazine, she says, the media attention became too intense for her. ''I couldn't go home; I couldn't go to work,'' she says. ''Newspaper, magazine people were following me around to get information, and I had to take my kids, and we had to go stay at my mom's for a while.''

As publicity about the case increased, Orelia Dixon, the director of the family-planning clinic in Montgomery, defended the actions of her facility. In the July 2 Times article, Dixon insisted that her nurses clearly explained to Minnie Relf that the injections for her daughters were no longer authorized and suggested sterilization as an alternative. Dixon also claimed that she and her staff believed sterilization was a proper alternative because the girls were not ''disciplined'' enough to take daily birth-control pills. ''There's no doubt in my mind that they all knew what that meant,'' Dixon told The Times, adding, ''We explain everything, and we don't use words that people can't understand.''

Levin and Dees, the Relfs' lawyers, would tell the court that the girls had been targeted for sterilization because they were Black. (Dixon was white, as was the physician who performed the operation, though clinic employees emphasized in interviews for news articles that the nurses who took the girls from their home were Black.) The lawyers also tried to demonstrate that the sisters did not comprehend that they had been sterilized, and still dreamed of bearing children someday. A Times article on July 8, 1973, included an exchange between Morris Dees and young Minnie Lee:

Q. Are you ever going to get married?A. Yes.Q. Are you going to have any children?A. Yes.Q. How many?A. One.Q. A boy or a girl?A. A little girl.

The news stories caught the eye of Senator Edward Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, then chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Health of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, and he asked Levin and the Relfs to appear at a congressional hearing and tell their story. Levin accompanied Lonnie, Minnie, Katie, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice to Washington -- the Relfs' first and only time on an airplane -- to testify. Levin and the Relf parents agreed that it would be too difficult for the girls to speak in an open hearing, so on the morning of July 10, 1973, Katie, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice met with Kennedy behind closed doors.

Levin recalls that the senator showed them pictures of his children, spoke to them gently and listened closely, moved by what he heard. During the Senate subcommittee hearing on sterilization abuse, Kennedy challenged Henry Simmons, H.E.W.'s deputy assistant secretary for health and scientific affairs, and other administrators about why the federal government was involved in coercive, nonconsensual sterilizations of Black and poor women. Then it was Lonnie and Minnie's turn. Speaking in the gentle tone he used earlier when meeting with the younger Relfs, Kennedy thanked the parents for appearing and asked them to describe in their own words what happened to their daughters. They told their story haltingly, Minnie explaining how she signed an X on the form given to her by the public-health-service workers. ''I did not want it done,'' Lonnie insisted. ''I am still upset about it.''

''What was your feeling then that they had operated on your children?'' Kennedy asked Minnie.

''I felt very bad about it,'' she said. ''I got mad.''

''Would you have permitted it if you had known about it?'' Kennedy asked.

''No,'' she said. ''I would not have let them do that. They said that they was going to give them shots.''

Kennedy again thanked the Relf family for their testimony, complimenting their three daughters and acknowledging their courage. ''We have seen too many incidents, mothers and fathers that have been saddened by the kinds of things that have happened to their children,'' Kennedy said. ''We are going to do our very best to make sure that it does not happen again.''

Levin says that the Senate testimony and Kennedy's support for the case and the issue had an enormous effect. Though the Relfs' case would take years to resolve, it helped uncover a pattern of sterilization abuse, financed by the U.S. government and practiced for decades. At the family-planning clinic that executed the sterilizations of the Relf children, 11 adolescent girls had been sterilized, 10 of them Black. But the practice turned out to be much more widespread.

In July 1973, the same month Levin and Dees filed the Relfs' case in D.C. District Court, a Black woman from North Carolina, Nial Ruth Cox, also filed a suit against a number of people, including the doctor who had surgically sterilized her after telling her, she claimed, that the results would ''wear off.'' At the time of the sterilization in 1965, Cox was 18, unmarried and the mother of a baby girl. Cox lived with her mother, who was a recipient of government benefits. A county caseworker threatened to strike the family from the welfare rolls unless the mother agreed to have her daughter's tubes temporarily tied. Five years later, Cox would learn that the sterilization was permanent. Though Cox -- who was represented by several lawyers, including the future Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg -- lost in court, her suit revealed that her sterilization was part of a eugenics program, created under state law, that began decades earlier.

In North Carolina, doctors performed some 7,600 sterilizations between 1929 and 1974, justified as a way to keep welfare rolls low, reduce poverty and improve the gene pool by preventing the ''mentally deficient'' from reproducing; the victims were disproportionately Black women and Native American women. In California, more than 17,000 were sterilized between 1920 and 1945 under a state eugenics law used to prevent reproduction of those deemed ''unfit''; a disproportionate number were women of Mexican descent. In 1976, a study by the U.S. General Accounting Office found that between 1973 and 1976, four of the 12 Indian Health Service regions sterilized 3,406 Native American women without their permission, including three dozen who were under 21. Also in 1976, H.E.W. reported that over 37 percent of Puerto Rican women of childbearing age, most in their 20s, were sterilized between the 1930s and the 1970s. The U.S. government had taken an active role in population control beginning in 1898, when it assumed governance of Puerto Rico, on the supposed grounds that overpopulation would increase poverty and other social and economic conditions.

Eventually, because of the Relfs' case and others, the congressional investigations and journalists reporting on them found that thousands of poor, mostly Black women were sterilized each year in the United States under federally funded programs. Many others were coerced into sterilization when health care providers threatened to cut off their benefits unless they agreed to give up their fertility. The Relfs' suit ended these practices, and H.E.W. was forced to withdraw regulations under which the government funded forced sterilizations. The federal government also instituted a requirement that health care providers obtain informed consent before performing sterilization procedures -- more than the X Minnie Relf had signed.

The Relf case happened almost 50 years ago, in another century, and many people would prefer to see it as a dark moment in history that could never happen now. But coerced contraception, including sterilization, has continued into the 21st century. In 2013, the Center for Investigative Reporting found that physicians under contract with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation sterilized nearly 150 female inmates from 2006 to 2010 without required state approvals for the tubal ligations the women received. According to the reporting, prison staff coerced or pressured women they believed likely to return to prison. State documents and interviews pointed to some 100 more procedures dating back to the late 1990s: ''From 1997 to 2010, the state paid doctors $147,460 to perform the procedure, according to a database of contracted medical services for state prisoners,'' C.I.R. reported.

In 2017, Judge Sam Benningfield of White County, Tenn., was reprimanded for promising 30-day sentence reductions to incarcerated men and women who agreed to receive vasectomies or birth-control implants. Benningfield claimed he was trying to encourage personal responsibility and prevent incarcerated people from being burdened with children when they were released. The A.C.L.U. chapter in Tennessee said in a statement at the time that ''offering a so-called 'choice' between jail time and coerced contraception or sterilization is unconstitutional.'' In the fall of 2020, a nurse at a for-profit Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center in Georgia reported that unnecessary gynecological procedures -- including hysterectomies -- had been performed on undocumented migrant women. The women said that they had undergone the operations without fully understanding or consenting to them. The Times reported that Dr. Ada Rivera, medical director of the ICE Health Service Corps, said that the whistle-blower's claims ''raise some very serious concerns that deserve to be investigated quickly and thoroughly.''

These cases demonstrate the persistent vulnerability of incarcerated and detained women in the criminal-justice and immigration systems. But even after the Relf case led to changes in laws, regulations and guidelines regarding forced or coerced sterilization, the question of compensation for the victims has remained. The federal lawsuit was not the only one filed on behalf of the Relfs themselves: Levin and Dees recruited Melvin Belli, nicknamed the King of Torts -- and Melvin Bellicose by insurance companies -- to file a damages suit to compensate the family. Loud and outrageous, Belli was best known for his celebrity clients: Errol Flynn, Mae West, Lana Turner, Lenny Bruce, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Muhammad Ali and the Rolling Stones. In February 1974, Belli's firm filed a $5 million damages suit on behalf of the Relfs against the former White House aides Dean and Ehrlichman and other federal officials for blocking the distribution in 1972 of federal guidelines that would have prevented the Relf sterilizations. After that suit was dismissed, Belli followed with another suit for $15 million that July.

After two and a half more years of motions, reversals, reconsiderations and transfers, the Relfs' last suit was dismissed in September 1977; Levin says it was because an appropriate defendant could not be identified under the Federal Tort Claims Act. The family was left still penniless. ''I felt sorry for them,'' Levin says now. ''The issue was brought to light but had no beneficial consequences for the kids and the Relf family. It felt very bad.''

In 2013, North Carolina -- where Nial Ruth Cox's 1973 lawsuit revealed the state's eugenics program -- agreed to compensate victims of forced or coerced sterilization. Three years earlier, the North Carolina Justice for Sterilization Victims Foundation was started to identify survivors of the state's program. The organization estimated that between 1,500 and 2,000 survivors might be alive and recommended paying $50,000 to each. In 2013, the State Legislature set aside $10 million. According to Lombardo, the Georgia State University College of Law professor, nearly 800 North Carolinians filed claims, with 220 qualifying for financial restitution. (To be eligible, the operations had to have occurred under the state's Eugenics Board, but some of the sterilizations occurred outside the auspices of the state, for example at county-run facilities.)

In 2015, the Virginia General Assembly set aside $400,000 for compensation, later adding more, and 30 survivors received $25,000 each. In 2003, California issued a formal apology to the victims of its eugenics program; last year, the state budgeted $4.5 million as compensation for its survivors. From 1909 through 1979, under state eugenics laws, thousands of people who lived in California state-run hospitals, homes and institutions were sterilized. Even after those laws were repealed in 1979, forced or coerced sterilizations continued to be performed on people in custody at state prisons or other correctional facilities. More than 20,000 people were sterilized in California, more than in any other state, and about 600 survivors are still alive today and eligible for compensation. Each will receive an equal share of the funds in two installments.

''Even as everyone recognizes that receiving a check, even for $25,000, is never going to undo the reproductive violence that was done to these people, at least it's something,'' Stern says. ''The state is making amends in some way, and it's an important material and symbolic gesture. I really hope that everyone who can receive compensation is able to find their pathway to the victim's compensation board and request it.''

The concept of reparations has long been contentious, debated in Congress and elsewhere as a question of what is owed to U.S. citizens who are descendants of those who were enslaved centuries ago. But the steps to compensate the living victims of forced sterilization can also be understood as reparations, and with three states having done so, new pressure has been placed on the remaining 29 states and the federal government itself.

In North Carolina, the first state to compensate survivors, the process began in late 2002, when The Winston-Salem Journal ran ''Against Their Will,'' a five-part series on North Carolina's eugenics program. Immediately afterward, Gov. Mike Easley issued a public apology. In April 2003, the North Carolina Senate voted to overturn the sterilization law that had been on the books since 1919. In 2009, the state placed a historical marker in Raleigh to commemorate the 7,600 victims sterilized under the state's eugenics laws between 1929 and 1974, and the media covered survivors' sharing memories of the trauma the surgery caused. In 2010, the North Carolina Justice for Sterilization Victims Foundation was started to find survivors; the following year, Gov. Bev Perdue appointed a task force to study a potential compensation package and its cost. Finally, in 2013, North Carolina's Republican-controlled Legislature voted to spend $10 million to compensate the survivors of the state's eugenics program.

''There's a huge movement all across the country to look at historical wrongs, including forced sterilization, and to consider what needs to be done now in order to redress them,'' explains Margaret Burnham, founder and co-director of the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project at Northeastern University School of Law. ''I think this is really the question of the 21st century.''

Minnie Lee Relf never finished high school, dropping out in 11th grade. Keeping up with classwork was difficult for her, given the absence of formal learning in her early childhood and the limitations of her parents. ''I was a slow reader in school,'' she says now. ''I can read, but I'm just slow. I was just slow.'' She also recalls her classmates mocking her after learning of the case through media coverage. ''People was just picking at me at school, always saying: 'You can't have no children. You can't do this and you can't ... ,''' she says, her voice trailing off. ''It hurt me. I felt so sad.''

Mary Alice was placed in McInnis, the special-needs school that Jessie Bly sought out for her. But she didn't graduate, either. Their mother died in 1980, just as they reached adulthood, and their father in 2009. Katie, their older sister, lives in an apartment in the same complex. They are still bound tightly together, walking to the store for groceries, attending church, sitting side by side watching TV. ''Some days I feel sad, but other times just tired,'' says Minnie Lee, who explains that she and her sister struggle with hypertension and asthma, and that Mary Alice also suffers from seizures. ''Not long ago, I was crying and felt like doing something to myself, like I wanted to go with my mom and dad,'' Minnie Lee adds, looking over at her sister, who doesn't seem to understand.

Minnie Lee says she recalls the lawsuit; Levin, Dees and of course Miss Jessie Bly; the airplane trip to Washington and Senator Kennedy. But when I describe the impact of their case, how their story stopped the government from harming more girls and women like them, Minnie Lee looks confused. It is too much to comprehend. Mary Alice holds on to my arm and smiles.

I met Katie in April. Now 66, she never finished high school. She and her husband, Michael, had one child, Jerome, who died shortly after he was born. Katie says she can barely remember anything about what happened to her and her sisters 50 years ago; she doesn't understand why her family didn't receive any compensation for what was done to them. ''But I think about it every day, really,'' she said.

As I described the way her family's case made history, she moved closer to listen. I then explained that apologies have been made to survivors in other places. An apology, she said, ''would mean the world to us, and I would forgive them.'' She looked away and began to weep.

''Sterilization involves two forms of harm, the physical harm to one's reproductive autonomy and the moral stigma associated with sterilization, including the suggestion that you are unworthy to reproduce, in the Relfs' case because they are Black women,'' Burnham says. ''These women bear a mark of being deemed less than a full person. That moral harm has to be addressed by an apology, and it must come from the state. But they are also owed material redress, some sort of financial repair. That's what is clearly acknowledged in the Virginia, North Carolina and California initiatives: that practices of truth telling, repair and reparation must come into play when formal law fails.''

Minnie Lee may not understand what the nation gained because of her case. But it is hauntingly, painfully clear that she understands what she and Mary Alice lost. When I visited, I saw that each woman slept with a brown baby doll, Mary Alice's nestled in a tangle of sheets, Minnie Lee's laid across her pillow. ''I know I can't have kids, and it gets to me sometimes,'' Minnie Lee says. ''Every time I see somebody like my cousin or my niece Debbie with their child, I think about it. Seeing these little pretty babies, I wish that was me.''

Linda Villarosa is a contributing writer for the magazine, focusing on race and health. She is an associate professor at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY and also teaches at the City College of New York in Harlem. Hannah Price is a photographic artist and filmmaker based in Philadelphia, with a focus on documenting relationships, race politics and misperception.This article is adapted from ''Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation,'' published this month by Doubleday.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/08/magazine/eugenics-movement-america.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/08/magazine/eugenics-movement-america.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY SETTLE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM28-MM29)

Jessie Bly in Montgomery, Ala. Opening pages: A previously unpublished photograph of Minnie Lee Relf (left) and Mary Alice Relf in 1973, from The Times's photography archives. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HANNAH PRICE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM31)

From left: Minnie Lee, Mary Alice, one of the girls' cousins, Katie Relf and Minnie Relf in 1973, in a previously unpublished photograph from The Times's archives. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY SETTLE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM32)

Mary Alice (left) and Minnie Lee at home in May. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HANNAH PRICE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM35)

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[***Republican Hangs On in District That Didn't Go for Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6163-XFM1-JBG3-637N-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Representative John Katko has managed to keep his seat in Central New York by distancing himself from the president. Will that be enough this year?

Two years ago, a pair of House Republicans in Central New York became prime targets for the Democratic Party, which had hoped to unseat them in the midterm elections by exploiting voters' unhappiness with President Trump.

The strategy partially worked: Claudia Tenney, a staunch Republican defender of Mr. Trump, was defeated by Anthony Brindisi, a Democrat. But Representative John M. Katko, a more moderate Republican, managed to hold off his Democratic challenger, Dana Balter.

All four candidates are back this year, and Mr. Trump seems even more of a divisive force now than in the midterm elections -- a factor that Democrats hope will push Ms. Balter to victory in the 24th Congressional District this time around.

The district, anchored in the city of Syracuse and dotted with farmlands and university towns, was one of the few House districts in the country whose voters favored Hillary Clinton in 2016, but which Republicans still hold.

''My overall sense is that people here are less interested in what party you're affiliated with than they are interested in who are you fighting for, whose side are you on,'' said Ms. Balter, a community organizer and former Syracuse University professor.

''One of the reasons that Congressman Katko had been successful in holding onto this seat is that he's been masquerading as a moderate for years,'' she added.

Indeed, Mr. Katko often references his history of working across party lines. He has voted for most Republican priorities, but he was one of 20 Republicans to vote against a G.O.P. bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act in 2017. In 2019, he was ranked the second most bipartisan member of Congress, according to an index released by the nonprofit Lugar Center and Georgetown University.

''That's a remarkable record and I'm very proud of that, because that's what this district wants,'' Mr. Katko, a former federal prosecutor, said during an October debate. ''I'm a centrist and a moderate, and I respect my opponent for her tenacity, but she is a far-left person and she just doesn't fit this district.''

Mr. Katko's campaign did not make the congressman available for an interview.

His moderate stances have enabled him to claim an unusual distinction: Mr. Katko's district is now the only Democratic-leaning House district in the country to be held by a Republican, according to the Cook Partisan Voter Index, which measures how strongly a district leans toward either party.

Cook ranked the contest between Mr. Katko and Ms. Balter as a tossup, as did a recent Siena College poll, which showed the candidates in a dead heat -- a reflection of Mr. Katko's strong crossover appeal, but also of Ms. Balter's headway as an upstart candidate.

''For years, Katko has been Democrats' white whale,'' said David Wasserman, House editor of the Cook Political Report. ''He's been able to survive in a Democratic district, but the problem this time is he endorsed Trump at the beginning of the year, when it looked that might benefit him politically with his base. But since then, Trump's fortunes have fallen.''

With a small likelihood of riding on Mr. Trump's coattails, Mr. Katko is aiming to reassemble the coalition that got him elected three times in a district that voted for President Barack Obama twice.

The strategy includes Republican voters, of course, but also enough independent voters, who account for 25 percent of active voters in the district, and Democrats to offset the edge Democrats currently hold over Republicans in voter registration.

The 24th District -- which borders Lake Ontario and includes all of Cayuga, Onondaga and Wayne Counties -- has a moderate streak, with a history of seesawing between representatives from both parties.

In 2016, when Ms. Clinton won the area by about four percentage points, Mr. Katko won his race in a landslide, making him one of the 25 Republicans to win in districts Ms. Clinton carried.

But buoyed by national anti-Trump fervor, Democrats flipped 22 of those Republican-held seats in 2018 to retake control of the House. Mr. Katko survived that trend, a testament to his shrewd handling of the electoral landscape despite Mr. Trump's unpopularity.

''Katko, to date, had been pretty good at weathering different political climates and storms,'' said Luke Perry, director of the Utica College Center of Public Affairs and Election Research. ''He was elected under multiple administrations and his favorability was always pretty good. But Biden has changed the dynamics.''

To win, Ms. Balter will also have to attract independent voters and win by wide enough margins in Syracuse, a liberal stronghold, to offset Mr. Katko's support in the rural counties.

Her brand of progressive policy stances, from expanding affordable health care to raising the minimum wage, resonates in a region with a ''Rust Belt mind-set,'' according to Bruce Gyory, a Democratic consultant.

She could also get a substantial boost from a big victory by Joseph R. Biden Jr. -- recent polls found he has a double-digit lead in the district -- especially if older voters and suburban women who have turned their backs on Mr. Trump turn out en masse and vote Democrat in down-ballot races.

Mr. Katko has outpaced his opponent in fund-raising, raising $3.5 million as of Oct. 14, compared with Ms. Balter's $2.7 million. He also had more cash on hand heading into the final stretch of the campaign.

But an influx of money from super PACs and both parties' congressional campaign committees has placed the race among the top 25 in the country to attract the most outside spending, with the majority of it, about $5.4 million, directed against Mr. Katko.

Amid an onslaught of negative ads in recent weeks, the candidates participated in their final debate on Sunday, when their differences -- and the ever-present shadow of Mr. Trump -- were on full display. They disagreed on everything from taxes and health care to climate change.

Ms. Balter sought to pin Mr. Trump's handling of the pandemic on Mr. Katko, who endorsed Mr. Trump in January -- a sharp contrast to 2016, when he called on Mr. Trump to drop out after the release of the ''Access Hollywood'' tape. He has said he wrote in the name of Nikki Haley, the former United Nations ambassador, on the 2016 presidential ballot.

''As I've said, Donald Trump is the most dangerous and corrupt president of our lifetime and is making us less safe with every passing week,'' Ms. Balter said. ''And it says a lot about the congressman's judgment that he chooses to endorse him.''

Mr. Katko, who has said he supports Mr. Trump's tax cuts and trade policies despite being troubled by the president's conduct and rhetoric, sought to assert his independence from the president.

''I'm not Donald Trump,'' said Mr. Katko, who voted against impeaching Mr. Trump, when asked if the race had devolved into a referendum on the president.

He added, ''For those who are undecided, please keep in mind that I'll work with anybody, including President Biden, if he wins.''

Ms. Balter, who taught public policy at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, her alma mater, has mostly centered her campaign on liberal policies, especially ''Medicare for all'' and getting corporate money out of politics.

On the campaign trail, she has pitched her personal story as one synonymous with that of ***working-class*** New Yorkers. She talks about her brother's cognitive disabilities, juggling three jobs in college and nearly going bankrupt after suffering a head injury and being denied health coverage.

Her race is one of three 2020 New York races the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee poured money into as part of its national Red to Blue program. The committee supported two other Republican seats that Democrats also came close to winning in 2018, on Long Island.

Two years ago, Mr. Brindisi made the committee's Red to Blue list, using its backing to defeat Ms. Tenney by 4,473 votes in the 22nd District, just east of Syracuse.

This year, the district has 28,000 more registered active Republicans than Democrats, and a sizable contingent of unaffiliated voters. In 2016, Mr. Trump won the district by 15 percentage points.

In her bid to reclaim her seat, Ms. Tenney has not shied away from the president, who endorsed her earlier this year, even though a recent poll indicated that Mr. Trump is far less popular in the 22nd District than he was four years ago.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/31/nyregion/house-races-katko-balter.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/31/nyregion/house-races-katko-balter.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Dana Balter, center, in the Westcott section of Syracuse. She is trying to unseat the Republican John Katko in the 24th district. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HEATHER AINSWORTH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Mr. Katko has kept his seat in a Democratic-leaning district with a record as one of the most moderate Republicans in Congress. (POOL PHOTO BY ANNA MONEYMAKER)

**Load-Date:** October 31, 2020

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[***Seeking No Opportunities***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64TK-G0N1-DXY4-X32H-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 4051 words

**Byline:** By Noreen Malone

**Body**

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I used to think of my job as existing in its own little Busytown -- as in the Richard Scarry books, where there's a small, bright village of workers, each focused on a single job, whose paths all cross in the course of one busy, busy day. In my neighborhood in Brooklyn, I would see the same person at the Myrtle Avenue bus stop several days a week and imagine where he was going with his Dell laptop bag and black sneakers. I'd buy coffee from a rotating cast of the same baristas at the cafe on the third floor of my office building, where I worked as an editor at a magazine. I'd stop to chat with another editor, whose office was on the other side of the wall from mine; sometimes, she would motion for me to shut the door, and we would say what we really thought about some piece of minor professional gossip, important to at most about 3.5 people in the world. I would watch my boss walk toward a meeting with his boss and wonder whether their chat would wind up affecting my job.

We all mostly worked on computers, typing in documents and sending emails to the person on the other side of a cubicle wall, but there was a bustle to the whole endeavor. It was a little terrarium where we all spent 50 hours a week, and we filled it with office snacks and bathroom outfit compliments and after-work drinks. Even on a day when nothing much happened professionally, there was the feeling of having worked, of playing your part in an ecosystem.

Every job had its own Busytown. Although no one in the broader world wanted to talk about, say, cost-cutting strategies for a potential new client, you could find someone in your Busytown who was just as preoccupied about it as you were. In Scarry's actual Busytown, meanwhile, the world is populated by people (OK, animals) who find it very easy to explain their jobs. They're policemen and grocers and postmen and doctors and nurses. When the pandemic hit, the people with those Scarry-style jobs had to keep going to work. Their Busytowns rolled on. And actually, those jobs got harder.

Everyone else has lost all touch with theirs. They log on to Slack and Zoom, where their co-workers are two-dimensional or avatars, and every day is just like the last one. Depending on what's happening with the virus, their children might be there again, just as in March 2020, demanding attention and sapping mental energy. The internet is definitely there, always, demanding attention and sapping mental energy. A job feels like just one more incursion, demanding attention and sapping mental energy.

And it didn't help that, early in the pandemic, all jobs were pointedly rebranded: essential or nonessential. Neither label feels good. There is still plenty of purpose to be found in a job that isn't in one of the helper professions, of course. But ''nonessential'' is a word that invites creeping nihilism. This thing we filled at least eight to 10 hours of the day with, five days a week, for years and decades, missed family dinners for ... was it just busy work? Perhaps that's what it was all along.

For the obviously essential workers -- I.C.U. nurses, pulmonologists -- the burden of being needed is a costly one. The word ''burnout,'' promiscuously applied these days, was in fact coined to diagnose exhaustion in medical workers (in a more quaint time, when we weren't heading into the third year of a multiwave global pandemic). And meanwhile, a vast majority of people deemed essential have jobs like Amazon warehouse worker or cashier. To be told that society can't function without you, and that you must risk your health to come in, while other people push around marketing reports from home -- often for much more money -- it becomes difficult not to wonder if ''essential'' is cynical, a polite way of classing humans as ''expendable'' or ''nonexpendable.''

Teachers, who happen to be both highly unionized and college-educated, haven't taken kindly to being on the expendable end of the equation, asked to work in person with tiny people who aren't good at distancing and masking and have spent the past years cooped up. In early January, I read an article in The Times about the drama between the Chicago teachers' union and the city over in-person instruction. When classes were abruptly canceled, a mother who worked as a bank teller had taken her child in for day care, provided by nonunionized school employees. (Day care workers: even further down the ugly new caste lines than teachers.) ''I understand they want to be safe, but I have to work,'' the bank teller said of her child's teachers. ''I don't understand why they are so special.'' This kind of comparison can curdle people's relationships to one another -- and to their own jobs.

Essential or nonessential, remote or in person, almost no one I know likes work very much at the moment. The primary emotion that a job elicits right now is the determination to endure: If we can just get through the next set of months, maybe things will get better.

The act of working has been stripped bare. You don't have little outfits to put on, and lunches to go to, and coffee breaks to linger over and clients to schmooze. The office is where it shouldn't be -- at home, in our intimate spaces -- and all that's left now is the job itself, naked and alone. And a lot of people don't like what they see.

There are two kinds of stories being told about work right now. One is a labor-market story, and because that's a little dull and quite confusing, it's mixed up with the second one, which is about the emotional relationship of American workers to their jobs and to their employers. The Great Resignation is the phrase that has been used, a little incorrectly, to describe each story.

It's true that we're in the midst of a ''quitagion,'' as this paper has jauntily termed it, citing the record number of people (4.5 million) who gave notice in November alone. An estimated 25 million people left their jobs in the second half of 2021; it's all but certain that this is the highest U.S. quit rate since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began tracking those numbers in 2000.

The labor market, as economists like to say, is tight: Employment statistics are strong and getting stronger. Despite inflation, real income is up across all income levels. It's a remarkable turnaround, following the early pandemic's horrific job losses, which disproportionately affected the lowest earners and those with little job security. Many of the recent quitters have been on the lower part of the income ladder. They're getting or seeking better work, for more money, because they can. And that kind of labor market means at least some lower-income workers get to think about their jobs the way the white-collar class more traditionally has, as something that needs to work for them, rather than the other way around.

But those top-line numbers obscure a muddier truth. After the latest employment numbers were released in February (which seemed to show remarkable job growth and an unemployment rate of 4 percent), one B.L.S. economist took to his Substack to call it the ''most complicated job report ever.'' In addition to those workers trying to trade their way into objectively better jobs, millions of others have simply left the work force -- because they're sick, or taking care of children, or retiring, or just plain miserable.

The precise reasons are a little mysterious. The jobs recovery isn't spread evenly across industries, nor is the quit rate. Staffing levels in the leisure and hospitality sectors are still 10 percent lower than they were prepandemic, and according to December's job report, people who work in hotels and restaurants are the most likely to have quit. Eight percent of all jobs in health care are open right now. There are almost 400,000 fewer health care workers now than there were before the pandemic. As LinkedIn's chief economist put it to CBS News, ''It may not just be worth it for some folks.''

Even among the people who were technically employed, a sizable number were unable to work because of child care issues or sick leave. Add to that the fact that many people who would prefer full-time work with benefits are still working on employers' terms, which means part-time, unstable employment, as The Times's Noam Scheiber recently reported. And if you dig into the quit numbers for higher-wage workers, it's still hardly about people going on ''Eat, Pray, Love'' journeys. The full picture just isn't that rosy.

It's also not entirely a fluke of this moment. For decades, job productivity has been increasing while real wages haven't. People were already stretched thin. The writer Anne Helen Petersen, who has made a specialty of truffle-hunting for the millennial internet's preoccupations, recently wrote a book about professional-class burnout based on a viral 2019 BuzzFeed article she wrote on the same subject. (Her lead personal example involved not getting around to having her knives sharpened.) I was in a particularly stressful moment of a management job at the time and would Google the symptoms of burnout late at night, on a private browser screen. But I was allergic to people talking ostentatiously about it, and I was embarrassed by the indulgence of the language, or, maybe, what I saw as the self-importance of it.

Now, though, it's as if our whole society is burned out. The pandemic may have alerted new swaths of people to their distaste for their jobs -- or exhausted them past the point where there's anything to enjoy about jobs they used to like.

Perhaps that's why the press is filled with stories about widespread employee dissatisfaction; last month an Insider article declared that companies ''are actively driving their white-collar workers away by presuming that employees are still thinking the way they did before the pandemic: that their jobs are the most important things in their lives,'' and pointed to a Gallup poll that showed that last year only a third of American workers said they were engaged in their jobs.

At Amazon, in its managerial ranks, employee departures have reached what is being seen as a ''crisis'' level, according to Bloomberg's Brad Stone. (A source told him that the turnover rate was as high as 50 percent in some groups, although Amazon disputes this.) One woman, leaving her job, posted in an internal listserv she started called Momazonian, which has more than 5,000 members. ''While it has been an incredibly rewarding place to work, the pressure often feels relentless and at times, unnecessary,'' she wrote, in a Jerry Maguire screed for the careful networker set; she also copied senior vice presidents and some board members.

It's not an accident that it was the moms' affinity group where she aired that feeling. A McKinsey study from last year showed that 42 percent of women feel burned out, compared with 32 percent in 2020. (For men, it jumped to 35 percent from 28 percent.) At the beginning of the pandemic, the working world lost more than 3.5 million mothers, according to the Census Bureau; and the National Women's Law Center found that in early 2021, women's labor-force participation was at a 33-year-low, returning us all the way back to the era when ''Working Girl'' was revolutionary. Many of those women haven't come back.

So the numbers are bad enough. But then there's the way the hard facts of the economy interact with our emotions. Consider this theory: that the current office ennui was simply the inevitable backlash to the punishing culture of the previous decade's #ThankGodItsMonday culture. And furthermore, sometime around the rise of #MeToo (and after Donald Trump's election), ambition began to seem like a mug's game. The enormous personal costs of getting to the top became clear, and the potential warping effects of being in charge also did. It wasn't just the bad sexually harassing bosses who were fired but the toxic ones, too, and soon enough we began to question the whole way power in the office worked. What started out as a hopeful moment turned depressing fast. Power structures were interrogated but rarely dismantled, a middle ground that left everyone feeling pretty bad about the ways of the world. It became harder to trust anyone who was your boss and harder to imagine wanting to become one. Covid was an accelerant, but the match was already lit.

Recently, I stumbled across the latest data on happiness from the General Social Survey, a gold-standard poll that has been tracking Americans' attitudes since 1972. It's shocking. Since the pandemic began, Americans' happiness has cratered. The graph looks like the heart rate has plunged and they're paging everyone on the floor to revive the patient. For the first time since the survey began, more people say they're not too happy than say they're very happy.

The plague, the death, the supply chain, long lines at the post office, the collapse of many aspects of civil society might all play a role in that statistic. But in his classic 1951 study of the office-working middle class, the sociologist C. Wright Mills observed that ''while the modern white-collar worker has no articulate philosophy of work, his feelings about it and his experiences of it influence his satisfactions and frustrations, the whole tone of his life.'' I remember a friend once saying that although her husband wasn't depressed, he hated his job, and it was effectively like living with a depressed person.

After the latest job report, the economist and Times columnist Paul Krugman estimated that people's confidence in the economy was about 12 points lower than it ought to have been, given that wages were up. As the pandemic drags on, either the numbers aren't able to quantify how bad things have become or people seem to have persuaded themselves that things are worse than they actually are.

It's not in just the data where the words ''job satisfaction'' seem to have become a paradox. It's also present in the cultural mood about work. Not long ago, a young editor I follow on Instagram posted a response to a question someone posed to her: What's your dream job? Her reply, a snappy internet-screwball comeback, was that she did not ''dream of labor.'' I suspect that she is ambitious. I know that she is excellent at understanding the zeitgeist.

It is in the air, this anti-ambition. These days, it's easy to go viral by appealing to a generally presumed lethargy, especially if you can come up with the kind of languorous, wry aphorisms that have become this generation's answer to the printer-smashing scene in ''Office Space.'' (The film was released in 1999, in the middle of another hot labor market, when the unemployment rate was the lowest it had been in 30 years.) ''Sex is great, but have you ever quit a job that was ruining your mental health?'' went one tweet, which has more than 300,000 likes. Or: ''I hope this email doesn't find you. I hope you've escaped, that you're free.'' (168,000 likes.) If the tight labor market is giving low-wage workers a taste of upward mobility, a lot of office workers (or ''office,'' these days) seem to be thinking about our jobs more like the way many ***working-class*** people have forever. As just a job, a paycheck to take care of the bills! Not the sum total of us, not an identity.

Even elite lawyers seem to be losing their taste for workplace gunning. Last year, Reuters reported an unusual wave of attrition at big firms in New York City -- noting that many of the lawyers had decided to take a pay cut to work fewer hours or move to a cheaper area or work in tech. It's happening in finance, too: At Citi, according to New York magazine, an analyst typed ''I hate this job, I hate this bank, I want to jump out the window'' in a chat, prompting human resources to check on his mental health. ''This is a consensus opinion,'' he explained to H.R. ''This is how everyone feels.''

Things get weird when employers try to address this discontent. Amazon's warehouse workers have, for the past year, been asked to participate in a wellness program aimed at reducing on-the-job injuries. The company recently came under fire for the reporting that some of its drivers are pushed so hard to perform that they've taken to urinating in bottles, and warehouse employees, for whom every move is tracked, live in fear of being fired for working too slowly. But now, for those warehouse workers, Amazon has introduced a program called AmaZen: ''Employees can visit AmaZen stations and watch short videos featuring easy-to-follow well-being activities, including guided meditations [and] positive affirmations.'' It's self-care with a dystopian bent, in which the solution for blue-collar job burnout is ... screen time.

The cultural mood toward the office even appears in the television shows that knowledge workers obsessed over. Consider ''Mad Men,'' a show set during the peaking economy of the late 1960s. It was a show that found work romantic. I don't mean the office affairs. I mean that the characters were in love with their work (or angrily sometimes out of love, but that's a passion of its own). More than that, their careers and the little dramas of their daily work -- the presentations to clients, the office politics -- gave their lives a sense of purpose. (At the show's end, Don Draper went to a resort that looks an awful lot like Esalen to find out the meaning of life, and meditated his way into a transformative ... Coke ad campaign.)

Peggy Olson, the striving adwoman on the make, has recently been taken up as the patron saint of quitters. An image of her shows up frequently illustrating articles about people leaving their jobs, sometimes in GIF form. In it, Olson is wearing sunglasses, carrying a box of office stuff. She has a cigarette dangling from her mouth, off to the side for maximum self-assurance. But she isn't actually quitting in that scene. Instead, she's walking into a new, better job at a different agency. The swagger she has comes from ambition, not from opting out.

That show was on the air from 2007 to 2015, at the peak of what sometimes gets called hustle culture (and Obama-era optimism). Back then -- just before, during and after a psyche-shattering global recession -- work had betrayed large swaths of the population, but many (at least those who were better off, for whom the economy recovered much more quickly) took that as inspiration to work harder, to short-circuit the problems of employment with entrepreneurship, or the dreams of it. Start a company! Build a brand! Become a girlboss! (A word that used to be a compliment, not an insult.)

Now, Sunday nights are for ''Succession,'' the beloved pitch-black workplace drama of the post-Trump nihilistic years. On that show, whose third season recently came to a close, work is a corrupting force. The Roy family is ruined not by their money but by their collective desire to run a conglomerate. Ambition perverts the love between parent and child, husband and wife, brother and sister. Even the from-nothing strivers on the show are ruined by their jobs. It's a Greek tragedy filtered through the present moment, in which every bit of labor is said to happen under late capitalism, and all the jobs are burnout jobs.

When ''Succession'' was over, the office workers of America got up off the couch, and they turned off the TV. They dozed off thinking about the psychological abuse the Roys heap on one another and their Waystar Royco underlings, then sat on the same couch Monday morning.

It's important to acknowledge that some people have reacted to this moment by becoming less cynical about the possibilities of work. The broader world is getting darker -- climate change, crumbling democracy. It feels impossible to change it. But work? Work could change. An idealistic generation has set about demanding a utopian world, on a local scale, in their own little Busytowns. More diversity, more attention to structural racism, better hours, better boundaries, better leave policies, better bosses.

At some companies, it finally feels as if the old hierarchies are being upended, and the top-paid people are running a little scared of their underlings, rather than the other way around. (No one has much sympathy for managers, and it's true, as Don Draper once told Peggy Olson, that's what the money is for. But steering a company through the past few years has been its own particular challenge.)

Confronted with this world, many young people with professional options want to be in solidarity with their colleagues instead of climbing the ladder above them. The meaning that they once found in work is now found in trying to make the workplace itself better. At Authentic, a Democratic consulting firm, some members of the unionized staff are refusing to work a contract serving Senator Kyrsten Sinema. Unionized think-tankers at the Center for American Progress, which tends to serve as a pipeline to coveted roles in Democratic presidential administrations, threatened to strike in mid-February over their wages. Some congressional staff members have begun the process of forming a union.

I'm now on staff at a digital news site that is unionized; I marvel at the fact that I can have a job with a title like ''editor at large'' and all the benefits that come from union membership. At Google, home of plush offices and free meals, 400 of its highly paid engineers formed a union in early 2021. The professional managerial classes -- as Bernie Sanders supporters called that slice of the white-collar work force pejoratively -- are in the middle of developing a class consciousness.

So some of the most prestigious offices are organizing, and the college-educated make up a larger slice of the union pie than ever, thanks largely to growth among teachers' unions. But union membership, more broadly, is at an all-time low. Those warehouse employees at Amazon voted against unionization in Alabama last year. (A federal review board found that Amazon had improperly pressured staff members against forming a union, and ordered a revote, which will take place in five weeks.) Amazon workers might end up voting to join a union. Starbucks employees are starting the process, too. But somehow, workplace protections still seem in danger of becoming one more luxury item that accrues to the privileged.

Perhaps there's no better example of this than what happened at Goldman Sachs last year. Junior bankers in San Francisco felt alienated over their long hours, what they considered low pay and lack of Seamless stipends while working from home. They made a formal presentation to their office's top executives, relying on survey data they gathered that showed, for instance, that three-quarters of them felt they had been victims of workplace abuse. It was something a little like collective action by America's future elite.

One lead organizer of that action was, as Bloomberg reported, the son of the vice chairman of TPG Capital, a private-equity firm. His father, a creature of a previous zeitgeist, got his start working for Michael Milken at Drexel Burnham Lambert, the famously competitive (and corrupt) investment bank.

The son's hostile takeover worked. The Goldman analysts got their base pay raised by nearly 30 percent. New York magazine reported that while at least five of the 13 analysts from the protest cohort in San Francisco had already left Goldman (four of whom were women of color), the bank was having no trouble recruiting college students to join the next class of analysts.

The Goldman raise is a reminder of a cold, hard fact. One that is explained in the very first sentence of Richard Scarry's ''What Do People Do All Day?'': ''We all live in Busytown and we are all workers. We work hard so that there will be enough food and houses and clothing for our families.'' Work is mainly, really, about making money to live. And then trying to make some more. A boring, ancient story. The future of work might be more like its past than anyone admits.

Noreen Malone is an editor at large for Slate Magazine. In 2015, she won a George Polk Award and a Newswomen's Club award for her reporting in New York magazine on the women who accused Bill Cosby of rape and sexual assault.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/15/magazine/anti-ambition-age.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/15/magazine/anti-ambition-age.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by María Jesús Contreras FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 20, 2022

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[***The 50 Best Movies on Max Right Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65G7-G581-DXY4-X114-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** In addition to new Warner and HBO films, the streamer has a treasure trove of Golden Age classics, indie flicks and foreign films. Start with these.

**Body**

In addition to new Warner and HBO films, the streamer has a treasure trove of Golden Age classics, indie flicks and foreign films. Start with these.

When [*HBO Max*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/hbo) debuted in May 2020, subscribers rightfully expected (and got) the formidable catalog of prestige television associated with the HBO brand. But its movie library drew from a much deeper well. Warner Bros. Discovery, which owns HBO, is a huge conglomerate, and its premiere streaming service comprises decades of titles from Warner Bros., Turner Classic Movies, Studio Ghibli and more. Viewed in that light, its recent rebranding as Max seems fitting.

That means a lot of large-scale fantasy series and selections from the DC extended universe. Max is also an education in Golden Age Hollywood classics and in independent and foreign auteurs like Federico Fellini, Satyajit Ray and John Cassavetes. The list below is an effort to recommend a diverse range of movies — old and new, foreign and domestic, all-ages and adults-only — that cross genres and cultures while appealing to casual and serious movie-watchers alike. (Note: Streaming services sometimes remove titles or change starting dates without notice.)

Here are our lists of the [*best movies*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/best-movies-netflix.html) and [*TV shows on Netflix*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/best-tv-shows-netflix.html), the [*best movies on Amazon Prime Video*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/best-movies-amazon-prime.html) and the best of [*everything on Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/best-movies-shows-hulu.html) and [*Disney+*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/best-tv-shows-movies-disney-plus.html).

‘Heretic’ (2024)

There’s a thin line between the Hugh Grant who played the debonair charmer in rom-coms like “Notting Hill” and “Four Weddings and a Funeral” and the one who deploys those same ingratiating qualities to sinister effect in “Heretic.” The two young Mormon missionaries (Sophie Thatcher and Chloe East) who turn up at his doorstep in snowy Colorado are not supposed to enter without another woman present, but Grant’s Mr. Reed easily coerces them, setting up a terrifying ordeal that doubles as a surprisingly provocative debate over spiritual values. Of Grant’s performance, [*Manohla Dargis wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/07/movies/heretic-review-hugh-grant.html) “the pleasure he exudes as an irredeemable fiend is plenty seductive.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/12199308-9afb-460b-9d79-9d54b5d2514c)

‘The Women’ (1939)

Produced at the peak of Hollywood’s Golden Age, George Cukor’s rambunctious comedy, featuring women in all of its 130-plus speaking roles, remains a delightful time capsule both for its depiction of a certain class of American women and as a showcase for some of the era’s biggest stars. Opening at a decadent spa abuzz with the gossip of Manhattan’s elite, “The Women” pokes at a hornet’s nest of rumors and scandals, starting with Norma Shearer as a wealthy, contented housewife whose life unravels over news that her husband is having an affair with a shopgirl (Joan Crawford). Rosalind Russell, Joan Fontaine, Paulette Goddard and other familiar faces add to the screwball entanglements, which toggle from New York high society to the divorce capital Reno, Nev. [*Frank S. Nugent called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1939/09/22/archives/the-screen-four-films-in-review-featured-in-new-pictures-here.html) “so marvelous we believe every studio in Hollywood should make at least one thoroughly nasty picture a year.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/8da69223-0c8c-4860-9c53-94e54e329792)

‘The Host’ (2007)

Part of a wave of Korean films that hit festivals and art houses in the early-to-mid aughts, “The Host” was a breakthrough film for Bong Joon Ho, whose facility for mixing horror, black comedy and family drama would win him the Oscar for best picture years later for “Parasite.” Bong kicks off the action with an audacious daytime effects sequence, as a sea monster created by pollutants rises out of the Han River and terrorizes the populace, including a ne’er-do-well food vendor (Song Kang Ho) whose daughter goes missing. As a craftsman, Bong stages big set pieces with a commercial bravado that suggests Steven Spielberg, but the serio-comic family dynamic at the heart of “The Host” feels entirely his own. [*Manohla Dargis called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/09/movies/09host.html) “a loopy, feverishly imaginative genre hybrid.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/c835f746-a4dd-4ca6-98db-d69282bddcbc)

‘Flow’ (2024)

The little Latvian animated film that could, Gints Zilbalodis’s low-budget odyssey, crafted entirely on an open-source software called Blender, won the Oscar over nominees from Hollywood animation goliaths like Pixar and DreamWorks. Over a wordless, mesmerizing 84 minutes, “Flow” follows a scrawny, intrepid cat that scrambles for survival during an cataclysmic flood that seems to have wiped out the human population. When the cat makes its way onto a boat, it befriends a quirky group of other survivors, including a yellow Labrador, a lemur, a capybara and a secretary bird that’s lost its flock. [*Calum Marsh wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/11/21/movies/flow-review.html) that Zilbalodis’s commitment to having his characters act like real animals “makes the emotion that much more powerful.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/83df1c2b-db9d-49cd-bf83-9ddbaa7e5e30)

‘Speed’ (1994)

Though it might be described as “Die Hard” on wheels, “Speed” set a new benchmark for high-concept action filmmaking, following through on the juicy premise of a hijacking in which a Los Angeles city bus can’t drive below 50 m.p.h. or a bomb onboard will detonate. In a star-making role, Sandra Bullock plays a passenger who reluctantly gets behind the wheel after the driver is shot and she has off-the-charts chemistry with Keanu Reeves, who turns up as a SWAT bomb disposal officer who tries to steer her in the right direction. It’s probably best not to think about the collateral damage of this bus smashing through stalled L.A. thoroughfares and pedestrian walkways and just enjoy the ride. [*As Janet Maslin wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/06/10/movies/review-film-an-express-bus-in-a-very-fast-lane.html), “this film’s sole objective is to keep moving, preferably at a pace that keeps the viewer from asking questions.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/d9598019-0c78-422c-bec9-88f58b56ecd9)

‘Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me’ (1992)

Booed at Cannes and mostly derided by critics who’d lost patience with “Twin Peaks” as it ended its two-season run on network television, David Lynch’s prequel about the tragic final days of Laura Palmer (Sheryl Lee) has since been embraced as a vital precursor to explicit, structurally audacious Lynch thrillers like “Lost Highway” and “Mulholland Drive.” Where the series could only hint at the darkness that swallowed Palmer, a high school student in an idyllic mountain town, “Fire Walk With Me” explores her toxic love triangle, her disturbed father (Ray Wise), her struggles with drug addiction and other evils lurking in the shadows. Unlike other prequels, the film doesn’t content itself with filling in the back story, but attempts to reinvent the “Twin Peaks” franchise on a new, forward-thinking set of terms.

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/807f20d8-c188-40e7-ae40-355d99b2dafd)

‘The Iron Claw’ (2023)

Though the title of Sean Durkin’s biopic about Von Erich family of wrestlers refers to a signature finishing move the patriarch (Holt McCallany) passed along to his sons (played here by Zac Efron and Jeremy Allen White, among others), it could just as easily describe his domineering toxicity or the cold hand of fate. The cascading tragedies that faced the real Von Erichs as they rose to prominence in the Reagan-era ’80s are so awful that Durkin dials back on them a little while still capturing the scene and the tender brotherly love that transcend all that loss. [*Manohla Dargis found*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/21/movies/the-iron-claw-review-zac-efron.html) “pleasure and meaning in the sons’ roughhousing and camaraderie, as well as beauty, heat and melancholy in their heartbreakingly fleeting physical perfection.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/fa5b9ea1-cd7f-42c9-9be9-2a48ece645f5)

‘Moonage Daydream’ (2022)

After fashioning home movie footage and other visually striking odd-and-ends into the superb documentary “[*Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/24/movies/review-kurt-cobain-montage-of-heck-a-documentary-by-brett-morgen.html),” the director Brett Morgen once again rejects the cookie-cutter storytelling of most music biopics for “Moonage Daydream,” a sumptuous impression of David Bowie’s career. Without the benefit of talking heads to offer biographical details, Morgen instead draws on archival footage to convey Bowie’s unique power as a chameleonic glam-rock icon and conceptual artist. It’s more experiential than informational, and all the better for it. [*As A.O. Scott put it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/15/movies/moonage-daydream-review-david-bowie.html), Bowie “is not so much the subject of the film as its animating spirit.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/2b485cf0-ac93-47ca-aa70-735f6a2776e0)

‘Call Me By Your Name’ (2017)

Made with piercing tenderness, insight and sun-kissed sensuality, Luca Guadagnino’s coming-of-age film is a showcase for Timothée Chalamet, who channels the intense emotion and vulnerability of first love. In the idyllic climes of rural Northern Italy during the summer of 1983, Chalamet’s 17-year-old loner mostly sticks to books and music, but when his father (Michael Stuhlbarg), an archaeology professor, brings in a 24-year-old grad student (Armie Hammer) to stay with the family, the two young men develop feelings for each other. Praising his typically luxuriant style — to say nothing of a soundtrack that gives Psychedelic Furs’s “Love My Way” a crucial supporting role — [*Manohla Dargis wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/movies/call-me-by-your-name-review-armie-hammer.html), “You don’t just watch Luca Guadagnino’s movies, you swoon into them.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/fecb0795-bd1f-43c8-b89d-c83585a9cd28)

‘Support the Girls’ (2018)

An ensemble comedy about the women working at a downscale Hooters-like “breastaurant” called Double Whammies may sound like lowbrow juvenilia, but Andrew Bujalski’s rambunctious slice-of-life happens to be one of the great modern American films about labor. Set over the course of one chaotic day, “Support the Girls” is anchored by a terrific Regina Hall performance as a manager putting out several fires at once, from a cable outage and an office robbery to the various personal catastrophes that beset her waitressing staff. [*Manohla Dargis praised Bujalski*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/23/movies/support-the-girls-review-regina-hall.html) for creating “modest, layered worlds and identifiably true characters, filling them in with details borrowed from life rather than the multiplex.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/26fcf896-5930-4eb1-a35a-cae3087bea6d)

‘Taxi Driver’ (1976)

Still shocking and endlessly imitated after half a century, Martin Scorsese’s vision of urban alienation and psychosis burrows into the troubled conscience of Travis Bickle (Robert De Niro), a New York cabbie whose sick fixations eventually lead to bloodshed. After his pursuit of an attractive campaign worker (Cybill Shepherd) falls flat, Travis decides to take action to “wipe the scum off the streets,” focusing first on a political candidate and later on a pimp (Harvey Keitel) with an underage prostitute (Jodie Foster). Within this repugnant character, Scorsese and screenwriter Paul Schrader find intense loneliness and suffering while noting larger ironies about American violence. [*Vincent Canby called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1976/02/15/archives/film-view-scorseses-disturbing-taxi-driver.html) “one of the most compelling portraits of a lunatic personality.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/f9037f52-1ca0-4c86-8817-07f23834bf33)

‘It Follows’ (2015)

The “it” in “It Follows,” an ingenious and hair-raising twist on the zombie movie, takes some explaining: The being is a slow-moving menace that can take any form and follow one person without stopping, unless that person “passes” the problem on to someone else through sexual contact. (Though if the second person is killed, it goes back to hunting the first.) Yes, there’s a metaphor here about the lethal nature of nascent sexuality, but “It Follows” mainly works as a stylistic tour de force, with the writer-director David Robert Mitchell constantly destabilizing the audience through a scanning camera and the suggestive use of offscreen space. [*Stephen Holden wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/13/movies/review-in-it-follows-a-shape-shifting-horror-stalks-a-teenager.html) that the film “abides by a principle that few horror movies have the courage to embrace: The unknown is the unknown.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://www.max.com/movies/it-follows/0067ef08-556d-48e4-9c32-4412ad43eacf)

‘We Are the Best!’ (2013)

With films from the late ’90s and early ’00s like “Show Me Love,” “Together” and “Lilya 4-ever,” the Swedish director Lukas Moodysson displayed a special sensitivity toward the experiences of wayward adolescents. Adapted from his wife Coco’s graphic novel “Never Goodnight,” Moodysson’s “We Are the Best!” was a return to form, capturing the rebellious spirit of two androgynous 13-year-old girls as they start a punk band in 1982 Stockholm. Who cares if punk is dead? Who cares if they’ve never played an instrument before? They become increasingly determined to express themselves no matter what it looks or sounds like, and the film celebrates them infectiously. [*A.O. Scott wrote that the film*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/30/movies/we-are-the-best-from-lukas-moodysson.html) “feels less like a nostalgic period piece than like a messy, urgent bulletin from a time that is barely past.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/da47b511-9097-48cc-a686-3b24f5471c86)

‘Showing Up’ (2022)

As one of the best truly independent American filmmakers, the director Kelly Reichardt (“First Cow,” “Wendy and Lucy”) teaches as an artist-in-residence at Bard College when she’s not making movies. To that end, “Showing Up” is an inspiring statement of purpose, a low-key and perfectly proportioned comedy about a sculptor (Michelle Williams) preparing for her next exhibit at a local gallery while managing the hassles of academia as a professor. She operates with measured expectations for her art and her life, save maybe for insisting that her flighty landlord (Hong Chau) finally fix the hot water heater. [*Manohla Dargis called*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/06/movies/showing-up-review-michelle-williams.html) Reichardt “interested in abstract ideas and everyday intangibles, but her filmmaking is precisely grounded in the material world.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/6793f043-416f-457f-8bb6-1f7650c40886)

‘The Accountant’ (2016)

If you go into “The Accountant” looking for hot bookmaking action, the film delivers more than expected. Ben Affleck, portraying an autistic accountant, untangles the financial chicanery at a robotics firm. But he also happens to be trained in martial arts and weaponry, making him a tough target for a Treasury agent (J.K. Simmons) who wants him for crimes related to his freelance work for cartels and other criminal organizations. It may seem silly to consider this John Wick-style killer with a ledger, but the film is well-cast and entertaining, with Anna Kendrick adding warmth and mild buddy chemistry as a fellow C.P.A. turned potential corporate whistle-blower.

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/79c82925-2e6e-48eb-8534-6a5dfcb9378d)

‘Janet Planet’ (2024)

In her debut feature as a writer-director, the acclaimed playwright Annie Baker beautifully and often hilariously evokes the lives of a progressive single mother (Julianne Nicholson) and her anxious, eccentric 11-year-old daughter (Zoe Ziegler) in early ’90s rural Massachusetts. As mom burns through a series of roommates and boyfriends — the film unfolds like neat little short stories around each — her child struggles to make friends while clinging to her for companionship. Although Baker pokes fun at the touchy-feely excesses of alternative communities, “Janet Planet” celebrates the integrity of those living outside the mainstream. [*Alissa Wilkinson called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/20/movies/janet-planet-review.html) “so carefully constructed, so loaded with details and emotions and gentle comedy, that it’s impossible to shake once it gets under your skin.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/91e3f9ea-e652-4754-814a-9b06d5bc3127)

‘Civil War’ (2024)

Throughout his career as an author, screenwriter and director, Alex Garland has frequently considered the collapse of civilization, whether it’s among idealistic young adventurers in South Asia (“The Beach”) or survivors of a zombie outbreak in England (“28 Days Later”). While his provocative “Civil War” avoids the red-state/blue-state dichotomies that currently roil the country, the film imagines a bleak future where America has collapsed into violence and a team of journalists follow a rebel faction as it pushes its way into Washington D.C. Garland intentionally makes “Civil War” an ideological Rorschach blot in order to suggest what humans are capable of doing when order breaks down. [*Manohla Dargis called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/11/movies/civil-war-review.html) “a blunt, gut-twisting work of speculative fiction.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/b04dd538-d36d-40da-aa25-210cdcb14748)

‘Take Out’ (2004)

For his debut feature — which he co-wrote and directed with Shih-Ching Tsou, a producer on several of his subsequent projects — Sean Baker makes an asset out of limited resources while flashing the high-wire urgency and urban grind of future films like “Tangerine” and “Anora.” With the look and feel of DIY nonfiction, “Take Out” chronicles a hectic all-day shift for Ming Ding (Charles Jang), an undocumented Chinese immigrant desperate to double his usual tip money as a delivery man in order to pay down his debt to smugglers. Between the driving rain, fussy customers and one ugly twist of fate, he has his work cut out for him. The payment he owes is less than a fourth of this movie’s reported [*$3,000 budget*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/05/nyregion/05takeout.html).

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/56a5a481-a4b1-49a1-9d0c-d2e66364eed9)

‘Knife in the Water’ (1963)

With his first feature, Roman Polanski immediately established himself as major emerging talent, bringing a sense of danger and Hitchcockian flair to this self-contained psychological thriller about a boating trip gone awry. While en route to a sailing excursion on a lake, a couple (Leon Niemczyk and Jolanta Umecka) nearly run over a hitchhiker (Zygmunt Malanowicz) on the road and, in a conciliatory gesture, invite the inexperienced young man on board. The stranger’s presence leads to confrontation and an inevitably violent love triangle, with Polanski making the most of the tight spaces and open sea. [*Bosley Crowther called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1963/10/29/archives/screen-polands-knife-in-the-waterdrama-involves-three-persons-in-a.html) “a devilish dissection of man in one of his more childish and ridiculous aspects.”[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/4581b46d-1ec5-43f6-a2bf-9a5c8016be50)

‘The Florida Project’ (2017)

It may sound like every child’s dream to live close to Disney World, but for the energetic 6-year-old Moonee (Brooklynn Prince) and her friends, who live in a purple hotel in Kissimmee, Fla., they experience the Magic Kingdom mostly through tourist shops and the noisy helicopter rides that take off near their building. With his serio-comic “The Florida Project,” the indie stalwart Sean Baker (“Anora”) directs attention to life on the fringes of American monoculture while staying close to an unsupervised protagonist whose days are both liberated and perilous. [*As A.O. Scott wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/05/movies/the-florida-project-review-sean-baker-willem-dafoe.html), “To balance joy and desperation as gracefully as Mr. Baker does — to interweave giddiness and heartbreak — is no easy feat.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/c88d7058-561a-49e5-b8a0-66d90611398b)

‘Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai’ (2000)

Occupying a supercool space between the existential crime films of Jean-Pierre Melville, American and Japanese gangster thrillers and his own deadpan comedies like “Stranger Than Paradise,” Jim Jarmusch’s “Ghost Dog” imagines how samurai code might apply to the modern-day mafia. Set to a thumping score by the Wu-Tang Clan’s RZA, the film stars Forest Whitaker as a peerless hit man whose loyalty to a midlevel gangster (John Tormey) is tested after a job goes sideways and the mob decides to turn on him. Naturally, Jarmusch’s principled urban warrior isn’t an easy man to kill. [*A.O. Scott wrote that Jarmusch*](https://www.nytimes.com/2000/03/03/movies/film-review-passions-of-emptiness.html) “has composed a ruminative, bittersweet visual essay on brutality, honor and tribalism.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/376da9d5-e28e-4aa4-96a1-09e8feb9dc05)

‘A Day in the Country’ (1946)

Few unfinished works feel as close to perfection as Jean Renoir’s “A Day in the Country,” a 41-minute short feature that he filmed in 1936 but wasn’t edited and released until a decade later, after he had made such masterworks as “Grand Illusion” and “The Rules of the Game.” The sequence most often associated with the film — a sensual image of a young woman on a swing — owes a debt to Renoir’s father, the renowned impressionist painter Pierre-Auguste, whose “La Balançoire” is one of many to evoke pastoral getaways. Set in 1860, this blissful film focuses primarily on the daughter (Sylvia Bataille) of a Paris shop owner who swoons over the attention she gets from a humble boatman.

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/ce49ca68-da81-4164-bbdf-f808a93b634b)

‘I Saw the TV Glow’ (2024)

Steeped in nostalgia, melancholy and seismic shifts in identity, the writer-director Jane Schoenbrun’s mesmerizing follow-up to “We’re All Going to the World’s Fair” might be categorized as a horror film, but it’s much more about sustaining an uneasy ambience than about goosing the audience. Set in 1996, “I Saw the TV Glow” is about a lonely teenager, Owen (played early on by Ian Foreman and later by Justice Smith), who bonds with a slightly older girl (Brigette Lundy-Paine) over a shared love for “The Pink Opaque,” a show that resembles “Buffy the Vampire Slayer.” But the relationship and the show look markedly different as Owen ages and reality starts to shift. [*Alissa Wilkinson admires Schoenbrunn’s storytelling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/02/movies/i-saw-the-tv-glow-review.html), “which weaves together half-remembered childhood elements in the way they might turn up in a nightmare.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/54c4cadd-7d0b-4fb9-bb37-2c4a50cf3dee)

‘Paris, Texas’ (1984)

The German director Wim Wenders’s longstanding interest in American music and culture was present in ’70s road movies like “Alice in the Cities” and his English-language noir “The American Friend,” but with “Paris, Texas,” his European eye makes a familiar Southern landscape seem new again. There’s a little bit of disorientation baked into the story of a grizzled loner (Harry Dean Stanton) who wanders into a Texas border town without a name, a personal history or the ability to speak. Though he slowly recovers his memory and takes drastic steps to reunite with his seven-year-old son and his long-lost wife (Nastassja Kinski), Wenders’s hero has a fundamental openness that reflects the film’s absorbing, exploratory vibe.

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/674ca2eb-861d-4e87-a831-7e0cbbdbe58f)

‘The Lighthouse’ (2019)

After scrupulously evoking the hardships facing exiled 17th century Puritans in his debut feature, “The Witch,” director Robert Eggers brings an equally textured and visceral punch to his follow-up, “The Lighthouse,” which takes place on a God-forsaken, wind-battered island off the New England coast in the 1890s. Shot in a black and white that mimics old photographs from the period, the film squeezes into the close quarters occupied by two lighthouse keepers (Willem Dafoe and Robert Pattinson) who sink into paranoia and madness as their living conditions worsen. On creating a claustrophobic atmosphere, Manohla Dargis [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/16/movies/the-lighthouse-review.html), “Eggers seamlessly blurs the lines between physical space and head space.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/f2f059c0-35af-4e6a-b04e-3c64e5c10d84)

‘Love Lies Bleeding’ (2024)

After reinventing the demon possession movie in her striking debut film “Saint Maud,” the director Rose Glass revs up the neo-noir with potent black comedy and Sapphic eroticism in “Loves Lies Bleeding,” a fiendishly entertaining love story gone sideways. Set in a Southwest backwater in the late ’80s, the film details the relationship between a bored lesbian gym manager (Kristen Stewart) and a would-be female bodybuilding champion (Katy O’Brian) on her way to a big-city competition. Ed Harris does sinister work as the manager’s father, a local crime boss who operates a gun range on the edge of town. [*Manohla Dargis called*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/03/07/movies/love-lies-bleeding-review-kristen-stewart.html) Stewart “one of the more interesting attractions in American film.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/552f0116-65dc-4a87-9666-b2ef6135ed3d)

‘A Tale of Winter’ (1992)

The second entry in Eric Rohmer’s impeccable “Tales of the Four Seasons” series — all of which are currently streaming on Max — “A Tale of Winter” opens with an idyllic summer fling that ends with Félicie (Charlotte Véry) inadvertently leaving her lover the wrong address to her new place. Five years later, the two have not reunited and Félicie is caring for their daughter while dating a pair of suitors, one her married boss (Michel Voletti) at a hair salon and the other a low-key librarian (Hervé Furic). Rohmer holds her fate (and her faith) in his hands, but [*Vincent Canby calls the seemingly inevitable climax*](https://www.nytimes.com/1992/10/02/movies/review-film-festival-another-seasonal-tale-from-rohmer.html) “completely unexpected, uncomfortable, very funny and, finally, ambiguous.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/8d7077fd-e7b8-4c4e-9d36-213a4af85028)

‘Mikey &amp; Nicky’ (1976)

Released by Paramount Pictures at a time when the auteur inmates ran the studio asylum, the writer-director Elaine May’s vital crime drama was like her version of a heightened John Cassavetes production, only with her distinctly spiky brand of dark humor. As Mikey and Nicky, respectively, she cast Cassavetes and one of his troupe members, Peter Falk, as lovable lowlifes whose friendship is tested when Mikey summons Nicky to a hotel room and asks for help getting away from a mob hit. What follows is a wild, irrational, dark-night-of-the-soul odyssey that pushes the boundaries of commercial cinema. [*J. Hoberman praised it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/02/movies/elaine-may-mikey-and-nicky.html) as the unique buddy movie that “shows bromance from the point of view of its victims.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://www.max.com/movies/mikey-and-nicky/59fa5e3c-49d4-49ed-a4ab-fd4f82ce7065)

‘Dune: Part 2’ (2024)

The first part of Denis Villeneuve’s “Dune” ended with Paul Atreides (Timothée Chalamet) joining Chani (Zendaya) and the Indigenous Fremen in their fight against the universal conspiracists who plunder the desert planet Arrakis for its precious “spice.” While the sequel continues its imposing world-building — and adds sandworm-surfing — it follows Frank Herbert’s novel closely, becoming the rare epic to question its hero’s messianic destiny, as Paul wrestles with the likelihood that his ascendance could lead to a holy war of inconceivable devastation. Manohla Dargis [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/29/movies/dune-part-two-review.html), “The art of cinematic spectacle is alive and rocking in ‘Dune: Part Two,’ and it’s a blast.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/f0a4f239-0b57-47e2-a39a-54fb96925e61)

‘Modern Times’ (1936)

Nearly a decade after the first “talkie,” Charlie Chaplin opted to keep his last performance as the Little Tramp silent, using sound to minimal (though exceptional) effect in his jaundiced take on the ills of the industrialized world. At once scabrously funny and disarmingly sweet, “Modern Times” follows the Tramp as he loses his job as a bolt-tightener at a factory, goes in and out of jail, and gets mistaken for a communist rabble-rouser, though he does find love with a streetwise gamine (Paulette Goddard). Noting its social commentary, [*Frank S. Nugent called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1936/02/06/archives/heralding-the-return-after-an-undue-absence-of-charlie-chaplin-in.html) “a rousing, rib-tickling, gag-be-strewn jest for all that and in the best Chaplin manner.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/84786ed8-0ce4-44e9-abd8-73a5140326c7)

‘RoboCop’ (1987)

Arriving in Hollywood after years of scandalizing art-house audiences with his Dutch thrillers, the director Paul Verhoeven (“Starship Troopers”) smuggles a bleakly satirical view of American violence and corporate chicanery under the guise of an effects-driven thriller. Peter Weller stars as Alex Murphy, a Detroit policeman who’s killed in the line of duty and then revived as a cyborg cop intended to clean up a crime-riddled city on behalf of the evil corporation that created the technology. The flickers of Alex’s humanity, however, alter his insidious programming. [*Our critic flinched*](https://www.nytimes.com/1987/07/17/movies/film-robocop-police-drama-with-peter-weller.html) at the violence, but admitted that “humor glimmers amid the mayhem.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/aca325cd-8b68-470f-abf9-86e15097fc70)

‘The Souvenir’ (2019)

The British writer-director Joanna Hogg brings a piercing wit and creative spark to the painful revelations at the heart of this semi-autobiographical drama about a young woman’s difficult stretch in film school. Honor Swinton Byrne plays Hogg’s on-screen surrogate, whose ambitions to make a short film about life in ***working-class*** Sunderland are derailed by her relationship with suave older professional with a drug problem (Tom Burke). Tilda Swinton swoops in for scene-stealing support as her mother. When it was released in mid-2019, [*A.O. Scott called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/16/movies/the-souvenir-review.html) “one of my favorite movies of the year so far.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/9acbb6bc-4f65-40b0-86a4-21efb79a16d2)

‘Kwaidan’ (1965)

Drawn from Lafcadio Hearn’s collections of Japanese folk tales, Masaki Kobayashi’s visually arresting horror anthology tells four separate stories with no narrative overlap, which allows Kobayashi to give each its own supernatural texture. Much of the aesthetic language that would fuel the J-horror movement decades later with films like “Ringu” are present in stories like “Black Hair,” in which a samurai returns to an eerier version of the wife he divorced, and “In a Cup of Tea,” about the haunted soul of a samurai reflected in water. [*Bosley Crowther called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1965/11/23/archives/screen-kwaidan-a-trio-of-subtle-horror-talesfine-arts-theater-has.html) “a horror picture with an extraordinarily delicate and sensuous quality.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/1f03c360-002a-4f8d-a333-22f40e371e0f)

‘M’ (1931)

Widely considered the birth of the psychological thriller — and its subset, the serial killer movie — Fritz Lang’s astonishingly dark film about a child murderer who terrorizes Berlin is radical both for humanizing a monster and for warning about the dangers of mass hysteria. With the killer (Peter Lorre) eight months into his rampage and the police unable to track him down, local criminals start to take up the search themselves, in part because his exploits are affecting their business and they don’t trust the rule of law to bring him to justice. [*Mordaunt Hall called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1933/04/03/archives/the-daesseldorf-murders.html) “a strong cinematic work with remarkably fine acting.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/e3dbb39b-eff6-4753-8885-c207f7a145d9)

‘High and Low’ (1963)

While rarely mentioned in the same breath as cinema studies standards like “Rashomon” and “The Seven Samurai,” Akira Kurosawa’s ingenious noir thriller “High and Low” deserves a place alongside them, turning an Ed McBain novel into twisty, stylized play on police procedurals. The Kurosawa favorite Toshiro Mifune stars as a shoe company executive whose plans to buy out the business unravel when kidnappers demand ransom money for abducting his son. The one hitch? They took his chauffeur’s son instead. It usually takes years for a film to earn the superlatives the [*critic Howard Thompson offered in his original review*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1963/11/27/121701923.html?pageNumber=30): “One of the best detective thrillers ever filmed.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/6fff4da0-589e-40db-83c6-bbe454e2b242)

‘Black Girl’ (1966)

A landmark in African cinema, Ousmane Sembène’s exceptional debut feature tackles the legacy of colonialism through the politically loaded story of a Senegalese woman who is more or less enslaved by her white French employers. Hired off the streets of Dakar, Diouana (Mbissine Thérèse Diop) travels to a town off the French Riviera for an expected nanny job, but she is never allowed to leave the apartment and spends her days doing housekeeping work instead. As her hopes for greater freedom and prosperity diminish, she rebels in startling ways. In his 50th anniversary appreciation of the film, [*A.O. Scott called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/18/movies/ousmane-sembenes-black-girl-turns-50.html) “powerfully of its moment and permanently contemporary.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/1529f35c-23a4-4c88-b516-844c4dbd0ffc)

‘The Red Shoes’ (1948)

A love triangle rendered with spectacular vibrancy and emotion, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger’s “The Red Shoes” translates the dark passions of the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale into a multitiered story of romantic obsession, on and off the stage. The luminous Moira Shearer stars as a dancer torn between the brilliant composer (Marius Goring) who has adapted a ballet version of “The Red Shoes” just for her and the dark impresario (Anton Walbrook) who runs the world-renowned Ballet Lermontov. Their conflict reaches a crescendo in the ballet itself, which Powell and Pressburger render in a dazzling, colorful, 17-minute set piece. [*Bosley Crowther called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1948/10/23/archives/the-screen-in-review-the-red-shoes-a-british-film-about-the-ballet.html) “a visual and emotional comprehension of all the grace and rhythm and power of the ballet.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/5081ab3a-6bbe-4355-a3f2-f5ca0c999702)

‘Cléo From 5 to 7’ (1962)

With this fiction feature, the French new wave director Agnès Varda brought some documentary techniques to bear on a real-time portrait of Cléo (Corinne Marchand), a singer and hypochondriac, as she awaits the results of a cancer test. Against an early-evening Paris backdrop, Varda follows Cléo through a 90-minute existential crisis that is full of spontaneous encounters, most notably a meeting with a young soldier who is preparing to leave for the war in Algeria. The life-or-death stakes of the biopsy give a vivid, bracing perspective to Varda’s character study. The critic Bosley Crowther [*wasn’t impressed*](https://www.nytimes.com/1962/09/05/archives/screen-a-french-new-wave-dramacinema-ii-introduces-cleo-from-5-to-7.html) by the film’s “fleeting moods” at the time, but its critical reputation is mostly sterling.

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/71a51a00-b94b-44bf-8e5c-b3b6d2d2e44b)

‘Slacker’ (1991)

One of the true watershed moments in American indie cinema, this slice-of-life picture from Richard Linklater strings together the philosophers, conspiracy theorists, cranks and other assorted Austin, Texas, oddballs into a half-funny, half-profound celebration of outsidership. There was no model then for the film’s formless roundelay of fascinating talkers, but “Slacker” resonated with art-house audiences, launched Linklater’s career and expanded the possibilities of what low-budget films could do. [*Vincent Canby marveled*](https://www.nytimes.com/1991/07/05/movies/review-film-slacker-a-collection-of-eccentrics-and-lunacies.html) that Linklater’s nonprofessional cast is “so amazingly effective that it’s hard to believe they didn’t make up their own lunacies.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/22615c3f-6232-44b4-85ca-1572614555c3)

‘Beau Travail’ (1999)

The films of the French director Claire Denis often feel more like poetry than prose, and they count on the audience’s intuition in piecing together their elliptical passages. But when the sounds and images are as seductive as those in “Beau Travail,” her loosely inspired take on Herman Melville’s “Billy Budd,” the experience isn’t as daunting as it might seem. Moving Melville’s seafaring tale to the striking landscapes of Djibouti, the film chronicles a love triangle among French Legionnaires in training. [*Stephen Holden called it*](https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/library/film/092899ny-beau-film-review.html) “the visually spellbinding equivalent of a military ballet.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/685ea0c1-2efa-43d2-976b-fd77c558bfa0)

‘Paris Is Burning’ (1991)

For this landmark L.G.B.T.Q. documentary, Jennie Livingston spent six years immersing herself in the underground ball scene in New York City, where minority, gay and transgender people come together to “vogue” in joyous drag competitions. But far beyond detailing these events, “Paris Is Burning” casts a sympathetic eye on the individual performers, whose lives are often defined by poverty, ostracism and the still-raging AIDS epidemic. [*Vincent Canby admired Livingston*](https://www.nytimes.com/1991/03/13/movies/review-film-aching-to-be-a-prima-donna-when-you-re-a-man.html) for studying her subjects “with the curiosity of a compassionate anthropologist.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/2519fa2a-866b-4c07-a5bc-2da9291546d9)

‘Rosetta’ (1999)

In their Palme d’Or-winning breakthrough, the Dardenne brothers, Jean-Pierre and Luc, deploy a rigorous, hand-held camera technique in charting the patterns and limits of a 17-year-old Belgian (Émilie Dequenne) on a near-feral quest to make ends meet. Living with her alcoholic mother (Anne Yernaux) in a broken-down trailer without running water, she frantically searches for work while dangling on the precipice of disaster. The film, [*wrote Stephen Holden*](https://www.nytimes.com/1999/10/02/movies/film-festival-review-poor-belgian-girl-yearns-for-what-else-waffles.html), “addresses a great subject, the Darwinian struggle to survive and its dehumanizing effects.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/7bb872de-da22-4724-8618-8e4e6eed855d)

‘Touki Bouki’ (1973)

In an African cinema largely defined by austerity and social realism, Djibril Diop Mambéty’s Senegalese classic “Touki Bouki” stands out for its rule-breaking irreverence, inspired by Jean-Luc Godard. With little formal training and a minuscule budget, Mambéty liberated himself to work blackout gags and avant-garde touches into an impressionistic road movie about a cowherd (Magaye Niang) and a student (Mareme Niang) who scramble to raise money to leave Dakar for Paris. [*Vincent Canby praised the director*](https://www.nytimes.com/1991/02/15/movies/review-film-a-dream-of-escape-to-paris.html) for mixing “neorealism and fantasy to create a mood of unease and aimless longing.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/4855cbda-8572-4d97-96c9-1e946cf82705)

‘The Battle of Algiers’ (1967)

Gillo Pontecorvo’s scrupulous depiction of insurgent and anti-terrorist tactics in the Algerian War of Independence proved so persuasive in its newsreel style that it required a disclaimer to let audiences know it was a work of fiction. Though hugely controversial in Europe for its treatment of the Algerian resistance and French torture tactics, “The Battle of Algiers” is such a cleareyed and accomplished vision of modern warfare that it has been [*studied by the Pentagon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/07/weekinreview/the-world-film-studies-what-does-the-pentagon-see-in-battle-of-algiers.html). [*Bosley Crowther called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1967/09/21/archives/screen-local-premiere-of-pontecorvos-prizewinning-battle-of.html) “an uncommonly dynamic picture.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/61333540-5954-4fee-ac91-49883cd81673)

‘Foreign Correspondent’ (1940)

Though rarely cited among established Alfred Hitchcock classics like “North by Northwest,” “Vertigo” and “Psycho,” “Foreign Correspondent” is every bit as masterly, a subtle and generously entertaining piece of wartime intrigue made for and about fraught times. Joel McCrea plays a bored city desk reporter in New York who gets all the action he can handle as a foreign correspondent in Europe, but the assignment soon embeds him in a treacherous web of shifty diplomats and Nazi spies. [*The Times critic Bosley Crowther raved*](https://www.nytimes.com/1940/08/28/archives/the-screen-at-the-rivoli.html) that the film “should be the particular favorite of a great many wonder-eyed folk.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/70c48a18-1510-4af9-a090-2d29c4d0c498)

‘Harlan County USA’ (1977)

This landmark labor documentary by Barbara Kopple brought cameras into coal country in 1973, covering the herculean efforts of 180 miners in southeast Kentucky to sustain a strike against the Duke Power Company. As the strike wears on, Kopple captures the rising tensions and violence between the two parties, with the company bringing in replacement workers and armed strikebreakers to intimidate their employees. More than once, even Kopple’s safety is put in serious jeopardy. The critic Richard Eder called it “[*a brilliantly detailed report from one side of a battle*](https://www.nytimes.com/1976/10/15/archives/film-festival-harlan-county.html).”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/1e53285f-4f19-4f8e-aefc-fc4b033a9080)

‘Hoop Dreams’ (1994)

For four years, the director Steve James and his crew followed two gifted Chicago high school basketball players as they pursued a long-shot ambition to make it to the N.B.A. and lift their families out of poverty. “Hoop Dreams” is about the impossible burden they’ve chosen to carry, one in which an errant free throw or a tweaked knee can have serious real-life consequences. [*The critic Caryn James called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/10/07/movies/film-festival-review-hoop-dreams-dreaming-the-dreams-realizing-the-realities.html) a “fascinating, suspenseful film [that] turns the endless revision of the American dream into high drama.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/8de6f0f3-38a2-48f8-88ad-7b2805d72782)

‘In the Mood for Love’ (2001)

Few films are as ravishingly beautiful as Wong Kar-wai’s intoxicating film about Hong Kong in the early to mid-60s, starring Tony Leung and Maggie Cheung, two screen icons at the peak of their powers. Leung and Cheung play lonely-hearts who form a special kinship because of their spouses’ neglect, but they’re reluctant to follow through on the intense romantic longing they feel for each other. Wong’s story of unrequited love in a changing city earned him the best reviews of his career, including [*one from the critic Elvis Mitchell*](https://www.nytimes.com/2000/09/30/movies/film-festival-review-just-next-door-neighbors-till-love-breaches-walls.html), who called the film “a sweet kiss blown to a time long since over.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/8822c9fb-3d44-439d-8669-761f9563f2f6)

‘Persona’ (1967)

The opening minutes of Ingmar Bergman’s “Persona” shocked international audiences with its experimental imagery, but the remaining minutes are no less audacious in Bergman’s willingness to push his expected dramatic intensity to a new, more abstract realm. Liv Ullmann plays a famed stage actress whose mid-performance breakdown leads first to hospitalization and later to a retreat on the Baltic Sea, where her relationship with a nurse (Bibi Andersson) takes on peculiar dimensions. [*Bosley Crowther called it*](https://www.nytimes.com/1967/03/07/archives/screen-ingmar-bergmans-persona-his-new-movie-opens-at-festival.html) a “lovely, moody film which, for all its intense emotionalism, makes some tough intellectual demands.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/20545b52-31af-4c52-a6c7-f8b483794494)

‘Tokyo Story’ (1953)

The most revered of Yasujiro Ozu’s dramas is also one of the most accessible, a profound statement on the grief and laments of getting older and on the widening generation gaps of a newly westernized Japan. When an elderly couple (Chishu Ryu and Chieko Higashiyama) visit their adult children in Tokyo, the kids barely have time for them, but their dead son’s widow (Setsuko Hara) is a welcoming host. [*The critic Roger Greenspun wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/1972/03/14/archives/yasujiro-ozus-tokyo-story-opens.html) that the film “understands that a calm reticence may be the true heroism of ordinary old age.”

[*Stream it on Max*](https://play.max.com/movie/315797af-7575-45f8-8231-31200e515f2f)

PHOTO: Hugh Grant in “Heretic.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kimberley French/A24 FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***Biden's Perfect Running Mate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:600M-J8Y1-JBG3-63K8-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Rachel Bitecofer

**Body**

The Democratic nominee needs someone to energize the party's coalition and balance the ticket.

Do vice-presidential picks matter? Conventional wisdom argues they have limited electoral impact.

But a vice-presidential pick does matter in a particular way to elections. It suggests the strategy and tactics a campaign will pursue. The pick might complement the ticket, like Al Gore did for Bill Clinton in 1992, or the pick might balance the ticket, like Mike Pence did for Donald Trump.

So Joe Biden's electoral fate may well hinge on this decision. In our polarized era, where turnout determines election victors and each party's coalition has become more locked in, ticket-balancing picks for vice president can be helpful in mending primary wounds and generating excitement for the coalition in the general election.

That is why Mr. Biden should select for his running mate a ticket balancer.

Now, the temptation for Mr. Biden to pick a ticket ''complementer'' will be high. All the conventional wisdom suggests that ticket complementers ''do no harm'' because they are, essentially, prototypes of the presidential nominee.

By contrast, ticket balancers offer voters something the main nominee lacks and often are meant to motivate a group within the coalition with which the nominee has struggled to gain traction. Balancers are perceived to be riskier, especially since John McCain's selection of Sarah Palin in 2008.

Hillary Clinton is often castigated as running a terrible, horrible, no good, doomed campaign. She actually ran a perfectly fine campaign -- but strategically speaking, it was the wrong kind of campaign. It was based on the flawed assumption that a significant portion of American conservatives would not, simply could not, vote for Donald Trump.

But on Election Day, 90 percent of Republicans voted for him; Mrs. Clinton also failed to carry independents, despite a campaign structured mostly on winning them over.

Mrs. Clinton's ''do no harm'' pick -- Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia -- ended up doing her considerable harm. The strategy built around the pick ended up leaving the party's progressive flank vulnerable to, among other things, a sophisticated Russian propaganda and disinformation campaign.

In addition, so-called protest balloting in 2016 was three to five times higher than normal in the swing states. In states like Wisconsin, which was decided by less than a percentage point, nearly 6 percent of the electorate cast protest ballots. For all the attention placed on white, ***working-class*** voters and their continued realignment away from Democrats, protest balloting affected the outcome of every swing state contest and played a pivotal role in Mr. Trump's destruction of the Democrat's Midwest ''blue wall.''

Yet Mr. Trump still has a plurality problem, and his campaign manager, Brad Parscale, knows it. Even before the pandemic came along to destroy his best argument for re-election, the economy, Mr. Trump was unpopular among independents and has hardly ever (aside from a brief moment early in the coronavirus crisis) hit 50 percent approval rating nationally and rarely in swing states.

The only way to re-elect a plurality president is to make a plurality vote share sufficient enough to win. And the best way to do that is to replicate Russia's playbook of targeting parts of the Democratic coalition -- like progressives and young black voters -- to turn them against voting for Mr. Biden.

The only person who has as much riding on Mr. Biden's decision is Mr. Trump. As in 2016, he hopes to pick off or discourage disgruntled progressive voters. Much of Mr. Trump's re-election hopes are pinned on Mr. Biden making the wrong choice of running mate.

So the Biden team must make a pick that can help Democrats match what promises to be an energized Republican base. The best way to do that is a ticket-balancing candidate like Stacey Abrams or Kamala Harris. They would bring gender and racial diversity to the ticket and, perhaps even more important, ideological diversity.

That might prove to be the single most effective way to head off the Trump campaign's ''divide and conquer'' plan for progressives in 2020. With 120 million millennials and Generation Z potential voters now powering their coalition, Democrats would be wise to recognize that their electoral fate hinges on getting these voters to the polls. Mr. Biden is positioning himself as a bridge to the party's future -- and liberals like Ms. Harris and Ms. Abrams would help pave the way.

Another ticket-balancing approach would be to put a down payment on the Democratic Party's geographic future. This approach would focus resources not as much on the Midwest but on Sunbelt states from California to Georgia through Texas, which could rise as a potential swing state as early as 2024. This would have the Biden team looking at Michelle Lujan Grisham, the Latina governor of New Mexico, or at Senator Catherine Cortez Masto of Nevada as potential running mates.

Mr. Biden's nomination maxes out the ticket's appeal to the center of the electorate. Among independents, the pandemic, economic collapse and Mr. Trump's antics already provide Mr. Biden a hard edge. A centrist, ticket-complementing pick like Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota will likely bring diminishing returns in this regard. As a fellow white moderate, Ms. Klobuchar is a quintessential ticket complementor -- a 2020 version of Mr. Kaine.

If Mr. Biden is going to ignore the fact that today's Democratic Party represents the most racially diverse coalition in America's history, he should at least look to a ticket balancer like Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, who would bring ideological diversity and guarantee robust turnout and loyal support among progressives, many of whom are independents.

The special election last week in California's 25th District shows Democrats are still vulnerable to low turnout; when their coalition fails to turn out, they lose. It also dispelled a dangerous myth -- suburban Republicans are not casting ballots for Democrats. If Democrats want to hold on to or even expand on their House gains from 2018 and potentially take control of the Senate, they need an excited electorate.

Election outcomes in key states like Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Florida and Arizona all come down to the same thing: the percentage of Democrats and left-leaning independents that end up casting ballots compared with the percentage of Republicans and right-leaning independents that do so. Republicans understand this campaign math and learned to solve this equation a long time ago. The only question is, have Democrats finally solved it too?

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHARLIE RIEDEL/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

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[***Aide Flouts Lockdown, And Johnson Takes Hit***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:600M-J8Y1-JBG3-63K3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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

**Body**

The image of a powerful official flouting the lockdown rules has struck a nerve in a way that the government's haphazard response to the virus has not.

LONDON -- For more than two months, Prime Minister Boris Johnson has floundered in his response to the coronavirus -- abandoning widespread testing, dragging his feet on imposing a lockdown, leaving nursing homes unprotected, and muddling his message about how to reopen the British economy.

But it took a rogue 260-mile car trip by Mr. Johnson's closest adviser to turn the tide of public opinion against him.

The outcry over Mr. Johnson's chief adviser, Dominic Cummings, showed no signs of abating on Tuesday, as a junior minister in Mr. Johnson's government resigned in protest and several additional lawmakers from his Conservative Party called on the prime minister to dismiss Mr. Cummings, taking the total number of those who have gone public against him to more than 35.

Two new polls showed a sharp erosion of public support for Mr. Johnson and a wall of opposition for his aide.

The image of a powerful government official flouting the lockdown rules that Downing Street enforces on everyone else has struck a nerve in a way that Britain's haphazard response to the virus has not. Unlike the mysteries of epidemiology or the technical details of testing, Mr. Cummings's decision to decamp for his parents' house in Durham, in the north of England, when others were confined in their homes, is easy to understand.

''I have constituents who didn't get to say goodbye to loved ones; families who could not mourn together; people who didn't visit sick relatives because they followed the guidance of the government,'' observed Douglas Ross, the under secretary of state for Scotland, in his resignation statement.

''I cannot in good faith tell them they were all wrong and one senior adviser to the government was right,'' he said.

Mr. Johnson showed no signs of abandoning Mr. Cummings, offering such an unequivocal defense, analysts said, that it likely forecloses the possibility of opening an inquiry into his conduct -- one way the prime minister could have appeased critics.

He risked his political capital to send his aide out to the garden at 10 Downing Street on Monday to mount an unrepentant defense of his actions. Mr. Cummings said that with his wife showing symptoms of the virus and him fearing he would soon contract it, he wanted to line up care for his 4-year-old child with relatives in Durham.

On Tuesday, the British media remorselessly dissected Mr. Cummings's account. They zeroed in on his claim that after he arrived in Durham and was bedridden for several days there, he drove to a scenic town more than 20 miles away to test his eyesight, which he said had been impaired by his illness, before embarking on the long journey back to London. The visit coincided with the birthday of Mr. Cummings's wife.

Kay Burley, an anchor at Sky News, pressed an ally of Mr. Cummings's, Michael Gove, on whether people with damaged eyesight should ''get in a car and drive half an hour with your 4-year-old strapped in the back.'' Mr. Gove, a senior Cabinet minister, allowed that Mr. Cummings could have skipped the excursion to the town, Barnard Castle, and driven straight to London.

That ordinary Britons were consumed by the picayune details of an unelected political strategist's personal travels, on a day when new government statistics suggested that the death toll from the coronavirus was closing in on 50,000, showed why the Cummings affair poses such a threat to Mr. Johnson. It goes beyond the normal din of politics to become a topic for dinner table conversation.

In British parlance, it is a story with ''cut through.''

''Sixty-five million of us have been locked up for weeks,'' said Jonathan Powell, a former chief of staff to Prime Minister Tony Blair, ''and this guy has the cheek to break the rules he created and then tell us he acted reasonably. That has a completely electric effect.''

Mr. Cummings's effort to explain himself rallied his supporters, who include most prominent cabinet ministers, but failed to turn the tide either among other lawmakers or, apparently, the general public.

A poll by the market research firm, YouGov, taken after Monday's news conference, found that 71 percent of respondents believed Mr. Cummings violated government rules in traveling to Durham, and 59 percent believed he should resign.

Mr. Johnson's numbers have taken a hit as well. Another survey, by the polling firm Savanta ComRes, found that his approval rating plunged 20 percentage points in the last four days and now stands in negative territory for the first time since his landslide election victory in December.

For all of Mr. Johnson's struggles in handling the coronavirus, the British public had been patient with him. His ratings surged after he imposed the lockdown on March 23 and peaked when he was admitted to an intensive care unit with the virus on April 8. After he was released from the hospital, and the spotlight shifted to Britain's mounting death toll, his support began to weaken.

Unlike in the United States, however, where President Trump's feuds with governors and his touting of dubious remedies have been polarizing, Britons have generally pulled together, showing their solidarity every Thursday night with a round of applause for the National Health Service. This week, critics are calling for people to boo Mr. Johnson before they cheer the health workers.

Criticism of Mr. Cummings has come from across the political spectrum and includes both the Conservative Party establishment and die-hard supporters of Brexit. ''No Apology, No Regrets,'' said the headline of the staunchly pro-Conservative Daily Mail, which ran 12 pages of coverage, most of it scathing.

Robert Hayward, a Conservative member of the House of Lords and a polling expert, said the episode angered traditional law-and-order Conservatives who do not take kindly to rule breaking. But it has had the same effect on some who voted for the Conservatives for the first time in December in northern, ***working-class*** constituencies -- the so-called ''red wall'' seats historically held by the Labour Party.

''Boris Johnson successfully convinced a fair few people in the Midlands and the north that he was a different sort of Tory and my guess is that this group of people will be most offended by it,'' Mr. Hayward said.

Some analysts suggested that the saga could do the same damage to the Conservatives as two other calamities in the party's modern history.

One was the introduction of the poll tax in the 1980s, which crippled Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and paved the way for her downfall in 1990. The other was when Britain crashed out of a European currency mechanism in 1992, which haunted Prime Minister John Major until he was swept out of power in 1997.

''This has that sort of potential, though whether it gets that far we can't yet judge,'' Mr. Hayward said. Certainly, he said, it was likely ''to be damaging for months and possibly for longer.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/26/world/europe/outcry-over-cummings-turns-public-against-johnson-for-1st-time.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/26/world/europe/outcry-over-cummings-turns-public-against-johnson-for-1st-time.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Dominic Cummings, top, a senior aide to Prime Minister Boris Johnson, has been widely criticized for defying Britain's lockdown orders. He retains the support of Mr. Johnson, but Douglas Ross, a junior minister from Scotland, above right with Mr. Johnson last year, resigned in protest on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER SUMMERS/GETTY IMAGES

DANIEL LEAL-OLIVAS)

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[***One Corner, Two 7-Elevens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62M6-9N71-DXY4-X338-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Ben Dooley and Hisako Ueno

**Body**

HIGASHI-OSAKA, Japan -- Across Japan, it can seem as if there's a 7-Eleven on every corner.

Now, on a single corner in a ***working-class*** suburb of Osaka, there are two.

The unusual pairing is the latest manifestation of a grudge match between one of Japan's most powerful companies and, arguably, one of its most stubborn men.

Mitoshi Matsumoto, a franchisee, ran one of the two 7-Elevens until the chain revoked his contract in 2019 after he dared to shorten his operating hours. For over a year, his store has sat empty as he and 7-Eleven have battled in court over control of the shop. Fed up and with no end in sight, the company decided on a stopgap: It built a second shop in what used to be Mr. Matsumoto's parking lot.

The conflict's outcome will determine not just who gets to sell rice balls and cigarettes from one tiny patch of asphalt and concrete. It could also have profound implications for 7-Eleven's authority over tens of thousands of franchise shops across Japan, part of a convenience store network so ubiquitous that the government considers it vital to the national infrastructure during emergencies.

7-Eleven has gone to surprising lengths against Mr. Matsumoto. It hired a team of private investigators to watch his store for months, collecting grainy video that, the company asserts, shows him head-butting one customer and attacking another's car with a flying kick. It has also compiled a dossier of complaints against him, including one over a bungled giveaway of ''commemorative mayonnaise.'' And now it says it plans to charge him for the cost of building the second shop next to his.

The company maintains that it moved against Mr. Matsumoto simply because he was a bad franchisee. But he argues that it is no coincidence that the company's view of him dimmed sharply after he said he would defy its rigid demand that stores stay open around the clock.

Before his seemingly small act of rebellion, the company had deemed him a model worker. He had received praise for, among other things, having the highest sales of steamed pork buns in his region.

After his decision, 7-Eleven threatened his business and eventually cut off his supplies and sued to take over the store. With its actions, Mr. Matsumoto says, the company is sending a message to other franchisees: The nail that sticks out gets hammered down.

The fight playing out in an Osaka courtroom will have ramifications for 7-Eleven and the rest of Japan's major franchises, which control the vast majority of the country's more than 50,000 convenience stores. 7-Eleven accounts for nearly 40 percent of those, and its business practices, for better or worse, have long been viewed as the industry standard.

''The outcome of this trial will have an enormous impact,'' said Naoki Tsuchiya, an economics professor at Musashi University in Tokyo. ''A loss would be a considerable blow to the company,'' but a win would ''shift the balance of power away from the franchisees and toward corporate HQ.''

Mr. Matsumoto ran the first of the two 7-Elevens from its construction in 2012 through the end of 2019. Situated on a busy street near one of the largest private universities in the region, the store has been shuttered for 16 months, musty, dark and gathering dust.

The second 7-Eleven, a scaled-down version of the shop next door, is being built as a service to the neighborhood, the company says, after residents expressed concern that the empty store was a security issue. The new shop has the knocked-together look of the temporary housing that springs up in the wake of a natural disaster. When the finishing touches are put on in the coming days, it will be operated -- 24 hours a day -- by 7-Eleven itself.

For most of the seven years that Mr. Matsumoto operated his 7-Eleven, he faithfully carried out the demands for round-the-clock operations, which boost corporate profits but can be costly for franchisees, who shoulder the labor costs. The pace became unsustainable, though, as help became harder and more expensive to find -- a problem that grew more acute after his wife's death from cancer in the spring of 2018.

In February 2019, he announced that he would close his store from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. each day. 7-Eleven began pressuring him to return to round-the-clock operations, his defense team wrote in court filings. Mr. Matsumoto, who prides himself on being persistent and plain-spoken, did not back down.

He went to the news media and described the industry's harsh labor conditions, including his own days working 12 hours or more. His story hit a nerve in a country where overwork is rampant and sometimes fatal.

His willingness to criticize 7-Eleven in ways that most other franchisees would not made him famous. It also cast a light on the hidden costs of ultraconvenience in Japan, where convenience stores fulfill many of life's daily needs and are often held up as symbols of the country's remarkable efficiency and customer service.

7-Eleven stood down in its clash with Mr. Matsumoto over his shorter hours. But his relationship with the company, which had always had some problems, reached a breaking point in October 2019 when he announced that he would close the store entirely for one day, on New Year's.

In late December, 7-Eleven notified him that it would revoke his contract unless he took unspecified action to restore a ''relationship of trust.'' It gave him 10 days.

The company said it was responding to two problems. One, Mr. Matsumoto had attacked it on social media. Two, he had racked up hundreds of customer complaints. (It would later claim, without providing evidence, that it was the largest number of any store in Japan.) It was the first time, he said, that the company had ever brought the problem to his attention. The company denies this.

The first complaint came in the months after the store's grand opening. Mr. Matsumoto and his wife had papered the neighborhood with fliers promising a squeeze tube of ''commemorative mayonnaise'' to any customer who showed up on the first day.

The mayonnaise ran out in hours, and Mr. Matsumoto ended up telling hundreds of shoppers to come back later that week to claim their gift. Over a month later, one disgruntled customer tried to cash in the I.O.U., then fired off a scathing complaint when she was refused.

The other complaints range from serious accusations -- berating customers -- to minor quibbles. The dossier also contains a number of complaints from former employees about pay and working conditions that echo some of Mr. Matsumoto's own complaints about 7-Eleven.

Mr. Matsumoto does not pretend that everything at his store was perfect. For years, he had been engaged in a heated battle over his parking lot, where customers of other businesses would often leave their cars for hours without so much as a thank-you.

By Japanese standards, Mr. Matsumoto's neighborhood is a little rough. People cut in line. They cross the street against the light. They aren't afraid to give a convenience store owner a piece of their mind.

He gave as good as he got, he readily admits, and he was not popular with the neighbors. On more than one occasion, a shouting match over parking spaces ended with a call to the police. They always sided with him, Mr. Matsumoto said.

7-Eleven had never seemed particularly interested in the occasional blowups, but after he declared that he was closing early, it began taking a very specific interest in them.

In the summer of 2019, the company hired private investigators to keep tabs on Mr. Matsumoto's store, it wrote in a court submission. Perched in a nearby building, they spent months secretly filming the shop's comings and goings.

The result is 7-Eleven's evidential pièce de résistance: five videos of what appear to be confrontations between Mr. Matsumoto and various customers in the parking lot. Two involve what the company says are the flying kick to the car and the head-butt, but it is difficult to make out much of the blurry footage presented to the court.

Another video shows Mr. Matsumoto upbraiding a man in a white van. Two men loitering nearby are surreptitiously taping the argument, and the company has crosscut shaky footage from their cameras with video taken from the balcony above Mr. Matsumoto's shop to give several perspectives on the exchange.

When approached for comment, a 7-Eleven representative referred reporters to the company's court filings.

Mr. Matsumoto's legal team has years of experience fighting convenience store chains in court, but one of his lawyers, Takayuki Kida, said that ''there aren't many cases that are full-out war, where 7-Eleven is this set on crushing someone.''

It's easy to see why, said Mr. Tsuchiya, the Musashi University professor. The attention on Mr. Matsumoto has already helped spur change in the industry.

In September, a broad inquiry by Japan's Fair Trade Commission concluded that the convenience store industry's 24-hour-a-day policy was unsustainable and ordered stores to give owners more flexibility or face possible legal action.

Under pressure, 7-Eleven has increased franchisees' share of revenue and, during the pandemic, taken a more lenient stance on operating hours. It is not clear how far the changes will go or whether regulators will follow through on their threat.

Mr. Matsumoto is bemused by 7-Eleven's decision to build a new shop next door to his. ''Everyone had forgotten about me,'' he said during a recent visit to the construction site. ''Now they've put me back in the news again.''

As he watched a crane do excavation work, a passing bicyclist stopped to share a few words of encouragement, urging Mr. Matsumoto not to let the ''big guys'' win.

Last year, Mr. Matsumoto says, the company offered him 10 million yen, or more than $92,000, to drop his case. The court encouraged him to accept the offer. But he wasn't interested. Now, the company is trying the opposite approach. Its lawyers have said they will bill him ¥30 million for construction of the new store.

Either way, it's the same to him, Mr. Matsumoto said. ''It's not about the money,'' he said. ''It's about something bigger.''

The same could be said for 7-Eleven. A sign in front of the construction site sums it all up: The building is temporary.

Win or lose, the company plans to tear it to the ground.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/30/business/japan-7-eleven.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/30/business/japan-7-eleven.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: When Mitoshi Matsumoto, a 7-Eleven franchisee, cut the hours that his store was open, the chain revoked his contract, then built a second shop in what used to be his parking lot.

The fight playing out in an Osaka courtroom will have ramifications for 7-Eleven and the rest of Japan's major franchises, which control most of the country's 50,000 convenience stores. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B1)

Mitoshi Matsumoto with his 7-Eleven convenience store on the right and the company's temporary shop on the left in a suburb of Osaka, Japan.

The company says it will operate the new shop, at top, as a service to the community while Mr. Matsumoto is tied up in court. Above, a sign posted on his store says it is temporarily closed because of the pandemic and the lawsuit. (B6)

**Load-Date:** May 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Why a Biden Victory Hinges on Picking the Right Running Mate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:600D-8S91-JBG3-6144-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 27, 2020 Wednesday 02:09 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1190 words

**Byline:** Rachel Bitecofer

**Highlight:** The Democratic nominee needs someone to energize the party&#39;s coalition and balance the ticket.

**Body**

The Democratic nominee needs someone to energize the party&#39;s coalition and balance the ticket.

Do vice-presidential picks matter? Conventional wisdom argues they have limited electoral impact.

But a vice-presidential pick does matter in a particular way to elections. It suggests the strategy and tactics a campaign will pursue. The pick might complement the ticket, like Al Gore did for Bill Clinton in 1992, or the pick might balance the ticket, like Mike Pence did for Donald Trump.

So Joe Biden’s electoral fate may well hinge on this decision. In our polarized era, where turnout determines election victors and each party’s coalition has become more locked in, ticket-balancing picks for vice president can be helpful in mending primary wounds and generating excitement for the coalition in the general election.

That is why Mr. Biden should select for his running mate a ticket balancer.

Now, the temptation for Mr. Biden to pick a ticket “complementer” will be high. All the conventional wisdom suggests that ticket complementers “do no harm” because they are, essentially, prototypes of the presidential nominee.

By contrast, ticket balancers offer voters something the main nominee lacks and often are meant to motivate a group within the coalition with which the nominee has struggled to gain traction. Balancers are perceived to be riskier, especially since John McCain’s selection of Sarah Palin in 2008.

Hillary Clinton is often castigated as running a terrible, horrible, no good, doomed campaign. She actually ran a perfectly fine campaign — but strategically speaking, it was the wrong kind of campaign. It was based on the flawed assumption that a significant portion of American conservatives would not, simply could not, vote for Donald Trump.

But on Election Day, 90 percent of Republicans voted for him; Mrs. Clinton also failed to carry independents, despite a campaign structured mostly on winning them over.

Mrs. Clinton’s “do no harm” pick — Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia — ended up doing her considerable harm. The strategy built around the pick ended up leaving the party’s progressive flank vulnerable to, among other things, a sophisticated Russian propaganda and disinformation campaign.

In addition, so-called protest balloting in 2016 was three to five times higher than normal in the swing states. In states like Wisconsin, which was [*decided*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/wisconsin) by less than a percentage point, nearly 6 percent of the electorate cast protest ballots. For all the attention placed on white, ***working-class*** voters and their continued realignment away from Democrats, protest balloting affected the outcome of every swing state contest and played a pivotal role in Mr. Trump’s destruction of the Democrat’s Midwest “blue wall.”

Yet Mr. Trump still has a plurality problem, and his campaign manager, Brad Parscale, knows it. Even before the pandemic came along to destroy his best argument for re-election, the economy, Mr. Trump was unpopular among independents and has hardly ever (aside from a brief moment early in the coronavirus crisis) hit 50 percent approval rating nationally and rarely in swing states.

The only way to re-elect a plurality president is to make a plurality vote share sufficient enough to win. And the best way to do that is to replicate Russia’s playbook of targeting parts of the Democratic coalition — like progressives and young black voters — to turn them against voting for Mr. Biden.

The only person who has as much riding on Mr. Biden’s decision is Mr. Trump. As in 2016, he hopes to pick off or discourage disgruntled progressive voters. Much of Mr. Trump’s re-election hopes are pinned on Mr. Biden making the wrong choice of running mate.

So the Biden team must make a pick that can help Democrats match what promises to be an energized Republican base. The best way to do that is a ticket-balancing candidate like Stacey Abrams or Kamala Harris. They would bring gender and racial diversity to the ticket and, perhaps even more important, ideological diversity.

That might prove to be the single most effective way to head off the Trump campaign’s “divide and conquer” plan for progressives in 2020. With 120 million millennials and Generation Z potential voters now powering their coalition, Democrats would be wise to recognize that their electoral fate hinges on getting these voters to the polls. Mr. Biden is positioning himself as a bridge to the party’s future — and liberals like Ms. Harris and Ms. Abrams would help pave the way.

Another ticket-balancing approach would be to put a down payment on the Democratic Party’s geographic future. This approach would focus resources not as much on the Midwest but on Sunbelt states from California to Georgia through Texas, which could rise as a potential swing state as early as 2024. This would have the Biden team looking at Michelle Lujan Grisham, the Latina governor of New Mexico, or at Senator Catherine Cortez Masto of Nevada as potential running mates.

Mr. Biden’s nomination maxes out the ticket’s appeal to the center of the electorate. Among independents, the pandemic, economic collapse and Mr. Trump’s antics already provide Mr. Biden a hard edge. A centrist, ticket-complementing pick like Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota will likely bring diminishing returns in this regard. As a fellow white moderate, Ms. Klobuchar is a quintessential ticket complementor — a 2020 version of Mr. Kaine.

If Mr. Biden is going to ignore the fact that today’s Democratic Party represents the most racially diverse coalition in America’s history, he should at least look to a ticket balancer like Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, who would bring ideological diversity and guarantee robust turnout and loyal support among progressives, many of whom are independents.

The special election last week in California’s 25th District shows Democrats are still vulnerable to low turnout; when their coalition fails to turn out, they lose. It also dispelled a dangerous myth — suburban Republicans are not casting ballots for Democrats. If Democrats want to hold on to or even expand on their House gains from 2018 and potentially take control of the Senate, they need an excited electorate.

Election outcomes in key states like Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Florida and Arizona all come down to the same thing: the percentage of Democrats and left-leaning independents that end up casting ballots compared with the percentage of Republicans and right-leaning independents that do so. Republicans understand this campaign math and learned to solve this equation a long time ago. The only question is, have Democrats finally solved it too?

Rachel Bitecofer ([*@RachelBitecofer*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/wisconsin)) is an election forecaster and senior fellow at the Niskanen Center.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/wisconsin) 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/elections/2016/results/wisconsin). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/wisconsin).

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHARLIE RIEDEL/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** May 27, 2020

**End of Document**



[***These Wetlands Helped Stop Flooding From Sandy. Now a BJ’s May Move In.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615F-S7J1-DXY4-X4XD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 28, 2020 Wednesday 07:51 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1523 words

**Byline:** Anne Barnard

**Highlight:** A group of Staten Island residents concerned about climate change is challenging the project.

**Body**

A group of Staten Island residents concerned about climate change is challenging the project.

It is an unlikely centerpiece for a save-the-wetlands campaign: a patch of woods and swamps surrounded by strip malls and service roads on the densely populated, industrial northern shore of [*Staten Island*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html).

To nearby residents fighting to preserve it, the parcel is a bulwark against disaster. The 28 acres are part of a network of wetlands that in 2012 helped protect the area from the deadliest floods of Hurricane Sandy, which devastated New York City and killed 43 residents, [*more than half of them in Staten Island*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html).

But the land’s developer has a different vision: a giant BJ’s Wholesale Club. His company has said the project will create at least 200 local jobs, protect 11 acres of the wetlands and include rain gardens and holding tanks to curb flooding.

State and city authorities agree, having approved plans for the membership-only warehouse club chain and an 800-car parking lot on the site, [*part of the Graniteville Swamp*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html). The decision has set off new wrangling over how best to [*handle development*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) on Staten Island’s diverse, ***working-class*** northern tip.

The fight has also taken on [*wider resonance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) as [*record-setting hurricane*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) and [*wildfire seasons*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) raise doubts that decades-old [*environmental, zoning and building*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) rules can produce safe, farsighted decisions.

“Where does it stop? It’s like Manifest Destiny for developers,” said Gabriella Velardi-Ward, who lives in the Mariners Harbor neighborhood surrounding the site and leads [*a group of residents*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) challenging the project in court. “In torrential rains, the water moves through our condo community to the wetlands.”

The case also points to potential challenges for Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo and [*Mayor Bill de Blasio*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html), who have positioned themselves as national [*climate leaders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) and pushed back against the Trump administration’s [*gutting of environmental rules*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html). They have staked out [*ambitious climate goals*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) — a state law requires net carbon neutrality by 2050 — but do not always have the tools to make local decisions line up with big-picture intentions.

The project’s supporters — including the Staten Island borough president, James S. Oddo, and the area’s City Council representative, Debi Rose — said in recent interviews that they shared concerns about building on natural areas. But they contend that the developer had a legal right to build — a view that opponents dispute — so their only way to protect the wetlands was to support his plan in exchange for measures to reduce ecological damage.

“In a perfect world, I would love for that place to remain as it is,” said Ms. Rose, a Democrat who, like Mr. Oddo, backed a [*special permit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) required to build a store as large as a BJ’s, despite objections from the local community board. “But it was going to be developed. I did the best I could to negotiate more responsible development.”

Mr. Oddo, a Republican, said: “I did emotionally understand the community’s arguments — I lived through Sandy. But legally, where would I stand if I wanted to oppose it?”

The city’s Department of Planning and the state’s Department of Environmental Conservation [*both agreed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) that the proposal was better for the environment, and the community, than if the developer, Charles Alpert, had built unchecked.

Wetlands regulation, which got underway in the 1970s, has not prevented heavy development in this section of Staten Island. The BJ’s would be the latest of the warehouses, housing developments and big-box stores that have proliferated around the Graniteville Swamp, a mix of freshwater and tidal wetlands that flow into [*Old Place Creek*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) and out to the Arthur Kill.

On the site, on South Avenue next to a multiplex cinema, tall trees shade fallen logs and rotting leaves. Ferns sprout amid bits of trash and broken machinery. Dark watermarks on tree trunks show where knee-deep vernal pools — seasonal freshwater wetlands — fill up in springtime, nurturing salamanders and frogs. One end slopes to a tidal marsh fringed with rushes.

The Alpert family bought the land in two pieces, in 1977 and 1984, just before the state started mapping wetlands and adjacent areas where development would be restricted. It fought for years to keep their land off those maps.

In 2012 came an agreement: The owners agreed to not build residential blocks and to seek a wetlands permit, and the conservation department designated less of the property as protected areas than its experts had initially recommended.

Two months later, Sandy hit.

In 2017, the local community board rejected the BJ’s plan, citing concerns about flooding and traffic. It was [*overruled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) by Mr. Oddo, planning officials and the City Council. A Hail-Mary search for endangered mud turtles, which would have held up the development, came up empty. Over a thousand people sent comments to the conservation department, nearly all opposing the project.

The department, [*in approving the ruling, noted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) that climate concerns fell outside the scope of its powers.

Ms. Velardi-Ward’s group, the [*Staten Island Coalition for Wetlands and Forests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html), is now suing to force the conservation department to redo its assessment. It is arguing that the right to build on the land was never guaranteed, and that regulators should have compared the project’s impact with unbuilt land — not a hypothetical, less environmentally sensitive development.

The conservation department declined to comment, citing the lawsuit. Mitchell Korbey, a lawyer for the holding company incorporated by Mr. Alpert, which owns the land, said the project would proceed and bring well-paid jobs and convenient shopping.

The case has wider significance for some elected officials and groups like the [*Waterfront Alliance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) and the [*Natural Areas Conservancy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html), which are pushing for more coordinated planning across the New York region in the face of climate change. As in many parts of the country, land-use decisions in the area fall to municipalities; they are typically hashed out according to local political-power dynamics and a mix of arcane — and often outdated — zoning and permitting rules.

“We’re acting at cross purposes: preparing for sea-level rise and trying to slow climate change with one set of policies, and taking actions elsewhere that undercut those efforts,” said Elena Conte, deputy director of the [*Pratt Center for Community Development*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) in Brooklyn.

Some climate and planning experts say the case shows why rules should be updated to reduce the [*80,000 acres of U.S. wetlands*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html) lost to development annually: Outdated regulatory maps miss wetlands that have migrated, and decades-old rules underestimate wetlands’ value in buffering hurricanes, absorbing storm water runoff and capturing carbon from the air.

New York State law does not protect freshwater wetlands that are smaller than 11 acres, like most of those in cities.

New York’s sweeping climate law requires that in every decision they make, state agencies must consider the impact on the climate. But the rules for weighing that impact have not yet been written, and the Staten Island case predates the law, passed last year.

The law also includes provisions to redress historically disproportionate environmental harm to low-income and Black and Latino neighborhoods, designated as “environmental justice communities.” Northern Staten Island has several such neighborhoods, with some of New York City’s highest asthma rates, according to state and federal data.

“Nothing has been updated to address the climate-change issues our environmental justice communities face,” said Beryl Thurman, who had been a longtime resident of a neighborhood near Mariners Harbor, Port Richmond, where a viral video in 2019 captured a flash flood [*swamping a city bus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html).

“You can white-water raft in every downpour,” said Ms. Thurman, who heads a [*local environmental group*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html). “To turn around and say this wetland or any other wetland is not significant for water retention, it just lacks all practicality, all sense of reason.”

Ms. Rose, the City Council member, said smarter planning rules were needed. Still, Mr. Oddo, the borough president, said, “I prefer to take my chances case by case than give more power to unelected regulators who don’t have Staten Islanders’ interests at heart.”

Gabrielle Dylag, a law student on the residents’ legal team, the [*Pace Environmental Litigation Clinic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/11/nyregion/staten-island-second-wave.html), blamed outdated regulations and developers’ budgets and clout: “This would never happen in a neighborhood of wealthy or powerful people with resources to fight, not just legally but politically.”

Ms. Velardi-Ward, 73, exhaled as she stepped onto the shady site on a recent day. A woodpecker hammered nearby.

“New York City has come to the end of the land,” she said. “That’s why they’re coming for the wetlands.”

PHOTOS: A BJ’s Wholesale Club and 800-car parking lot is planned on 28 acres of wetlands on Staten Island’s northern shore. The plan would protect 11 acres of the property.; Gabriella Velardi-Ward, who lives in Mariners Harbor, S.I., leads a local group opposed to the project. “It’s like Manifest Destiny for developers” when it comes to the wetlands, she said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 11, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Teenagers in The Times: April 2021***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62M1-XCM1-JBG3-64NT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 6, 2021 Thursday 15:09 EST

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**Section:** LEARNING

**Length:** 1932 words

**Byline:** The Learning Network

**Highlight:** Our roundup of the news stories and features about young people that have recently appeared across sections of NYTimes.com.

**Body**

Our roundup of the news stories and features about young people that have recently appeared across sections of NYTimes.com.

Here is the April edition of [*Teenagers in The Times*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times), a roundup of the news and feature stories about young people that have recently appeared across sections of [*NYTimes.com*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times). We publish a new edition on the first Thursday of each month.

For ideas about how to use Teenagers in The Times with your students, please see our [*lesson plan*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times) and [*special activity sheet*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times), both of which can be used with this or any other edition.

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Education

[*Scripps Spelling Bee Adds Vocabulary (and Possible Lightning Round) for 2021*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The changes come after last year’s event was canceled because of the pandemic and the 2019 bee resulted in an eight-way tie.

[*Howard Students Protest Cut of Classics Department, Hub for Black Scholarship*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Howard University’s board of trustees approved the decision to scrap the program, the only such department at a historically Black university.

[*One High School, Five Students Fatally Shot*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Five students at a Knoxville, Tenn., high school have been killed in gun violence this year, plunging a community’s young people into a whirlwind of trauma.

[*Why Students Are Logging In to Class From 7,000 Miles Away*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Students are joining remote classes from outside the country. In one New Jersey school district, computers were traced to 24 countries on a day last month.

[*For many college students, pandemic life is disappointing. For others, it is a financial crisis.*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

As campuses struggle under the shadow of the pandemic, many students report having trouble paying for food, housing and other basic needs.

[*Italy’s Problem With School Dropouts Goes From Bad to Worse*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Even before the pandemic, Italy had among the worst dropout rates in Europe. But closed schools and online classes have pushed students out in higher numbers.

[*Online Schools Are Here to Stay, Even After the Pandemic*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Some families have come to prefer stand-alone virtual schools and districts are rushing to accommodate them — though questions about remote learning persist.

[*100 U.S. colleges will require vaccinations to attend in-person classes in the fall.*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Private colleges make up the bulk of the schools with vaccine mandates, but some public universities have also moved to require shots, according to a survey by The New York Times.

[*Only 8 Black Students Are Admitted to Stuyvesant High School*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Once again, tiny numbers of Black and Latino students received offers to attend New York City’s elite public high schools.

[*School District Investigating ‘Abhorrent’ George Floyd Image Posted by Student*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

A football player posted the image, which superimposed two Virginia high schools’ logos on the faces of Derek Chauvin and George Floyd, to celebrate his team’s victory, according to the district superintendent.

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Civics, Politics, Economics and Business

[*German High Court Hands Youth a Victory in Climate Change Fight*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The government must expand its plan to reduce carbon emissions to zero by 2050, the country’s highest court ruled. The decision requires lawmakers to make long-term commitments.

[*Women Are Calling Out ‘Rape Culture’ in U.K. Schools*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Thousands of anonymous online accounts have shined a spotlight on sexual violence against young women and girls.

[*Supreme Court Rejects Limits on Life Terms for Youths*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The court, which has for years been cutting back on harsh punishments for juvenile offenders, changed course in a 6-to-3 decision.

[*The Only Ones Arrested After a Child’s Rape: The Women Who Helped Her*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The assault of a 13-year-old girl in Venezuela and the arrest of her mother and a teacher who helped her end the pregnancy have forced a national debate about legalizing abortion.

[*Darnella Frazier captured George Floyd’s death on her cellphone. The teenager’s video shaped the Chauvin trial.*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Ms. Frazier was 17 when she recorded the cellphone video in May and uploaded it to Facebook. ‘When I look at George Floyd, I look at my dad,’ she said in court.

[*An Outspoken Student Union Positions Itself at the Vanguard of a Changing France*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

To its critics, the 114-year-old Unef is the incarnation of the American-inspired ideas that threaten France’s founding principles. Its leaders say it is the future.

[*The Pandemic Hit the* ***Working Class*** *Hard. The Colleges That Serve Them Are Hurting, Too.*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The community colleges largely serving low-income, Black and Latino students are reeling, and experts worry that inequality in education will increase.

[*Chicago to Release Video of Deadly Police Shooting of a 13-Year-Old*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The shooting has tapped into a tide of anguish and frustration in Chicago neighborhoods that have been gripped by recurring gun violence.

[*Young Migrants Crowd Shelters, Posing Test for Biden*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The administration is under intensifying pressure to expand its capacity to care for as many as 35,000 unaccompanied minors, part of a wave of people crossing the border.

[*Greta Thunberg Says She’ll Skip U.N. Climate Summit in Glasgow*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The teenage activist, citing concerns about global vaccine inequality, said she would not attend the meeting “unless everyone can take part on the same terms.”

[*Young Women Are Dropping Out of School and Work. Is Caregiving the Culprit?*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

While much of the economy is beginning to bounce back, young people — particularly young women — are living a different reality.

[*N.Y.C. Bans Pesticides in Parks With Push From Unlikely Force: Children*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

“A bunch of kindergartners,” now in seventh grade, worked years to push the City Council to approve a ban on toxic pesticides in parks, playgrounds and other spaces.

[*Hundreds March in Chicago, Protesting Police Shooting of Adam Toledo, 13*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The boy was fatally shot in March after a police chase in Chicago’s Little Village neighborhood.

[*What Teenagers Have Learned From a Tumultuous Time in Politics*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Soon-to-be voters say they’re disillusioned by what they’ve observed, but many are also motivated to political action.

[*White Police Officer to Face Charge She Intimidated Son’s Black Friend*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Officer Patricia Lio of the Milton Police Department in Massachusetts is accused of berating her son’s 14-year-old Black friend about his stance on the Black Lives Matter movement.

[*‘A Horrendous Tragedy’: The Moments Before a Police Shooting in Columbus*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

New video and 911 calls shed light on what led up to the fatal shooting of 16-year-old Ma’Khia Bryant, who the police said was wielding a knife.

[*Jobs for Homeless L.G.B.T.Q. Youth*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

New York City struggles to support L.G.B.T.Q. youth who are experiencing homelessness and unemployment.

[*College Accounts at Birth: State Efforts Raise New Hopes*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Creating and seeding accounts for every newborn is found to have an impact on aspirations as well as savings.

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Science, Health, Technology and Sports

[*Tsubasa Kajitani Wins Augusta National Women’s Amateur in Playoff*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The 17-year-old from Japan started the day slow on the tough course at Augusta National but rallied for a surprise sudden-death finish.

[*Alabama and North Dakota pass bills barring transgender girls and women from playing on female teams.*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Republican lawmakers in more than 30 states have introduced dozens of measures this year, the highest number of anti-transgender bills ever filed in a single year.

[*Transgender Childhood Is Not a ‘Trend’*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

“As far back as historians have found evidence of transgender people, they’ve found transgender children,” writes the author of this Opinion essay.

[*‘Just Overwhelmed’: When a School Restarts but Students Can’t*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Working on the audio documentary “Odessa” gave one producer a painful look at the post-lockdown emotional struggles of teenagers.

[*After Chauvin Verdict, a Minneapolis High School Football Team Moves On*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Charles Adams, a former police officer, and the Minneapolis North team are warily moving forward after the Derek Chauvin verdict offered a rebuke to one police killing in their community.

[*It’s Easy (and Legal) to Bet on Sports. Do Young Adults Know the Risks?*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Americans wagered $13 billion on sports in 2019. With sports betting now legal in nearly half the states, experts fear the addiction danger is not being adequately addressed.

[*Are Spring Sports Safe for Children?*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Youth sports are ramping up in many parts of the country. But without a vaccine for children, we still need to avoid spreading the coronavirus.

[*Parents, Stop Talking About the ‘Lost Year’*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Teenagers and tweens will be fine, experts say — if adults model resilience.

[*How to Support Young People Seeing Body Changes as They Return to School*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Teenagers experiencing puberty without being in school are facing a unique set of challenges. Here’s how parents can help them.

[*Eating Disorders in Teens Have ‘Exploded’ in the Pandemic*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Here’s what parents need to know.

[*How Will Camps Keep Kids Safe This Summer?*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Do counselors have to be vaccinated? Will there be singing around campfires? We asked the experts.

[*The Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine Is Said to Be Powerfully Protective in Adolescents*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

A clinical trial found no symptomatic infections among vaccinated children ages 12 to 15, the companies said, and there were no serious side effects. The data have not yet been reviewed by independent experts.

[*Johnson &amp; Johnson has begun testing its vaccine in adolescents.*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

People under 18 account for about 23 percent of the U.S. population, and the country cannot hope to reach herd immunity without protecting them.

[*Emerging From the Pandemic With Acne, Facial Hair and Body Odor*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Young people experiencing the body changes of puberty without being in school are facing a unique set of challenges. Here’s how parents can support them.

[*Tools for Teens to Call Out Sexual Violence*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

A sex ed teacher talks about how young people can try to keep themselves safe from sexual assault and be allies to others.

[*A Letter to XVideos*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

“When I was 14, someone recorded a video of me naked without my knowledge or consent. It ended up on XVideos,” states the narrator of this Times video.

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Arts, Media and Culture

[*What I Learned When I Reopened My Middle School Yearbook*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

There’s no right way to come of age, especially for a child of immigrants.

[*‘Future People’ Review: Connected by Biology, Bonded by Love*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

This documentary chronicles eight years in the lives of a group of children who form a bond after discovering they were conceived by the same sperm donor.

[*‘Moffie’ Review: A Bleak Coming-of-Age*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

This grueling film about the South African military going to war with Angola is replete with vicious, stark depictions of racism and homophobia.

[*‘Giants Being Lonely’ Review: Indie Filmmaking Being Twee*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

The feature-directing debut of the artist Grear Patterson paints a hazy picture of adolescence.

[*How ‘Rocks’ Made Stars of Its Schoolgirl Cast*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

By casting first-time actors, the film tells a story rarely seen onscreen: what growing up is like for British women of color.

[*Transgender and Nonbinary Teens Share Their Stories in New Book Series*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

Written by four teenagers, the books aim to open up conversations about young people who are transgender or nonbinary.

[*‘Best Summer Ever’ Review: Not Just Another Song and Dance*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times)

A largely disabled cast leads this charming teen musical.

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PHOTO: Joanna Lopez, 18, a senior at Odessa High School, attends a math class remotely from her bedroom in Odessa, Texas, in January. [*Related Article*](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-teens-in-the-times) &lt;div&gt; &lt;div&gt; &lt;div class="highlighter--icon highlighter--icon-copy"&gt;&lt;/div&gt; &lt;div class="highlighter--separator"&gt;&lt;/div&gt; &lt;div class="highlighter--icon highlighter--icon-change-color"&gt;&lt;/div&gt; &lt;div class="highlighter--separator"&gt;&lt;/div&gt; &lt;div class="highlighter--icon highlighter--icon-delete"&gt;&lt;/div&gt; &lt;/div&gt; &lt;/div&gt; (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***The Brutal Clarity of the Trump-McConnell Plan***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:600D-1FH1-JBG3-60HD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 26, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1179 words

**Byline:** By Will Wilkinson

**Body**

The liability-protection ruse is an excuse to coerce Americans back to work by refusing desperately needed help.

House Democrats have passed a new ''phase four'' $3 trillion coronavirus relief bill. You could call it an opening bid toward a package to support a sensible, deliberate economic reopening.

But Republicans are having none of it. No one has staked out the ''no'' position as starkly as Mitch McConnell, the Senate majority leader. He declared the bill ''dead on arrival'' upon its release. Weeks ago, when it was barely a twinkle in Nancy Pelosi's eye, he asserted that ''we can't pass another bill unless we have liability protections.''

Unsurprisingly, the president agrees with Mr. McConnell that any federal cash to states must be conditioned on ''lawsuit indemnification,'' as he indicated in a tweet.

Democrats adamantly oppose removing a critical incentive for businesses to prevent workplace contagion and keep employees and communities safe. Insisting that they imbibe this specific poison is more than a hardball negotiating tactic. Mr. McConnell is essentially saying that the debate over the next round of coronavirus relief is finished before it starts because Republicans are in charge and their course is set: Americans will suffer for the Dow, Democrats can't stop it, and negotiation over what else might be done will be limited to policy instrumental to the Trump-McConnell plan.

The ruling Republican approach to the economic crisis of mass social distancing seems to be to simply to cut it short, force a hasty reboot of the economy and recklessly gamble on penniless states and municipalities muddling through without creating too much politically inconvenient carnage.

The president's repudiation of responsibility pushed the burden of pandemic control onto states with imploding budgets. Yet Republican leadership holds that states shouldn't get a dime of additional aid unless, by agreeing to liability reform, they not only endorse the rush to re-engage the economy but also do so in a way that accepts that thousands more may sicken or worse in the push to kick America's casinos and car dealerships back into gear.

It makes an appalling sort of sense. If your goal is to break America's lifesaving resolve to maintain social-distancing measures or introduce reliable test-and-trace regimes, it can be counterproductive to relieve intensifying pressure on wrecked state and municipal budgets. Steadfast federal inaction will suffice to starve workers back into the yoke and compel governors and mayors fearing fiscal ruin and popular uprising to reopen.

The hitch in the plan for a blitzkrieg economic reboot, as Republicans see it, is that some business owners might hesitate to reopen if there's a risk that employees who catch Covid-19 on the job might sue them for failing to take reasonable safety precautions.

But this isn't really a problem. It's an excuse to coerce Americans back to work by refusing desperately needed help.

You'll notice that the Republican call for liability protection amounts to a frank admission that in hurrying back to shops and offices, factories and showrooms, Americans might die. The wariness of business owners to expose themselves to the legal peril of reopening during an uncontained epidemic isn't a problem. It's a market signal telling us that for now, the risks of rushing to reopen might outweigh the rewards. If it were generally safe to reopen, Republicans wouldn't need to shut this signal down.

That said, there's really very little risk of ''a second epidemic of frivolous lawsuits,'' as Mr. McConnell heartlessly put it. Personal injury lawyers, who generally get paid only if they win or settle, are unlikely to pursue Covid-19 lawsuits against employers. It would be very difficult to establish precisely when and where someone caught the virus or to prove that a worker would not have picked it up but for their employer's negligence. Nor is it likely to build a plausible class-action lawsuit by bundling together many injuries of such easily contestable origin. In any case, many employment agreements require workers to waive their right to join class-action suits. There will be no plague of ambulance chasers.

Still, our real problem, the first and actual epidemic, remains to be contained. According to existing liability law, businesses have little to fear if they take ''reasonable care'' to protect the health and safety of their workers. This means little more than following state and local reopening guidelines and adopting prevailing industry standards.

The demand for liability reform is just a pretext for disgraceful inaction -- an excuse for legislative obstruction that attempts to cast Democrats as the obstruction's source.

Democrats may have little power to stop the Trump-McConnell plan. But they can rattle Republican resolve to refuse aid to suffering workers and struggling states through brutal clarity about the shocking, electorally toxic reality of the Republican ''plan'' for our country.

Mr. Trump displays his determination to restart the economy in plain defiance of his administration's own public health guidelines nearly every day. It's a transparently panicked effort to memory-hole what may be the deadliest presidential failure in American history, foist the blame onto China or Democrats or both, and flog the recalcitrant donkey of America's stalled economy into a virulent gallop -- all to conjure the illusion of a successfully managed return to normality well before the election in November.

Mitch McConnell's liability protection ruse is a refined encapsulation of the wild dishonesty, incoherence and cruelty of the president's desperate rush to reopen the country.

Why will workers agree to show up at a workplace that wouldn't have reopened if their employer hadn't been encouraged to discount their safety? Well, because they'll get kicked off unemployment if they don't, which could force them to choose between working in unsafe conditions or watching their children go hungry.

For a strategy meant to foster an illusion of economic success, these are atrocious optics. The Republican Party is broadcasting that it can't see the difference between the interests of capital and the health and welfare of ordinary working Americans. It's communicating that fatal losses to workers and their communities are tolerable, but financial losses to the business class are not.

The longer you look at it, the more Republican haste to reopen resembles sociopathic class warfare. This won't be lost on the ***working class***, including white blue-collar voters Republicans need to avoid a wipeout, especially if Democrats drive the message home: Trump-McConnell Republicans believe that you deserve nothing but owe them everything.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***How Ronald Reagan Triumphed; nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60M9-V641-DXY4-X1DW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 18, 2020 Tuesday 02:25 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1306 words

**Byline:** Evan Thomas

**Highlight:** Rick Perlstein’s “Reaganland” completes his multivolume survey of American conservatism with the 1980 election victory of Ronald Reagan.

**Body**

REAGANLAND

America’s Right Turn, 1976-1980

By Rick Perlstein

In 1968, 17-year-old [*Patrick Caddell*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/16/obituaries/patrick-caddell-dead.html) polled a ***working-class*** neighborhood in Jacksonville, Fla., about the upcoming presidential race for a high school project. He was surprised to hear, again and again, “Wallace or Kennedy, either one.” This seemed to make no sense. Alabama Governor George Wallace, a segregationist, was the ideological opposite and avowed foe of Robert Kennedy, who had pushed civil rights as attorney general in his brother’s administration. Young Caddell had an insight: In politics, feelings mattered more than policy. For all their apparent differences, Wallace and Kennedy were both tough guys; they both seemed to be mad at something most of the time. Voters could relate: The feeling abroad in the land in 1968 (not unlike 2020) was alienation.

Later, working out of his college dorm room, Caddell became a paid political consultant. One of his clients in the 1972 election was Joe Biden, then 29, running for the United States Senate from Delaware. Caddell told Biden not to attack his opponent. That would just make him look like another politician. Rather, he should run against Washington. Biden took the advice and won.

[*Rick Perlstein*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/16/obituaries/patrick-caddell-dead.html) tells this anecdote early in “Reaganland,” his absorbing political and social history of the late 1970s. More than 700 pages later, Perlstein notes that Biden, himself, went on to become “an exquisitely well-calibrated politician.” Perlstein doesn’t point out the irony, but he doesn’t need to. The joy of this book, and the reason it remains fresh for nearly a thousand pages of text, is that personality and character constantly confound the conventional wisdom. Perlstein’s broad theme is well known, partly because he has made it so through his three earlier volumes (“Before the Storm,” “Nixonland” and “The Invisible Bridge”) on the rise of the New Right in American politics. In the 1960s and 70s, liberals overplayed their hand and failed to see the growing disaffection of Americans who felt cut out or left behind. (Sound familiar?) But Perlstein is never deterministic, and his sharp insights into human quirks and foibles make all of his books surprising and fun, if a little smart-alecky at times.

[ Read an excerpt from [*“Reaganland.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/16/obituaries/patrick-caddell-dead.html) ]

One of Perlstein’s favorite sports is to poke fun at the cluelessness of establishment commentators from the mainstream media. In the summer of 1977, Perlstein reports, pundits were writing long “thumbsuckers” pronouncing the near death of the Republican Party. The Boston Globe’s David Nyhan said “the two party system is now down to one and a half parties.” That was because, “the party of Abraham Lincoln forgot its heritage and started neglecting minorities.”

In fact, Perlstein points out, the “party of Lincoln” knew exactly what it was doing: marching into the once-Democratic Solid South to convert angry white voters into Republicans. In 1968 and 1972, Richard Nixon had made a start with his [*Southern Strategy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/16/obituaries/patrick-caddell-dead.html), using code words like “states’ rights” to appeal to racists, but by 1980, the Republican Party seemed to dispense with subtlety. Ronald Reagan’s first major appearance of the 1980 general election campaign was at the Neshoba County Fair in Mississippi. This was Klan country. In 1964, the bodies of three civil rights activists had been found buried in an earthen dam a few miles away. Families came to the Neshoba County Fair every year to enjoy the mule races and beauty and pie-eating contests. “White families, that is,” Perlstein archly notes. “Blacks only participated as employees.”

In the hot sun, before an adoring audience, on a stage crowded with Confederate flags, Reagan began with a football story and some corny jokes, and then plunged into the red meat of his speech, about the wickedness of federal interference in the lives of ordinary Americans. But then, Perlstein notes, a strange thing happened. Reagan, one of the most sure-footed stump speakers ever, began to get “wobbly.” Instead of pausing for his punch lines, he rushed ahead. He seemed to want to get the speech over with.

The enthusiasm drained from the crowd. The speech was a bust. Reagan actually dropped in the polls in Mississippi. He recovered later, taking every Southern state but Jimmy Carter’s Georgia. Still, the plain fact was that Reagan was not comfortable playing the race card, and he couldn’t hide it.

It’s a small, redeeming moment in Perlstein’s overspilling narrative, but the glimpse into Reagan’s conscience is characteristic of Perlstein’s storytelling. Reagan is hardly a hero to Perlstein, whose own politics are to the left. But in this description, the former movie actor turned politician is intensely human, and capable of empathy, or at least shame.

Reagan is also sly, especially at outfoxing condescending liberals. In 1980, Jimmy Carter’s campaign advisers, along with most of the press corps, underestimated him. “They presumed the public would see what they saw. Which was that Carter was smart and that Reagan was stupid. And that therefore Reagan would lose any debate,” Perlstein writes. “Which overlooked the fact that Reagan had won practically every debate he had participated in — going back at least to 1967, when he appeared on the same TV hookup with Robert F. Kennedy to discuss the Vietnam War, and twisted his opponent into such knots that Kennedy subsequently yelled, ‘Who … got me into this?’ and ordered staffers never to pair him with ‘that son-of-a-bitch’ ever again.”

At their final debate in late October, virtually tied in the polls, Carter started in on Reagan for having advocated, “on four different occasions,” for “making Social Security a voluntary system, which would, in effect, very quickly bankrupt it.” After Reagan responded with a wandering anecdote about an orphan and someone’s aunt, Carter bore in and attacked Reagan for opposing Medicare. Now, Carter warned, Reagan was trying to block national health insurance.

As Perlstein tells it, Reagan looked at Carter smilingly, his face betraying “a hint of pity.” Then the old cowboy rocked back, and with an easy, genial chuckle, delivered the knockout blow. “There you go again!” he said, beaming. The audience gave a “burst of delighted laughter. … Jimmy Carter was being mean again.”

With one deft jab, Reagan had finished off his opponent. A few days later, the Republican candidate won in an electoral vote landslide.

The 1980 election marks the end of this book, and, Perlstein says in his acknowledgments, the end of his four-volume saga on the rise of conservatism in America, from the early stirrings of Barry Goldwater to the dawn of the Age of Reagan. One hopes Perlstein does not stop there. “Reaganland” is full of portents for the current day. Among the fascinating and disturbing echoes is his description of the night the lights went out in New York City in the midsummer of 1977. The city went feral. Looters ran wild. The police force, diminished by huge layoffs, seemed helpless to restore order. At the time, a congressman named Ed Koch was running for mayor. Koch was known as a liberal, but after the mayhem, he ran on a platform that featured bringing back the death penalty. He won. One wonders, in our own uncertain era, what the future will hold for Joe Biden, whom we meet on Page 8 of “Reaganland” as a Patrick Caddell-made populist candidate on his way to becoming “an exquisitely well-calibrated politician.” Maybe, some day, Rick Perlstein will tell us that story.

Evan Thomas is the author, most recently, of “First: Sandra Day O’Connor.” REAGANLAND America’s Right Turn, 1976-1980 By Rick Perlstein Simon & Schuster. 1120 pp. $40.

PHOTO: Ronald Reagan campaigning in September 1980. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES HUGHES/NY DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Related Articles**

* [*A Distant Mirror*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/16/obituaries/patrick-caddell-dead.html)

1. [*Rick Perlstein: By the Book*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/16/obituaries/patrick-caddell-dead.html)
2. [*Bring Us Apart*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/16/obituaries/patrick-caddell-dead.html)

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[***With Weakness Among Hispanic Voters, Biden Trails in Texas***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6153-4M61-JBG3-64FJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 26, 2020 Monday 11:36 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 1406 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Large Democratic gains among white suburbanites suggest risks down the ballot for Republicans in congressional and state House races, our poll shows.

**Body**

Large Democratic gains among white suburbanites suggest risks down the ballot for Republicans in congressional and state House races, our poll shows.

President Trump maintains a narrow lead in [*Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-texas.html), according to a New York Times/Siena College poll on Monday, as he faces a rebellion in the state’s once overwhelmingly Republican suburbs but survives with support from an unlikely ally, Hispanic voters.

Over all, Mr. Trump leads [*Joe Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-texas.html), 47 percent to 43 percent, among likely voters. The majority of interviews were conducted before the final presidential debate on Thursday. In the Senate race, the Republican incumbent, John Cornyn, holds a larger lead, 48-38, over the Democrat, M.J. Hegar.

A Democratic win in Texas would be an epochal moment in American electoral politics, heralding an end to decades of Republican dominance in the nation’s second-largest state and representing a decisive repudiation of the Trump presidency. Polls have shown a competitive race in Texas all cycle, but the Biden campaign has made limited efforts to contest the state.

The Republican grip on Texas has deteriorated rapidly during the Trump era, as a Democratic breakthrough in the suburbs has endangered more than one-third of the state’s Republican congressional delegation and Republican control of the state House.

The findings suggest that Republicans face catastrophic risks down-ballot, even if Mr. Trump wins. Mr. Biden leads him by five percentage points, 48 percent to 43 percent, across the 12 predominantly suburban congressional districts that the Cook Political Report has rated as competitive. These districts voted for the president by eight points in 2016.

In these districts, Republicans face a combination of rapid demographic change and previously unthinkable Democratic gains among white college-educated voters. Mr. Trump leads Mr. Biden by just two points among white college graduates in these districts, even though they say they backed Mr. Trump by 24 points over Hillary Clinton in 2016.

Even those who have long embraced the Democratic dream of a “blue Texas,” powered by mobilizing the state’s growing Latino population, probably never imagined such staggering Democratic gains in once-solidly Republican areas. Yet the poll suggests that Hispanic voters might just be the group that keeps the state red a while longer.

Mr. Biden has a lead of only 57 percent to 34 percent among that group, somewhat beneath most estimates of Mrs. Clinton’s support among Hispanic voters four years ago. The finding broadly tracks with national surveys, which have shown Mr. Trump improving among Hispanic voters compared with his 2016 standing. Similarly, Hispanic voters in the Times/Siena poll say they backed Mrs. Clinton by a margin of 60 percent to 29 percent.

Hispanic voters are difficult to measure in any state, and Texas is no exception. In 2018, Times/Siena surveys generally underestimated turnout by Hispanics and their support for Democrats in Texas. So far this cycle, polls have varied widely on Mr. Trump’s standing among the group in Texas, with a recent Quinnipiac survey showing Mr. Biden ahead by just eight points, 51-43, while a Dallas Morning News/UT Tyler Texas survey showed him ahead by a far wider margin, 67-20.

Up to this point, the Biden campaign’s limited ad spending has been concentrated in the El Paso and San Antonio media markets, where Hispanic voters represent a particularly large share of the electorate. It may suggest that the Biden campaign sees Hispanic voters as one of its best and most cost-efficient opportunities to improve its standing in the state.

Mr. Trump also shows modest but meaningful strength among Black voters, who back Mr. Biden by a margin of 78 percent to 12 percent. Black respondents in the survey said they voted for Mrs. Clinton over Mr. Trump by a somewhat larger margin, 82-8, in 2016.

And while Mr. Biden has made significant gains among rural white voters without a college degree elsewhere in the country, the Times/Siena survey found this is not the case in Texas. Over all, white voters in rural areas back Mr. Trump, 80-15, mirroring the president’s resilience among white voters in Times/Siena polls across the Deep South, even as Mr. Biden makes significant breakthroughs among white voters across Northern battlegrounds.

As a result, Mr. Biden has not improved over Mrs. Clinton’s performance at all outside of the well-educated, competitive and fast-changing districts, according to the Times/Siena survey. Mr. Trump maintains nearly all of his strength among the Hispanic, Black and white ***working-class*** voters who prevail outside of the state’s affluent neighborhoods.

The poll offered mixed news for Democrats in their hopes of transforming the electorate to their favor, even as early voting already makes it clear that the 2020 electorate in Texas will be unlike any before.

With still a week of early voting and Election Day to go, more than seven million voters have already cast ballots in the state, representing more than 80 percent of the total turnout from four years ago. The state has not been vigorously contested at the presidential level in decades, leaving analysts with even more uncertainty about the eventual electorate than elsewhere.

No pollster and analyst can be reasonably confident about what the final Texas electorate will look like, given that a significant departure from prior turnout patterns is all but an inevitability. Nonetheless, the Times/Siena poll offers one possible picture: a turnout approaching 12 million, with neither Mr. Biden nor Mr. Trump claiming a clear advantage because of the higher turnout, but still with a lower turnout among Hispanic than non-Hispanic voters.

The poll finds that Mr. Biden holds a seven-point lead among the half of the likely electorate who had already voted as of Friday, according to state records compiled by L2, a nonpartisan data vendor. These voters are older and whiter than the electorate as a whole, and more have participated in a recent Republican primary than a Democratic one. But, like early voters elsewhere in the country, they appear more favorable to Mr. Biden than their demographic characteristics would suggest.

The president counters with a 17-point lead among the voters who had not turned out by Friday, including an even wider 29-point advantage among those who say they are almost certain to vote.

Mr. Biden fails to keep pace on Election Day, the poll finds, in part because the survey sees relatively little evidence that the turnout surge will extend to Latino voters, and that even if it did, such a surge would do less to benefit Mr. Biden than one might expect.

Over all, 66 percent of Hispanic registered voters say they’ve already voted or are almost certain to do so, compared with 83 percent of non-Hispanic whites and 77 percent of non-Hispanic Blacks.

Perhaps surprisingly, the Hispanic voters likeliest to stay home are the Hispanic voters likeliest to support Mr. Trump. Or, if you prefer: Mr. Biden fares better among the Latino voters who say they will vote. Mr. Biden leads, 61-30, among Hispanic voters who say they’ve already voted or are “almost certain” to do so, while Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden are effectively tied among those who are less likely. Mr. Biden has an even wider lead of 73-20 among Hispanic voters who say they have already voted. As a result, higher Latino turnout does little to bolster Mr. Biden, even though this low-turnout group of voters identified as Democratic over Republican by a 16-point margin.

Low-turnout Hispanic voters in Texas are some of the toughest voters to reach in the country for pollsters. It is even harder to ensure a representative sample of the group in a state like Texas where voters don’t register with a party; party registration can be used to ensure the right number of Democrats and Republicans. We can’t rule out the possibility that the poll failed to reach the most Democratic-leaning of these voters.

Mr. Biden may also succeed in mobilizing the Democratic-leaning elements of this group, as already seems to be happening in early voting. He can also hope that undecided, low-turnout Latino voters will break toward Democrats over the final stretch, as they seemed to do two years ago.

Here are the [*crosstabs*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-texas.html) for the poll.

PHOTO: Watching the presidential debate last week in San Antonio. The president’s standing among Hispanics has improved since 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SERGIO FLORES/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** November 7, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Brutal Clarity of the Trump-McConnell Plan to Protect Businesses***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6008-KW21-DXY4-X3D1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 26, 2020 Tuesday 18:41 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1186 words

**Byline:** Will Wilkinson

**Highlight:** The liability-protection ruse is an excuse to coerce Americans back to work by refusing desperately needed help.

**Body**

The liability-protection ruse is an excuse to coerce Americans back to work by refusing desperately needed help.

House Democrats have passed a new “phase four” $3 trillion coronavirus relief bill. You could call it an opening bid toward a package to support a sensible, deliberate economic reopening.

But Republicans are having none of it. No one has staked out the “no” position as starkly as Mitch McConnell, the Senate majority leader. He [*declared*](https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/497433-mcconnell-senate-gop-declare-house-3t-coronavirus-bill-dead-on-arrival) the bill “dead on arrival” upon its release. Weeks ago, when it was barely a twinkle in Nancy Pelosi’s eye, he   [*asserted*](https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/497433-mcconnell-senate-gop-declare-house-3t-coronavirus-bill-dead-on-arrival) that “we can’t pass another bill unless we have liability protections.”

Unsurprisingly, the president agrees with Mr. McConnell that any federal cash to states must be conditioned on “lawsuit indemnification,” as he indicated in a [*tweet*](https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/497433-mcconnell-senate-gop-declare-house-3t-coronavirus-bill-dead-on-arrival).

Democrats adamantly oppose removing a critical incentive for businesses to prevent workplace contagion and keep employees and communities safe. Insisting that they imbibe this specific poison is more than a hardball negotiating tactic. Mr. McConnell is essentially saying that the debate over the next round of coronavirus relief is finished before it starts because Republicans are in charge and their course is set: Americans will suffer for the Dow, Democrats can’t stop it, and negotiation over what else might be done will be limited to policy instrumental to the Trump-McConnell plan.

The ruling Republican approach to the economic crisis of mass social distancing seems to be to simply to cut it short, force a hasty reboot of the economy and recklessly gamble on penniless states and municipalities muddling through without creating too much politically inconvenient carnage.

The president’s repudiation of responsibility pushed the burden of pandemic control onto states with imploding budgets. Yet Republican leadership holds that states shouldn’t get a dime of additional aid unless, by agreeing to liability reform, they not only endorse the rush to re-engage the economy but also do so in a way that accepts that thousands more may sicken or worse in the push to kick America’s casinos and car dealerships back into gear.

It makes an appalling sort of sense. If your goal is to break America’s lifesaving resolve to maintain social-distancing measures or introduce reliable test-and-trace regimes, it can be counterproductive to relieve intensifying pressure on wrecked state and municipal budgets. Steadfast federal inaction will suffice to starve workers back into the yoke and compel governors and mayors fearing fiscal ruin and popular uprising to reopen.

The hitch in the plan for a blitzkrieg economic reboot, as Republicans see it, is that some business owners might hesitate to reopen if there’s a risk that employees who catch Covid-19 on the job might sue them for failing to take reasonable safety precautions.

But this isn’t really a problem. It’s an excuse to coerce Americans back to work by refusing desperately needed help.

You’ll notice that the Republican call for liability protection amounts to a frank admission that in hurrying back to shops and offices, factories and showrooms, Americans might die. The wariness of business owners to expose themselves to the legal peril of reopening during an uncontained epidemic isn’t a problem. It’s a market signal telling us that for now, the risks of rushing to reopen might outweigh the rewards. If it were generally safe to reopen, Republicans wouldn’t need to shut this signal down.

That said, there’s really very little risk of “a second epidemic of frivolous lawsuits,” as Mr. McConnell heartlessly [*put it*](https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/497433-mcconnell-senate-gop-declare-house-3t-coronavirus-bill-dead-on-arrival). Personal injury lawyers, who generally get paid only if they win or settle, are unlikely to pursue Covid-19 lawsuits against employers. It would be very difficult to establish precisely when and where someone caught the virus or to prove that a worker would not have picked it up but for their employer’s negligence. Nor is it likely to build a plausible class-action lawsuit by bundling together many injuries of such easily contestable origin. In any case, many employment agreements require workers to waive their right to join class-action suits. There will be no plague of ambulance chasers.

Still, our real problem, the first and actual epidemic, remains to be contained. According to existing liability law, businesses have little to fear if they take “[*reasonable care*](https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/497433-mcconnell-senate-gop-declare-house-3t-coronavirus-bill-dead-on-arrival)” to protect the health and safety of their workers. This means little more than following state and local reopening guidelines and adopting prevailing industry standards.

The demand for liability reform is just a pretext for disgraceful inaction — an excuse for legislative obstruction that attempts to cast Democrats as the obstruction’s source.

Democrats may have little power to stop the Trump-McConnell plan. But they can rattle Republican resolve to refuse aid to suffering workers and struggling states through brutal clarity about the shocking, electorally toxic reality of the Republican “plan” for our country.

Mr. Trump displays his determination to restart the economy in plain defiance of his administration’s own public health guidelines nearly every day. It’s a transparently panicked effort to memory-hole what may be the deadliest presidential failure in American history, foist the blame onto China or Democrats or both, and flog the recalcitrant donkey of America’s stalled economy into a virulent gallop — all to conjure the illusion of a successfully managed return to normality well before the election in November.

Mitch McConnell’s liability protection ruse is a refined encapsulation of the wild dishonesty, incoherence and cruelty of the president’s desperate rush to reopen the country.

Why will workers agree to show up at a workplace that wouldn’t have reopened if their employer hadn’t been encouraged to discount their safety? Well, because they’ll get kicked off unemployment if they don’t, which could force them to choose between working in unsafe conditions or watching their children go hungry.

For a strategy meant to foster an illusion of economic success, these are atrocious optics. The Republican Party is broadcasting that it can’t see the difference between the interests of capital and the health and welfare of ordinary working Americans. It’s communicating that fatal losses to workers and their communities are tolerable, but financial losses to the business class are not.

The longer you look at it, the more Republican haste to reopen resembles harsh class warfare. This won’t be lost on the ***working class***, including white blue-collar voters Republicans need to avoid a wipeout, especially if Democrats drive the message home: Trump-McConnell Republicans believe that you deserve nothing but owe them everything.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/497433-mcconnell-senate-gop-declare-house-3t-coronavirus-bill-dead-on-arrival) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/497433-mcconnell-senate-gop-declare-house-3t-coronavirus-bill-dead-on-arrival). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/497433-mcconnell-senate-gop-declare-house-3t-coronavirus-bill-dead-on-arrival).

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 26, 2020

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[***The Don Strikes Back***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y5M-4MF1-JBG3-62B3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 9, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 9

**Length:** 981 words

**Byline:** By Maureen Dowd

**Body**

An enraged and ebullient Trump ups the body count.

Democrats: The only thing you have to fear is Trump himself.

You should be quaking. Our unhinged monarch had a very good week and your party had a very bad week -- and that's no B.S.

A lot of you told me, with expletives, that while you were watching President Trump's carnival-barking this past week, you were thinking, ''We're going to freaking lose.''

Trump hollowed out the hallowed, Apprenticing one of Washington's most august traditions on Tuesday night, showing in the State of the Union how he has figured out how to use the levers of the presidency to amplify his flair for the dramatic.

There has always been political theater; now there's Trump political theater, as he perfects the black art of turning Democrats into mincemeat.

What could be more flamboyantly offensive than the anti-bullying advocate, Melania, hanging a Presidential Medal of Freedom around the neck of one of the biggest bullies and hate preachers of all time, Rush Limbaugh? Talk about the bully pulpit.

The president even finally managed to send his classy nemesis, Nancy Pelosi, over the edge, as she became so agitated that she was driven to Trumpian tactics to rebut his lies.

The acquittal put an exclamation point on two facts: Trump has subsumed the Republican Party, except for the sole Republican lawmaker whose base would not kill him if he voted to throw the president out of office. And he has forged one of the most cynical and darkly productive alliances of all time with the poker-faced Mitch McConnell, sending his personal approval rating to an all-time high.

Iowa was a master class in Democratic dysfunction. The disarray kicked off the Saturday before the vote when the all-important Des Moines Register poll crashed and burned. After that, campaign staffers on the ground began spinning, pushing their own narratives based on internal polls, and the press corps became a dog chasing its own tail.

On the night of the vote, I went to a high school on the edge of Des Moines to watch Iowans caucus. The caucuses have always been screwy under the rubric of quaint, with people offering chocolates for votes and doing coin tosses to make final decisions. But after I watched a kerfuffle, where a woman in a pajama outfit threw a fit when her vote somehow got moved from Biden to Buttigieg, things seemed sketchier than ever.

That was just the start of Iowa's auto-da-fé. Candidates jumped on planes to get out of dodgy Dodge, leaving lower-level staffers and the press corps in a cocktail party of confusion at the lobby bar at the Des Moines Marriott.

As one campaign staffer told New York magazine's Olivia Nuzzi as he disappeared into the freezing cold Iowa night, the only thing left was to get soused and give himself over to concupiscence.

By the time I got to New Hampshire, the Democratic hysteria was rising -- and a faltering Joe Biden disappeared in a crisis cloud -- while internecine class war was intensifying. Pete Buttigieg was pre-declaring victory, spurring Sanders supporters to dub him ''Mayor Cheat'' on Twitter. Bernie Sanders spoke on Friday morning, tying Buttigieg to Wall Street and urging Democrats to decide if they were on the side of the ***working class*** or greed, ''where billionaires control not only our economy, but our political life.'' #PetesBillionaires began trending on Twitter.

James Carville, en route to New Hampshire with his Mardi Gras beads to campaign for Michael Bennet, went on viral rants about being ''scared to death'' for his party as it lurched toward the far left. ''Let's get relevant here, people, for sure,'' he said on MSNBC, adding, ''Do we want to be an ideological cult?''

As the Republicans stuck together, ruled by fear and self-interest, the Democrats shattered apart.

''Donald Trump is narrowcasting to African-Americans and Latinos with his Super Bowl ad and at the State of the Union, and the economy's doing well, and meanwhile we're fiddling around with a Socialist and Encyclopedia Brown,'' moaned one top Democrat on the Hill.

Democrats from Congress to Los Angeles began whispering hopefully about Michael Bloomberg.

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Just as when he made his very imperfect call to the Ukrainian president the day after Robert Mueller testified, Trump began acting out right after his acquittal.

He launched a revenge mission, accusing Pelosi of a Xerox felony. He said ominously about the Pelosi rip heard around the world: ''First of all, it's an official document. You're not allowed. It's illegal what she did. She broke the law.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/08/opinion/sunday/trump-vindman-sondland.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/08/opinion/sunday/trump-vindman-sondland.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Trump departing the White House Friday for another leg of his victory lap. (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. Kirkpatrick for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***The Don Strikes Back***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y5F-5421-DXY4-X298-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 8, 2020 Saturday 11:53 EST

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**Length:** 1003 words

**Byline:** Maureen Dowd

**Highlight:** An enraged and ebullient Trump ups the body count.

**Body**

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PHOTO: President Trump departing the White House Friday for another leg of his victory lap. (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. Kirkpatrick for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 14, 2020

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[***The Work Of Many Lifetimes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KX-FS81-JBG3-62DG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 16, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section TW; Column 0; SpecialSections; Pg. 40

**Length:** 1247 words

**Byline:** By Kate Clarke Lemay

**Body**

In March 2019, the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery opened an exhibition called ''Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence.'' As curator, I visited archives around the country looking for original objects and images that would reveal new aspects of the suffrage movement. I wanted to widen the story and address the roles played by women of color, especially.

While visiting the archives of Howard University, I came across a 1901 studio portrait of the suffragist Mary Church Terrell with her daughter, Phyllis. I caught my breath because I had never seen it, and I suspected that it had never been published. Mary started working for progressive causes long before Phyllis was born, and her activism served as a model for posterity. Years after this picture was taken, mother and daughter picketed together, with members of the National Woman's Party, outside Woodrow Wilson's White House.

Looking at their picture, I was reminded that the struggle for women's rights was, and continues to be, multigenerational. Leading suffragists like Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Lucy Stone, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Ida B. Wells-Barnett each had daughters who carried on their work. Reformers like Susan B. Anthony cultivated followers such as Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, who were completely devoted to the movement. These women sometimes clashed over strategies and tactics, but they shared the belief that winning the vote was a crucial first step toward empowering women in the ongoing fight for equality.

Issues of race and class divided the movement, too -- sometimes along generational lines. Harriot Stanton Blatch, one of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's daughters and a formidable suffragist in her own right, famously parted ways with her mother around ''educated suffrage.'' At various points in her life, Stanton argued that educated women were more deserving of the vote than ''ignorant'' men, among whom she included many formerly enslaved people, ***working-class*** people and immigrants. Blatch disagreed with her mother. In 1894, in response to a statement of Stanton's, she wrote, ''Every working man needs the suffrage more than I do, but there is another who needs it more than he does, just because conditions are more galling, and that is the working woman.''

Though Blatch publicly rebutted Stanton, she also was inspired by her. The foremothers of suffrage, despite their limitations, modeled a steadfastness that would motivate both their own daughters and other young women in the movement. They never wavered in the idea that the vote was essential for women to live as full citizens. Stanton died in 1902, 18 years before the 19th Amendment was ratified, but Blatch saw it realized. To honor her mother, she worked with her brother Theodore on a collection of Stanton's papers, now in the holdings of Vassar College.

The mothers were the foundations; the daughters, even when they differed in opinion, ensured their legacy.

Harper gained renown in the 1850s as an author of elegant prose and persuasive antislavery poetry. She was also a popular lecturer, and a suffragist who rejected white women's claims to superiority in the movement for voting rights. ''I do not believe that giving the woman the ballot is immediately going to cure all the ills of life,'' she declared in an 1860s address. ''I do not believe that white women are dewdrops just exhaled from the skies. I think that like men they may be divided into three classes: the good, the bad and the indifferent.''

Harper was a natural leader. Active in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, she used her position as a superintendent to empower Black women. And in 1896, along with Terrell, Ruffin and others, Harper co-founded the National Association of Colored Women, or N.A.C.W. The group argued that voting rights and education were inextricably linked and raised funds for Black kindergartens, libraries and vocational schools -- resources for the next generation.

Harper sometimes appeared at conferences with her daughter, Mary, who was also a talented public speaker. Mary seems to have been less politically active (and perhaps more religious) than her mother, but they both worked for social reforms. Moreover, they were a pair: In 1895 Harper published a collection of her poetry, ''Atlanta Offering,'' and insisted not only on her own frontispiece portrait but also on one of Mary -- a kind of visual dedication to her daughter.

Before co-founding the N.A.C.W., Ruffin worked with her daughter, Florida Ruffin Ridley, and Maria Baldwin to found the Woman's Era Club in Boston. By the mid-1890s, shortly after its founding, the club had 133 members, with the mother-daughter team editing its important newspaper (also called The Woman's Era). In 1894, in the paper's second issue, they published an editorial about the growth of clubs like theirs: ''This organization of colored women means much; through it our women are brought more closely in touch with the world and the great questions of the day; by organization, not only are their own minds and talents strengthened and developed, but they are enabled to give a helping hand to those less favored.''

Organization and close intergenerational cooperation were invaluable, but they were no guarantee of victory, and progress toward suffrage was often painfully slow. After Ruffin and Ridley founded the Woman's Era, it would be another quarter-century before the 19th Amendment passed and women nationwide won the right to vote. And even then, many Black women would still be denied their rights for decades.

In curating ''Votes for Women,'' I hoped to honor women like Ruffin and Ridley. It wasn't always possible. I recall the crushing disappointment I experienced when I traveled to New York City to see a portrait of Ruffin, only to discover that the image had a large, demeaning crease down the middle of her face. It was unexhibitable. And I never found a portrait of Ridley.

Still, of the 60 portraits of named women on view, almost a third were of women of color. With the support of the Smithsonian American Women's History Initiative, we featured stunning photographic portraits of Anna Julia Cooper, Ida Gibbs Hunt, Margaret Murray Washington, Mary McLeod Bethune, Adella Hunt Logan, Felisa Rincón de Gautier, Susette La Flesche Tibbles, Zitkala-Sa, Fannie Lou Hamer and Patsy Takemoto Mink. By presenting these women as the stars of the exhibition, the Portrait Gallery placed women's history at the center, rather than the margins, of American history.

Today, it can be both daunting and inspiring to remember how these women refused to give up. Their persistence set the stage for everyone who came after them, including us: We would not be considering ratifying the E.R.A., or deploying women as soldiers in combat, or participating in the #MeToo movement, or electing many more women to represent the people, or hiring more gender-inclusive leadership, if not for the suffragists.

And yet, as we consider their legacy, it's also worth asking how we might do things differently than our mothers. How can we hold ourselves up to the light -- one that will stand the judgment of the next generation?

Kate Clarke Lemay is a historian and curator at the National Portrait Gallery, and a co-author of ''Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence.''Kate Clarke Lemay is a historian and curator at the National Portrait Gallery and a co-author of ''Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/suffrage-generations-vote.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/suffrage-generations-vote.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mary E. Harper, left, and her mother, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, both worked for social reforms. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EMORY UNIVERSITY VIA NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY) (TW40)

Mary Church Terrell with her daughter, Phyllis, in 1901. Years later, they picketed together outside the White House. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MOORLAND-SPINGARN RESEARCH CENTER) (TW41)

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[***What Suffrage Owes to Queer Women***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KX-FS81-JBG3-62FG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 16, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Maya Salam

**Body**

For many suffragists, scholars have found, the freedom to choose whom and how they loved was tied deeply to the idea of voting rights.

In 1920, the suffragist Molly Dewson sat down to write a letter of congratulations to Maud Wood Park, who had just been chosen as the first president of the League of Women Voters, formed in anticipation of the passage of the 19th Amendment to help millions of women carry out their newfound right as voters.

''Partner and I have been bursting with pride and satisfaction,'' she wrote. Dewson didn't need to specify who ''partner'' was. Park already knew that Dewson was in a committed relationship with Polly Porter, whom she had met a decade earlier. The couple then settled down at a farm in Massachusetts (where they named their bulls after men they disliked).

Dewson ''made every political decision, career decision based on how it would affect her relationship with Polly Porter,'' Susan Ware, a historian and the author of ''Partner and I'' and ''Why They Marched: Untold Stories of the Women Who Fought for the Right to Vote,'' said in a phone interview.

Dewson was far from the only suffragist who had romantic relationships with women. Many of the women who fought for representation were rebels living nonnormative, queer lives.

''These kinds of non-heteronormative relationships were just part and parcel of the suffrage movement,'' Ware said. ''It's not like we are having to dig and turn up like two or three women. They're everywhere.'' Including among the highest echelons of the movement.

In her diary, Alice Dunbar-Nelson, an African-American writer and a suffrage field organizer, described ''a thriving lesbian and bisexual subculture among Black suffragists and clubwomen,'' Wendy Rouse, a historian and associate professor at San Jose State University, wrote in an article published on the website of the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission. In those entries, Dunbar-Nelson wrote about the romantic and sexual experiences she had with men and women both while she was single and while she was married.

Carrie Chapman Catt, a president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), settled down with Mary Garrett Hay, a prominent suffragist in New York, after the death of Catt's second husband. Catt asked that she be buried alongside Hay (instead of either of her husbands), which she was, at Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx.

And Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, another NAWSA president, had a decades-long relationship with Lucy Anthony, the niece of Susan B. Anthony. Though the elder Anthony was concerned about her niece's long-term well-being, given more than a decade difference in their ages, she understood the kind of relationship she was in, said Lillian Faderman, a scholar of L.G.B.T.Q. history, who wrote the book ''To Believe in Women: What Lesbians Have Done for America -- A History.'' Shaw ''assured Susan that she would take care of Lucy forever,'' Faderman said in a phone interview, ''and she did indeed do that.''

Susan B. Anthony herself had relationships with women, Faderman said. Anthony wrote romantic letters to the suffragist Anna Elizabeth Dickinson and had a long relationship with Emily Gross. Faderman found letters -- one to a relative, another to a close friend -- in which Anthony refers to Gross as her lover. Lover was a term used for an admirer, but not in Anthony's vocabulary, Faderman said.

Today, we have many terms for romantic relationships between women: lesbian, bisexual, same-sex and queer, among others. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, they were sometimes called ''romantic friendships'' or Boston marriages, which Faderman described as ''long-term domestic relationships between two women who were financially independent thinkers.''

When the history of the 19th Amendment is taught in classrooms, suffragists are often depicted as boring, chaste and dowdy, and their campaign is rarely framed as a major social and political movement. But as greater attention is starting to be paid to suffrage history, and to the roles of Black and brown women, the narrative that is emerging is much more varied. This broader, more accurate picture is also increasing our understanding of queerness in the movement. Rouse, who is among scholars working to ''queer the suffrage movement'' -- which she described as ''deconstructing the dominant narrative that has focused on the stories of elite, white, upper-class suffragists'' -- uses ''queer'' as an umbrella term to describe suffragists who challenged gender and sexual norms in their everyday lives.

They did this by choosing not to marry, for example, or by living a life outside the rigid expectations placed on women in other ways. The suffragist Gail Laughlin demanded that pockets be sewn into her dresses, a radical request at the time.

Belle Squire, a suffragist from Illinois, ''not only wanted the vote, she wanted to smash what we now call 'the patriarchy,''' Rouse wrote in her article. In 1910, inspired by Squire and her No Vote, No Tax League, thousands of women refused to pay their taxes until women were granted the right to vote. Squire also publicly declared her refusal to marry, ''a bold statement against the oppression of women,'' Rouse wrote. And, demanding the same respect as married women, she insisted on being called Mrs. Squire, not Miss Squire.

Of course, the reality of living as an outlier wasn't exactly rosy, especially for women in the ***working class*** or women with a more masculine presentation. In her research, Faderman found several instances in which a sex toy was found in the possession of women, a discovery that she said was ''certainly frowned upon.'' Those women, especially if they were of a lower social status, ''were sentenced to jail'' or ''sentenced to be publicly whipped.''

The societal expectation that middle- and upper-class white women would marry men created a smoke screen of sorts. ''I think that the world outside didn't speculate about the possibilities of a sexual relationship between'' women, Faderman said, adding that parents were probably relieved to learn that their daughter had an intense relationship with a female friend, and not a man, before marriage.

In a way, this smoke screen extended to detractors of the movement, known as anti-suffragists. Anti-suffragists already viewed suffragists as abnormal for wanting equal rights, and they pointed to gender-nonconforming suffragists as evidence that the movement was deviant. They argued that these women would reject marriage, family and the home, and they feared women would adopt men's clothes and assume male privileges, Rouse said in an email. But somehow they didn't latch onto the fact that many of these women were having romantic relationships with each other.

This oversight was in part because same-sex relationships didn't start to be pathologized until the early 20th century, and because, as Ware put it, ''Women are kind of invisible, period.'' But maybe most of all, it was because the suffrage movement itself downplayed the queerness within it, Rouse said, a defensive strategy that contributed to the erasure of queer suffragists.

Leaders of the movement (including Shaw and Catt) opted instead to present a version ''palatable to the mainstream,'' Rouse said, by emphasizing normalcy. So suffragists who were seemingly happily married wives and mothers -- or young, beautiful and affluent, a.k.a. marriage material -- became the faces of the movement.

Despite this internal friction and these fraught side effects, it ultimately made practical sense that queer women would be at the forefront of the movement. Married women of the day often had children, and mothers didn't have time to lead a movement, Faderman said. ''But the women who didn't have kids, they did have time to lead.''

For these queer women, the freedom to choose whom and how they loved was tied deeply to the idea of voting rights.

''They knew they would have no man to represent them,'' Faderman said, echoing a common refrain among married women who were not suffragists: ''My husband votes for me. He votes for the family.'' But unmarried or gay women knew that would not be the case for them, she said, and so, ''they needed to get the vote for themselves.''Maya Salam is a senior staff editor on the Culture desk at The New York Times.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/14/us/queer-lesbian-women-suffrage.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/14/us/queer-lesbian-women-suffrage.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Molly Dewson, left, with Polly Porter in 1925. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CASTINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY) (TW17)

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[***The Long Shadow of Eugenics in America***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65MV-M6V1-JBG3-60XV-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 7159 words

**Byline:** Linda Villarosa

**Highlight:** As young girls, the Relf sisters were sterilized without consent. What does the government owe them — and the thousands of other living victims?

**Body**

I keep a sepia-tone photograph of the Relf sisters folded up and tucked in my wallet. [*It’s from a 1973 issue of Ebony magazine.*](https://americanhistory.si.edu/girlhood/wellness/talking-about-sex/experimenting-girls-of-color) The older of the two sisters, Minnie Lee, stares hard at the camera, her gaze direct and unsmiling but pleasant, almost quizzical. Her hair is freshly pressed, hot-curled and brushed into place, making her look older than 14. In a clean white dress with lacy zigzags, she seems ready for Sunday school. Her left arm is draped around her baby sister, Mary Alice, age 12, anchoring her in place. The younger Relf sister cracks a big, playful smile, her hair in braids — and not the usual three unruly braids from other pictures of the sisters during this time. Instead they are pinned down, neat and tidy for the Ebony shoot. The bottom of Mary Alice’s schoolgirl dress is hiked up as she reaches up to rest her right arm, the one that’s not fully formed, a disability she was born with, on her sister’s shoulder.

That same picture lay on the passenger seat of my rental car in February 2020 as I turned into the Westport Apartments, a cluster of brick homes situated behind a strip mall near the Mobile Highway in south Montgomery, Ala. When I knocked on the door of the Relfs’ home — a cramped single-story apartment that looks like all the others in the public-housing complex — Mary Alice yanked it open with a big smile, the same one in that picture from 49 years ago. She pulled me into the house and said something I didn’t quite understand, though after spending time with her, I would come to better comprehend what on that day was a raspy collection of sounds, resulting from a speech impediment and an intellectual disability that make communication difficult for her.

On that afternoon, Minnie Lee sat resting her elbows on their dining-room table, which was covered with glass to keep it from getting scratched. “I’m sorry, ma’am, I can’t stand up for you,” she said politely, pointing down to her right foot. It was in a bulky gray cast. While reaching for a can of string beans in her kitchen cabinet the week before, she lost her balance and fractured it in three places.

Mary Alice pulled a chair close to her sister, so they were nestled next to each other as in the Ebony photo and nearly every other photo of the Relf sisters. They are now 61 and 63; looking at them pressed together as though attached, I could still see the faces of the two young girls forever memorialized a half century ago beneath the headlines “Suit Says Girls Were Sterilized” in The New York Times; “Sterilized, Why?” in Time magazine; and, in Ebony, “Sterilization: Newest Threat to the Poor.”

In the summer of 1973, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice were taken from their home in Montgomery, cut open and sterilized against their will and without the informed consent of their parents by a physician working in a federally funded clinic. The Relf case would change the course of history: A lawsuit filed on their behalf, [*Relf v. Weinberger,*](https://www.splcenter.org/seeking-justice/case-docket/relf-v-weinberger) helped reveal that more than 100,000 mostly Black, Latina and Indigenous women were sterilized under U.S. government programs over decades. It also officially ended this practice and forced doctors to obtain informed consent before performing sterilization procedures — though as it would turn out, forced sterilizations by state governments would continue into the 21st century.

From 1907 to 1932, 32 states passed explicit eugenics laws that allowed for the government to sterilize the “insane,” the “feebleminded,” the “dependent” and the “diseased” — all of whom were deemed incapable of making their own decisions about reproduction. Nearly all of these laws have been repealed (in Washington State, a version of the law still remains on the books). Indiana, Virginia and North Carolina have created historical markers to commemorate those who were sterilized through government-sanctioned programs. Eight states have issued official apologies.

“While eugenics practices and policies are no longer in existence, the impact and the legacy deeply remains today,” [*Jill Krowinski, speaker of Vermont’s House of Representatives, said*](https://vtdigger.org/2021/10/18/vermonts-legislative-leaders-apologize-for-state-sanctioned-eugenics-movement/) on the Statehouse floor in Montpelier last October. Vermont state legislators apologized for using forced sterilizations and other practices to reduce populations deemed unfit to have children — including Indigenous and mixed-race people, people with disabilities and low-income families. “For those that were directly impacted, for their descendants, and for all of the communities involved, we cannot undo the trauma that this moment has caused, but we can start by formally acknowledging this dark period in our state’s history. Today, we publicly apologize for the Legislature’s role in ever allowing this to occur.”

Some states have begun to go beyond apologies. Three so far, Virginia, North Carolina and California, have established programs to compensate victims of forced sterilization. But Alabama, where the Relf sisters were forcibly sterilized and which has been their home all their lives, is not one of those states, and the federal government has made no such moves. The Relf sisters subsist in obscurity on meager Social Security checks.

“I can show you what they did to me,” Minnie Lee said. She lifted up her T-shirt and revealed a jagged horizontal scar that rips across her abdomen. “That’s where they cut me.” As she lowered her shirt — which had the word “courage” printed three times on the front — she dropped her head. Mary Alice, sitting on a floral-patterned chair next to her, with a poster of the Last Supper displayed in an ornate plastic frame on a nearby wall, watched intently, her glasses pushed up on her face. Her half arm rested lightly on her thigh as she leaned in to listen to her sister. “It might have happened a long time ago, but it still brings back memories,” Minnie Lee said, looking at Mary Alice. “We’re still thinking about it.”

The history of legalized forced sterilization by the government begins in 1907, when [*Indiana became the first state to pass a eugenics law*](https://eugenics.iupui.edu/) providing for the involuntary sterilization of “confirmed criminals, idiots, imbeciles and rapists.” Those affected early on were mainly men viewed as criminalistic, including those whose “defect” was supposedly excessive masturbation or homosexuality.

“That first law focused on vasectomizing poor white men who were identified as being sexually deviant,” says Dr. Alexandra Minna Stern, a professor of American history and culture at the University of Michigan and co-director of the [*Sterilization and Social Justice Lab.*](https://www.ssjlab.org/) Her research team studies the history of eugenic sterilization in the United States and has collected the records of more than 60,000 survivors in California, Iowa, Michigan, North Carolina and Utah. “We’re talking about sterilizing populations that are being seen as hypersexualized or as sexually inappropriate, as promiscuous, as not having middle-class sexual respectability.”

By the 1930s, women became a majority of the victims, sterilized in mental hospitals and prisons and under court orders. This shifting gender pattern resulted from a rising concern about the fitness to parent, with a focus on mothering, as well as the development of a safer, standardized tubal-ligation procedure for sterilizing women. The movement was codified in 1927, when the Supreme Court upheld the right of the state of Virginia to sterilize Carrie Buck, a 20-year-old white woman. Born in 1906 to a mother living in poverty in Virginia, Buck was sent to a ***working-class*** foster home, where at age 16 she was raped by an extended-family member. Her foster parents took custody of Buck’s daughter and successfully petitioned a local court to confine Buck at the Virginia State Colony for Epileptics and Feeble-Minded — though she was neither epileptic nor intellectually disabled. There she was sterilized without her consent. Writing for the majority in the landmark Supreme Court case [*Buck v. Bell,*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/274/200) Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. stated, “It is better for all the world, if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime, or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind.” He added, “Three generations of imbeciles are enough.”

More than 60,000 men, women and children would be sterilized under these state laws, which would also inform Nazi Germany: The Third Reich sterilized approximately 400,000 children and adults, mostly Jews and other “undesirables,” using a 1933 law modeled after legislation in the United States. [*Germany’s Law for the Prevention of Offspring and Hereditary Diseases*](https://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/English30.pdf) focused on people with a high probability of having a child with a serious “defect,” including blindness, deafness and manic depression. The last eugenics legislation in the United States was passed in Georgia in 1937, and eventually the laws would be rolled back in a series of repeals. But that didn’t stop local governments from sterilizing many more people, mostly women of color. The voting rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer was given a hysterectomy without her consent in 1961 when undergoing removal of a uterine tumor by a white physician. The practice of being sterilized, including during unrelated surgery, grew so common among poor Black women in the South that it came to be known as a “Mississippi appendectomy.”

“You start seeing people sterilized in the ’40s, ’50s, ’60s and beyond as a population-control measure, as a means of decreasing the dependent population, which was the same idea the eugenicists had, but now without the laws,” says Paul A. Lombardo, a professor at the Georgia State University College of Law in Atlanta, author of [*“Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court and Buck v. Bell”*](https://www.press.jhu.edu/books/title/12262/three-generations-no-imbeciles) and editor of “A Century of Eugenics in America: From the Indiana Experiment to the Human Genome Era.”

“It generally came down to sex and money, which means, ‘Who’s having babies that I don’t want my tax dollars to go to?’” Lombardo says. “So then you start identifying people like the Relfs.” He continues, “Those young girls represented the perfect storm of race, poverty and alleged disability.”

Jessie Bly, a 30-year-old Black social worker, was working in Montgomery when she received a call from a local city councilman in 1972. Her employer, the City of St. Jude Catholic Church, was founded by a progressive Catholic priest in the 1930s to serve as a “center for the religious, charitable, educational and industrial advancement of the Negro people.” Bly was born and raised in Montgomery; her mother was a housekeeper and her father a gravedigger. They understood early that their seventh child was bright and engaged, and they sent her to private school. She was the only one of eight siblings to finish college. Her work at City of St. Jude included checking on the condition of the elderly and the poor to make sure they had necessities and basic services.

Now the councilman was asking her to take a ride with him to a poor Black community in Montgomery called Flatwood to go see a family. When she asked, “What kind of family?” she recalled that he replied, “Trust me, in the day that we’re living, I never thought that we would see anything like this in the United States of America.”

In Flatwood, Bly was shocked by what she witnessed. “I was waiting to see a house,” she said, “but I never saw one.” The Relfs, a husband, wife and six children, were living as squatters in a field, sheltered in a shanty built from cardboard boxes. “They had no running water, no electricity,” Bly, now 80, said, closing her eyes and shaking her head. “I was really taken aback, because I just couldn’t believe that anybody would be living in those conditions. But they were.”

Bly, a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and ordained minister who still lives in Montgomery, said what crushed her heart most were the girls, teenage Katie and her two younger adolescent sisters, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice. Bly couldn’t shake the image of the youngest girl, who was physically and intellectually disabled. “She was born with an automatic amputation, with the umbilical cord wrapped around her right arm,” Bly said. “She had no hand, and the arm was just a little stub.”

Like many Black families at the tail end of the Great Migration in the 1950s and 1960s, the children’s parents, Lonnie and Minnie Relf, both illiterate, were forced out of rural Macon County, Ala., where mechanization had caused jobs in the fields to dry up. Some former field workers went North, but others crowded into Southern cities like Montgomery, the state capital. Census data shows that in 1960, for the first time, [*Alabama’s urban population exceeded the rural population,*](https://www.al.com/news/2019/12/alabamas-population-1800-to-the-modern-era.html) in a state that was nearly one-third Black. This influx of rural Black residents, most unskilled and lacking education, increased poverty in the Black communities in a number of Southern cities. But even if Lonnie Relf had been able to find a job in Montgomery, he was disabled in an accident and was unable to work.

Bly arranged with the director of the Montgomery Housing Authority for the Relfs to live in a three-bedroom apartment in Smiley Court, a public-housing project on the west side of the city. Once the family moved into their new home, Bly took them to the Salvation Army and Goodwill to buy used furniture and put out a call for donations of linens, cooking utensils and other household items to the people in her church and network. She taught Minnie, who was used to preparing meals on a rudimentary oil burner in old burned pots, the basics of keeping house and how to use a stove. “They didn’t know how people really lived,” Bly says. “Life had passed them by.”

The girls had no idea about hygiene, so Bly showed them how to wash and care for their bodies and got the two older daughters enrolled in public school. She took Mary Alice to a pediatrician who specialized in developmental disabilities for evaluation. He declared her “mentally incompetent,” not teachable but trainable, and recommended the McInnis School for Retarded Children. Bly worries, years later, that visiting the government-funded diagnostic facility put the Relf girls on the radar of the family-planning clinic that would eventually arrange the sterilizations. More likely, they were flagged by the government services they were receiving: food stamps, a $156 monthly check from the Alabama Department of Pensions and Security, medical benefits and a subsidized apartment in public housing.

These services were administered through the Office of Economic Opportunity, the federal agency established in 1964 as part of the U.S. government’s proclaimed war on poverty. That year, President Lyndon Johnson initiated his ambitious multibillion-dollar Great Society agenda, which would lead to Medicare, Medicaid, Head Start, the distribution of food stamps and other programs in an effort to end poverty and hunger, reduce crime, abolish inequality and racial barriers and improve the environment. Also under the auspices of the O.E.O., in 1967 the U.S. government created its family-planning program, which was intended to help poor people prevent unwanted births through contraception and other reproductive-health services.

After Richard Nixon was elected president in 1968, his Republican administration set out to dismantle Great Society programs, while also increasing funding for family-planning services in an effort to target the so-called population bomb. This term, popularized by the Stanford University professor Paul Ehrlich — and the title of his 1968 best-selling book — referred to an exaggerated population explosion that he incorrectly predicted would lead to global famine in the 1970s and 1980s. Nixon championed the Family Planning Services and Population Research Act of 1970, also known as the Birth Curb Bill, a $382 million federal program to control population growth, which had ballooned into a national obsession.

Efforts like this took particular aim at poor women, arguing that poverty bred more poverty, so keeping the poor from having babies — particularly “illegitimate” children born out of wedlock — offered a solution. Though the initial O.E.O. regulations of 1967 stated that “no project funds shall be expended for any surgical procedures intended to result in sterilization or to cause abortions,” the prohibition on funding voluntary sterilization ended in 1971. “The ’70s and ’80s were this kind of interesting moment where at the same time state sterilization laws were being repealed, America was creating the conditions for the sterilization of the Relf sisters,” says Dr. Stern of the University of Michigan Sterilization and Social Justice Lab. “The federal government funneled money into county family-planning programs, especially in the South,” she continues. “These facilities were twisted by racial and eugenic logics and pre-existing, longstanding racism and disempowerment of Black mothers and Black girls. Yet there were no checks on anything.”

According to the Relf v. Weinberger lawsuit, not long after the family moved into public housing, the Relf sisters were directed to the family-planning clinic of the Montgomery Community Action Committee, which was funded and controlled by the federal O.E.O. The process began with Katie, the oldest of the three girls, who was about 16 when she was first injected with the contraceptive Depo-Provera. At that time, the drug was still in the investigational phase and not yet approved by the F.D.A. for administration to adult women, let alone minor teenagers. Between 1967 and 1978, during a clinical trial of Depo-Provera, the Grady Memorial Hospital Family Planning Clinic in Atlanta administered the drug to 11,400 mostly poor Black women despite serious side effects, including heavy or interrupted menstrual bleeding and near suicidal depression.

The staff at the family-planning clinic in Montgomery never obtained permission to perform the injections or adequately explained the shots to Katie or her mother. Sometime later, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice were also injected with Depo-Provera. Bly remembers that a member of the staff would later explain the decision by saying that she was worried that “boys are hanging around the house, and we don’t want no more of their kind,” though there was no evidence that any of the girls were sexually active. The Relf sisters were judged to be intellectually inferior, though only Mary Alice would be diagnosed with an actual disability. The other two girls lacked formal education and were struggling to catch up to their peers. In March 1973, Katie, then 17, was again taken to the family-planning clinic, this time for insertion of an IUD, after the Food and Drug Administration denied approval of Depo-Provera because of its link to cancer in animals. Though Katie was under the age of consent, her parents would later insist that they were not consulted about the IUD.

On June 13, 1973, at least one nurse employed by the family-planning clinic came to the Relfs’ apartment and informed Minnie that her daughters would need to see a doctor for what she understood to be more shots. Minnie’s two younger girls, then 14 and 12, were driven first to a doctor’s office and then to the Professional Center Hospital in downtown Montgomery. Later, when she met them at the hospital, health care providers told Minnie she needed to sign a paper. It is unclear what Minnie Relf understood, but she trusted her daughters in the hands of the staff at this clinic, sponsored by the same government that had given her family a home, food, money and an education for her children. Still, it is very clear from her later Senate testimony that she had no idea that signing the piece of paper would mean that her daughters would never be able to bear children. Because she could not read or write, Minnie signed what turned out to be a surgical consent form with an X and was then escorted out to be driven home while the younger girls remained alone in the ward.

Before Minnie got back home, one of the same family-planning nurses returned to the Relfs’ apartment to pick up Katie and take her to the hospital. Katie refused to go, locking herself in her room. The following day, when Jessie Bly stopped by, a frantic Katie told her what had happened. “Where are your sisters?” Bly asked. “I can show you, Miss Bly,” Katie told her, and they got in Bly’s car and drove to the Professional Center Hospital.

Nearly half a century later, Bly has no trouble recalling the younger Relf girls in the hospital, huddled together, looking small and scared in cotton surgical gowns. The second they saw the social worker, they both began to cry. Clinging to Minnie Lee, Mary Alice sobbed and repeated over and over: “I just hurt so bad. I just hurt so bad, Miss Bly, help me. Help me, Miss Bly.”

Bly was shaken. She recalls being unable to sleep, haunted by the image of the young girls crying and calling her name as they stood in the hospital ward. She also feared she was somehow at fault, though she had not been informed about the contraceptive shots or the sterilizations. “I knew I wouldn’t be able to rest, knowing that this kind of an injustice had been perpetrated upon these young ladies and nobody was speaking for them,” she says. “It happened because of where I am, so I felt like God wanted me to be the mouthpiece for them. I was going to do what I had to do.”

Jessie Bly found her way to a law office in a small, old house on Washington Avenue in Montgomery, where the Southern Poverty Law Center was founded two years earlier by two young civil rights lawyers, Morris Dees and Joe Levin, with the civil rights leader Julian Bond as its first president. Bly shared the Relfs’ story with Levin and Dees, who decided to take the case.

In early summer 1973, they filed a case in Federal District Court in Montgomery, and then weeks later refiled the case as Relf v. Weinberger in D.C. District Court, claiming that government officials “have failed to promulgate constitutionally acceptable guidelines by which federally funded and directed agencies can determine who should or should not be sterilized. Further, there are no constitutionally acceptable guidelines to determine what persons are capable of giving knowledgeable, informed consent to the administration upon them of any birth control measures.” Caspar Weinberger, the director of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, now the Department of Health and Human Services, from 1973 to 1975, who would later become Ronald Reagan’s defense secretary, was named as a respondent in the suit. The case also named two former Nixon White House aides, John W. Dean III and John D. Ehrlichman.

Just before the official filing, Levin called Bond to brief him on the Relf case. Bond immediately saw it as “a horrendous attack on privacy, innocence and the right of motherhood,” he would tell [*The New York Times in an article published on July 2, 1973.*](https://www.nytimes.com/1973/07/02/archives/racism-ethics-and-rights-at-issue-in-sterilization-case-money.html)He encouraged Levin and Dees to contact the news media, and soon articles in The Times and [*Time magazine*](https://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,878602,00.html) and a report on NBC News revealed the plight of the Relfs and the issue of forced sterilization to a national audience. “The suit all of a sudden attracted a great deal of attention,” Levin, now 79, remembers. “And it’s not that we hadn’t had attention, but this was actually at a scale that we hadn’t seen before.”

After Bly was interviewed by reporters from The Washington Post and Jet magazine, she says, the media attention became too intense for her. “I couldn’t go home; I couldn’t go to work,” she says. “Newspaper, magazine people were following me around to get information, and I had to take my kids, and we had to go stay at my mom’s for a while.”

As publicity about the case increased, Orelia Dixon, the director of the family-planning clinic in Montgomery, defended the actions of her facility. In the July 2 Times article, Dixon insisted that her nurses clearly explained to Minnie Relf that the injections for her daughters were no longer authorized and suggested sterilization as an alternative. Dixon also claimed that she and her staff believed sterilization was a proper alternative because the girls were not “disciplined” enough to take daily birth-control pills. “There’s no doubt in my mind that they all knew what that meant,” Dixon told The Times, adding, “We explain everything, and we don’t use words that people can’t understand.”

Levin and Dees, the Relfs’ lawyers, would tell the court that the girls had been targeted for sterilization because they were Black. (Dixon was white, as was the physician who performed the operation, though clinic employees emphasized in interviews for news articles that the nurses who took the girls from their home were Black.) The lawyers also tried to demonstrate that the sisters did not comprehend that they had been sterilized, and still dreamed of bearing children someday. [*A Times article on July 8, 1973, included an exchange between Morris Dees and young Minnie Lee*](https://www.nytimes.com/1973/07/08/archives/exploring-motives-and-methods-the-nation-sterilizing-the-poor.html):

Q. Are you ever going to get married?

A. Yes.

Q. Are you going to have any children?

A. Yes.

Q. How many?

A. One.

Q. A boy or a girl?

A. A little girl.

The news stories caught the eye of Senator Edward Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, then chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Health of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, and he asked Levin and the [*Relfs to appear at a congressional hearing*](https://www.nytimes.com/1973/07/11/archives/sterilization-consent-not-given-father-tells-kennedys-panel-damage.html) and tell their story. Levin accompanied Lonnie, Minnie, Katie, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice to Washington — the Relfs’ first and only time on an airplane — to testify. Levin and the Relf parents agreed that it would be too difficult for the girls to speak in an open hearing, so on the morning of July 10, 1973, Katie, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice met with Kennedy behind closed doors.

Levin recalls that the senator showed them pictures of his children, spoke to them gently and listened closely, moved by what he heard. During the Senate subcommittee hearing on sterilization abuse, Kennedy challenged Henry Simmons, H.E.W.’s deputy assistant secretary for health and scientific affairs, and other administrators about why the federal government was involved in coercive, nonconsensual sterilizations of Black and poor women. Then it was Lonnie and Minnie’s turn. Speaking in the gentle tone he used earlier when meeting with the younger Relfs, Kennedy thanked the parents for appearing and asked them to describe in their own words what happened to their daughters. They told their story haltingly, Minnie explaining how she signed an X on the form given to her by the public-health-service workers. “I did not want it done,” Lonnie insisted. “I am still upset about it.”

“What was your feeling then that they had operated on your children?” Kennedy asked Minnie.

“I felt very bad about it,” she said. “I got mad.”

“Would you have permitted it if you had known about it?” Kennedy asked.

“No,” she said. “I would not have let them do that. They said that they was going to give them shots.”

Kennedy again thanked the Relf family for their testimony, complimenting their three daughters and acknowledging their courage. “We have seen too many incidents, mothers and fathers that have been saddened by the kinds of things that have happened to their children,” Kennedy said. “We are going to do our very best to make sure that it does not happen again.”

Levin says that the Senate testimony and Kennedy’s support for the case and the issue had an enormous effect. Though the Relfs’ case would take years to resolve, it helped uncover a pattern of sterilization abuse, financed by the U.S. government and practiced for decades. At the family-planning clinic that executed the sterilizations of the Relf children, 11 adolescent girls had been sterilized, 10 of them Black. But the practice turned out to be much more widespread.

In July 1973, the same month Levin and Dees filed the Relfs’ case in D.C. District Court, a Black woman from North Carolina, [*Nial Ruth Cox, also filed a suit*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/context/cox-complaint/bff27c19-5195-460c-8757-a3a81ed08331/?itid=lk_inline_manual_8) against a number of people, including the doctor who had surgically sterilized her after telling her, she claimed, that the results would “wear off.” At the time of the sterilization in 1965, Cox was 18, unmarried and the mother of a baby girl. Cox lived with her mother, who was a recipient of government benefits. A county caseworker threatened to strike the family from the welfare rolls unless the mother agreed to have her daughter’s tubes temporarily tied. Five years later, Cox would learn that the sterilization was permanent. Though Cox — who was represented by several lawyers, including the future Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg — lost in court, her suit revealed that her sterilization was part of a eugenics program, created under state law, that began decades earlier.

In North Carolina, doctors performed some 7,600 sterilizations between 1929 and 1974, justified as a way to keep welfare rolls low, reduce poverty and improve the gene pool by preventing the “mentally deficient” from reproducing; the victims were disproportionately Black women and Native American women. In California, [*more than 17,000 were sterilized between 1920 and 1945*](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5888070/) under a state eugenics law used to prevent reproduction of those deemed “unfit”; a disproportionate number were women of Mexican descent. In 1976, a study by the U.S. General Accounting Office found that [*between 1973 and 1976, four of the 12 Indian Health Service regions sterilized 3,406 Native American women*](https://www.nlm.nih.gov/nativevoices/timeline/543.html) without their permission, including three dozen who were under 21. Also in 1976, H.E.W. reported that over [*37 percent of Puerto Rican women of childbearing age, most in their 20s, were sterilized between the 1930s and the 1970s.*](https://eugenicsarchive.ca/discover/connections/530ba18176f0db569b00001b) The U.S. government had taken an active role in population control beginning in 1898, when it assumed governance of Puerto Rico, on the supposed grounds that overpopulation would increase poverty and other social and economic conditions.

Eventually, because of the Relfs’ case and others, the congressional investigations and journalists reporting on them found that thousands of poor, mostly Black women were sterilized each year in the United States under federally funded programs. Many others were coerced into sterilization when health care providers threatened to cut off their benefits unless they agreed to give up their fertility. The Relfs’ suit ended these practices, and H.E.W. was forced to withdraw regulations under which the government funded forced sterilizations. The federal government also instituted a requirement that health care providers obtain informed consent before performing sterilization procedures — more than the X Minnie Relf had signed.

The Relf case happened almost 50 years ago, in another century, and many people would prefer to see it as a dark moment in history that could never happen now. But coerced contraception, including sterilization, has continued into the 21st century. In 2013, the Center for Investigative Reporting found that [*physicians under contract with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation sterilized nearly 150 female inmates from 2006 to 2010*](https://revealnews.org/article/female-inmates-sterilized-in-california-prisons-without-approval/) without required state approvals for the tubal ligations the women received. According to the reporting, prison staff coerced or pressured women they believed likely to return to prison. State documents and interviews pointed to some 100 more procedures dating back to the late 1990s: “From 1997 to 2010, the state paid doctors $147,460 to perform the procedure, according to a database of contracted medical services for state prisoners,” C.I.R. reported.

In 2017, [*Judge Sam Benningfield of White County, Tenn., was reprimanded*](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/tennessee-judge-who-offered-sentence-reductions-vasectomies-changes-course-n787401) for promising 30-day sentence reductions to incarcerated men and women who agreed to receive vasectomies or birth-control implants. Benningfield claimed he was trying to encourage personal responsibility and prevent incarcerated people from being burdened with children when they were released. The A.C.L.U. chapter in Tennessee said in a statement at the time that “offering a so-called ‘choice’ between jail time and coerced contraception or sterilization is unconstitutional.” In the fall of 2020, a nurse at a for-profit Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center in Georgia reported that unnecessary gynecological procedures — including hysterectomies — had been performed on undocumented migrant women. The women said that they had undergone the operations without fully understanding or consenting to them. The Times reported that [*Dr. Ada Rivera, medical director of the ICE Health Service Corps, said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/29/us/ice-hysterectomies-surgeries-georgia.html) that the whistle-blower’s claims “raise some very serious concerns that deserve to be investigated quickly and thoroughly.”

These cases demonstrate the persistent vulnerability of incarcerated and detained women in the criminal-justice and immigration systems. But even after the Relf case led to changes in laws, regulations and guidelines regarding forced or coerced sterilization, the question of compensation for the victims has remained. The federal lawsuit was not the only one filed on behalf of the Relfs themselves: Levin and Dees recruited Melvin Belli, nicknamed the King of Torts — and Melvin Bellicose by insurance companies — to file a damages suit to compensate the family. Loud and outrageous, Belli was best known for his celebrity clients: Errol Flynn, Mae West, Lana Turner, Lenny Bruce, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Muhammad Ali and the Rolling Stones. In February 1974, Belli’s firm filed a $5 million damages suit on behalf of the Relfs against the former White House aides Dean and Ehrlichman and other federal officials for blocking the distribution in 1972 of federal guidelines that would have prevented the Relf sterilizations. After that suit was dismissed, Belli followed with another suit for $15 million that July.

After two and a half more years of motions, reversals, reconsiderations and transfers, the Relfs’ last suit was dismissed in September 1977; Levin says it was because an appropriate defendant could not be identified under the Federal Tort Claims Act. The family was left still penniless. “I felt sorry for them,” Levin says now. “The issue was brought to light but had no beneficial consequences for the kids and the Relf family. It felt very bad.”

In 2013, North Carolina — where Nial Ruth Cox’s 1973 lawsuit revealed the state’s eugenics program — agreed to compensate victims of forced or coerced sterilization. Three years earlier, the North Carolina Justice for Sterilization Victims Foundation was started to identify survivors of the state’s program. The organization estimated that between 1,500 and 2,000 survivors might be alive and recommended paying $50,000 to each. In 2013, the State Legislature set aside $10 million. According to Lombardo, the Georgia State University College of Law professor, nearly 800 North Carolinians filed claims, with 220 qualifying for financial restitution. (To be eligible, the operations had to have occurred under the state’s Eugenics Board, but some of the sterilizations occurred outside the auspices of the state, for example at county-run facilities.)

In 2015, the Virginia General Assembly set aside $400,000 for compensation, later adding more, and 30 survivors received $25,000 each. In 2003, California issued a formal apology to the victims of its eugenics program; last year, the state budgeted $4.5 million as compensation for its survivors. From 1909 through 1979, under state eugenics laws, thousands of people who lived in California state-run hospitals, homes and institutions were sterilized. Even after those laws were repealed in 1979, forced or coerced sterilizations continued to be performed on people in custody at state prisons or other correctional facilities. More than 20,000 people were sterilized in California, more than in any other state, and about 600 survivors are still alive today and eligible for compensation. Each will receive an equal share of the funds in two installments.

“Even as everyone recognizes that receiving a check, even for $25,000, is never going to undo the reproductive violence that was done to these people, at least it’s something,” Stern says. “The state is making amends in some way, and it’s an important material and symbolic gesture. I really hope that everyone who can receive compensation is able to find their pathway to the victim’s compensation board and request it.”

The concept of reparations has long been contentious, debated in Congress and elsewhere as a question of what is owed to U.S. citizens who are descendants of those who were enslaved centuries ago. But the steps to compensate the living victims of forced sterilization can also be understood as reparations, and with three states having done so, new pressure has been placed on the remaining 29 states and the federal government itself.

In North Carolina, the first state to compensate survivors, the process began in late 2002, when [*The Winston-Salem Journal ran “Against Their Will,”*](https://www.winstonwatchman.com/will-winston-salem-journal-greensboro-news-record-layoffs/) a five-part series on North Carolina’s eugenics program. Immediately afterward, Gov. Mike Easley issued a public apology. In April 2003, the North Carolina Senate voted to overturn the sterilization law that had been on the books since 1919. In 2009, the state placed a historical marker in Raleigh to commemorate the 7,600 victims sterilized under the state’s eugenics laws between 1929 and 1974, and the media covered survivors’ sharing memories of the trauma the surgery caused. In 2010, the North Carolina Justice for Sterilization Victims Foundation was started to find survivors; the following year, Gov. Bev Perdue appointed a task force to study a potential compensation package and its cost. Finally, in 2013, North Carolina’s Republican-controlled Legislature voted to spend $10 million to compensate the survivors of the state’s eugenics program.

“There’s a huge movement all across the country to look at historical wrongs, including forced sterilization, and to consider what needs to be done now in order to redress them,” explains Margaret Burnham, founder and co-director of the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project at Northeastern University School of Law. “I think this is really the question of the 21st century.”

Minnie Lee Relf never finished high school, dropping out in 11th grade. Keeping up with classwork was difficult for her, given the absence of formal learning in her early childhood and the limitations of her parents. “I was a slow reader in school,” she says now. “I can read, but I’m just slow. I was just slow.” She also recalls her classmates mocking her after learning of the case through media coverage. “People was just picking at me at school, always saying: ‘You can’t have no children. You can’t do this and you can’t ... ,’” she says, her voice trailing off. “It hurt me. I felt so sad.”

Mary Alice was placed in McInnis, the special-needs school that Jessie Bly sought out for her. But she didn’t graduate, either. Their mother died in 1980, just as they reached adulthood, and their father in 2009. Katie, their older sister, lives in an apartment in the same complex. They are still bound tightly together, walking to the store for groceries, attending church, sitting side by side watching TV. “Some days I feel sad, but other times just tired,” says Minnie Lee, who explains that she and her sister struggle with hypertension and asthma, and that Mary Alice also suffers from seizures. “Not long ago, I was crying and felt like doing something to myself, like I wanted to go with my mom and dad,” Minnie Lee adds, looking over at her sister, who doesn’t seem to understand.

Minnie Lee says she recalls the lawsuit; Levin, Dees and of course Miss Jessie Bly; the airplane trip to Washington and Senator Kennedy. But when I describe the impact of their case, how their story stopped the government from harming more girls and women like them, Minnie Lee looks confused. It is too much to comprehend. Mary Alice holds on to my arm and smiles.

I met Katie in April. Now 66, she never finished high school. She and her husband, Michael, had one child, Jerome, who died shortly after he was born. Katie says she can barely remember anything about what happened to her and her sisters 50 years ago; she doesn’t understand why her family didn’t receive any compensation for what was done to them. “But I think about it every day, really,” she said.

As I described the way her family’s case made history, she moved closer to listen. I then explained that apologies have been made to survivors in other places. An apology, she said, “would mean the world to us, and I would forgive them.” She looked away and began to weep.

“Sterilization involves two forms of harm, the physical harm to one’s reproductive autonomy and the moral stigma associated with sterilization, including the suggestion that you are unworthy to reproduce, in the Relfs’ case because they are Black women,” Burnham says. “These women bear a mark of being deemed less than a full person. That moral harm has to be addressed by an apology, and it must come from the state. But they are also owed material redress, some sort of financial repair. That’s what is clearly acknowledged in the Virginia, North Carolina and California initiatives: that practices of truth telling, repair and reparation must come into play when formal law fails.”

Minnie Lee may not understand what the nation gained because of her case. But it is hauntingly, painfully clear that she understands what she and Mary Alice lost. When I visited, I saw that each woman slept with a brown baby doll, Mary Alice’s nestled in a tangle of sheets, Minnie Lee’s laid across her pillow. “I know I can’t have kids, and it gets to me sometimes,” Minnie Lee says. “Every time I see somebody like my cousin or my niece Debbie with their child, I think about it. Seeing these little pretty babies, I wish that was me.”

Linda Villarosa is a contributing writer for the magazine, focusing on race and health. She is an associate professor at the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY and also teaches at the City College of New York in Harlem. Hannah Price is a photographic artist and filmmaker based in Philadelphia, with a focus on documenting relationships, race politics and misperception.

This article is adapted from [*“Under the Skin: The Hidden Toll of Racism on American Lives and on the Health of Our Nation,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/08/books/review/under-the-skin-linda-villarosa.html) published this month by Doubleday.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY SETTLE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM28-MM29); Jessie Bly in Montgomery, Ala. Opening pages: A previously unpublished photograph of Minnie Lee Relf (left) and Mary Alice Relf in 1973, from The Times’s photography archives. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HANNAH PRICE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM31); From left: Minnie Lee, Mary Alice, one of the girls’ cousins, Katie Relf and Minnie Relf in 1973, in a previously unpublished photograph from The Times’s archives. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GARY SETTLE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM32); Mary Alice (left) and Minnie Lee at home in May. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HANNAH PRICE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM35)

**Load-Date:** June 12, 2022

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[***Democrats Issue First Public-Health Stance: Wear a Mask***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KF-M2Y1-JBG3-60KH-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Thomas Kaplan and Glenn Thrush

**Body**

Joe Biden said wearing a mask was ''about your responsibilities as an American'' as he and his new running mate, Kamala Harris, drew a contrast with President Trump's handling of the coronavirus.

WILMINGTON, Del. -- Joseph R. Biden Jr. and his newly selected running mate, Senator Kamala Harris of California, called on Thursday for Americans to be required to wear masks, offering one of the first glimpses at how the Democratic ticket plans to confront the coronavirus and draw a contrast with President Trump.

Mr. Biden, addressing reporters after receiving a briefing from public health experts, said every American should wear a mask while outside for at least the next three months and that all governors should mandate mask wearing.

''It's not about your rights,'' Mr. Biden said, standing in front of five American flags at the Hotel du Pont in Wilmington. ''It's about your responsibilities as an American.''

Ms. Harris, appearing jointly with Mr. Biden for a second consecutive day, presented his call for mask-wearing as an example of what he would bring to the presidency -- providing an early example of how she may try to talk up Mr. Biden to the American people.

''That's what real leadership looks like,'' she said. ''We just witnessed real leadership.''

For months, Mr. Biden has assailed Mr. Trump over his handling of the pandemic, and the issue is likely to remain a central argument for Mr. Biden and now Ms. Harris in the final months of the campaign. The mask issue is an area that allows for a clear distinction with how Mr. Trump has approached the virus and how he has used -- or not used -- the platform that comes with the presidency to set an example for the American people.

Mr. Trump, who has ignored or mischaracterized scientific data throughout the pandemic, opened a White House press briefing on Thursday by calling Mr. Biden's views ''anti-scientific.''

Mr. Trump suggested that a mask mandate threatened to overstep individual freedoms of Americans and said Mr. Biden was more interested in keeping Americans ''in their basements for months on end'' than in listening to medical experts.

''If the president has the unilateral power to order every single citizen to cover their face in nearly all instances, what other powers does he have?'' Mr. Trump said.

Mr. Biden, the former vice president, had previously said that as president, he would seek to require people to wear masks in public. Mr. Trump, on the other hand, resisted wearing a mask before shifting on the issue.

The virus continues to loom over Mr. Trump as a major political liability. Fifty-seven percent of Americans said the president was doing a bad job dealing with the virus, and 52 percent said the United States' response was worse than other countries', according to a Monmouth University poll released Thursday.

And in Wisconsin, an important battleground state, 69 percent of voters said people should be required to wear masks in all public places, according to a poll released Tuesday by Marquette University Law School. Polling by Quinnipiac University last month found that four in five voters in Florida and Texas also supported mask mandates.

In addition to the briefing on the virus on Thursday, Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris also received a briefing on the economic situation, with experts appearing by videoconference in both sessions. Janet L. Yellen, the former Federal Reserve chair, was among the participants in the economic briefing, the Biden campaign said.

As for their own mask etiquette, Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris did not wear masks, but were seated at a distance, when reporters were briefly allowed into the meeting on the virus. When they later addressed reporters, they wore masks until they got to the lectern, and then put their masks back on after they finished speaking.

Ms. Harris tried to cast doubt on the Trump administration's efforts to develop a vaccine in a speedy manner, suggesting that what mattered was when that vaccine would be available to the public.

''I think it's important that the American people, looking at the election coming up, ask the current occupant of the White House: When am I going to get vaccinated?'' Ms. Harris said. ''Because there may be some grand gestures offered by the current president about a vaccine. But it really doesn't matter until you can answer the question: When am I going to get vaccinated?''

As Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris put their focus on the pandemic, Mr. Trump continued to ridicule Ms. Harris in a television interview, auditioning one of his demeaning schoolyard nicknames -- a go-to Trump tactic that some Republican officials worry will backfire among suburban women who will see such an attack as sexist.

''Now you have sort of a mad woman, I call her, because she was so angry and such hatred with Justice Kavanaugh,'' he told Maria Bartiromo, an ally who hosts a morning show on the Fox Business Network. ''I mean, I've never seen anything like it. She was the angriest of the group, and they were all angry. They're all radical-left angry people.''

But Mr. Trump's attacks on Ms. Harris seem to have had little initial impact so far; one person close to Mr. Trump deplored what he saw as positive media coverage of the Biden-Harris announcement but conceded it had been ''a nearly perfect rollout.''

Republican officials say that their focus groups on Ms. Harris show she is vulnerable to carefully framed criticism that avoids divisive political attacks on gender and race, instead portraying her as an out-of-touch coastal elitist who has little in common with ***working-class*** women. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak for the Trump campaign.

Mr. Trump, however, demonstrated on Thursday that he is unable to follow a surgical approach. At the White House briefing, he encouraged a racist conspiracy theory that is rampant among some of his followers: that Ms. Harris is not eligible for the vice presidency or the presidency because her parents were immigrants.

That assertion is false; Ms. Harris was born in California and is eligible to serve.

Mr. Trump also said in an interview on Thursday that he planned to deliver his renomination speech at the Republican National Convention from the South Lawn at the White House, a move that raises legal questions about using federal property for campaign purposes.

The day's events came at a moment of muted optimism for a president whose approval numbers have tanked in recent months.

Internal campaign and party polling shows Mr. Trump recovering significant ground in several states, including Florida, which several of his aides attributed to his increased focus on the pandemic. (Recent public polling shows Mr. Biden maintaining a small lead in Florida.)

Nobody in Mr. Trump's circle wants him to stop attacking. But some now fear some of those gains will evaporate if he attacks Ms. Harris with the same caustic abandon that characterized his attacks on Mrs. Clinton four years ago.

Republicans have also had difficulty in executing a coherent strategy against Mr. Biden. They have hit him with a buckshot spray of criticism -- calling him soft on China, casting him as too tough on crime for party progressives, and, at the same time, labeling him as anti-police over his embracing of peaceful protests in the wake of the George Floyd killing.

Vice President Mike Pence, visiting Iowa on Thursday, sought to paint both Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris as anti-police and to stoke fears over public safety.

''The truth is you won't be safe in Joe Biden's America,'' Mr. Pence said at a town hall discussion on law enforcement put on by Heritage Action for America, a conservative group.

Mr. Biden has supported redirecting some funding from the police but has rejected the ''defund the police'' movement. Ms. Harris, before she was Mr. Biden's running mate, spoke about ''reimagining'' the role of law enforcement in America.

Thomas Kaplan reported from Wilmington, and Glenn Thrush from Washington. Michael Gold and Shane Goldmacher contributed reporting from New York, and Katie Rogers from Washington.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/wear-masks-mandate-biden.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/us/politics/wear-masks-mandate-biden.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr. and Kamala Harris received virtual briefings from economic and public-health experts on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Go Ahead, California, Get Rid of the SAT***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YY6-T6M1-DXY4-X22S-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1189 words

**Byline:** Paul Tough

**Highlight:** When it comes to college admissions, standardized tests penalize ambitious low-income students.

**Body**

When it comes to college admissions, standardized tests penalize ambitious low-income students.

If you’re a college student (or an aspiring one) from a financially struggling family, the coronavirus pandemic has brought with it a steady downpour of bad news: closed campuses, slashed financial-aid budgets and, coming soon, big cuts in state funding for public colleges and universities. But through these dark clouds one ray of more hopeful news has shone. Standardized admissions tests, which many aspiring low-income students see as the greatest barrier to their college goals, are being eliminated this spring as entrance requirements by one institution after another.

At first, the [*list of colleges*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html)deciding during the pandemic to go “test-optional” (meaning that applicants can choose whether or not to submit test scores) included mostly small private institutions — Williams, Amherst, Tufts, Vassar — and the decisions were often presented merely as temporary changes or pilot projects.

But last week brought much bigger news: Janet Napolitano, the president of the University of California, [*recommended*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html) to the system’s Board of Regents that the entire U.C. system go test-optional for the next two years, followed by two years during which the university would become not just test-optional but “test-blind.” In 2023 and 2024, Ms. Napolitano proposed, Berkeley and U.C.L.A. and every other U.C. school wouldn’t consider SAT or ACT scores at all in their admissions decisions.

The university administration, Ms. Napolitano explained, would spend these years trying to come up with its own better and fairer standardized admission test. If it failed, U.C. wouldn’t go back to accepting the SAT and ACT; instead, it would eliminate the consideration of standardized tests in admissions for California students once and for all.

This was a sweeping proposal, especially for such an influential institution as the University of California. And what was so surprising about Ms. Napolitano’s recommendations — which will be put to a vote by the Board of Regents on Thursday — was that they came less than a month after the university’s faculty senate had [*unanimously accepted*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html) the report of a task force supporting the continued use of the tests and proposing to keep them in place for at least the next nine years.

If the Regents concur with Ms. Napolitano this week, it will be a crucial turning point in a national debate about standardized testing that has been going on for decades. Do standardized tests help smart, underprivileged college applicants? Or do they hurt them?

Proponents of standardized tests often make the case that the tests are the least unfair measure in a deeply unfair system. It’s certainly true that the system is unfair from start to finish. Rich kids enjoy advantages over poor kids that begin in prenatal yoga sessions and continue through summer tennis camps, after-school robotics classes and high-priced college-essay coaching sessions. But the data show that standardized tests don’t level that playing field; they skew it even further.

The best predictor of college success overall is a simple one: high school grades. This makes a certain sense. An impressive high school G.P.A. reflects a combination of innate talent and dedicated hard work, and that’s exactly what you need to excel in college. And while standardized test scores have long been found to be highly correlated with students’ financial status, that’s much less true with high school G.P.A. In a [*recent study*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html), Saul Geiser, a researcher at Berkeley, found that the correlation between family income and SAT scores among University of California applicants is three times as strong as the correlation between their family income and their high school G.P.A.

You can see the same pattern when you look at applicants by race. When Mr. Geiser used high school G.P.A. to identify the top 10 percent of Californians applying for admission to the U.C. system, 23 percent of the pool was black or Latino. When he used SAT scores to identify the top 10 percent, 5 percent was black or Latino.

Here’s another way to look at the numbers: The students who are most likely to benefit from any university’s decision to eliminate the use of standardized tests are those who have high G.P.A.s in high school but comparatively low standardized test scores. These are, by definition, hard-working and diligent students, but they don’t perform as well on standardized tests. Let’s call them the strivers.

A few years ago, researchers with the College Board, the organization that administers the SAT, [*analyzed*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html) students in that cohort and compared them with their mirror opposites: those with relatively high test scores and relatively low high school G.P.A.s. Let’s call them the slackers: self-assured test takers who for one reason or another didn’t put as much effort into high school.

The College Board’s researchers made two important discoveries about these groups. First, there were big demographic differences between them. The slackers with the elevated SAT scores were much more likely to be white, male and well-off. And the strivers with the elevated high school G.P.A.s were much more likely to be female, black or Latina, and ***working-class*** or poor.

The researchers’ second discovery was that students in the striver cohort, despite their significant financial disadvantages, actually did a bit better in college. They had slightly higher freshman grades and slightly better retention rates than the more affluent, higher-scoring slackers.

Despite the persistent and compelling evidence that standardized tests penalize low-income students, a lot of us want to believe the opposite: that standardized tests are the tool that can help selective colleges pluck brilliant low-income students out of low-performing high schools. These Cinderella stories do sometimes happen, and when they do, they’re inspiring. But these anecdotal exceptions are overwhelmed by the experience of a large majority of ambitious low-income students, for whom standardized tests have the opposite effect: They construct a wall that separates them from prestigious universities, a wall with a narrow doorway that only well-off kids seem to know how to squeeze through.

If the Board of Regents approves Ms. Napolitano’s recommendations, it won’t get rid of all the structural barriers standing in the way of California’s striving low-income students. Not by a long shot. But it will have taken an important step toward making that wall a little lower and that doorway a little wider.

[*Paul Tough*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html) (   [*@paultough*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html)) is a contributing writer for The Times Magazine and the author, most recently, of “   [*The Years That Matter Most*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html): How College Makes or Breaks Us.”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html).

Follow The New York Times Opinion section on [*Facebook*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html),   [*Twitter (@NYTopinion)*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html) and   [*Instagram*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/sat-act-test-optional-colleges-coronavirus.html).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Joe Raedle/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 21, 2020

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[***Beirut’s Shiites Like the Idea of Change, but Like Hezbollah More; Beirut Dispatch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KF-M8M1-DXY4-X1BG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 14, 2020 Friday 09:53 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; middleeast

**Length:** 1298 words

**Byline:** Mona El-Naggar

**Highlight:** In a Shiite stronghold, people agree that the political system is dysfunctional and needs replacing, but not if that means Hezbollah ceding its power.

**Body**

In a Shiite stronghold, people agree that the political system is dysfunctional and needs replacing, but not if that means Hezbollah ceding its power.

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Near sunset, squads of young men gather along the narrow roads that lead in and out of their ***working-class*** Shiite neighborhood.

They block off the streets with metal barricades. Some arrive on scooters, wielding walkie-talkies, a sign of privilege in an area where many people struggle to buy food or pay a phone bill.

They have come for the anti-government protests that have been taking place nearby almost nightly since an explosion at [*Beirut’s port*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/10/world/middleeast/beirut-port-fire.html) last week ravaged the city. The protesters want to tear down Lebanon’s sectarian political system, which they blame for incompetence, corruption and now for negligence that led to the blast, which killed at least 171 people and wounded thousands.

But these young men see the protests as a threat that could take power and privilege away from their Shiite sect and in particular from [*Hezbollah*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/10/world/middleeast/beirut-port-fire.html), the militant Shiite party, militia and Lebanon’s most powerful faction. They set up barricades not to support the protest but to make sure the angry crowds don’t come too close to their neighborhood.

“We have to protect ourselves,” said Ibrahim Abu Muhammad, the one member of the group who agreed to speak to a journalist. “Disparaging the leaders of the Shiite sect is a red line.”

Mr. Abu Muhammad, a devoted supporter of Hezbollah, pointed to a picture on his phone. It showed gallows erected by the protesters the night before, hanging cardboard cutouts of Hassan Nasrallah, secretary-general of Hezbollah, and Nabih Berri, the speaker of Parliament and leader of the allied Amal party.

“They hung the nooses for the Shiites,” he said, “only the Shiites.”

That was not true. A third noose, not visible in the picture on his phone, held a cutout of President Michel Aoun, a Christian, next to the two Shiite leaders.

That scene, in a nutshell, describes Lebanon’s problem.

Most Lebanese agree that the sectarian system of government, in which 18 religious sects divvy up power, profits and patronage, is the root of the country’s dysfunction and corruption. Many believe it should be replaced.

But no sect wants to give up its piece of the pie, and that is true for the Shiite parties. Hezbollah has been one of the strongest forces opposing anti-government protests, which began last fall over the economic crisis and were revitalized by the explosion, both of which, protesters contend, are the result of a failed government.

The photo on Mr. Abu Muhammad’s phone, which had been circulating on his WhatsApp groups, shows that each sect also has its own sources of information, reinforcing each group’s insularity and propaganda.

The central Beirut neighborhood of Khandaq el-Ghamiq, where the young men were gathering, feels small and contained. Scooters are the preferred mode of transportation on its jammed main streets. In a pungent display of government dysfunction, [*garbage is piled on the streets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/10/world/middleeast/beirut-port-fire.html) here as it is in the rest of the city.

Most women dress modestly and cover their hair but walk freely. At night, men hang out on stoops and street corners, a reprieve from the hot, airless apartments they often share with extended family members.

Portraits of Mr. Nasrallah are everywhere. Large ones on billboards, smaller ones on walls and store fronts. Other leaders who show up next to him are Mr. Berri of the Amal party and Maj. Gen. Qassim Suleimani, the powerful Iranian commander who was killed in a United States airstrike in Iraq in January, and who is a reminder of Iran’s support for Hezbollah.

The neighborhood is about a mile from the port, where the explosion took place. The shock wave from the blast smashed windows, cracked walls and injured more than 70 people in the neighborhood.

People here are as angry at the government as anyone else but they fear that joining the protests would offend the leaders of Hezbollah and Amal. And for many, an attack on Hezbollah is an attack on them.

Muhammad Ali Jounie, who had stepped outside of the small grocery store where he works, seemed conflicted. At first, he seemed upset about the explosion and interested in a new government.

Then he said, “No matter what happens, I will side with my sect.”

Pressed on the seeming contradiction, he acknowledged the dueling impulses.

“I’m not convinced of what I’m saying,” he said, “but it’s what I’ll do. Lebanon is the country of sects. Put me in another country and I’ll be a different citizen.”

Mr. Jounie was not stretching the truth.

Lebanon’s unwieldy power-sharing system requires the president to be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim and the speaker of Parliament a Shiite Muslim.

Sectarian quotas work their way down the chain and have concentrated power in the hands of a few leaders who survive by promoting the narrow interests of their sect and trusted allies. Corruption festers. There is little to no accountability.

And the state is so weak that people inevitably fall back on the safety provided by the sectarian party that runs their streets, making it nearly impossible to cultivate a sense of national identity. Hezbollah provides its supporters with jobs, social services and protection and demands loyalty in return.

“I can’t say anything to support the protests because I have a government job and a big part of the government is controlled by Hezbollah,” said one woman, who refused to be identified for fear of retribution.

Distraught over Lebanon’s economic tailspin, which eviscerated the value of her salary from $1,000 last year to about $200 this year, she initially joined the protests. But then she felt threatened, and stopped.

“If I join the protests,” she said, “I’ll be bullied and accused of treason.”

On Monday night the mood was tense. The government had just [*resigned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/10/world/middleeast/beirut-port-fire.html), protesters were clashing with security forces, and the young Shiite squads were on high alert, monitoring the streets from the edge of the neighborhood.

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“We’re headed towards federalism,” he said, railing against the resignation and the uncertain future that the country now faces. His wife, Zainab, sat at a desk, smoking a cigarette. Their 31-year-old son, Hassanein, who was slouched and leaning back in a chair, jumped in.

“I grew up with Hezbollah, its wars, its victories, its money,” he said. “Who else can give me that sense of confidence?”

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Shiites here remember that.

“How can I know that if they come for Hezbollah and its weapons, they won’t come for me?” said the younger Mr. Khreiss.

PHOTOS: In the Khandaq el-Ghamiq neighborhood, a Shiite stronghold in Beirut, pictures of Hezbollah’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah, and other Shiite leaders are everywhere.; Above, Red Cross volunteers in Khandaq el-Ghamiq, which is about a mile from the port where devastating explosions occurred. Left, the blasts left a resident’s windows broken.; Smoking water pipes in Khandaq el-Ghamiq. The blasts injured over 70 people in the neighborhood. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DIEGO IBARRA SANCHEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 6, 2021

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[***A Yearning for Change Faces an Obstacle: Loyalty to Hezbollah***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KF-M2Y1-JBG3-60KB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 14, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 13; BEIRUT DISPATCH

**Length:** 1231 words

**Byline:** By Mona El-Naggar

**Body**

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**Graphic**

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Above, Red Cross volunteers in Khandaq el-Ghamiq, which is about a mile from the port where devastating explosions occurred. Left, the blasts left a resident's windows broken.

Smoking water pipes in Khandaq el-Ghamiq. The blasts injured over 70 people in the neighborhood. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DIEGO IBARRA SANCHEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 20, 2020

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[***The Age of Anti-Ambition; The Future of Work Issue***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SS-31Y1-DXY4-X2DB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 15, 2022 Tuesday 17:59 EST

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 4037 words

**Byline:** Noreen Malone

**Highlight:** When 25 million people leave their jobs, it’s about more than just burnout.

**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=where_we_go_malone).

I used to think of my job as existing in its own little Busytown — as in the Richard Scarry books, where there’s a small, bright village of workers, each focused on a single job, whose paths all cross in the course of one busy, busy day. In my neighborhood in Brooklyn, I would see the same person at the Myrtle Avenue bus stop several days a week and imagine where he was going with his Dell laptop bag and black sneakers. I’d buy coffee from a rotating cast of the same baristas at the cafe on the third floor of my office building, where I worked as an editor at a magazine. I’d stop to chat with another editor, whose office was on the other side of the wall from mine; sometimes, she would motion for me to shut the door, and we would say what we really thought about some piece of minor professional gossip, important to at most about 3.5 people in the world. I would watch my boss walk toward a meeting with his boss and wonder whether their chat would wind up affecting my job.

We all mostly worked on computers, typing in documents and sending emails to the person on the other side of a cubicle wall, but there was a bustle to the whole endeavor. It was a little terrarium where we all spent 50 hours a week, and we filled it with office snacks and bathroom outfit compliments and after-work drinks. Even on a day when nothing much happened professionally, there was the feeling of having worked, of playing your part in an ecosystem.

Every job had its own Busytown. Although no one in the broader world wanted to talk about, say, cost-cutting strategies for a potential new client, you could find someone in your Busytown who was just as preoccupied about it as you were. In Scarry’s actual Busytown, meanwhile, the world is populated by people (OK, animals) who find it very easy to explain their jobs. They’re policemen and grocers and postmen and doctors and nurses. When the pandemic hit, the people with those Scarry-style jobs had to keep going to work. Their Busytowns rolled on. And actually, those jobs got harder.

Everyone else has lost all touch with theirs. They log on to Slack and Zoom, where their co-workers are two-dimensional or avatars, and every day is just like the last one. Depending on what’s happening with the virus, their children might be there again, just as in March 2020, demanding attention and sapping mental energy. The internet is definitely there, always, demanding attention and sapping mental energy. A job feels like just one more incursion, demanding attention and sapping mental energy.

And it didn’t help that, early in the pandemic, all jobs were pointedly rebranded: essential or nonessential. Neither label feels good. There is still plenty of purpose to be found in a job that isn’t in one of the helper professions, of course. But “nonessential” is a word that invites creeping nihilism. This thing we filled at least eight to 10 hours of the day with, five days a week, for years and decades, missed family dinners for ... was it just busy work? Perhaps that’s what it was all along.

For the obviously essential workers — I.C.U. nurses, pulmonologists — the burden of being needed is a costly one. The word [*“burnout,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/03/opinion/burnout-stress.html) promiscuously applied these days, was in fact coined to diagnose exhaustion in medical workers (in a more quaint time, when we weren’t heading into the third year of a multiwave [*global pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/covid-cases.html)). And meanwhile, a vast majority of people deemed essential have jobs like Amazon warehouse worker or cashier. To be told that society can’t function without you, and that you must risk your health to come in, while other people push around marketing reports from home — often for much more money — it becomes difficult not to wonder if “essential” is cynical, a polite way of classing humans as “expendable” or “nonexpendable.”

Teachers, who happen to be both highly unionized and college-educated, haven’t taken kindly to being on the expendable end of the equation, asked to work in person with tiny people who aren’t good at distancing and masking and have spent the past years cooped up. In early January, I read an article in The Times about the drama between [*the Chicago teachers’ union and the city over in-person instruction.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/05/us/chicago-schools-close-teachers-union-child-care.html) When classes were abruptly canceled, a mother who worked as a bank teller had taken her child in for day care, provided by nonunionized school employees. (Day care workers: even further down the ugly new caste lines than teachers.) “I understand they want to be safe, but I have to work,” the bank teller said of her child’s teachers. “I don’t understand why they are so special.” This kind of comparison can curdle people’s relationships to one another — and to their own jobs.

Essential or nonessential, remote or in person, almost no one I know likes work very much at the moment. The primary emotion that a job elicits right now is the determination to endure: If we can just get through the next set of months, maybe things will get better.

The act of working has been stripped bare. You don’t have little outfits to put on, and lunches to go to, and coffee breaks to linger over and clients to schmooze. The office is where it shouldn’t be — at home, in our intimate spaces — and all that’s left now is the job itself, naked and alone. And a lot of people don’t like what they see.

There are two kinds of stories being told about work right now. One is a labor-market story, and because that’s a little dull and quite confusing, it’s mixed up with the second one, which is about the emotional relationship of American workers to their jobs and to their employers. [*The Great Resignation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/opinion/great-resignation-labor-shortage.html) is the phrase that has been used, a little incorrectly, to describe each story.

It’s true that we’re in the midst of a [*“quitagion,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/21/business/quitting-contagious.html) as this paper has jauntily termed it, citing the record number of people (4.5 million) who gave notice in November alone. An estimated 25 million people left their jobs in the second half of 2021; it’s all but certain that this is the highest U.S. quit rate since the Bureau of Labor Statistics began tracking those numbers in 2000.

The labor market, as economists like to say, is tight: Employment statistics are strong and getting stronger. Despite inflation, real income is up across all income levels. It’s a remarkable turnaround, following the early pandemic’s horrific job losses, which disproportionately affected the lowest earners and those with little job security. Many of the recent quitters have been on the lower part of the income ladder. They’re getting or seeking better work, for more money, because they can. And that kind of labor market means at least some lower-income workers get to think about their jobs the way the white-collar class more traditionally has, as something that needs to work for them, rather than the other way around.

But those top-line numbers obscure a muddier truth. After [*the latest employment numbers were released in February*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/04/business/jobs-report-january) (which seemed to show remarkable job growth and an unemployment rate of 4 percent), one B.L.S. economist took to his Substack to call it the [*“most complicated job report ever.”*](https://apricitas.substack.com/p/omicron-and-the-labor-market)In addition to those workers trying to trade their way into objectively better jobs, millions of others have simply left the work force — because they’re sick, or taking care of children, or retiring, or just plain miserable.

The precise reasons are a little mysterious. The jobs recovery isn’t spread evenly across industries, nor is the quit rate. Staffing levels in the leisure and hospitality sectors are still 10 percent lower than they were prepandemic, and according to December’s job report, people who work in hotels and restaurants are the most likely to have quit. Eight percent of all jobs in health care are open right now. There are almost 400,000 fewer health care workers now than there were before the pandemic. As [*LinkedIn’s chief economist put it to CBS News,*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/great-resignation-60-minutes-2022-01-10/) “It may not just be worth it for some folks.”

Even among the people who were technically employed, a sizable number were unable to work because of child care issues or sick leave. Add to that the fact that many people who would prefer full-time work with benefits are still working on employers’ terms, which means part-time, unstable employment, [*as The Times’s Noam Scheiber recently reported.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/01/business/economy/part-time-work.html) And if you dig into the quit numbers for higher-wage workers, it’s still hardly about people going on “Eat, Pray, Love” journeys. The full picture just isn’t that rosy.

It’s also not entirely a fluke of this moment. For decades, job productivity has been increasing while real wages haven’t. People were already stretched thin. The writer Anne Helen Petersen, who has made a specialty of truffle-hunting for the millennial internet’s preoccupations, recently wrote a book about professional-class burnout based on a viral [*2019 BuzzFeed article she wrote on the same subject.*](https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/annehelenpetersen/millennials-burnout-generation-debt-work) (Her lead personal example involved not getting around to having her knives sharpened.) I was in a particularly stressful moment of a management job at the time and would Google the symptoms of burnout late at night, on a private browser screen. But I was allergic to people talking ostentatiously about it, and I was embarrassed by the indulgence of the language, or, maybe, what I saw as the self-importance of it.

Now, though, it’s as if our whole society is burned out. The pandemic may have alerted new swaths of people to their distaste for their jobs — or exhausted them past the point where there’s anything to enjoy about jobs they used to like.

Perhaps that’s why the press is filled with stories about widespread employee dissatisfaction; last month an Insider article declared that companies “are actively driving their white-collar workers away by presuming that employees are still thinking the way they did before the pandemic: that their jobs are the most important things in their lives,” and pointed to a Gallup poll that showed that last year only a third of American workers said they were engaged in their jobs.

At Amazon, in its managerial ranks, employee departures have reached what is being seen as a “crisis” level, [*according to Bloomberg’s Brad Stone.*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/newsletters/2022-01-24/amazon-employees-are-burned-out-and-leaving-their-jobs) (A source told him that the turnover rate was as high as 50 percent in some groups, although Amazon disputes this.) One woman, leaving her job, posted in an internal listserv she started called Momazonian, which has more than 5,000 members. “While it has been an incredibly rewarding place to work, the pressure often feels relentless and at times, unnecessary,” she wrote, in a Jerry Maguire screed for the careful networker set; she also copied senior vice presidents and some board members.

It’s not an accident that it was the moms’ affinity group where she aired that feeling. A McKinsey study from last year showed that [*42 percent of women feel burned out, compared with 32 percent in 2020.*](https://womenintheworkplace.com/) (For men, it jumped to 35 percent from 28 percent.) At the beginning of the pandemic, the working world lost more than 3.5 million mothers, according to the Census Bureau; and the National Women’s Law Center found that in early 2021, women’s labor-force participation was at a 33-year-low, returning us all the way back to the era when “Working Girl” was revolutionary. Many of those women haven’t come back.

So the numbers are bad enough. But then there’s the way the hard facts of the economy interact with our emotions. Consider this theory: that the current office ennui was simply the inevitable backlash to the punishing culture of the previous decade’s #ThankGodItsMonday culture. And furthermore, sometime around the rise of #MeToo (and after Donald Trump’s election), ambition began to seem like a mug’s game. The enormous personal costs of getting to the top became clear, and the potential warping effects of being in charge also did. It wasn’t just the bad sexually harassing bosses who were fired but the toxic ones, too, and soon enough we began to question the whole way power in the office worked. What started out as a hopeful moment turned depressing fast. Power structures were interrogated but rarely dismantled, a middle ground that left everyone feeling pretty bad about the ways of the world. It became harder to trust anyone who was your boss and harder to imagine wanting to become one. Covid was an accelerant, but the match was already lit.

Recently, I stumbled across the latest data on [*happiness from the General Social Survey,*](https://gssdataexplorer.norc.org/trends?category=Gender%20%26%20Marriage&amp;measure=happy&amp;Measure%20Category=Very%20happy&amp;Breakdown%20Label=Total) a gold-standard poll that has been tracking Americans’ attitudes since 1972. It’s shocking. Since the pandemic began, Americans’ happiness has cratered. The graph looks like the heart rate has plunged and they’re paging everyone on the floor to revive the patient. For the first time since the survey began, more people say they’re not too happy than say they’re very happy.

The plague, the death, the supply chain, long lines at the post office, the collapse of many aspects of civil society might all play a role in that statistic. But in his classic 1951 study of the office-working middle class, the sociologist C. Wright Mills observed that “while the modern white-collar worker has no articulate philosophy of work, his feelings about it and his experiences of it influence his satisfactions and frustrations, the whole tone of his life.” I remember a friend once saying that although her husband wasn’t depressed, he hated his job, and it was effectively like living with a depressed person.

After the latest job report, the economist and Times columnist Paul Krugman estimated that people’s confidence in the economy was about 12 points lower than it ought to have been, given that wages were up. As the pandemic drags on, either the numbers aren’t able to quantify how bad things have become or people seem to have persuaded themselves that things are worse than they actually are.

It’s not in just the data where the words “job satisfaction” seem to have become a paradox. It’s also present in the cultural mood about work. Not long ago, a young editor I follow on Instagram posted a response to a question someone posed to her: What’s your dream job? Her reply, a snappy internet-screwball comeback, was that she did not “dream of labor.” I suspect that she is ambitious. I know that she is excellent at understanding the zeitgeist.

It is in the air, this anti-ambition. These days, it’s easy to go viral by appealing to a generally presumed lethargy, especially if you can come up with the kind of languorous, wry aphorisms that have become this generation’s answer to the printer-smashing scene in “Office Space.” (The film was released in 1999, in the middle of another hot labor market, when the unemployment rate was the lowest it had been in 30 years.) “Sex is great, but have you ever quit a job that was ruining your mental health?” went one tweet, which has more than 300,000 likes. Or: “I hope this email doesn’t find you. I hope you’ve escaped, that you’re free.” (168,000 likes.) If the tight labor market is giving low-wage workers a taste of upward mobility, a lot of office workers (or “office,” these days) seem to be thinking about our jobs more like the way many ***working-class*** people have forever. As just a job, a paycheck to take care of the bills! Not the sum total of us, not an identity.

Even elite lawyers seem to be losing their taste for workplace gunning. Last year, Reuters reported an unusual wave of attrition at big firms in New York City — noting that [*many of the lawyers had decided to take a pay cut to work fewer hours or move to a cheaper area or work in tech*](https://www.reuters.com/legal/legalindustry/elite-ny-firms-are-battle-talent-could-they-all-be-losing-2021-06-15/). It’s happening in finance, too: At Citi, according to New York magazine, an analyst typed “I hate this job, I hate this bank, I want to jump out the window” in a chat, prompting human resources to check on his mental health. “This is a consensus opinion,” he explained to H.R. “This is how everyone feels.”

Things get weird when employers try to address this discontent. Amazon’s warehouse workers have, for the past year, been asked to participate in a wellness program aimed at reducing on-the-job injuries. The company recently came under fire for the reporting that some of its [*drivers are pushed so hard to perform that they’ve taken to urinating in bottles, and warehouse employees,*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/amazon-drivers-peeing-in-bottles-union-vote-worker-complaints/) for whom every move is tracked, live in fear of being fired for working too slowly. But now, for those warehouse workers, Amazon has introduced a program called AmaZen: “Employees can visit AmaZen stations and watch short videos featuring easy-to-follow well-being activities, including guided meditations [and] positive affirmations.” It’s self-care with a dystopian bent, in which the solution for blue-collar job burnout is ... screen time.

The cultural mood toward the office even appears in the television shows that knowledge workers obsessed over. Consider “Mad Men,” a show set during the peaking economy of the late 1960s. It was a show that found work romantic. I don’t mean the office affairs. I mean that the characters were in love with their work (or angrily sometimes out of love, but that’s a passion of its own). More than that, their careers and the little dramas of their daily work — the presentations to clients, the office politics — gave their lives a sense of purpose. (At the show’s end, Don Draper went to a resort that looks an awful lot like Esalen to find out the meaning of life, and meditated his way into a transformative ... Coke ad campaign.)

Peggy Olson, the striving adwoman on the make, has recently been taken up as the patron saint of quitters. An image of her shows up frequently illustrating articles about people leaving their jobs, sometimes in GIF form. In it, Olson is wearing sunglasses, carrying a box of office stuff. She has a cigarette dangling from her mouth, off to the side for maximum self-assurance. But she isn’t actually quitting in that scene. Instead, she’s walking into a new, better job at a different agency. The swagger she has comes from ambition, not from opting out.

That show was on the air from 2007 to 2015, at the peak of what sometimes gets called hustle culture (and Obama-era optimism). Back then — just before, during and after a psyche-shattering global recession — work had betrayed large swaths of the population, but many (at least those who were better off, for whom the economy recovered much more quickly) took that as inspiration to work harder, to short-circuit the problems of employment with entrepreneurship, or the dreams of it. Start a company! Build a brand! Become a girlboss! (A word that used to be a compliment, not an insult.)

Now, Sunday nights are for [*“Succession,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/succession) the beloved pitch-black workplace drama of the post-Trump nihilistic years. On that show, whose third season recently came to a close, work is a corrupting force. The Roy family is ruined not by their money but by their collective desire to run a conglomerate. Ambition perverts the love between parent and child, husband and wife, brother and sister. Even the from-nothing strivers on the show are ruined by their jobs. It’s a Greek tragedy filtered through the present moment, in which every bit of labor is said to happen under late capitalism, and all the jobs are burnout jobs.

When “Succession” was over, the office workers of America got up off the couch, and they turned off the TV. They dozed off thinking about the psychological abuse the Roys heap on one another and their Waystar Royco underlings, then sat on the same couch Monday morning.

It’s important to acknowledge that some people have reacted to this moment by becoming less cynical about the possibilities of work. The broader world is getting darker — climate change, crumbling democracy. It feels impossible to change it. But work? Work could change. An idealistic generation has set about demanding a utopian world, on a local scale, in their own little Busytowns. More diversity, more attention to structural racism, better hours, better boundaries, better leave policies, better bosses.

At some companies, it finally feels as if the old hierarchies are being upended, and the top-paid people are running a little scared of their underlings, rather than the other way around. (No one has much sympathy for managers, and it’s true, as Don Draper once told Peggy Olson, that’s what the money is for. But steering a company through the past few years has been its own particular challenge.)

Confronted with this world, many young people with professional options want to be in solidarity with their colleagues instead of climbing the ladder above them. The meaning that they once found in work is now found in trying to make the workplace itself better. At Authentic, a Democratic consulting firm, some members of the unionized staff are refusing to work a contract serving Senator Kyrsten Sinema. Unionized think-tankers at the Center for American Progress, which tends to serve as a pipeline to coveted roles in Democratic presidential administrations, threatened to strike in mid-February over their wages. Some congressional staff members have begun the process of forming a union.

I’m now on staff at a digital news site that is unionized; I marvel at the fact that I can have a job with a title like “editor at large” and all the benefits that come from union membership. At Google, home of plush offices and free meals, 400 of its highly paid engineers formed a union in early 2021. The professional managerial classes — as Bernie Sanders supporters called that slice of the white-collar work force pejoratively — are in the middle of developing a class consciousness.

So some of the most prestigious offices are organizing, and the college-educated make up a larger slice of the union pie than ever, thanks largely to growth among teachers’ unions. But union membership, more broadly, is at an all-time low. Those warehouse employees at Amazon voted against unionization in Alabama last year. (A federal review board found that Amazon had improperly pressured staff members against forming a union, and ordered a revote, which will take place in five weeks.) Amazon workers might end up voting to join a union. Starbucks employees are starting the process, too. But somehow, workplace protections still seem in danger of becoming one more luxury item that accrues to the privileged.

Perhaps there’s no better example of this than [*what happened at Goldman Sachs last year.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/19/business/goldman-sachs-analysts-workplace-complaint.html) Junior bankers in San Francisco felt alienated over their long hours, what they considered low pay and lack of Seamless stipends while working from home. They made a formal presentation to their office’s top executives, relying on survey data they gathered that showed, for instance, that three-quarters of them felt they had been victims of workplace abuse. It was something a little like collective action by America’s future elite.

One lead organizer of that action was, as [*Bloomberg reported, the son of the vice chairman of TPG Capital,*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-21/goldman-junior-banker-uprising-was-ignited-by-son-of-tpg-leader) a private-equity firm. His father, a creature of a previous zeitgeist, got his start working for Michael Milken at Drexel Burnham Lambert, the famously competitive (and corrupt) investment bank.

The son’s hostile takeover worked. The Goldman analysts got their base pay raised by nearly 30 percent. [*New York magazine reported*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/11/goldman-sachs-analysts-money-pandemic.html) that while at least five of the 13 analysts from the protest cohort in San Francisco had already left Goldman (four of whom were women of color), the bank was having no trouble recruiting college students to join the next class of analysts.

The Goldman raise is a reminder of a cold, hard fact. One that is explained in the very first sentence of Richard Scarry’s “What Do People Do All Day?”: “We all live in Busytown and we are all workers. We work hard so that there will be enough food and houses and clothing for our families.” Work is mainly, really, about making money to live. And then trying to make some more. A boring, ancient story. The future of work might be more like its past than anyone admits.

Noreen Malone is an editor at large for Slate Magazine. In 2015, she won a George Polk Award and a Newswomen’s Club award for [*her reporting in New York magazine on the women who accused Bill Cosby of rape and sexual assault.*](https://www.thecut.com/2015/07/bill-cosbys-accusers-speak-out.html)

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by María Jesús Contreras FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Winning the Right to Vote Was the Work of Many Lifetimes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KB-0PK1-JBG3-605M-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Kate Clarke Lemay

**Highlight:** It took generations of women — mothers and daughters, leaders and followers — to secure the 19th Amendment.

**Body**

In March 2019, the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery opened an exhibition called “[*Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence*](https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women).” As curator, I visited archives around the country looking for original objects and images that would reveal new aspects of the suffrage movement. I wanted to widen the story and address the roles played by women of color, especially.

While visiting the archives of Howard University, I came across a 1901 studio portrait of the suffragist Mary Church Terrell with her daughter, Phyllis. I caught my breath because I had never seen it, and I suspected that it had never been published. Mary started working for progressive causes long before Phyllis was born, and her activism served as a model for posterity. Years after this picture was taken, mother and daughter picketed together, with members of the National Woman’s Party, outside Woodrow Wilson’s White House.

Looking at their picture, I was reminded that the struggle for women’s rights was, and continues to be, multigenerational. Leading suffragists like Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Lucy Stone, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Ida B. Wells-Barnett each had daughters who carried on their work. Reformers like Susan B. Anthony cultivated followers such as Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, who were completely devoted to the movement. These women sometimes clashed over strategies and tactics, but they shared the belief that winning the vote was a crucial first step toward empowering women in the ongoing fight for equality.

Issues of race and class divided the movement, too — sometimes along generational lines. Harriot Stanton Blatch, one of Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s daughters and a formidable suffragist in her own right, famously parted ways with her mother around “educated suffrage.” At various points in her life, Stanton argued that educated women were more deserving of the vote than “ignorant” men, among whom she included many formerly enslaved people, ***working-class*** people and immigrants. Blatch [*disagreed*](https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women) with her mother. In 1894, in response to a statement of Stanton’s, she wrote, “Every working man needs the suffrage more than I do, but there is another who needs it more than he does, just because conditions are more galling, and that is the working woman.”

Though Blatch publicly rebutted Stanton, she also was inspired by her. The foremothers of suffrage, despite their limitations, modeled a steadfastness that would motivate both their own daughters and other young women in the movement. They never wavered in the idea that the vote was essential for women to live as full citizens. Stanton died in 1902, 18 years before the 19th Amendment was ratified, but Blatch saw it realized. To honor her mother, she worked with her brother Theodore on [*a collection of Stanton’s papers*](https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women), now in the holdings of Vassar College.

The mothers were the foundations; the daughters, even when they differed in opinion, ensured their legacy.

Harper gained renown in the 1850s as an author of elegant prose and persuasive antislavery poetry. She was also a popular lecturer, and a suffragist who [*rejected*](https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women) white women’s claims to superiority in the movement for voting rights. “I do not believe that giving the woman the ballot is immediately going to cure all the ills of life,” she declared in an 1860s address. “I do not believe that white women are dewdrops just exhaled from the skies. I think that like men they may be divided into three classes: the good, the bad and the indifferent.”

Harper was a natural leader. Active in the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, she used her position as a superintendent to empower Black women. And in 1896, along with Terrell, Ruffin and others, Harper co-founded the National Association of Colored Women, or N.A.C.W. The group argued that voting rights and education were inextricably linked and raised funds for Black kindergartens, libraries and vocational schools — resources for the next generation.

Harper sometimes appeared at conferences with her daughter, Mary, who was also a talented public speaker. Mary seems to have been less politically active (and perhaps more religious) than her mother, but they both worked for social reforms. Moreover, they were a pair: In 1895 Harper published a collection of her poetry, “[*Atlanta Offering*](https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women),” and insisted not only on her own frontispiece portrait but also on one of Mary — a kind of visual dedication to her daughter.

Before co-founding the N.A.C.W., Ruffin worked with her daughter, Florida Ruffin Ridley, and Maria Baldwin to found the Woman’s Era Club in Boston. By the mid-1890s, shortly after its founding, the club had 133 members, with the mother-daughter team editing its important newspaper (also called [*The Woman’s Era*](https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women)). In 1894, in the paper’s second issue, they published an [*editorial*](https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women) about the growth of clubs like theirs: “This organization of colored women means much; through it our women are brought more closely in touch with the world and the great questions of the day; by organization, not only are their own minds and talents strengthened and developed, but they are enabled to give a helping hand to those less favored.”

Organization and close intergenerational cooperation were invaluable, but they were no guarantee of victory, and progress toward suffrage was often painfully slow. After Ruffin and Ridley founded the Woman’s Era, it would be another quarter-century before the 19th Amendment passed and women nationwide won the right to vote. And even then, many Black women would still be denied their rights for decades.

In curating “Votes for Women,” I hoped to honor women like Ruffin and Ridley. It wasn’t always possible. I recall the crushing disappointment I experienced when I traveled to New York City to see a portrait of Ruffin, only to discover that the image had a large, demeaning crease down the middle of her face. It was unexhibitable. And I never found a portrait of Ridley.

Still, of the 60 portraits of named women on view, almost a third were of women of color. With the support of the [*Smithsonian American Women’s History Initiative*](https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women), we featured stunning photographic portraits of Anna Julia Cooper, Ida Gibbs Hunt, Margaret Murray Washington, Mary McLeod Bethune, Adella Hunt Logan, Felisa Rincón de Gautier, Susette La Flesche Tibbles, Zitkala-Sa, Fannie Lou Hamer and Patsy Takemoto Mink. By presenting these women as the stars of the exhibition, the Portrait Gallery placed women’s history at the center, rather than the margins, of American history.

Today, it can be both daunting and inspiring to remember how these women refused to give up. Their persistence set the stage for everyone who came after them, including us: We would not be considering ratifying the E.R.A., or deploying women as soldiers in combat, or participating in the #MeToo movement, or electing many more women to represent the people, or hiring more gender-inclusive leadership, if not for the suffragists.

And yet, as we consider their legacy, it’s also worth asking how we might do things differently than our mothers. How can we hold ourselves up to the light — one that will stand the judgment of the next generation?

Kate Clarke Lemay is a historian and curator at the National Portrait Gallery, and a co-author of “[*Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence*](https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women).”

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PHOTOS: Mary E. Harper, left, and her mother, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, both worked for social reforms. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EMORY UNIVERSITY VIA NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY) (TW40); Mary Church Terrell with her daughter, Phyllis, in 1901. Years later, they picketed together outside the White House. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MOORLAND-SPINGARN RESEARCH CENTER) (TW41)

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[***Biden's Presidency Is Altering Definition Of Being a Democrat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JP-42N1-DXY4-X3V8-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

A lifelong centrist, President Biden has moved leftward with his party, and early in his tenure is driving the biggest expansion of American government in decades.

When Joseph R. Biden Jr. served as vice president in the Obama administration, he was known to preface his recommendations to other officials with a self-deprecating disclaimer. He may not have attended Harvard or Yale, Mr. Biden would say as he popped into an office or a meeting, but he was still a foreign policy expert, and he knew how to work Capitol Hill.

Mr. Biden isn't apologizing anymore.

Now 100 days into his presidency, Mr. Biden is driving the biggest expansion of American government in decades, an effort to use $6 trillion in federal spending to address social and economic challenges at a scale not seen in a half-century. Aides say he has come into his own as a party leader in ways that his uneven political career didn't always foretell, and that he is undeterred by matters that used to bother him, like having no Republican support for Democratic priorities.

For an establishment politician who cast his election campaign as a restoration of political norms, his record so far amounts to the kind of revolution that he said last year he would not pursue as president -- but that, aides say, became necessary to respond to a crippling pandemic. In doing so, Mr. Biden is validating the desires of a party that feels fiercely emboldened to push a liberal agenda through a polarized Congress.

The result is something few people expected: His presidency is transforming what it means to be a Democrat, even among a conservative wing of his party that spent decades preaching the gospel of bipartisanship.

''We've been very happy with his agenda and we're the moderates,'' said Matt Bennett, a co-founder of Third Way, a Democratic think tank named after a governing style embraced by former President Bill Clinton that rejected liberal orthodoxy. ''Some have said this is a liberal wish list. We would argue that he is defining what it is to be a 21st-century moderate Democrat.''

Mr. Biden trumpeted his expansive agenda again on Wednesday night in his first address to Congress, casting his efforts to expand vaccinations and pour trillions of dollars into the economy as a way to unify a fractured nation.

''We're vaccinating the nation; we're creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs,'' he said. ''We're delivering real results to people -- they can see it and feel it in their own lives.''

Mr. Biden, now 78, has pursued these sweeping changes without completely losing his instinct for finding the center point of his party. As the Democratic consensus on issues has moved left over the years, he has kept pace -- on abortion, gun control, same-sex marriage, the Iraq war and criminal justice -- without going all the way to the furthest liberal stance. Now, he is leading a party that accelerated leftward during the Trump administration, and finding his own place on the Democratic spectrum -- the one with the most likelihood of legacy-cementing success.

In private calls with Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, whom he vanquished in the Democratic primaries, he collects ideas from the party's liberal wing. With Senator Joe Manchin, the centrist West Virginia Democrat, he keeps tabs on his caucus and its slim congressional margins. And in conversations with Senator Mitch McConnell, the Republican minority leader and a longtime negotiating partner, Mr. Biden appeals for bipartisan support, even as he warns that he won't wait for it indefinitely.

''Biden is a politician who stays inside of the moment,'' said Rashad Robinson, president of racial justice organization Color of Change, which was skeptical of Mr. Biden during the primary but now praises his work. ''He stays inside of where the cultural context has moved.''

To the consternation of some Republicans, Mr. Biden is approaching politics differently from recent Democratic presidents who believed that support from the opposing party would provide a bulwark for their policies and political standing. In the 1990s, Mr. Clinton espoused triangulation, a strategy that forced liberals to settle for moderate policies by cutting deals with Republicans. Former President Barack Obama spent months trying to win bipartisan buy-in for his policy proposals.

Both strategies were rooted in political fears that began in the Reagan era: Doing too much to assuage the party's left flank could alienate voters in the middle who took a more skeptical view of government, leaving Democrats unable to build coalitions for re-election.

Mr. Biden and his administration have embraced a different philosophy, arguing that difficult times have made liberal ideas popular with independents and some Republican voters, even if G.O.P. leaders continue to resist them.

The shift leftward, aides say, reflects a recognition by Mr. Biden that the problems facing the country require sweeping solutions, but also that both parties changed during the polarizing years of the Trump administration. Gone is the Senate where Mr. Biden spent decades, legislating like former President Ronald Reagan, who liked to say he'd call any negotiation where he could get 70 percent of what he wanted a win.

''There's a difference between President Biden and Senator Biden,'' said former Senator Chuck Hagel, a Republican who served for decades with Mr. Biden and supported his presidential bid. ''Even a difference between President Biden and Vice President Biden. He's the president now and he's got the responsibility of trying to move this country forward. Yes, he wants to do it in a bipartisan way if he can. But the fact is these problems aren't going to solve themselves.''

Other Republicans see a more dissembling president, one who has broken his promises to reach across the aisle. In a floor speech on Wednesday afternoon, Mr. McConnell accused Mr. Biden of ''false advertising'' during his campaign, saying Americans ''elected a president who preached moderation.''

He added: ''Over a few short months the Biden officials seems to have given up on selling actual unity in favor of catnip for their liberal base.''

In his address, Mr. Biden said he was open to hearing Republican ideas on his infrastructure plans -- but wouldn't wait forever.

''I applaud a group of Republican senators who just put forward their proposal,'' he said. ''We welcome ideas. But the rest of the world isn't waiting for us. Doing nothing is not an option.''

The decades Mr. Biden spent cultivating a moderate image, paired with the conciliatory tone he has adopted toward Republicans in public, has allowed him to push his agenda without facing charges of socialism -- a label his opponents unsuccessfully tried to make stick during the presidential campaign.

Focus groups throughout the campaign found that voters felt they knew Mr. Biden, both for his family story and ***working class*** bona fides. Even now, voters rate Mr. Biden as more moderate than Mr. Obama at the same stage of his presidency, according to polling from NBC News. Mr. Biden is pursuing a more liberal agenda than Mr. Obama did, of course; but he is taking a lower-key approach and advancing relatively popular ideas, and he doesn't face the same smears and attacks as Mr. Obama did as the first Black president.

''It's been very artful because it's allowed him to create this weird equilibrium where people don't see him as a partisan ramrod, which gives comfort to moderates,'' said David Axelrod, a former top adviser to Mr. Obama. ''On the other hand, he's really moving forward on a lot of these initiatives.''

Aides and allies say the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol also affected Mr. Biden's thinking about what the country might accept politically. The soon-to-be president believed the violence alienated a slice of voters from Mr. Trump's Republican Party, leaving them more open to Mr. Biden's agenda, particularly if he delivered tangible government benefits like stimulus checks and vaccines.

''It's fair to say that Obama followed the Clinton model, and Biden is not, in some fundamental ways, because the world has changed so profoundly,'' Mr. Bennett said. ''Joe Biden is dealing with a seditious, anti-democratic set of lunatics. You can't deal with people who voted to overturn the election. You simply cannot, even if you're a moderate.''

Mr. Biden's predecessor helped till the ground in other ways. As Mr. Trump focused his attention on waging baseless attacks against the election results last winter, coronavirus cases surged across the country, leaving Americans eager for more economic and public health assistance; Mr. Biden provided that with a $1.9 trillion stimulus bill just a few weeks into his presidency.

''Joe Biden is living in a honeymoon with a prenup signed by Donald Trump,'' said Rahm Emanuel, who was Mr. Obama's chief of staff.

Yet some longtime friends and allies also see a more personal evolution in Mr. Biden since he assumed the role of president.

His inner circle says he is exhibiting a level of confidence they've never seen before, combined with an awareness that he only has a short window to achieve his goals before next year's midterm elections, which could cost Democrats their slim governing majority. While Mr. Biden has said his ''expectation'' is that he'll run again, political allies privately admit that remains an open question given his age.

Mr. Biden's administration has not given liberals everything they've wanted, pushing back on proposals to cancel student debt, adopt the entirety of the Green New Deal and completely eliminate the filibuster.

During negotiations with Mr. Sanders's team last summer over a shared platform that would unify Democrats behind Mr. Biden's general election candidacy, Biden aides made clear that they would not accept any recommendations that they didn't believe he could support if elected. At one point, they agreed to decriminalize marijuana but rejected a plan to legalize it completely, saying Mr. Biden didn't agree with that policy, according to a person involved in the talks.

But Mr. Biden didn't treat the negotiations as simply optics, an encouraging sign to many progressives that Mr. Biden and his team were committed to pursuing more-liberal policies than they had realized.

Mr. Biden's advisers said they were perplexed by the progressive zeal over the president's economic agenda, noting that the American Jobs Plan is exactly what Mr. Biden promised he would do during his campaign. The view from inside the West Wing is that liberals and Republicans both made false assumptions about Mr. Biden and how he would govern.

Aides argue that Mr. Biden hasn't changed from the candidate who just months ago promised to find ''between four and eight Republican senators'' to support his policies. He's still the politician who would be more comfortable compromising on his proposals, getting less than what he wanted, but passing legislation with Republicans on board. He still describes Mr. McConnell as a friend, and thinks he might have come in with a better shot at getting his support than Mr. Obama.

Aides also say he believes that bipartisan support, in the long term, will be more important for the country than passing his $4 trillion infrastructure bills untouched, through reconciliation.

''In his heart, he probably still would love to forge bipartisan deals,'' Mr. Axelrod said. ''But he's going to be judged at the end of the day not on style points but what he gets done, and he knows that.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/biden-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/us/politics/biden-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: President Biden trumpeted his agenda in his first address to Congress, casting his efforts as a way to unify a fractured nation. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

The president has called upon Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, center, to collect ideas. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEFANI REYNOLDS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***At 100 Days, Biden Is Transforming What It Means to Be a Democrat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JG-DW01-JBG3-60S1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 29, 2021 Thursday 10:33 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1956 words

**Byline:** Lisa Lerer and Annie Karni

**Highlight:** A lifelong centrist, President Biden has moved leftward with his party, and early in his tenure is driving the biggest expansion of American government in decades.

**Body**

A lifelong centrist, President Biden has moved leftward with his party, and early in his tenure is driving the biggest expansion of American government in decades.

When Joseph R. [*Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/us/politics/democrats-biden.html) Jr. served as vice president in the Obama administration, he was known to preface his recommendations to other officials with a self-deprecating disclaimer. He may not have attended Harvard or Yale, Mr. Biden would say as he popped into an office or a meeting, but he was still a foreign policy expert, and he knew how to work Capitol Hill.

Mr. Biden isn’t apologizing anymore.

Now 100 days into his presidency, Mr. Biden is driving the biggest expansion of American government in decades, an effort to use $6 trillion in federal spending to address social and economic challenges at a scale not seen in a half-century. Aides say he has come into his own as a party leader in ways that his uneven political career didn’t always foretell, and that he is undeterred by matters that used to bother him, like having no Republican support for Democratic priorities.

For an establishment politician who cast his election campaign as a restoration of political norms, his record so far amounts to the kind of revolution that [*he said last year he would not pursue*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2020-election/joe-biden-sanders-americans-aren-t-looking-revolution-n1143681) as president — but that, aides say, became necessary to respond to a crippling pandemic. In doing so, Mr. Biden is validating the desires of a party that feels fiercely emboldened to push a liberal agenda through a polarized Congress.

The result is something few people expected: His presidency is transforming what it means to be a Democrat, even among a conservative wing of his party that spent decades preaching the gospel of bipartisanship.

“We’ve been very happy with his agenda and we’re the moderates,” said Matt Bennett, a co-founder of Third Way, a Democratic think tank named after a governing style embraced by former President Bill Clinton that rejected liberal orthodoxy. “Some have said this is a liberal wish list. We would argue that he is defining what it is to be a 21st-century moderate Democrat.”

Mr. Biden trumpeted his expansive agenda again on Wednesday night in his [*first address to Congress*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/arts/television/president-biden-speech.html), casting his efforts to expand vaccinations and pour trillions of dollars into the economy as a way to unify a fractured nation.

“We’re vaccinating the nation; we’re creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs,” he said. “We’re delivering real results to people — they can see it and feel it in their own lives.”

Mr. Biden, now 78, has pursued these sweeping changes without completely losing his instinct for finding the center point of his party. As the Democratic consensus on issues has moved left over the years, he has kept pace — on abortion, gun control, same-sex marriage, the Iraq war and criminal justice — without going all the way to the furthest liberal stance. Now, he is leading a party that accelerated leftward during the Trump administration, and finding his own place on the Democratic spectrum — the one with the most likelihood of legacy-cementing success.

In private calls with Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, whom he vanquished in the Democratic primaries, he collects ideas from the party’s liberal wing. With Senator Joe Manchin, the centrist West Virginia Democrat, he keeps tabs on his caucus and its slim congressional margins. And in conversations with Senator Mitch McConnell, the Republican minority leader and a longtime negotiating partner, Mr. Biden appeals for bipartisan support, even as he warns that he won’t wait for it indefinitely.

“Biden is a politician who stays inside of the moment,” said Rashad Robinson, president of racial justice organization Color of Change, which was skeptical of Mr. Biden during the primary but now praises his work. “He stays inside of where the cultural context has moved.”

To the consternation of some Republicans, Mr. Biden is approaching politics differently from recent Democratic presidents who believed that support from the opposing party would provide a bulwark for their policies and political standing. In the 1990s, Mr. Clinton espoused triangulation, a strategy that forced liberals to settle for moderate policies by cutting deals with Republicans. Former President Barack Obama spent months trying to win bipartisan buy-in for his policy proposals.

Both strategies were rooted in political fears that began in the Reagan era: Doing too much to assuage the party’s left flank could alienate voters in the middle who took a more skeptical view of government, leaving Democrats unable to build coalitions for re-election.

Mr. Biden and his administration have embraced a different philosophy, arguing that difficult times have made liberal ideas popular with independents and some Republican voters, even if G.O.P. leaders continue to resist them.

The shift leftward, aides say, reflects a recognition by Mr. Biden that the problems facing the country require sweeping solutions, but also that both parties changed during the polarizing years of the Trump administration. Gone is the Senate where Mr. Biden spent decades, legislating like former President Ronald Reagan, who liked to say he’d call any negotiation where he could get 70 percent of what he wanted a win.

“There’s a difference between President Biden and Senator Biden,” said former Senator Chuck Hagel, a Republican who served for decades with Mr. Biden and supported his presidential bid. “Even a difference between President Biden and Vice President Biden. He’s the president now and he’s got the responsibility of trying to move this country forward. Yes, he wants to do it in a bipartisan way if he can. But the fact is these problems aren’t going to solve themselves.”

Other Republicans see a more dissembling president, one who has broken his promises to reach across the aisle. In a floor speech on Wednesday afternoon, Mr. McConnell accused Mr. Biden of “false advertising” during his campaign, saying Americans “elected a president who preached moderation.”

He added: “Over a few short months the Biden officials seems to have given up on selling actual unity in favor of catnip for their liberal base.”

In his address, Mr. Biden said he was open to hearing Republican ideas on his infrastructure plans — but wouldn’t wait forever.

“I applaud a group of Republican senators who just put forward their proposal,” he said. “We welcome ideas. But the rest of the world isn’t waiting for us. Doing nothing is not an option.”

The decades Mr. Biden spent cultivating a moderate image, paired with the conciliatory tone he has adopted toward Republicans in public, has allowed him to push his agenda without facing charges of socialism — a label his opponents unsuccessfully tried to make stick during the presidential campaign.

Focus groups throughout the campaign found that voters felt they knew Mr. Biden, both for his family story and ***working class*** bona fides. Even now, voters rate Mr. Biden as more moderate than Mr. Obama at the same stage of his presidency, [*according to polling from NBC News*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/joe-biden/100-days-americans-see-biden-more-moderate-obama-n1265380). Mr. Biden is pursuing a more liberal agenda than Mr. Obama did, of course; but he is taking a lower-key approach and advancing relatively popular ideas, and he doesn’t face the same smears and attacks as Mr. Obama did as the first Black president.

“It’s been very artful because it’s allowed him to create this weird equilibrium where people don’t see him as a partisan ramrod, which gives comfort to moderates,” said David Axelrod, a former top adviser to Mr. Obama. “On the other hand, he’s really moving forward on a lot of these initiatives.”

Aides and allies say the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol also affected Mr. Biden’s thinking about what the country might accept politically. The soon-to-be president believed the violence alienated a slice of voters from Mr. Trump’s Republican Party, leaving them more open to Mr. Biden’s agenda, particularly if he delivered tangible government benefits like stimulus checks and vaccines.

“It’s fair to say that Obama followed the Clinton model, and Biden is not, in some fundamental ways, because the world has changed so profoundly,” Mr. Bennett said. “Joe Biden is dealing with a seditious, anti-democratic set of lunatics. You can’t deal with people who voted to overturn the election. You simply cannot, even if you’re a moderate.”

Mr. Biden’s predecessor helped till the ground in other ways. As Mr. Trump focused his attention on waging baseless attacks against the election results last winter, coronavirus cases surged across the country, leaving Americans eager for more economic and public health assistance; Mr. Biden provided that with a $1.9 trillion stimulus bill just a few weeks into his presidency.

“Joe Biden is living in a honeymoon with a prenup signed by Donald Trump,” said Rahm Emanuel, who was Mr. Obama’s chief of staff.

Yet some longtime friends and allies also see a more personal evolution in Mr. Biden since he assumed the role of president.

His inner circle says he is exhibiting a level of confidence they’ve never seen before, combined with an awareness that he only has a short window to achieve his goals before next year’s midterm elections, which could cost Democrats their slim governing majority. While Mr. Biden has said his “expectation” is that he’ll run again, political allies privately admit that remains an open question given his age.

Mr. Biden’s administration has not given liberals everything they’ve wanted, pushing back on proposals to cancel student debt, adopt the entirety of the Green New Deal and completely eliminate the filibuster.

During negotiations with Mr. Sanders’s team last summer over a shared platform that would unify Democrats behind Mr. Biden’s general election candidacy, Biden aides made clear that they would not accept any recommendations that they didn’t believe he could support if elected. At one point, they agreed to decriminalize marijuana but rejected a plan to legalize it completely, saying Mr. Biden didn’t agree with that policy, according to a person involved in the talks.

But Mr. Biden didn’t treat the negotiations as simply optics, an encouraging sign to many progressives that Mr. Biden and his team were committed to pursuing more-liberal policies than they had realized.

Mr. Biden’s advisers said they were perplexed by the progressive zeal over the president’s economic agenda, noting that the American Jobs Plan is exactly what Mr. Biden promised he would do during his campaign. The view from inside the West Wing is that liberals and Republicans both made false assumptions about Mr. Biden and how he would govern.

Aides argue that Mr. Biden hasn’t changed from the candidate who just months ago promised to find “between four and eight Republican senators” to support his policies. He’s still the politician who would be more comfortable compromising on his proposals, getting less than what he wanted, but passing legislation with Republicans on board. He still describes Mr. McConnell as a friend, and thinks he might have come in with a better shot at getting his support than Mr. Obama.

Aides also say he believes that bipartisan support, in the long term, will be more important for the country than passing his $4 trillion infrastructure bills untouched, through reconciliation.

“In his heart, he probably still would love to forge bipartisan deals,” Mr. Axelrod said. “But he’s going to be judged at the end of the day not on style points but what he gets done, and he knows that.”

PHOTOS: President Biden trumpeted his agenda in his first address to Congress, casting his efforts as a way to unify a fractured nation. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES); The president has called upon Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, center, to collect ideas. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEFANI REYNOLDS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 8, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Grudge Match in Japan: One Corner, Two 7-Elevens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JR-2DX1-JBG3-631Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 30, 2021 Friday 10:11 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1838 words

**Byline:** Ben Dooley and Hisako Ueno

**Highlight:** Inside the war between a very powerful company and a very stubborn franchisee, complete with threats, spies and videotape.

**Body**

HIGASHI-OSAKA, Japan — Across [*Japan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/18/world/asia/japan-refugee-wishma-rathnayake.html), it can seem as if there’s a 7-Eleven on every corner.

Now, on a single corner in a ***working-class*** suburb of Osaka, there are two.

The unusual pairing is the latest manifestation of a grudge match between one of Japan’s most powerful companies and, arguably, one of its most stubborn men.

Mitoshi Matsumoto, a franchisee, ran one of the two 7-Elevens until the chain [*revoked his contract*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/18/world/asia/japan-refugee-wishma-rathnayake.html) in 2019 after he [*dared to shorten his operating hours*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/18/world/asia/japan-refugee-wishma-rathnayake.html). For over a year, his store has sat empty as he and 7-Eleven have battled in court over control of the shop. Fed up and with no end in sight, the company decided on a stopgap: It built a second shop in what used to be Mr. Matsumoto’s parking lot.

The conflict’s outcome will determine not just who gets to sell rice balls and cigarettes from one tiny patch of asphalt and concrete. It could also have profound implications for 7-Eleven’s authority over tens of thousands of franchise shops across Japan, part of a convenience store network so ubiquitous that the government considers it vital to the national infrastructure during emergencies.

7-Eleven has gone to surprising lengths against Mr. Matsumoto. It hired a team of private investigators to watch his store for months, collecting grainy video that, the company asserts, shows him head-butting one customer and attacking another’s car with a flying kick. It has also compiled a dossier of complaints against him, including one over a bungled giveaway of “commemorative mayonnaise.” And now it says it plans to charge him for the cost of building the second shop next to his.

The company maintains that it moved against Mr. Matsumoto simply because he was a bad franchisee. But he argues that it is no coincidence that the company’s view of him dimmed sharply after he said he would defy its rigid demand that stores stay open around the clock.

Before his seemingly small act of rebellion, the company had deemed him a model worker. He had received praise for, among other things, having the highest sales of steamed pork buns in his region.

After his decision, 7-Eleven threatened his business and eventually cut off his supplies and sued to take over the store. With its actions, Mr. Matsumoto says, the company is sending a message to other franchisees: The nail that sticks out gets hammered down.

The fight playing out in an Osaka courtroom will have ramifications for 7-Eleven and the rest of Japan’s major franchises, which control the vast majority of the country’s more than 50,000 convenience stores. 7-Eleven accounts for nearly 40 percent of those, and its business practices, for better or worse, have long been viewed as the industry standard.

“The outcome of this trial will have an enormous impact,” said Naoki Tsuchiya, an economics professor at Musashi University in Tokyo. “A loss would be a considerable blow to the company,” but a win would “shift the balance of power away from the franchisees and toward corporate HQ.”

Mr. Matsumoto ran the first of the two 7-Elevens from its construction in 2012 through the end of 2019. Situated on a busy street near one of the largest private universities in the region, the store has been shuttered for 16 months, musty, dark and gathering dust.

The second 7-Eleven, a scaled-down version of the shop next door, is being built as a service to the neighborhood, the company says, after residents expressed concern that the empty store was a security issue. The new shop has the knocked-together look of the temporary housing that springs up in the wake of a natural disaster. When the finishing touches are put on in the coming days, it will be operated — 24 hours a day — by 7-Eleven itself.

For most of the seven years that Mr. Matsumoto operated his 7-Eleven, he faithfully carried out the demands for round-the-clock operations, which boost corporate profits but can be costly for franchisees, who shoulder the labor costs. The pace became unsustainable, though, as help became harder and more expensive to find — a problem that grew more acute after his wife’s death from cancer in the spring of 2018.

In February 2019, he announced that he would close his store from 1 a.m. to 6 a.m. each day. 7-Eleven began pressuring him to return to round-the-clock operations, his defense team wrote in court filings. Mr. Matsumoto, who prides himself on being persistent and plain-spoken, did not back down.

He went to the news media and described the industry’s harsh labor conditions, including his own days working 12 hours or more. His story hit a nerve in a country where overwork is rampant and sometimes fatal.

His willingness to criticize 7-Eleven in ways that most other franchisees would not made him famous. It also cast a light on the hidden costs of ultraconvenience in Japan, where convenience stores fulfill many of life’s daily needs and are often held up as symbols of the country’s remarkable efficiency and customer service.

7-Eleven stood down in its clash with Mr. Matsumoto over his shorter hours. But his relationship with the company, which had always had some problems, reached a breaking point in October 2019 when he announced that he would close the store entirely for one day, on New Year’s.

In late December, 7-Eleven notified him that it would revoke his contract unless he took unspecified action to restore a “relationship of trust.” It gave him 10 days.

The company said it was responding to two problems. One, Mr. Matsumoto had attacked it on social media. Two, he had racked up hundreds of customer complaints. (It would later claim, without providing evidence, that it was the largest number of any store in Japan.) It was the first time, he said, that the company had ever brought the problem to his attention. The company denies this.

The first complaint came in the months after the store’s grand opening. Mr. Matsumoto and his wife had papered the neighborhood with fliers promising a squeeze tube of “commemorative mayonnaise” to any customer who showed up on the first day.

The mayonnaise ran out in hours, and Mr. Matsumoto ended up telling hundreds of shoppers to come back later that week to claim their gift. Over a month later, one disgruntled customer tried to cash in the I.O.U., then fired off a scathing complaint when she was refused.

The other complaints range from serious accusations — berating customers — to minor quibbles. The dossier also contains a number of complaints from former employees about pay and working conditions that echo some of Mr. Matsumoto’s own complaints about 7-Eleven.

Mr. Matsumoto does not pretend that everything at his store was perfect. For years, he had been engaged in a heated battle over his parking lot, where customers of other businesses would often leave their cars for hours without so much as a thank-you.

By Japanese standards, Mr. Matsumoto’s neighborhood is a little rough. People cut in line. They cross the street against the light. They aren’t afraid to give a convenience store owner a piece of their mind.

He gave as good as he got, he readily admits, and he was not popular with the neighbors. On more than one occasion, a shouting match over parking spaces ended with a call to the police. They always sided with him, Mr. Matsumoto said.

7-Eleven had never seemed particularly interested in the occasional blowups, but after he declared that he was closing early, it began taking a very specific interest in them.

In the summer of 2019, the company hired private investigators to keep tabs on Mr. Matsumoto’s store, it wrote in a court submission. Perched in a nearby building, they spent months secretly filming the shop’s comings and goings.

The result is 7-Eleven’s evidential pièce de résistance: five videos of what appear to be confrontations between Mr. Matsumoto and various customers in the parking lot. Two involve what the company says are the flying kick to the car and the head-butt, but it is difficult to make out much of the blurry footage presented to the court.

Another video shows Mr. Matsumoto upbraiding a man in a white van. Two men loitering nearby are surreptitiously taping the argument, and the company has crosscut shaky footage from their cameras with video taken from the balcony above Mr. Matsumoto’s shop to give several perspectives on the exchange.

When approached for comment, a 7-Eleven representative referred reporters to the company’s court filings.

Mr. Matsumoto’s legal team has years of experience fighting convenience store chains in court, but one of his lawyers, Takayuki Kida, said that “there aren’t many cases that are full-out war, where 7-Eleven is this set on crushing someone.”

It’s easy to see why, said Mr. Tsuchiya, the Musashi University professor. The attention on Mr. Matsumoto has already helped spur change in the industry.

In September, a broad inquiry by Japan’s Fair Trade Commission concluded that the convenience store industry’s 24-hour-a-day policy was unsustainable and [*ordered stores to give owners more flexibility*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/18/world/asia/japan-refugee-wishma-rathnayake.html) or face possible legal action.

Under pressure, 7-Eleven has increased franchisees’ share of revenue and, during the pandemic, taken a more [*lenient stance on operating hours*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/18/world/asia/japan-refugee-wishma-rathnayake.html). It is not clear how far the changes will go or whether regulators will follow through on their threat.

Mr. Matsumoto is bemused by 7-Eleven’s decision to build a new shop next door to his. “Everyone had forgotten about me,” he said during a recent visit to the construction site. “Now they’ve put me back in the news again.”

As he watched a crane do excavation work, a passing bicyclist stopped to share a few words of encouragement, urging Mr. Matsumoto not to let the “big guys” win.

Last year, Mr. Matsumoto says, the company offered him 10 million yen, or more than $92,000, to drop his case. The court encouraged him to accept the offer. But he wasn’t interested. Now, the company is trying the opposite approach. Its lawyers have said they will bill him ¥30 million for construction of the new store.

Either way, it’s the same to him, Mr. Matsumoto said. “It’s not about the money,” he said. “It’s about something bigger.”

The same could be said for 7-Eleven. A sign in front of the construction site sums it all up: The building is temporary.

Win or lose, the company plans to tear it to the ground.

PHOTOS: When Mitoshi Matsumoto, a 7-Eleven franchisee, cut the hours that his store was open, the chain revoked his contract, then built a second shop in what used to be his parking lot.; The fight playing out in an Osaka courtroom will have ramifications for 7-Eleven and the rest of Japan’s major franchises, which control most of the country’s 50,000 convenience stores. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B1); Mitoshi Matsumoto with his 7-Eleven convenience store on the right and the company’s temporary shop on the left in a suburb of Osaka, Japan.; The company says it will operate the new shop, at top, as a service to the community while Mr. Matsumoto is tied up in court. Above, a sign posted on his store says it is temporarily closed because of the pandemic and the lawsuit. (B6)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Head to Netflix For Music Docs***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YXH-3W81-JBG3-61BR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 17, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Travel Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1272 words

**Byline:** By Noel Murray

**Body**

No hagiographies to be found here, with looks at the lives and careers of Amy Winehouse, Quincy Jones, Nina Simone and Taylor Swift, among others.

Pop, rock and R&B fans will find a decent assortment of top-shelf concert films on Netflix, including ''Springsteen on Broadway,'' Beyoncé's ''Homecoming'' and ''Justin Timberlake + the Tennessee Kids.'' But performances alone don't tell the fuller story of a musical act or a cultural movement. For that, you need a good documentary, combining exciting old footage with probing new interviews, and putting an artist into proper context.

Netflix is currently streaming a healthy assortment of good music docs. Here are 11 of the best.

(For more ideas of what to stream, here are the 50 best movies currently on Netflix as well as the 10 funniest movies.)

'Amy' (2015)

During her short, turbulent career, Amy Winehouse sang phenomenally catchy neo-soul songs, giving classic R&B the sonic oomph of 21st-century pop. She also became a tabloid staple, plagued by drug addiction and persistent personal drama. Asif Kapadia's documentary isn't always easy to watch, given that the phenomenally talented Winehouse fell so far and so fast. But the film is remarkably comprehensive, detailing its subject's rise from a ***working class*** background to international superstardom. And it's filled with insight into how the intense public scrutiny that comes with celebrity may set some stars up for catastrophic failure. (Stream it here.)

'Chasing Trane' (2016)

The saxophonist John Coltrane began his career as a sideman to some of the legends of jazz; and then from the late 1950s to his 1967 death, he had a remarkable musical run as the leader of multiple classic combos. From the pop melodicism of his early solo albums to the transcendent abstractions of his later work, Coltrane kept obsessively searching for ways to capture the fragile beauty and spiritual yearning of the human experience. The director John Scheinfeld gathers meaningful observations from famous Coltrane colleagues and admirers, who help demystify his incredibly complicated compositions and improvisations. (Stream it here.)

'Echo in the Canyon' (2019)

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of The Byrds' seminal folk-rock version of Bob Dylan's ''Mr. Tambourine Man,'' Jakob Dylan assembled musicians from his own generation who had been inspired by the sounds of Los Angeles in the late 1960s. The younger Dylan interviews surviving members of the Byrds, the Beach Boys, Buffalo Springfield and the Mamas and the Papas; and he sings alongside the likes of Fiona Apple, Beck and Regina Spektor. This short, sunny documentary is an entertaining rock history lesson, detailing the shared influences and enduring inspiration of some of the '60s biggest hitmakers. (Stream it here.)

'Hip-Hop Evolution' (2016-20)

You'll need to carve out some time in your schedule to watch all of ''Hip-Hop Evolution,'' a 16-part series that's been spread across four seasons. But this project is worth the effort. Each episode has a theme and purpose: whether it's describing a subgenre or covering a key moment in the history of rap. A lot of the feature documentaries about hip-hop remain stuck in the '80s and '90s; but ''Hip-Hop Evolution'' presses on into the 2000s, making room for the ''Dirty South'' sound, the experiments of the Neptunes crew, the controversies surrounding the mixtape revolution and more. (Stream it here.)

'Miss Americana' (2020)

Taylor Swift comes from a generation of pop stars who've never had much of an ''offstage'' component to their careers. They expose themselves constantly, on social media and in their songs. Yet ''Miss Americana'' is still genuinely revealing. Lana Wilson spent a few years with Swift, during a time when she was moving into new phases with her sound and public persona. This film is about an idol trying to figure out how to use her influence wisely; but it's also about the difficulties of wielding a strong voice in an era when fans and haters alike gather on the internet to dissect and question everything. (Stream it here.)

'No Direction Home' (2005)

Martin Scorsese directed this lengthy look back at one of Bob Dylan's most fruitful creative periods: between 1961 and 1966, when he rose to prominence in the Greenwich Village folk scene, before leaving the New York traditionalists behind to embrace oblique literary expression and raw rock 'n' roll. Not just a doc about Dylan, ''No Direction Home'' is also about the changes sweeping through American culture in the first half of the 1960s, and how the artists who survived and thrived were the ones who could steal from the past while keeping an eye on the future. (Stream it here.)

'Quincy' (2018)

Who better to make a documentary about Quincy Jones than his own daughter: the actress, writer and producer Rashida Jones? ''Quincy'' was shot over the course of several years by Jones and Alan Hicks. Their film combines a detailed and admiring biography of an EGOT-winning musician with more down-to-earth scenes of the man's daily life in the present day, coping with increasingly poor health and heavy demands on his time. What emerges is an intimate portrait of a towering cultural figure. (Stream it here.)

'Searching for Sugar Man' (2012)

Success in the music business requires opportunity as well as skill; and sometimes extenuating circumstances can sideline a potentially great artist. That's the theme of director Malik Bendjelloul's ''Searching for Sugar Man,'' about a 1970s Detroit singer-songwriter named Sixto Rodriguez who became an improbable cult hero in apartheid-era South Africa, even though his fans didn't know whether he was alive or dead. Bendjelloul turns a real-life investigation into Rodriguez's past into a touching and tuneful look at how great music, no matter how obscure, can connect people. (Stream it here.)

'20 Feet from Stardom' (2013)

Here's another Oscar winner, about the lives and aspirations of successful backup singers. Director Morgan Neville raises some good questions about why his subjects -- mostly black, mostly women -- have had to settle for filling in the backgrounds of Rolling Stones and David Bowie songs, rather than becoming stars themselves. But ''20 Feet from Stardom'' is ultimately more of a celebration than a lament, offering a fairly in-depth examination of how the personality and artistry of supporting musicians fits into the larger history of popular music. (Stream it here.)

'What Happened, Miss Simone?' (2015)

The jazz and R&B singer Nina Simone had a complicated relationship with the press, the music business and her own friends and family -- in part because of mental illness, and in part because she was politically outspoken and confrontational. Liz Garbus's documentary ''What Happened, Miss Simone?'' includes interviews from people who knew Simone, which supplement extended performance footage, in which Simone stares down her audiences while singing some of the most thrilling American popular music of the 1960s. (Stream it here.)

'ZZ Top: That Little Ol' Band from Texas' (2019)

During ZZ Top's rise to chart success in the 1970s and '80s, the Texas trio cultivated a certain mystique, taking on larger-than-life stage personas while mostly ignoring a rock press that didn't seem to understand or respect what they were doing. Because of all that, the documentary ''That Little Ol' Band from Texas'' tells a story that even ZZ Top fans may not fully know: about three gifted mavericks who channeled their shared love of the blues, acid rock and garage bands into weird, witty and danceable songs. (Stream it here.)

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/12/arts/netflix-music-documentaries.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/12/arts/netflix-music-documentaries.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From top: Amy Winehouse, Quincy Jones and Sixto Rodriguez, better known as Sugar Man.

**Load-Date:** May 17, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Conners Confront The Covid***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:613H-P671-DXY4-X4CD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 19, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1398 words

**Byline:** By Sarah Bahr

**Body**

This ABC sitcom has dealt with real-world challenges since its earliest days as ''Roseanne.'' In its new season, those include the pandemic and its fallout.

When ''The Conners'' returned to set in mid-August after a lengthy pandemic delay, John Goodman had no doubt that every safety precaution had been taken. But his heart still fluttered a bit when it came time to finally get to work.

''That moment before the first mask came off, I held my breath,'' said the 68-year-old actor, who plays patriarch Dan Conner in the ABC sitcom.

Sara Gilbert, who stars as Dan's daughter Darlene was also anxious, even though, as an executive producer, she was well aware of the measures the show takes to keep everyone safe. The Los Angeles set is patrolled by two Covid compliance supervisors and the actors are tested five times per week, with everyone else getting tests at least three times a week.

Even so, ''when they say 'Rolling,' I wait until after the sound cue,'' Gilbert said. ''And then -- at the very last second -- my mask comes off.''

When the coronavirus pandemic intensified in March, it forced Hollywood to shut down production for months. Most shows interrupted by the pandemic were back on set, with coronavirus protocols, by September, though some didn't survive the break -- series including ABC'S ''Stumptown,'' Netflix's ''GLOW'' and Showtime's ''On Becoming a God in Central Florida,'' which all had new seasons planned or in the works, were canceled by their networks.

Those that did return to production had a choice to make: Should they pick up where they left off and resume pandemic-free storytelling? Or should they deal with the coronavirus and its disruptions within their narratives?

For ''The Conners,'' which from its earliest days as ''Roseanne'' has dealt with everyday difficulties like depression, divorce and job loss, it was never even a question.

''We've always tried to represent blue-collar, middle-class families,'' Gilbert said. ''To pretend this isn't happening seems out of touch.''

''Life and death stories are familiar territory for us,'' she added. (The show's original matriarch, Roseanne Conner, was killed off via an opioid overdose after Roseanne Barr was fired for comparing a former Obama adviser to an ape on Twitter. The show title was subsequently changed from ''Roseanne'' to ''The Conners.'')

When the series returns on Wednesday for its third season, viewers will watch the family grapple with the same issues as the rest of the country: Dan is on the verge of losing the family home. His sister-in-law, Jackie (Laurie Metcalf), is trying to keep the family restaurant alive by making deliveries on her bike (complete with a blinding neon yellow helmet, gloves and face mask). Darlene and her boyfriend, Ben (Jay R. Ferguson), are wondering whether to shutter their start-up magazine. Dan's oldest daughter, Becky (Lecy Goranson), is navigating the return of her undocumented husband, Emilio (Rene Rosado), who is caring for her baby while hiding from immigration authorities.

Of course, it's hard to avoid incorporating the pandemic when it seeps into every aspect of life on set. Like every other returning series, ''The Conners,'' led by the showrunner, Bruce Helford, and executive producers Dave Caplan and Bruce Rasmussen, has had to radically reconfigure nearly every element of its production for pandemic safety.

Before the cast and crew set foot onstage, they have passed two temperature checks, filled out a symptoms questionnaire and passed a Covid test within, at minimum, the last two days. Hair and makeup are done with masks and visors -- Gilbert said she finishes the area around her mouth herself. Props are sanitized between each take., and the show is filmed without an audience and with a limited crew.

And enforcement, Gilbert said, is rigorous. ''You can't eat or drink onstage,'' she said. ''Not even water. You have to go up to your dressing room.''

But processing the approximately 350 weekly tests and installing upgrades like sanitizer stations and HEPA filters does not come cheap, Helford said.

''It's well into the six figures, additional, to do this,'' he said. ''We had to cut holes in the wall for better ventilation and refit all the AC systems, plus the constant cleaning.'' More than two months into shooting, the show has yet to see a positive test.

Gilbert said the most difficult on-set restriction to remember is the six-foot rule. ''The writers tend to just walk over and run an idea by one another,'' she said. ''But now we have to be reminded 'SIX FEET!'''

Helford said they try to set a good example for viewers watching at home. ''Characters can pull their masks down if it's a scene with someone they live with,'' he said. ''But if they're out in the workplace and around people, they keep their face shields on.''

Goodman said not having spectators on set, while dispiriting, can actually be a benefit. ''We have to maintain the amount of energy the audience naturally provides,'' he said. ''But it's quite frankly easier to time things when you don't have people to laugh at them.''

Gilbert said the series will not dwell on the darkest parts of the pandemic -- ''People get that on the news every day,'' she said -- but that the show, which is set in the current moment, will reflect real-world events. The second episode of the season airs Oct. 28, six nights before Election Day and three nights before Halloween. She said the Conners will celebrate their favorite holiday with some in-home trick-or-treating -- and that politics may come up.

''But it's not through the lens of 'I'm for this guy!,''' she said. ''It's 'How does what's going on affect my family economically?'''

The writers also drew on their personal experiences in penning the new season, Caplan said. He, Helford and Rasmussen all ''come from low to middle income ***working class*** families,'' Caplan said. ''So even if the stories aren't exactly ours all the time, they're emotional and honest.''

Helford said they wanted to spotlight the struggles of small business owners through Jackie's battle to save her restaurant, the Lanford Lunch Box, as well as address the increased anxiety the pandemic has created among kids. ''Mark, the youngest boy, is definitely bothered by this the worst,'' he said, referring to Darlene's son (Ames McNamara). ''He's the one standing outside the door checking everyone's temperatures, making everyone crazy.''

Other pandemic-focused programs, like the Freeform series ''Love in the Time of Corona,'' starring Leslie Odom Jr. and his wife Nicolette Robinson as spouses navigating life during the pandemic, and HBO's ''Coastal Elites,'' a series of satirical monologues, have received mixed reviews.

''The most notable thing about most of them is that they were done at all,'' James Poniewozik, the chief TV critic for The New York Times, wrote in a recent appraisal of pandemic shows. ''But none of them had to sustain the approach for a full season.''

But Gilbert thinks ''The Conners'' can serve as counterprogramming to a news cycle that highlights rising case counts and political posturing. ''There's so much fear and anxiety,'' she said. ''But we're looking at how the pandemic is affecting this family, and humor is definitely a part of that.''

Some of the moments that resonated with the actors were unexpected. Goranson, who has been living alone in Los Angeles since March, said a scene in the third episode proved surprisingly emotional.

''Becky is quarantining with her family, and I was not able to,'' she said. ''But in the scene, she says something about being alone, and it was almost confessional because it was so true to what I had experienced.''

Goranson's mother died in January, and she said her family has not been able to hold a gathering for her. ''One thing my mom told me before she died was 'So little matters other than people,''' she said. ''And that seems like cruel irony right now, because I haven't been around anyone I love since she said that.''

It is unclear how long the pandemic will infect the Conners' fictional town of Lanford, Ill., just as it is uncertain how long masks and social distancing will remain the norm in America. But Goodman said that, despite everything, he tries to remain upbeat.

''It's just another damn thing we have to deal with,'' he said. ''I'm thrilled we're able to make a show at all.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/18/arts/television/the-conners-season-3.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/18/arts/television/the-conners-season-3.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Lecy Goranson and John Goodman in the new season of ''The Conners,'' which deals with mask variations and other pandemic stresses. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC MCCANDLESS/ABC) (C7)

**Load-Date:** October 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Democrats’ Immigration Problem; The Morning Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:628C-SRP1-JBG3-60MC-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1808 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** We explain the Biden administration’s early struggles on immigration policy.

**Body**

We explain the Biden administration’s early struggles on immigration policy.

For most of the past few decades, the Democratic Party had a pretty clear stance on immigration. It favored a mix of [*enforcement*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) (like border security and the deportation of undocumented immigrants who committed serious crimes) and [*new pro-immigrant laws*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) (like an increase in legal [*immigration*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) and a pathway to citizenship for undocumented people).

In recent years, however, a growing number of immigration advocates and progressive Democrats have become dissatisfied with this combination. They have pointed out that Democrats’ support for tighter border security has not led to the bipartisan compromise that it was supposed to: Republicans continue to block bills that offer a pathway to citizenship.

In response, these progressives and activists have pushed the party to change. Bill Clinton ran for re-election [*on a platform*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) that said, “We cannot tolerate illegal immigration and we must stop it.” Barack Obama [*once said*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), “We simply cannot allow people to pour into the United States undetected, undocumented, unchecked.” President Biden has instead emphasized the humane treatment of immigrants, regardless of their legal status.

After taking office, Biden began putting this idea into action. He announced a 100-day halt on deportations ([*which a judge has blocked*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security)). He allowed more migrants — especially children — to enter the country, rather than being detained. And Central American migrants, sensing that the U.S. has become more welcoming, [*are streaming north*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) in the largest numbers in two decades.

The surge appears to have surprised the Biden administration, as [*Doris Meissner of the Migration Policy Institute*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), who ran the Immigration and Naturalization Service in the 1990s, told me. Republicans have pounced, accusing Democrats of favoring an “open border.”

Some Democrats are unhappy, too. Biden’s policy “incentivizes droves of people to come, and the only way to slow it down is by changing policy at our doorstep,” [*Representative Vicente Gonzalez*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) of Texas told The Washington Post. Henry Cuellar, another House Democrat from Texas, said the administration was sending “a terrible message.”

It all stems from the fact that the Democratic Party no longer has a clear policy on immigration.

Trump obscured the debate

While Donald Trump was president, he smoothed over the Democrats’ internal tensions because they could unite in opposition to him. Trump used racist language; Democrats abhorred it. Trump separated families and locked children in cages; Democrats promised to end those policies. Trump said he would build a border wall, paid for by Mexico; Democrats mocked his failure.

With Trump out of office, however, the party faces some hard, unresolved questions, including:

Do Democrats still favor the deportation of anyone? Some activists criticized Obama as the “deporter in chief.” But he focused deportations [*on only two groups*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security): recent arrivals and immigrants who committed serious crimes.

If Democrats prefer a more lenient policy than Obama’s, it isn’t clear whether they support the deportation of anybody — or whether they instead believe that the humane solution is to allow everybody who manages to enter the U.S., legally or illegally, to remain. [*The party’s 2020 platform*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) doesn’t mention any conditions in which deportation is acceptable. Biden’s attempt to halt deportations for 100 days highlights the party’s new attitude.

Which migrants should be turned away at the border? And what should happen to them next?

There are no easy answers. One option is to prevent people from entering (as is now the case with many adults traveling alone) — but that can create miserable conditions on Mexico’s side of the border. A second is to detain people in the U.S. while their legal cases are being considered — but [*detaining children is fraught*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), and many Democrats consider the jailing of any immigrants akin to Trumpism.

A third option is to admit migrants and order them to appear at a future legal hearing (as is happening with many children and families). The adults must often wear ankle bracelets. Still, the process [*can take years*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) and raises other thorny issues. Many migrants are not good asylum candidates; they are coming to find work or to be near relatives, neither of which necessarily qualifies them for legal entry.

Often, the administration will still be left to decide whom it is willing to deport.

What’s the progressive policy?

There are potential policy solutions for all of these questions. The U.S. could [*increase legal immigration*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security). It could build more detention facilities with humane conditions. It could do more to improve conditions in Latin America and to push Mexico to control its own southern border. The Biden administration is pursuing many of these policies.

But if Biden and his aides appear to be less steady on immigration than many other policy areas, there is a reason for that: They are less steady.

Congress appears unlikely to increase legal immigration levels by much. And polls show that while public opinion favors a pathway to citizenship for many undocumented immigrants, it also favors [*rigorous border security*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) and [*the enforcement of existing immigration laws*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

I’m not even sure that these views should be described as conservative. Historically, many progressives [*supported*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) immigration restrictions as a way to keep U.S. wages high. Today, ***working-class*** Americans — including many Asian-American, Black and Latino voters — tend to favor more restrictions than progressive Democrats, [*who are often high-earning professionals*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), do. This contrast may play a role in Republicans’ [*recent gains*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) among minority voters.

“Unfortunately, the way the debate plays out too frequently feels like, ‘Everybody should come and the border should be open,’” [*Cecilia Muñoz*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), a longtime immigrant advocate and former Obama adviser, told me. “And that’s the thing that makes Americans anxious.”

One of the advantages to the Democrats’ old approach to immigration was that it was easy to describe: Be firm at the border, be generous to people who have lived in the U.S. for years. The new approach also has an abiding idea: Be more welcoming to people who want to enter the country. But Democrats still have not figured out the limits to that idea, which has created an early problem for the Biden presidency.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* A U.S. trial of AstraZeneca’s coronavirus vaccine found that it provided strong protection with no serious side effects. The company will seek F.D.A. approval, [*but the U.S. may not need the shot*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

1. Rich countries signed away a chance to vaccinate the world. [*The Times’s Selam Gebrekidan and Matt Apuzzo explain*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).
2. Miami Beach [*extended an 8 p.m. curfew*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) to deal with crowds of spring breakers.
3. Vaccinated older Americans are filling restaurants, hugging their grandchildren and are offering [*a glimpse into post-pandemic times*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

Politics

* Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin [*traveled to Afghanistan*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) to meet with President Ashraf Ghani before a May 1 deadline to withdraw U.S. troops from the country.

1. Investigators probably have enough evidence to [*charge some Capitol rioters with sedition*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), a federal prosecutor said.
2. Representative Tom Reed, Republican of New York, said he would not run for any political office next year, after a former lobbyist [*told The Washington Post*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) that Reed touched her inappropriately in 2017.
3. Simply “asking questions”: How Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin became the Republican Party’s [*foremost amplifier of disinformation*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

Other Big Stories

* After the attacks at three Atlanta-area spas, officers [*handcuffed one victim’s husband for hours*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), he told the news site [*Mundo Hispánico*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

1. The Times’s visual investigations team reviewed ship-tracking data, corporate records and satellite imagery to uncover [*how North Korea evades international sanctions*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).
2. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey [*withdrew the country*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) from an international treaty on preventing violence against women.
3. [*Meet Aaron Appelhans*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), the first Black sheriff in Wyoming’s 131-year state history.

Opinions

How many immigrants should the U.S. legally admit?

* More: “There’s nothing wrong with open borders,” [*The Times’s Farhad Manjoo has written*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security). [*Shikha Dalmia*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) has argued that more immigration will lift economic growth, and Matthew Yglesias has written [*“One Billion Americans”*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) a book making the case that more immigration will help the U.S. compete with China.

1. Fewer: “The progressive case for reducing immigration” revolves around higher wages, according to [*Philip Cafaro*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security). And The Atlantic’s [*David Frum*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) has suggested that less immigration will reduce the political appeal of nativism.

Morning Reads

In Bloom: Spring has arrived in New York. Here come the [*cornflowers, butterfly milkweed and black-eyed Susans*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

Lives Lived: Dr. Nawal el Saadawi was an Egyptian author, physician and advocate for women’s rights in the Arab world who told her own story of female genital mutilation in her memoirs. [*She died at 89*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Model trains, thriving

Model trains are the latest industry getting a pandemic-spurred boost from people seeking new hobbies. With sales rising, Märklin, a 162-year-old German company, is hiring new apprentices to learn the precise art of making miniature trains. ([*Take a virtual tour of the factory here*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).)

“Outside, there is total chaos,” one enthusiast said. “But inside, around my little train set, it is quiet, it is picturesque.”

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

This [*spinach soup with tahini and lemon*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security) is bright and complex.

What to Watch

The latest season of “Genius” focuses on Aretha Franklin, played by Cynthia Erivo. “In the moments when it finds its groove,” [*James Poniewozik writes in a review*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), “it socks it to us.”

Virtual travel

Nintendo’s theme park opened in Japan last week. Take a look at the [*“gleefully surreal” park in The Verge*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

Now Time to Play

The pangram from Friday’s Spelling Bee was unpopular. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), and a clue: Heart throb (five letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

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

P.S. The Times’s Marc Lacey will host a subscribers-only event looking back on one year of the pandemic at 7 p.m. Eastern tomorrow. [*R.S.V.P. to attend*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security)” is about long Covid. On the [*Book Review podcast*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security), Thomas Dyja talks about New York City’s history, and Derek DelGaudio discusses his memoir.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/immigration/border-security).

PHOTO: Central American migrants are streaming north to the U.S. in the largest numbers in two decades. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Daniel Berehulak for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Hudson Valley Is in Demand***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6286-4JP1-JBG3-60VT-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1732 words

**Byline:** By Julie Lasky

**Body**

New Yorkers scouring northern towns for second homes have pushed prices up and made it harder for locals to find affordable homes.

Meghan McCann, a sales representative for a wine and liquor company, has spent more than a year looking for a house in Columbia County, in the northern Hudson Valley, where she was born and raised.

Ms. McCann, 39, who grew up in Copake Falls, less than 10 minutes from the town of Hillsdale, where she currently rents with her fiancé, Joseph Walters, said she was preapproved for a $270,000 mortgage, but ''it wasn't enough.'' Every house she and Mr. Walters looked at sold within two weeks for prices that beggared belief.

Now they are budgeting up to $350,000, or maybe more, in hopes of finding a small property on a few acres that they expect will probably have foundation problems or a leaky roof. Though it helps that Mr. Walters is in construction, this wasn't what they had bargained for.

''We don't want to have to do a lot of work,'' Ms. McCann said, pointing out that the cost of building materials has recently skyrocketed, making a fixer-upper a more serious investment. ''We want to go out to dinner and take vacations.''

As the real estate market remains on a boil in New York's Hudson Valley, heated in large part by second-home buyers re-evaluating their commitment to urban living, longtime residents are experiencing both prosperity and pain.

A wave of newcomers, drawn by the painterly beauty and burgeoning craft and food culture of this region, are helping to sustain local businesses, allowing bars and shops to flourish, and keeping construction companies and maintenance crews active.

At the same time, they are vacuuming up much of the available housing, leading to bidding wars and inflated prices. The ambitions of many second-home seekers from outside the area are frustrated, but so are the desires of locals looking for primary residences. Houses listed far above their appraisal values sell to buyers with suitcases of cash. Property taxes threaten to rise. Hearts break. Lives are disrupted.

Patricia, a 55-year-old nurse who lives in Rockland County, in the southern Hudson Valley, and who asked that her last name not be divulged in case it scuttled her chances of buying a house, was so confident that she could find the upstate home of her dreams that she and her husband sold their farmhouse in August before completing their search.

They wanted a historic property in turnkey condition with at least two acres and a swimming pool. Now, after combing through listings and submitting half a dozen bids -- all rejected -- they are resigned to settling for a fixer-upper that breaks their $650,000 budget. They have until May -- when the new owners take possession of their Rockland County house -- to find it.

''We have a lead on something because somebody has passed away, and somebody who knew somebody who knew somebody said it might work for us,'' she said.

Ten New York counties make up the Hudson Valley, from Westchester to Rensselaer on the east side of the river, and from Rockland to Albany on the west side. From January 2020 through January 2021, the average median sale price of a home in Columbia County, where Hillsdale is located, rose 13.6 percent, from $266,250 to $302,500, according to the New York State Association of Realtors. (This is close to the national median sale price as of January of $303,900, a year-over-year increase of 14.1 percent.)

In Dutchess County, just south of Columbia County, the median sale price rose 30.3 percent through 2020, arriving at $358,250 in January.

As with overheated markets throughout the country, these price hikes reflect a diminishing supply. In that same period, the average number of residences for sale in both Columbia and Dutchess counties dropped 37 percent, as owners clung to their homes as refuges, rented them at juicy rates or realized that they could sell at a profit, but then where would they go?

Robert Bradway, who owns a plumbing and heating business in Hillsdale, said he knows people in the community who have chosen to cash out and move as far away as South Carolina. ''If I was on the brink of wanting to go somewhere else, it would be the time,'' he said.

But Mr. Bradway, 38, is running a surging business, thanks in large part to the second-home community. In the first, cold months of the pandemic, he got houses ready for owners who planned to use them as shelters and wanted to cram in extended family members and friends. Mr. Bradway had to install bigger hot water heaters and replace sewer lines to support the overload.

In summer, he was busy with air conditioning. Through the fall and into winter, he repaired frozen pipes in houses where absent owners neglected to turn off the water, and set fixtures for increasingly large and lavish new builds.

He said he is thankful but somewhat weary. His team of seven, including him and his wife, Rachael, went from 40-hour to 80-hour workweeks in March ''and never looked back.'' Eventually he added three people, but it was still not enough to meet rapid demand. Some of his newer clients have shown little tolerance for delays, he said, chalking up their impatience to a lack of familiarity with the town and its rhythms, and possibly to pandemic-related stress.

''There would be no problem growing the business to twice or three times what it was if the employees were here,'' Mr. Bradway said. But ''it's tough in this area to find qualified help for what we do.''

West of the Hudson River, in the tiny Ulster County hamlet of Accord, Jacob Meglio also has found profit -- and some ambivalence -- in the influx of newcomers. Mr. Meglio, 32, is a co-founder and managing partner of Arrowood Farm, a brewery and distillery that grows much of the produce it uses and was able to keep its bar open this winter for the first time in five years of operation.

Born in nearby Kingston and a citizen of Accord, he views this windfall through a double lens. The pandemic has been ''great for business, but challenging for the people we care about,'' he said.

''Airbnb's the third rail around here,'' he noted. ''People either own one or they don't, and they begrudge each other because of it.'' From the business side, Airbnbs are a boon -- the renters often patronize his bar. From the community side, the price of houses that used to rent for $1,000 have quintupled, ''and it's totally inaccessible for regular folks.''

Mr. Meglio pointed to a long-term trend of urbanites discovering the Hudson Valley. His own parents moved from New York City in the late 1980s, and there was a large wave after 9/11. Like many of his peers, he left Ulster County to attend college and have a look at the world, returning in 2012.

The area has always had poverty, he said. What is different now is the number of ***working-class*** people who are struggling to find affordable housing. And some of his peers who moved away would like to repatriate but are shut out of the market. (The median sale price in the county in January was $275,000, a year-over-year increase of 14.6 percent; at that time, there were 682 homes for sale, a year-over-year decline of 42.3 percent.)

''It's not so much that change is happening, but that it's happening so fast. What is the collateral damage?'' Mr. Meglio asked.

The Housing Action Plan, a report released this month by Ulster County, describes a crisis that was years in the making but sharply exacerbated by the pandemic. It found that in two-thirds of the county's municipalities, a family earning ''a typical income'' could afford fewer than 10 percent of the homes that were on the market last fall. Among its recommendations is investigating scattered sites and buildings that could be developed and repurposed for residential use. Next year, construction will begin where a jail now stands in Kingston to create 80 units each of senior and work force housing affordable to people making between 30 and 130 percent of the median income in the area.

Throughout the Hudson Valley, communities are struggling to loosen the economic chokehold on the housing market. They are regulating short-term rentals, approving accessory dwelling units, imposing transfer taxes on high-value properties to subsidize environmental protections and enacting other measures designed to increase equity that are promoted by old-timers and newcomers alike.

Tod Wohlfarth, a creative marketing director who moved into his weekend house in Hillsdale in 2014 and has been active in Democratic politics in both the town and Columbia County, acknowledges a persistent divide between the haves and have-nots. It dates, he said, from more than a century ago, when the Hudson Valley was a refuge for New Yorkers fleeing outbreaks of cholera and yellow fever. It accelerated in the last eight years, after the economic downturn diverted wealth to the region from places like the Hamptons and Martha's Vineyard. And it is sustained by high-speed internet, which has allowed people earning their living beyond the community to remain and work remotely in what is often a bubble.

But Mr. Wohlfarth, 50, who labored to bring broadband to Hillsdale, believes remote work is its future. He also dreams of more vocational training for area job seekers, a transfer tax that could be diverted to finance affordable housing, and a mentorship program at the schools that would bring together some of the highly successful part-timers with the local population. ''If you have a community that's really only here Saturday and Sunday, there's a disconnect, he said. ''They don't feel invested.''

A lack of emotional investment is what Patricia, the nurse in Rockland County, fears from her competitors in the market for antique homes. Given how tetchy an old house can be, she was surprised to find herself competing with so many eager bidders. Were the properties being scooped up out of desperation? Would the buyers gut their interiors to make them over in the image of the houses they couldn't find? Would ''these treasures,'' as she described them, end up looking like everything else?

And what will she do if she doesn't secure her own treasure by May? ''We'll put our stuff in storage and maybe rent a motor house and camp out on my nephew's lawn,'' she said.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/19/realestate/hudson-valley-home-sales.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/19/realestate/hudson-valley-home-sales.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Hillsdale, N.Y., above, has had a surge in new construction. Joseph Walters and Meghan McCann, above right with their dog, Reilly, have been looking for over a year for a house in Columbia County, where they grew up. Jacob Meglio, right, with his dog, Kiva, is a founder of Arrowood Farm, a brewery and distillery in Accord, N.Y. The pandemic has been ''great for business,'' he said, but housing has become ''totally inaccessible for regular folks.'' Below, Kerhonkson, in Ulster County, is home to a big garden gnome. Bottom, Tod Wohlfarth, with his dog, Orange, helped bring broadband to Hillsdale. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (RE10)

**Load-Date:** March 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Conners Return to Confront the Coronavirus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:613C-6J21-JBG3-647X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1401 words

**Byline:** Sarah Bahr

**Highlight:** This ABC sitcom has dealt with real-world challenges since its earliest days as “Roseanne.” In its new season, those include the pandemic and its fallout.

**Body**

This ABC sitcom has dealt with real-world challenges since its earliest days as “Roseanne.” In its new season, those include the pandemic and its fallout.

When “The Conners” returned to set in mid-August after a lengthy pandemic delay, John Goodman had no doubt that every safety precaution had been taken. But his heart still fluttered a bit when it came time to finally get to work.

“That moment before the first mask came off, I held my breath,” said the 68-year-old actor, who plays patriarch Dan Conner in the ABC sitcom.

Sara Gilbert, who stars as Dan’s daughter Darlene was also anxious, even though, as an executive producer, she was well aware of the measures the show takes to keep everyone safe. The Los Angeles set is patrolled by two [*Covid*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/20/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) compliance supervisors and the actors are tested five times per week, with everyone else getting tests at least three times a week.

Even so, “when they say ‘Rolling,’ I wait until after the sound cue,” Gilbert said. “And then — at the very last second — my mask comes off.”

When the coronavirus pandemic intensified in March, it forced Hollywood to shut down production for months. Most shows interrupted by the pandemic were back on set, with coronavirus protocols, by September, though some didn’t survive the break — series including ABC’S “Stumptown,” Netflix’s “GLOW” and Showtime’s “On Becoming a God in Central Florida,” which all had new seasons planned or in the works, were canceled by their networks.

Those that did return to production had a choice to make: Should they pick up where they left off and resume pandemic-free storytelling? Or should they deal with the coronavirus and its disruptions within their narratives?

For “The Conners,” which from its earliest days as “Roseanne” has dealt with everyday difficulties like depression, divorce and job loss, it was never even a question.

“We’ve always tried to represent blue-collar, middle-class families,” Gilbert said. “To pretend this isn’t happening seems out of touch.”

“Life and death stories are familiar territory for us,” she added. (The show’s original matriarch, Roseanne Conner, was killed off via an opioid overdose after Roseanne Barr [*was fired*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/20/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) for comparing a former Obama adviser to an ape on Twitter. The show title was subsequently changed from “Roseanne” to “The Conners.”)

When the series returns on Wednesday for its third season, viewers will watch the family grapple with the same issues as the rest of the country: Dan is on the verge of losing the family home. His sister-in-law, Jackie (Laurie Metcalf), is trying to keep the family restaurant alive by making deliveries on her bike (complete with a blinding neon yellow helmet, gloves and face mask). Darlene and her boyfriend, Ben (Jay R. Ferguson), are wondering whether to shutter their start-up magazine. Dan’s oldest daughter, Becky (Lecy Goranson), is navigating the return of her undocumented husband, Emilio (Rene Rosado), who is caring for her baby while hiding from immigration authorities.

Of course, it’s hard to avoid incorporating the pandemic when it seeps into every aspect of life on set. Like every other returning series, “The Conners,” led by the showrunner, Bruce Helford, and executive producers Dave Caplan and Bruce Rasmussen, has had to radically reconfigure nearly every element of its production for pandemic safety.

Before the cast and crew set foot onstage, they have passed two temperature checks, filled out a symptoms questionnaire and passed a Covid test within, at minimum, the last two days. Hair and makeup are done with masks and visors — Gilbert said she finishes the area around her mouth herself. Props are sanitized between each take., and the show is filmed without an audience and with a limited crew.

And enforcement, Gilbert said, is rigorous. “You can’t eat or drink onstage,” she said. “Not even water. You have to go up to your dressing room.”

But processing the approximately 350 weekly tests and installing upgrades like sanitizer stations and HEPA filters does not come cheap, Helford said.

“It’s well into the six figures, additional, to do this,” he said. “We had to cut holes in the wall for better ventilation and refit all the AC systems, plus the constant cleaning.” More than two months into shooting, the show has yet to see a positive test.

Gilbert said the most difficult on-set restriction to remember is the six-foot rule. “The writers tend to just walk over and run an idea by one another,” she said. “But now we have to be reminded ‘SIX FEET!’”

Helford said they try to set a good example for viewers watching at home. “Characters can pull their masks down if it’s a scene with someone they live with,” he said. “But if they’re out in the workplace and around people, they keep their face shields on.”

Goodman said not having spectators on set, while dispiriting, can actually be a benefit. “We have to maintain the amount of energy the audience naturally provides,” he said. “But it’s quite frankly easier to time things when you don’t have people to laugh at them.”

Gilbert said the series will not dwell on the darkest parts of the pandemic — “People get that on the news every day,” she said — but that the show, which is set in the current moment, will reflect real-world events. The second episode of the season airs Oct. 28, six nights before Election Day and three nights before Halloween. She said the Conners will celebrate their favorite holiday with some in-home trick-or-treating — and that politics may come up.

“But it’s not through the lens of ‘I’m for this guy!,’” she said. “It’s ‘How does what’s going on affect my family economically?’”

The writers also drew on their personal experiences in penning the new season, Caplan said. He, Helford and Rasmussen all “come from low to middle income ***working class*** families,” Caplan said. “So even if the stories aren’t exactly ours all the time, they’re emotional and honest.”

Helford said they wanted to spotlight the struggles of small business owners through Jackie’s battle to save her restaurant, the Lanford Lunch Box, as well as address the increased anxiety the pandemic has created among kids. “Mark, the youngest boy, is definitely bothered by this the worst,” he said, referring to Darlene’s son (Ames McNamara). “He’s the one standing outside the door checking everyone’s temperatures, making everyone crazy.”

Other pandemic-focused programs, like the Freeform series “[*Love in the Time of Corona*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/20/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates),” starring Leslie Odom Jr. and his wife Nicolette Robinson as spouses navigating life during the pandemic, and HBO’s “[*Coastal Elites*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/20/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates),” a series of satirical monologues, have received mixed reviews.

“The most notable thing about most of them is that they were done at all,” James Poniewozik, the chief TV critic for The New York Times, [*wrote in a recent appraisal*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/20/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) of pandemic shows. “But none of them had to sustain the approach for a full season.”

But Gilbert thinks “The Conners” can serve as counterprogramming to a news cycle that highlights rising case counts and political posturing. “There’s so much fear and anxiety,” she said. “But we’re looking at how the pandemic is affecting this family, and humor is definitely a part of that.”

Some of the moments that resonated with the actors were unexpected. Goranson, who has been living alone in Los Angeles since March, said a scene in the third episode proved surprisingly emotional.

“Becky is quarantining with her family, and I was not able to,” she said. “But in the scene, she says something about being alone, and it was almost confessional because it was so true to what I had experienced.”

Goranson’s mother died in January, and she said her family has not been able to hold a gathering for her. “One thing my mom told me before she died was ‘So little matters other than people,’” she said. “And that seems like cruel irony right now, because I haven’t been around anyone I love since she said that.”

It is unclear how long the pandemic will infect the Conners’ fictional town of Lanford, Ill., just as it is uncertain how long masks and social distancing will remain the norm in America. But Goodman said that, despite everything, he tries to remain upbeat.

“It’s just another damn thing we have to deal with,” he said. “I’m thrilled we’re able to make a show at all.”

PHOTO: Lecy Goranson and John Goodman in the new season of “The Conners,” which deals with mask variations and other pandemic stresses. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC MCCANDLESS/ABC) (C7)

**Load-Date:** October 21, 2020

**End of Document**



[***In Battleground Ohio, Trump Seeks Optimism On Economy and Virus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60HY-TT81-DXY4-X2JP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 7, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 19

**Length:** 1271 words

**Byline:** By Maggie Haberman

**Body**

The president came into 2020 considering the state a lock, but his performance in managing the pandemic and delivering on his promises from four years ago could put it in play.

President Trump traveled Thursday to the crucial battleground of Ohio, hoping to highlight efforts to bolster the economy after the damage done by the spread of the coronavirus and to announce new executive orders to make drug prices more affordable.

But he could not escape the reality of the landscape he is facing: Before Mr. Trump arrived, the state's Republican governor, Mike DeWine, tested positive for the coronavirus during a routine screening for people meeting the president.

The sudden change in plans -- Mr. DeWine, 73, had been expected to greet Mr. Trump at the airport when the president arrived -- mirrored the president's shifting fortunes in a state that coming into 2020 had seemed unassailable on Mr. Trump's electoral map. After a second, different type of test on Thursday, Mr. DeWine came up negative.

But the failures in his response to the pandemic have changed the forecast for November in Ohio, where cases remain high. Several polls in the state have shown the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., running close to Mr. Trump.

Mr. Trump could still win in Ohio, a state that has been won by Republicans seven times since 1972 and that has been a strong predictor of the national winner.

But the cost in ''resources, attention and manpower is likely to cost him another needed state,'' said Nicholas Everhart, the president of Content Creative Media, a Republican national ad-buying firm based in Ohio. Mr. Trump's re-election campaign has laid out tens of millions of dollars for a fall advertising blitz there.

''On Jan. 1, there was not a serious consultant on the Republican or Democrat side who thought Ohio was an up-for-grabs presidential swing state,'' he said.

Mr. Everhart said that a number of factors have made the state more competitive for Democrats, even though Republicans fared relatively well there in 2018.

''The economic fallout of the pandemic, though, seems to have caught Ohio up with Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, particularly in the Columbus and Cleveland suburbs,'' Mr. Everhart said, describing shifts in political support.

And a local corruption scandal that has seen federal racketeering charges filed against the Republican speaker of the House in Ohio could have a toxic effect for other Republicans in the state, Mr. Everhart said.

It is also one of a number of states where Republicans are trying to help Kanye West, the rapper and occasional Trump ally who has said he is running for president, fulfill requirements to get on the ballot, a move that many see as an effort to siphon Black votes away from Mr. Biden. Mr. West appeared to confirm this week in an interview with Forbes that he was trying to harm the former vice president.

Mr. Biden, whose advisers believe can connect with the ***working-class*** white voters who bolstered Mr. Trump in 2016, remains an elusive target for the president.

When Mr. Trump arrived in Ohio and gave a speech to a group of supporters, he accused Mr. Biden of trying to ''hurt'' the Bible and ''hurt'' God.

''He's against God,'' Mr. Trump, who rarely attends church and has had trouble pointing to specific Bible verses that he likes, said, promptly obliterating whatever media attention his aides hoped an earlier remark that Mr. Biden had made about Black people would get. ''He's against guns. He's against energy, our kind of energy. I don't think he's going to do too well in Ohio.''

The remark prompted a swift rebuke from Mr. Biden's campaign and, hours later, from the former vice president himself.

Mr. Biden, a Catholic, described his faith as the ''bedrock foundation of my life'' that sustained him after he lost his first wife and daughter in a car accident, and later, his adult son Beau Biden to cancer.

''For President Trump to attack my faith is shameful,'' Mr. Biden said, calling it ''beneath the office he holds.'' He added that the attacks ''show us a man willing to stoop to any low for political gain, and someone whose actions are completely at odds with the values and teachings that he professes to believe in.''

Mr. Trump maintained that Mr. Biden frequently is confused about his whereabouts, during a speech in which the president mispronounced Thailand as ''Thighland,'' catching himself a short time later.

The president spoke as his aides struggled to get a deal for new legislation to help people suffering economic pain caused by the coronavirus, something Mark Meadows, his chief of staff, and Steven Mnuchin, the Treasury secretary, have been scrambling to achieve in negotiations with Democratic leaders. Mr. Trump has not been a meaningful part of the talks, preferring to comment from the sidelines. After a fund-raiser on Thursday evening in Ohio, he will head to his private club in New Jersey and has fund-raisers scheduled this weekend.

Mr. Trump's swing through Ohio took him to Clyde, where he toured a Whirlpool factory. The president wore a mask as he walked through the plant, giving a thumbs-up sign to photographers nearby, a notable move given his longstanding resistance to the masks until the past few weeks. Mr. DeWine has been a proponent of masks; he issued a statewide order requiring them last month.

Then, standing at a lectern with the presidential seal, his face glistening with sweat, Mr. Trump delivered a winding series of remarks that were ostensibly about trade and the economy, but that took several detours into criticizing Mr. Biden and complaining about his political lot in life.

''I had such a beautiful life before I did this,'' Mr. Trump said at one point.

The president's inability to stick to his script has infuriated and exasperated his advisers, who believe he could be in a much stronger position in the campaign if only he would stop creating so much content for his critics and opponent.

During the event, Mr. Trump announced his plan to reimpose tariffs on Canadian-made aluminum. He criticized Mr. Biden and former President Barack Obama as purveyors of ''broken promises and brazen sellouts and lost jobs.''

He insisted the job outlook would improve soon, despite the sharp rise in unemployment when the pandemic began and the continued elevated levels of new claims for jobless benefits -- developments that have undercut his ability to claim he has delivered on his promises of four years ago to restore American manufacturing might and middle-class opportunity.

He praised the economy that existed before the arrival of the virus. And he lauded his administration's response to the coronavirus despite polling suggesting that voters are displeased with his repeated playing down of the threat.

He talked up an executive order requiring the federal government to buy ''essential'' drugs from within the United States, instead of countries like China, where the coronavirus originated. And he maintained there could be a vaccine ''long before the end of the year,'' despite skepticism from the health experts in his administration and concern among regulators about pressure to approve a vaccine on a political calendar.

And a day after Facebook and Twitter forced his campaign accounts to remove video of him falsely saying that children are ''almost immune'' to the virus, he simply cited children as ''strong'' in fighting off the illness.

At another point, after frequently criticizing Democratic governors, he said, ''We cannot defeat the virus by fighting against each other.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/06/us/politics/trump-economy-ohio.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/06/us/politics/trump-economy-ohio.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Speaking at a Whirlpool plant in Clyde, Ohio, on Thursday, President Trump veered from the economy to lament his political fortunes. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 7, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Battle Over Water as Drought Parches Both U.S. and Mexico***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:612X-FSP1-JBG3-61X8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 16, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1345 words

**Byline:** By Natalie Kitroeff

**Body**

BOQUILLA, Mexico -- The farmers armed themselves with sticks, rocks and homemade shields, ambushed hundreds of soldiers guarding a dam and seized control of one of the border region's most important bodies of water.

The Mexican government was sending water -- their water -- to Texas, leaving them next to nothing for their thirsty crops, the farmers said. So they took over the dam and have refused to allow any of the water to flow to the United States for more than a month.

''This is a war,'' said Victor Velderrain, a grower who helped lead the takeover, ''to survive, to continue working, to feed my family.''

The standoff is the culmination of longstanding tensions over water between the United States and Mexico that have recently exploded into violence, pitting Mexican farmers against their own president and the global superpower next door.

Negotiating the exchange of water between the two countries has long been strained, but rising temperatures and long droughts have made the shared rivers along the border more valuable than ever, intensifying the stakes for both nations.

The dam's takeover is a stark example of how far people are willing to go to defend livelihoods threatened by climate change -- and of the kind of conflict that may become more common with increasingly extreme weather.

Along the arid border region, water rights are governed by a decades-old treaty that compels the United States and Mexico to share the flows of the Colorado and Rio Grande rivers, with each side sending water to the other. Mexico has fallen far behind on its obligations to the United States and is now facing a deadline to deliver the water this month.

But this has been one of the driest years in the last three decades for Chihuahua, the Mexican border state responsible for sending the bulk of the water Mexico owes. Its farmers have rebelled, worried that losing any more water will rob them of a chance for a healthy harvest next year.

''These tensions, these tendencies, are already there, and they're just made so much worse by climate change,'' said Christopher Scott, a professor of water resources policy at the University of Arizona. ''They are in a fight for their lives, because no water, no agriculture; no agriculture, no rural communities.''

Since February, when federal forces first occupied the dam to ensure water deliveries to the United States continued, activists in Chihuahua have burned government buildings, destroyed cars and briefly held a group of politicians hostage. For weeks, they've blocked a major railroad used to ferry industrial goods between Mexico and the United States.

Their revolt has alarmed farmers and politicians in Texas. Greg Abbott, the state's Republican governor, appealed to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo last month, demanding that he persuade Mexico to deliver the water by the deadline next week, or risk inflicting pain on American farmers.

Mexico's president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who has repeatedly bent to President Trump's demands on immigration, has vowed that his country will make good on its water obligations to the United States -- whether the state of Chihuahua likes it or not.

He sent hundreds of members of the National Guard to protect Chihuahua's dams, and his government temporarily froze bank accounts belonging to the city where many of the protesters live.

For farmers, the government's stance is a betrayal.

Mr. Velderrain, 42, said he never saw himself as the type of person who would lead hundreds over a hill to overwhelm a group of soldiers protecting a cache of automatic weapons. But there he was in a video posted on Facebook, escorting a Mexican general out of the Boquilla Dam on the day he led the takeover.

Surprised and heavily outnumbered, the National Guard quickly surrendered. Later that day, one protester was shot and killed by the National Guard.

''We have always dedicated ourselves to work; we've never been known as protesters,'' Mr. Velderrain said back on his farm, shucking an ear of corn that wasn't quite ready for harvest. ''What happened at the Boquilla dam was impressive, because we took off our farmer clothes and put on the uniform of guerrilla fighters.''

The federal government argues that the protesting farmers are also hurting other Mexicans by preventing water from flowing to their compatriots downstream, and that the growers would still have access to at least 60 percent of the water they need for next year.

''Agriculture, like any other profession, has risks,'' said Blanca Jiménez, the head of Mexico's National Water Commission. ''One of the risks is that there are years when it rains more and years when it rains less.''

With the intensity of the drought in Chihuahua this year, Mexico has fallen far behind on its water shipments to the United States. It now has to send more than 50 percent of its average annual water payment in a matter of weeks. The Mexican government insists it will still comply, despite the takeover of the dam, which spans the Conchos River, a major tributary of the Rio Grande. But some Texans have their doubts.

''It's just not going to happen, unless a storm develops and helps Mexico, which is normally what they count on,'' said Sonny Hinojosa, the general manager of an irrigation district in Hidalgo County, Texas. ''They gamble and hope that a storm or mother nature will bail them out.''

Texans also contend that, on balance, Mexico benefits more from the water-sharing agreement between the two countries, signed in 1944, than they do. Mr. Abbott, the state's governor, has pointed out that the United States sends Mexico about four times as much water as it receives from its neighbor.

The treaty doesn't punish either side for shirking its duties but, eager to avoid conflict, Mexico is scrambling to find a way to meet its water obligations as the deadline nears. One of the likeliest solutions is that Mexico will hand over a significant amount of the water it owns in reservoirs, normally used by more than a dozen Mexican cities. In exchange, Mexico has asked the United States to lend it drinking water for those cities, if Mexico ends up running out.

Part of the problem, scientists say, is that Mexico's need for water has grown since the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement in the 1990s, as more people settled in the country's dry border region and agricultural production ramped up to satisfy American consumers.

Francisco Marta, a 23-year-old who manages his father's corn and alfalfa fields, suspects that his fellow farmers don't have the Mexican president's sympathies in the water dispute because they are generally not members of his poor and ***working class*** political base. The farmers live in the north, traditionally a stronghold of the conservative opposition against Mr. López Obrador, who ran on a leftist platform.

''He believes that we are rich and that nothing will happen to us if we don't work next year, but that's not true," Mr. Marta said. ''I myself will migrate if I don't have anywhere to work here.''

Mr. López Obrador has accused politicians and ''big agriculture'' of fomenting strife in Chihuahua, which, he said at a recent news conference, ''has nothing to do with small farmers.''

But Jéssica Silva, 35, the protester who was killed the day the farmers took the Boquilla Dam, didn't have a farm of her own, her parents said. She and her husband, Jaime Torres, rented about 22 acres of pecan trees and helped her parents cultivate an even smaller plot.

''She had so many plans,'' said Ms. Silva's mother, Justina Zamarripa, tears falling into the creases of her cheeks.

The National Guard shot Ms. Silva several times in the back through the window of her husband's truck. He was wounded but survived.

''She was defending what belongs to us,'' said her father, José Luis Silva.

In a photo her parents have of the two just after the attack, Ms. Silva is slumped over in the passenger seat, wearing her seatbelt and a mask to protect against the coronavirus.

''She was always so cautious,'' her mother said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/14/world/americas/mexico-water-boquilla-dam.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/14/world/americas/mexico-water-boquilla-dam.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Receding water levels near the Boquilla Dam. ''These tensions, these tendencies, are already there, and they're just made so much worse by climate change,'' one water policy expert said.

The parents of Jéssica Silva, who was killed while protesting, holding up a portrait of her. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIEL BEREHULAK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** October 16, 2020

**End of Document**



[***‘All I Can Think About Is Her’: Families Grieve for Victims of Atlanta Attacks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627X-C261-JBG3-64XD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 19, 2021 Friday 11:26 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1640 words

**Byline:** Juliana Kim, Corina Knoll and Campbell Robertson

**Highlight:** Among the eight people killed at Atlanta-area spas this week was a wife going for a massage with her husband, and immigrant mothers working long hours to support their children.

**Body**

Among the eight people killed at Atlanta-area spas this week was a wife going for a massage with her husband, and immigrant mothers working long hours to support their children.

ATLANTA — From early in the morning until late at night, Hyun Jung Grant was at work. She was a single mother with life’s unyielding obligations: two sons who needed college tuition, the rent on the home they all shared, the relentless drumbeat of bills.

An immigrant from South Korea, Ms. Grant, 51, did not talk much about her job at Gold Spa, a massage parlor in a neon-lit stretch of strip malls in northeastern Atlanta. She preferred to tell people that she worked at a makeup store.

“She didn’t want us to worry about her ever,” said her son Eric Park, 20.

Ms. Grant was among eight people shot to death on Tuesday evening. Another victim is still hospitalized.

They had come a long way to the storefronts set inconspicuously amid the crowded commercial unspooling of metro Atlanta. They had come from Korea, from China, from Guatemala, from Detroit, from right up the road in Acworth, Ga. Most had come to work, perhaps to put some aside for children and even grandchildren, to carve out a little bit of security and independence for themselves and their families.

Then a young man with a gun arrived, and over the course of a single violent hour, years of work and accumulated opportunities were put to an abrupt end.

“All I can think about is her,” said Mr. Park, recalling the days at the mall and aquarium, just him and his brother and his mother, the bowls of soondubu at Korean restaurants, the kimchi jjigae she made herself. Ms. Grant had encouraged Eric in his dreams of becoming a chef. They were a close-knit trio, relying on one another.

“It’s just us two now,” Eric said.

Twenty-five miles up the interstate from Gold Spa, amid the strip malls and parking lots of the Atlanta suburbs, sits Young’s Asian Massage, a shop that was kept running through long days and late evenings by Xiaojie Tan.

“She worked from 9 to 9 almost every day,” said Ashley Zhang, a friend of Ms. Tan’s, who like her was a Chinese immigrant. “We’re here for opportunity,” she said. “We work so hard. We want the American dream to come true.”

Ms. Tan, a mother and businesswoman who was known to her friends as Emily, owned the spa and had made it into a place where patrons felt at home, said Greg Hynson, a longtime customer who had seen her last weekend. She was “just the sweetest, kindest, most giving person,” he said, and she set a tone that the other employees followed.

“They welcomed you,” Mr. Hynson said. “If you were a friend of Emily’s, you were a friend of theirs.”

One of those workers was Daoyou Feng, 44, who according to Mr. Hynson had started working at the spa a few months ago. She was among those killed on Tuesday.

When the gunman showed up, Delaina Ashley Yaun, 33, was there with her husband, having arrived shortly beforehand. Unlike the others who were killed, Ms. Yaun had been born and raised in the area.

She knew about hard work.

“I’ve worked with a lot of people in my life,” said John Beck, 27, who had been Ms. Yaun’s manager at a nearby Waffle House. “Delaina was the most hard-working, most determined, most outspokenly good-hearted person I’ve ever met.”

She had been a server and master grill operator at the Waffle House, Mr. Beck said, arriving in the morning blasting gospel music and often buying eggs and grits for homeless people who had no money for food. She was raising a son by herself, but she also kept a motherly eye on Mr. Beck, checking in regularly to make sure he was OK.

Her big dream, Mr. Beck said, was to get married. And last year, she did just that, marrying Mario Gonzalez, whom Mr. Beck said she had met at the Waffle House when he showed up as a customer. They soon had a daughter. It was “real love,” Mr. Beck said.

Tuesday was a date — they were going to get massages together.

Paul Andre Michels, 54, an electrician, was also killed at the spa on Tuesday. He was a “workaholic,” said his brother Fred Michels. He grew up as the seventh of nine children in a ***working-class*** Catholic family in Detroit that had a long history of building and fixing things. His father painted Cadillacs at a General Motors plant, his mother kept the family fed with pierogies and stuffed cabbage, and he went off to join the Army.

Mr. Michels returned to Detroit but eventually settled in Atlanta, his brother said, marrying and starting his own electrical business.

As the employees met with patrons inside the business, Elcias R. Hernandez-Ortiz, 30, was out front, walking to a money exchange business next door. He had come to the area from Guatemala about 10 years ago, “like most immigrants living here,” his wife, Flor Gonzalez, said, leaving home “to look for a better life.”

He found work as a mechanic, sending some money to his family in Guatemala and taking care of his family here — the couple had been planning for next week’s birthday of their daughter Yoseline.

Mr. Ortiz-Hernandez, who was shot but survived the attack, remains hospitalized in critical condition.

Back in northeastern Atlanta, on the border of one of the most upscale parts of town, sits a small pocket of tattoo shops, strip clubs and massage parlors.

Among these are Gold Spa, where Ms. Grant worked alongside Suncha Kim, 69, and Soon Chung Park, who, at 74, was the oldest person to be killed on Tuesday.

Ms. Kim, a grandmother who enjoyed line dancing in her spare time, had been married for more than 50 years, a family member said. She had immigrated to the United States from Korea “to provide us a better education and better life,” said the family member, who asked not to be named for privacy reasons. “Just a regular American family and worked really hard.”

Ms. Park had lived in New York before moving to Atlanta, a son-in-law, Scott Lee, said in a brief interview on Friday. She had stayed close with her relatives, many of whom still live in New York and New Jersey. “She got along with her family so well,” Mr. Lee said in Korean.

Across the street from Gold Spa is Aromatherapy Spa, where Yong Ae Yue worked.

Ms. Yue, 63, moved to the United States from South Korea in the 1970s, coming with her husband, Mac Peterson, whom she had met while he was stationed in the Army. They had one son before moving to Fort Benning, Ga., and having another son, Mr. Peterson said.

Ms. Yue found work as a cashier at a grocery store outside of Fort Benning and the couple stayed there until getting divorced in 1982. Their families had been close — “She used to take my sister to the spa,” Mr. Peterson said — and they had kept in touch, having lunch together as recently as last summer.

“She was a good mother,” Mr. Peterson said. “She was always there for her kids.”

Ms. Yue was the last person killed in the shootings on Tuesday.

Ms. Grant’s sons, Eric and his brother Randy, 22, first learned about the attacks from a Gold Spa employee’s daughter. They did not know that their mother had died until late that night, after a relative in Korea saw Ms. Grant’s name in a news report.

On Friday morning, the brothers were at home, looking through photo albums for their mother’s upcoming memorial.

This was a new place for them, relatively. They had moved into the house, a rental, from an apartment last year, a moment of celebration because it was a step closer to Ms. Grant’s dream of buying a home.

But Ms. Grant had not spent as much time in it. She was gone for days and weeks on end, Randy Park said. She often stayed at Gold Spa or at a friend’s place near the business, he said, because she did not have a car and the commute to work was lengthy and tedious.

Still, Randy Park said his mother called every night after work to check in on him and his younger brother. The last time she called was Monday evening, he recalled. She asked if they were doing OK and if they had eaten, and then wished them good night.

“I knew she was working for us,” said her youngest son, Eric. “So I never resented her for when she wasn’t around.”

Juliana Kim reported from Atlanta, Corina Knoll from New York, and Campbell Robertson from Pittsburgh. Reporting was contributed by Richard Fausset, Jack Healy, Inyoung Kang, Linda Qiu, Rick Rojas and John Yoon from Atlanta, Giulia McDonnell Nieto del Rio, Sarah Mervosh and Edgar Sandoval from New York, and Nicholas Bogel-Burroughs from Tivoli, N.Y. Susan C. Beachy contributed research.

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PHOTOS: Jami Webb, left, whose mother, Xiaojie Tan, was among those killed. “She worked from 9 to 9 almost every day,” a friend recalled. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES); PROVIDER: Hyun Jung Grant was close with both of her sons. “It’s just us two now,” one said. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA RANDY AND ERIC PARK); GIVER: Delaina Ashley Yaun, a restaurant server, often bought food for homeless people. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA DANA TOOLE); ‘WORKAHOLIC’: Paul Andre Michels moved from Detroit and started his own electrical business. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNESAW POLICE DEPARTMENT, VIA FACEBOOK); ENTREPRENEUR: Ms. Tan set a welcoming tone as the owner of Young’s Asian Massage. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNESAW POLICE DEPARTMENT, VIA FACEBOOK) (A1); A memorial set up outside Young’s Asian Massage in Acworth, Ga., Thursday, the site of one of the shootings. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); A group rallied outside Gold Spa Thursday to protest escalating racism and sexism against those of Asian descent. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Showing Progressive Clout, Activist Stuns 20-Year Incumbent in St. Louis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60HR-VJC1-JBG3-6264-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 6, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Nicholas Fandos

**Body**

The upset of the veteran congressman from St. Louis sent tremors though the Democratic establishment in Missouri and Washington, D.C.

ST. LOUIS -- Cori Bush, a progressive activist and a leader of the swelling protest movement for racial justice, toppled Representative William Lacy Clay Jr. of Missouri in a Democratic primary on Tuesday, notching the latest in a stunning string of upsets against the party establishment.

Ms. Bush, 44, had captured nearly 49 percent of the vote by late Tuesday evening compared with 45.5 percent for Mr. Clay, according to The Associated Press. She had tried and failed to unseat Mr. Clay in 2018, but this year rode a surge in support for more liberal, confrontational politics within the Democratic Party amid the coronavirus pandemic and the national outcry over festering racial inequities.

Ms. Bush's victory, which came on the same night that Missouri voters decided to expand Medicaid eligibility, was a significant milestone for insurgent progressive candidates and the groups, like Justice Democrats, that have backed them across the country. It showed that the same brand of politics that has helped young, liberal candidates of color unseat veteran party stalwarts in places like Massachusetts and New York could also resonate deep in the heartland against a Black incumbent whose family has been synonymous with his district for decades.

Ms. Bush now joins figures like Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, who defeated the 20-year veteran Representative Joseph Crowley in 2018, and Jamaal Bowman, who last month won a primary against Representative Eliot L. Engel, a powerful committee chairman in his 16th term representing a district straddling the Bronx and Westchester.

A single mother, former nurse and pastor, Ms. Bush would be the first Black woman to represent the state of Missouri in Congress. The plurality of the district, which encompasses St. Louis and some of its innermost liberal suburbs, is African-American and considered safely Democratic.

''Tonight, Missouri's First District has decided that an incremental approach isn't going to work any longer,'' Ms. Bush told supporters at a jubilant news conference after the race was called. ''We decided that we the people have the answers, and we will lead from the front lines.''

Mr. Clay, the scion of a storied Black Missouri political dynasty in his 10th term in Congress, had tried to make the campaign a referendum on not only Ms. Bush's suitability for elected office but also the progressive movement behind her. He carried out a series of dark, personal attacks in the campaign's final days to try to halt Ms. Bush's momentum and described her as a ''prop'' of out-of-town interests seeking to divide the Democratic Party along racial lines.

Mr. Clay highlighted his own ties to the Democratic power structure, earning endorsements from Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senator Kamala Harris of California and groups like Planned Parenthood.

Late Tuesday night, it was Justice Democrats, which helped groom Ms. Bush and other successful progressive challengers, that was celebrating.

''If you don't know, now you know: The Squad is here to stay, and it's growing,'' said Alexandra Rojas, the group's executive director.

In his own brief statement Wednesday afternoon, Mr. Clay congratulated Ms. Bush and thanked his constituents.

''This seat belongs to the people of Missouri's First Congressional District, and I respect their decision,'' he said.

Unlike other incumbents who have lost in recent years, Mr. Clay did not fit neatly into the moderate or progressive wings of the party. He had supported some hallmark progressive policies in Washington, including ''Medicare for all'' and the Green New Deal, but also continued to take campaign money from corporations. Ms. Bush's backers bashed him for helping payday lenders.

Ms. Bush built her campaign around her personal story as a ***working-class*** Black woman who was pulled into public life after a white police officer shot and killed Michael Brown, an unarmed Black teenager, in Ferguson, Mo., in 2014. She joined protesters in the days after the shooting, and in the weeks and years that followed became one of their leaders, staring down tear gas, mace and rubber bullets.

Ms. Bush was a fixture at protests across the district this summer after the police killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor.

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''I was maced and beaten by those same police officers in those same streets,'' she said. ''Six months from now, as the first Black congresswoman in the entire history of Missouri, I will be holding every single one of them accountable.''

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Amid a worsening health and economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic, Ms. Bush pushed drastic changes to the nation's criminal justice system, including defunding and dismantling police departments; called for Medicare for all, a $15 minimum wage and a universal basic income; and swore off corporate campaign contributions.

But as the campaign wore on, she also began sharpening her attacks against Mr. Clay directly, accusing him of ''failed leadership'' after two decades in office. She noted that he was largely absent from the protests and questioned his commitment to fighting for voters in a city troubled by segregation and economic stagnation.

''He's had 20 years to make a change, not only in St. Louis but across this country,'' Ms. Bush said on Saturday. ''He waits until something is popular to stand up for it, or he waits until there is pressure. I do it just because that is the need.''

The message ultimately resonated with voters, many of whom had never before voted for a congressman not named Clay. William Lacy Clay Sr., a local civil rights figure, entered Congress in 1969 and handed the seat to his son when he retired in 2001.

While Mr. Clay narrowly carried the portions of the district in suburban St. Louis County, Ms. Bush won a commanding victory in the city of St. Louis.

Ms. Bush's campaign explicitly benefited from the momentum claimed by progressives this summer and since 2018. A documentary about her 2018 campaign and that of challengers like Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, ''Knock Down the House,'' helped build a national profile. And donations to her campaign far outpaced those in 2018, allowing her to advertise on TV here, as other progressives notched victories.

Ms. Bush's victory comes just a few weeks after Mr. Bowman, a middle school principal from the Bronx, upset Mr. Engel, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. In Illinois in March, Marie Newman, another progressive, defeated Representative Dan Lipinski, a conservative Democrat who opposed abortion rights and the Affordable Care Act. Like Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, each challenger had the backing of Justice Democrats.

But while Ms. Bush had the group's enthusiastic support as well -- she was one of only two challengers to Black incumbents it endorsed this cycle -- and was endorsed by Mr. Bowman, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez had conspicuously sat on the sidelines. She had campaigned for Ms. Bush in 2018, but Mr. Clay courted the New York Democrat in Washington, signing onto the Green New Deal, and inviting Ms. Ocasio-Cortez and other progressive lawmakers to support some of his bills.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/05/us/politics/cori-bush-missouri-william-lacy-clay.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/05/us/politics/cori-bush-missouri-william-lacy-clay.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Cori Bush, above left, with Kristine Hendrix, upset William Lacy Clay Jr., left, in Tuesday's Democratic primary. Ms. Bush would be the first Black woman to represent Missouri in Congress. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT COHEN/ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANDREW HARNIK/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** August 6, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Trump, Facing Headwinds in Ohio, Talks Up Economy in Campaign Swing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60HV-KS81-JBG3-63H1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 6, 2020 Thursday 19:00 EST

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**Byline:** Maggie Haberman

**Highlight:** The president came into 2020 considering the state a lock, but his performance in managing the pandemic and delivering on his promises from four years ago could put it in play.

**Body**

The president came into 2020 considering the state a lock, but his performance in managing the pandemic and delivering on his promises from four years ago could put it in play.

President Trump traveled Thursday to the crucial battleground of Ohio, hoping to highlight efforts to bolster the economy after the damage done by the spread of the coronavirus and to announce new executive orders to make drug prices more affordable.

But he could not escape the reality of the landscape he is facing: Before Mr. Trump arrived, the state’s Republican governor, Mike DeWine, tested positive for the coronavirus during a routine screening for people meeting the president.

The sudden change in plans — Mr. DeWine, 73, had been expected to greet Mr. Trump at the airport when the president arrived — mirrored the president’s shifting fortunes in a state that coming into 2020 had seemed unassailable on Mr. Trump’s electoral map. After a second, different type of test on Thursday, [*Mr. DeWine came up negative*](https://twitter.com/GovMikeDeWine/status/1291548735772798977?s=20).

But the failures in his response to the pandemic have changed the forecast for November in Ohio, where cases remain high. Several polls in the state have shown the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., running close to Mr. Trump.

Mr. Trump could still win in Ohio, a state that has been won by Republicans seven times since 1972 and that has been a strong predictor of the national winner.

But the cost in “resources, attention and manpower is likely to cost him another needed state,” said Nicholas Everhart, the president of Content Creative Media, a Republican national ad-buying firm based in Ohio. Mr. Trump’s re-election campaign has laid out tens of millions of dollars for a fall advertising blitz there.

“On Jan. 1, there was not a serious consultant on the Republican or Democrat side who thought Ohio was an up-for-grabs presidential swing state,” he said.

Mr. Everhart said that a number of factors have made the state more competitive for Democrats, even though Republicans fared relatively well there in 2018.

“The economic fallout of the pandemic, though, seems to have caught Ohio up with Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, particularly in the Columbus and Cleveland suburbs,” Mr. Everhart said, describing shifts in political support.

And a local corruption scandal that has seen federal racketeering charges filed against the Republican speaker of the House in Ohio could have a toxic effect for other Republicans in the state, Mr. Everhart said.

It is also one of a number of states where Republicans are trying to help Kanye West, the rapper and occasional Trump ally who has said he is running for president, fulfill requirements to get on the ballot, a move that many see as an effort to siphon Black votes away from Mr. Biden. Mr. West appeared to confirm this week in an [*interview with Forbes*](https://twitter.com/GovMikeDeWine/status/1291548735772798977?s=20) that he was trying to harm the former vice president.

Mr. Biden, whose advisers believe can connect with the ***working-class*** white voters who bolstered Mr. Trump in 2016, remains an elusive target for the president.

When Mr. Trump arrived in Ohio and gave a speech to a group of supporters, he accused Mr. Biden of trying to “hurt” the Bible and “hurt” God.

“He’s against God,” Mr. Trump, who rarely attends church and has had trouble pointing to specific Bible verses that he likes, said, promptly obliterating whatever media attention his aides hoped an earlier remark that Mr. Biden had made about Black people would get. “He’s against guns. He’s against energy, our kind of energy. I don’t think he’s going to do too well in Ohio.”

The remark prompted a swift rebuke from Mr. Biden’s campaign and, hours later, from the former vice president himself.

Mr. Biden, a Catholic, described his faith as the “bedrock foundation of my life” that sustained him after he lost his first wife and daughter in a car accident, and [*later, his adult son Beau Biden to cancer*](https://twitter.com/GovMikeDeWine/status/1291548735772798977?s=20).

“For President Trump to attack my faith is shameful,” Mr. Biden said, calling it “beneath the office he holds.” He added that the attacks “show us a man willing to stoop to any low for political gain, and someone whose actions are completely at odds with the values and teachings that he professes to believe in.”

Mr. Trump maintained that Mr. Biden frequently is confused about his whereabouts, during a speech in which the president mispronounced Thailand as “Thighland,” catching himself a short time later.

The president spoke as his aides struggled to get a deal for new legislation to help people suffering economic pain caused by the coronavirus, something Mark Meadows, his chief of staff, and Steven Mnuchin, the Treasury secretary, have been scrambling to achieve in negotiations with Democratic leaders. Mr. Trump has not been a meaningful part of the talks, preferring to comment from the sidelines. After a fund-raiser on Thursday evening in Ohio, he will head to his private club in New Jersey and has fund-raisers scheduled this weekend.

Mr. Trump’s swing through Ohio took him to Clyde, where he toured a Whirlpool factory. The president wore a mask as he walked through the plant, giving a thumbs-up sign to photographers nearby, a notable move given his longstanding resistance to the masks until the past few weeks. Mr. DeWine has been a proponent of masks; he issued a statewide order requiring them last month.

Then, standing at a lectern with the presidential seal, his face glistening with sweat, Mr. Trump delivered a winding series of remarks that were ostensibly about trade and the economy, but that took several detours into criticizing Mr. Biden and complaining about his political lot in life.

“I had such a beautiful life before I did this,” Mr. Trump said at one point.

The president’s inability to stick to his script has infuriated and exasperated his advisers, who believe he could be in a much stronger position in the campaign if only he would stop creating so much content for his critics and opponent.

During the event, Mr. Trump announced his plan to reimpose [*tariffs on Canadian-made aluminum*](https://twitter.com/GovMikeDeWine/status/1291548735772798977?s=20). He criticized Mr. Biden and former President Barack Obama as purveyors of “broken promises and brazen sellouts and lost jobs.”

He insisted the job outlook would improve soon, despite the sharp rise in unemployment when the pandemic began and the continued elevated levels of [*new claims for jobless benefits*](https://twitter.com/GovMikeDeWine/status/1291548735772798977?s=20) — developments that have undercut his ability to claim he has delivered on his promises of four years ago to restore American manufacturing might and middle-class opportunity.

He praised the economy that existed before the arrival of the virus. And he lauded his administration’s response to the coronavirus despite polling suggesting that voters are displeased with his repeated playing down of the threat.

He talked up an executive order requiring the federal government to buy “essential” drugs from within the United States, instead of countries like China, where the coronavirus originated. And he maintained there could be a vaccine “long before the end of the year,” despite skepticism from the health experts in his administration and concern among regulators about pressure to approve a vaccine on a political calendar.

And a day after Facebook and Twitter forced his campaign accounts to remove video of him falsely saying that children are “almost immune” to the virus, he simply cited children as “strong” in fighting off the illness.

At another point, after frequently criticizing Democratic governors, he said, “We cannot defeat the virus by fighting against each other.”

PHOTO: Speaking at a Whirlpool plant in Clyde, Ohio, on Thursday, President Trump veered from the economy to lament his political fortunes. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 17, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Cori Bush Defeats William Lacy Clay in a Show of Progressive Might***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60HH-G4N1-DXY4-X3V7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 5, 2020 Wednesday 13:31 EST

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**Byline:** Nicholas Fandos

**Highlight:** The upset of the veteran congressman from St. Louis sent tremors through the Democratic establishment in Missouri and Washington, D.C.

**Body**

The upset of the veteran congressman from St. Louis sent tremors through the Democratic establishment in Missouri and Washington, D.C.

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Ms. Bush now joins figures like Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, who [*defeated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/us/politics/cori-bush-eviction-moratorium.html) the 20-year veteran Representative Joseph Crowley in 2018, and Jamaal Bowman, who last month [*won a primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/us/politics/cori-bush-eviction-moratorium.html) against Representative Eliot L. Engel, a powerful committee chairman in his 16th term representing a district straddling the Bronx and Westchester.

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But while Ms. Bush had the group’s enthusiastic support as well — she was one of only two challengers to Black incumbents it endorsed this cycle — and was endorsed by Mr. Bowman, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez had conspicuously sat on the sidelines. She had campaigned for Ms. Bush in 2018, but Mr. Clay courted the New York Democrat in Washington, signing onto the Green New Deal, and inviting Ms. Ocasio-Cortez and other progressive lawmakers to support some of his bills.

PHOTOS: Cori Bush, above left, with Kristine Hendrix, upset William Lacy Clay Jr., left, in Tuesday’s Democratic primary. Ms. Bush would be the first Black woman to represent Missouri in Congress. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT COHEN/ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS; ANDREW HARNIK/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** August 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How Atlanta Tore Down Its Suburbs' Political Fences***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61H9-52X1-DXY4-X4FN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 13, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 27

**Length:** 1609 words

**Byline:** By Emily Badger

**Body**

Communities that defined themselves in opposition to the city have increasingly grown to resemble it.

The suburbs of Cobb County, Ga., boomed during white flight on the promise of isolation from Atlanta. Residents there dating to the 1960s did not want Atlanta problems, or Atlanta transit, or Atlanta people. As a local commissioner once infamously put it, he would stock piranha in the Chattahoochee River that separates Cobb from Atlanta if it were necessary to keep the city out.

The county became a model of the conservative, suburban South, opposed to the kind of federal meddling that integrates schools, or the kind of taxes that fund big infrastructure. And then, this year, after timidly embracing Hillary Clinton in 2016 (she won the area by just two points), Cobb County voted for Joe Biden by 14 percentage points. And Democrats swept the major countywide races.

''It's been this evolution of Cobb from a white-flight suburb to, now, I went to a Ramadan meal in a gated community in Cobb County that was multiracial,'' said Andrea Young, the executive director of the Georgia A.C.L.U., and the daughter of the former Atlanta mayor Andrew Young. ''This is the story,'' she said, ''of Atlanta spilling out into the metro area.''

Around the region, suburban communities that once defined themselves in opposition to Atlanta have increasingly come to resemble it: in demographics, in urban conveniences and challenges, and, finally, in politics. Rather than symbolizing a bulwark against Black political power, these places have become part of a coalition led by Black voters that is large enough to tip statewide races -- and that could hand control of the Senate to Democrats next month.

''In Atlanta, they thought they could draw a line, and they thought it would be permanent, whether it was the Chattahoochee River, or Sandy Springs forming its own city to keep Atlanta out,'' said Kevin Kruse, a Princeton historian whose book ''White Flight'' followed the mass migration from Atlanta in the civil rights era. ''That was just a holding operation. It couldn't stop those forces of progress.''

Mr. Kruse says these suburbs gave rise to a ''politics of suburban secession.'' Their voters prized private spaces over the public good, low taxes over big government, local autonomy over federal intervention. Newt Gingrich, a House member from Cobb County who embodied that agenda, became House Speaker in 1995. And neighboring counties were as reliably red. In 2004, George W. Bush carried Cobb by 25 points. He carried Gwinnett County to the east by 32 points, and Henry County south of Atlanta by 34 points.

Such suburban politics became national in scope. But in Atlanta, they emerged in reaction to a very particular political history.

In Atlanta, dating to the 1940s under Mayor William B. Hartsfield, who was white, African-American voters and the white business class have long had a political alliance, one born out of shared opposition to ***working-class*** white segregationists who were viewed as bad for both racial progress and for business.

''Atlanta's ethic was 'If you can show me how to make money, I can work with you on the prejudice part,''' Ms. Young said. '''I'm willing to give up some of my white supremacy, if I can make some more money.'''

That fragile alliance helped integrate neighborhoods, parks and schools, often in tentative and token ways but without the violent mass resistance of other Southern cities. It also helped Atlanta establish what would become the busiest airport in the country, cementing the city's reputation as a home of corporate headquarters and, eventually, the 1996 Olympics (the volleyball competition, originally planned for Cobb County, was moved after officials there passed a resolution condemning ''lifestyles advocated by the gay community'').

What held the biracial coalition together -- in ''The Atlanta Way'' -- wasn't exactly a shared moral mission.

''In fact, the corporate elite were very specific that they were pursuing enlightened self-interest -- that's the term they themselves used,'' said Clarence Stone, whose 1989 book studying the coalition, ''Regime Politics,'' is essential reading in the city even today. ''It wasn't that this was the moral path. This was the pragmatic path.''

White segregationists unwilling to share neighborhoods, schools and power with African-Americans left the city. Over time, many middle-class whites did, too, as the integration they supported in theory touched their own schools and blocks. The alliance also shifted, as African-Americans like Mr. Young won offices once held by white leaders in what became a smaller, more predominantly Black city.

But the success of the Atlanta economy ultimately helped seed the ground for Georgia's political change. The region attracted new residents from all over -- not just white families looking for low taxes, but also tech entrepreneurs from the West Coast, immigrants from Asia, and Black professionals from Northern cities.

According to the real estate company Redfin, Los Angeles, Washington and the Bay Area are now among the most common metros where people appear to be searching for a move to the Atlanta area.

In the region's four core counties of Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb and Gwinnett, the African-American population grew by 17 percent between 2010 and 2018. It's not so much that African-Americans moved across the Chattahoochee; they moved from Memphis and Chicago.

''Even when I was campaigning, there are those people who think 'you shouldn't be representing us because you didn't grow up here,''' said Erick Allen, who won his second term as a Democratic state representative from Cobb County last month after flipping a Republican seat. ''And I have to remind them, well that makes me the majority. Most of us that are here, we're here by choice, not by lineage.''

Mr. Allen, who is African-American, grew up in Nashville. His wife, born in Jamaica, was raised in New York. They chose to live in Cobb County because of what it's becoming, not because of what it was 30 years ago, he said.

''This isn't Newt Gingrich's Cobb County,'' Mr. Allen said. ''This truly is Lisa Cupid's Cobb County.''

Ms. Cupid, a Democrat, became the first African-American woman to be elected the county commission chair this year.

Suburbs around the region have also become home to lower-income residents priced out by Atlanta's rising housing costs. Suburban foreclosures during the housing crisis also opened up neighborhoods that were once owner-occupied to more renters.

Add to these changes the efforts of some suburban communities to attract young professionals -- by building denser, walkable town centers.

''There's a replication of urban life,'' said A.J. Robinson, the president of Central Atlanta Progress, the business alliance that has been central to Atlanta's coalition since the 1940s. ''With that you begin to recognize, hey, we have urban issues that are very much like the city of Atlanta. You have more density, you have more people who are concerned about civic affairs, you have more issues of infrastructure.''

Denser and more diverse places create their own politics, he said, apart from the politics that new residents bring.

''You have to think about how if we want more stuff, we have to tax ourselves,'' Mr. Robinson said. ''That's not a Republican concept.''

These trends have created a diverse region with both a growing Black population and new white residents whose politics differ from those of past white voters.

''You now have the basis for a multiracial electoral coalition,'' said Andra Gillespie, a political scientist at Emory. ''Whether or not they're all voting for the same reasons -- that's a totally different topic that's up for discussion.''

For the first time in Georgia, African-Americans made up the majority of a winning presidential candidate's coalition, according to Bernard Fraga, another Emory political scientist. That is a remarkable evolution of the old biracial alliance that many white Georgians rejected.

''This really does feel like the old Hartsfield coalition -- it's just happened beyond the city limits,'' said Professor Kruse, the historian. That alliance includes white college-educated suburbanites who, like the downtown business leaders before them, he said, ''aren't necessarily personally liberal but who see the forces of illiberalism as being hostile to their own interests.''

Now it is dog whistles and political conspiracy theories that are bad for business.

This larger Democratic coalition may also prove fragile, in some of the same ways. The Atlanta Way, for one, has often left out the interests of lower-income African-Americans.

''I don't think it's a strong enough coalition to create more equity in terms of improving majority-minority schools, or building more affordable housing,'' said Deirdre Oakley, a sociologist at Georgia State. And some of these suburbs, with their rising diversity, still don't want Atlanta transit.

But the coalition will have a chance to demonstrate its might again soon, in the Senate runoffs, and in a governor's race likely to include Stacey Abrams again in 2022.

''One way you could characterize what happened a month ago is this was the first time -- maybe the first time ever -- where urban Georgia outvoted rural Georgia,'' said Charles S. Bullock III, a political scientist at the University of Georgia.

That urban tally includes Savannah, Macon and Athens, but now, also, voters in suburban communities that, a generation ago, defined themselves as anything but urban.

Quoctrung Bui contributed to this article.Quoctrung Bui contributed to this article.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/upshot/atlanta-suburbs-democratic-shift.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/upshot/atlanta-suburbs-democratic-shift.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Real New Yorkers, Coming and Going***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y2M-HXP1-JBG3-626G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 26, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 3; BIG CITY

**Length:** 1015 words

**Byline:** By Ginia Bellafante

**Body**

When a Brooklyn politician tells transplants to ''go back to Ohio,'' what exactly does that mean?

This past week was not an ideal moment to be moving to New York from the Midwest, particularly if you were coming from Des Moines or Cleveland.

Delivering a speech in Harlem on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president seeking to become mayor in 2021, railed against the crisis of displacement that gentrification has produced around the city.

To his mind, the face of the destructive interloper in Upper Manhattan or Crown Heights belongs not to the guy in digital marketing born in Scarsdale who can't afford the West Village yet, but rather to the person who has landed in New York from what is so often derisively known as flyover country.

To these people, kept by fate from the privilege of an East Coast childhood, Mr. Adams had a message: ''Go back to Iowa. You go back to Ohio. New York City belongs to the people that was here and made New York City what it is. And I know. I'm a New Yorker.''

His comments were criticized roundly and immediately -- for divisiveness, for hypocrisy, for their refusal to acknowledge the essential role of the transplant to the city's identity, for misplaced blame.

Two years ago, Mr. Adams said that ''gentrification'' was a term used to ''demonize'' Brooklyn's evolution, a remark that suggested a lack of proper antipathy for the real-estate industry voraciously at the heart of the city's housing emergencies. Mr. Adams has, in fact, taken contributions both from developers in New York and ordinary people around the country, including Ohio.

Although the outrage eventually prompted him to scale his comments back, the spirit in which they were rendered speaks to the broader problem of the invasion narrative in American politics and social thought -- the horror of the outsider at the gate with a wrecking ball aimed at all that is pure and authentic in a place that belongs only to those who already occupy it.

On the right this plays out in the fear that immigrants are arriving to upend a stability among the ***working class*** that hasn't existed for decades. On the left it often takes the shape of distaste or flat-out disgust -- with the many natives living in all those places west of New York and east of Los Angeles who are always showing up to ruin things, voting against their own economic interests and handing the country to President Trump, clogging the streets of Midtown Manhattan to see ''Jersey Boys'' and eat at Red Lobster.

One of the few who came to Mr. Adams's defense was the writer Jeremiah Moss, New York City's career elegist, who embraced the suggestion that the wrong people ought to leave. Mr. Moss, whose ongoing chronicle of the city's vanishing retail landscape has been an essential and poignant contribution to urban history, had just published an essay in the literary journal n+1, running under the headline ''Open House.'' It had a subtitle familiar to anyone who has passed by a T-shirt booth in Times Square: ''Welcome to New York; Now Go Home.''

In the piece, he writes about the desecration of his East Village apartment building, once home to outcasts and freaks, in his view the only rightful heirs to a downtown life. It was now the address of Kaylas and Hayleys and Ashleys with their generic habits and empty minds, their AirPods and blank stares and Amazon addictions. One of his neighbors, he tells us, is from Wisconsin.

''These new people are completists,'' he writes. ''If they don't have professional furnishers, they order entire apartments through the mail in their first week.'' He mourns the loss of a time when people appointed apartments with the discarded lamps and night stands they found on the street, even as a freegan movement thrives in New York despite whatever preferences his own neighbors have for the bland efficiency of West Elm.

In my 30-odd years of living in New York -- I, too, am a transplant -- I have met three people from Ohio, two of whom moved back, one an accountant who complained about the city's high taxes. The idea that the city is being colonized by Midwesterners or others from elsewhere in the country is itself not supported by statistics. In fact, the opposite is true.

Two years ago, a study from the Zicklin School of Business at Baruch College looked at data from the census and the Internal Revenue Service to determine migration patterns in and out of New York. What researchers found is that while the city's population grew by 362,000 residents between 2010 and 2016, net domestic migration was down by approximately 525,000 people, meaning that more people moved out of the city than moved in.

New York dispersed more people to surrounding suburban counties and a number of large urban counties around the country than it received.

Presumably some portion of the population moving to New York, one of the most expensive cities in the world, from other parts of the country, are compelled by job opportunities that have dried up in Indianapolis or Columbus or somewhere else. At the same time, foreign immigration to communities beyond the Northeast means that you can eat decent Mongolian food in Sioux City. The sophistications of New York -- the diversity, the bohemianism, creativity and acceptance which made it unlike anywhere else -- have been in the process of a slow, successful export.

When Andy Warhol and Patti Smith, the patron saints of downtown cool, arrived in New York, they were misfits from somewhere else, and they brought with them an outsize ambition both for success and to live freely, as they were. Would they come now? Maybe they wouldn't bother. And maybe that doesn't bear the weight of tragedy we give it.

Five years ago a school district near Kansas City, Mo., gained wide attention when a transgender student was crowned homecoming queen. Three years after that, two elementary schools in the district installed gender-neutral bathrooms.

If you are welcome where you are, maybe you don't have to leave.Email [*bigcity@nytimes.com*](mailto:bigcity@nytimes.com); follow Ginia Bellafante on Twitter: @GiniaNYT

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/24/nyregion/eric-adams-gentrification.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/24/nyregion/eric-adams-gentrification.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, stirred contention with his recent suggestion that Midwestern transplants should ''go back to Iowa.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX WROBLEWSKI/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2020

**End of Document**



[***‘This Is a War’: Cross-Border Fight Over Water Erupts in Mexico***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:612G-7041-JBG3-61KS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 14, 2020 Wednesday 07:53 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1387 words

**Byline:** Natalie Kitroeff

**Highlight:** Farmers in Mexico ambushed soldiers and seized a dam to stop water payments to the United States, in a sign of growing conflict over increasingly scarce resources.

**Body**

BOQUILLA, Mexico — The farmers armed themselves with sticks, rocks and homemade shields, ambushed hundreds of soldiers guarding a dam and seized control of one of the border region’s most important bodies of water.

The Mexican government was sending water — their water — to Texas, leaving them next to nothing for their thirsty crops, the farmers said. So they took over the dam and have refused to allow any of the water to flow to the United States for more than a month.

“This is a war,” said Victor Velderrain, a grower who helped lead the takeover, “to survive, to continue working, to feed my family.”

The standoff is the culmination of longstanding tensions over water between the United States and Mexico that have recently exploded into violence, pitting Mexican farmers against their own president and the global superpower next door.

Negotiating the exchange of water between the two countries has long been strained, but rising temperatures and long droughts have made the shared rivers along the border more valuable than ever, intensifying the stakes for both nations.

The dam’s takeover is a stark example of how far people are willing to go to defend livelihoods threatened by climate change — and of the kind of conflict that may become more common with increasingly extreme weather.

Along the arid border region, water rights are governed by a decades-old treaty that compels the United States and Mexico to share the flows of the Colorado and Rio Grande rivers, with each side sending water to the other. Mexico has fallen far behind on its obligations to the United States and is now facing a deadline to deliver the water this month.

But this has been one of the driest years in the last three decades for Chihuahua, the Mexican border state responsible for sending the bulk of the water Mexico owes. Its farmers have rebelled, worried that losing any more water will rob them of a chance for a healthy harvest next year.

“These tensions, these tendencies, are already there, and they’re just made so much worse by climate change,” said Christopher Scott, a professor of water resources policy at the University of Arizona. “They are in a fight for their lives, because no water, no agriculture; no agriculture, no rural communities.”

Since February, when federal forces first occupied the dam to ensure water deliveries to the United States continued, activists in Chihuahua have burned government buildings, destroyed cars and briefly held a group of politicians hostage. For weeks, they’ve blocked a major railroad used to ferry industrial goods between Mexico and the United States.

Their revolt has alarmed farmers and politicians in Texas. Greg Abbott, the state’s Republican governor, appealed to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo last month, demanding that he persuade Mexico to deliver the water by the deadline next week, or risk inflicting pain on American farmers.

Mexico’s president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who has repeatedly bent to President Trump’s demands on immigration, has vowed that his country will make good on its water obligations to the United States — whether the state of Chihuahua likes it or not.

He sent hundreds of members of [*the National Guard*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/28/world/americas/mexico-amlo-national-guard.html) to protect Chihuahua’s dams, and his government temporarily froze bank accounts belonging to the city where many of the protesters live.

For farmers, the government’s stance is a betrayal.

Mr. Velderrain, 42, said he never saw himself as the type of person who would lead hundreds over a hill to overwhelm a group of soldiers protecting a cache of automatic weapons. But there he was in [*a video posted on Facebook*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/28/world/americas/mexico-amlo-national-guard.html), escorting a Mexican general out of the Boquilla Dam on the day he led the takeover.

Surprised and heavily outnumbered, the National Guard quickly surrendered. Later that day, one protester was shot and killed by the National Guard.

“We have always dedicated ourselves to work; we’ve never been known as protesters,” Mr. Velderrain said back on his farm, shucking an ear of corn that wasn’t quite ready for harvest. “What happened at the Boquilla dam was impressive, because we took off our farmer clothes and put on the uniform of guerrilla fighters.”

The federal government argues that the protesting farmers are also hurting other Mexicans by preventing water from flowing to their compatriots downstream, and that the growers would still have access to at least 60 percent of the water they need for next year.

“Agriculture, like any other profession, has risks,” said Blanca Jiménez, the head of Mexico’s National Water Commission. “One of the risks is that there are years when it rains more and years when it rains less.”

With the intensity of the drought in Chihuahua this year, Mexico has fallen far behind on its water shipments to the United States. It now has to send more than 50 percent of its average annual water payment in a matter of weeks. The Mexican government insists it will still comply, despite the takeover of the dam, which spans the Conchos River, a major tributary of the Rio Grande. But some Texans have their doubts.

“It’s just not going to happen, unless a storm develops and helps Mexico, which is normally what they count on,” said Sonny Hinojosa, the general manager of an irrigation district in Hidalgo County, Texas. “They gamble and hope that a storm or mother nature will bail them out.”

Texans also contend that, on balance, Mexico benefits more from the water-sharing agreement between the two countries, signed in 1944, than they do. Mr. Abbott, the state’s governor, has pointed out that the United States sends Mexico about four times as much water as it receives from its neighbor.

The treaty doesn’t punish either side for shirking its duties but, eager to avoid conflict, Mexico is scrambling to find a way to meet its water obligations as the deadline nears. One of the likeliest solutions is that Mexico will hand over a significant amount of the water it owns in reservoirs, normally used by more than a dozen Mexican cities. In exchange, Mexico has asked the United States to lend it drinking water for those cities, if Mexico ends up running out.

Part of the problem, scientists say, is that Mexico’s need for water has grown since the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement in the 1990s, as more people settled in the country’s dry border region and agricultural production ramped up to satisfy American consumers.

Francisco Marta, a 23-year-old who manages his father’s corn and alfalfa fields, suspects that his fellow farmers don’t have the Mexican president’s sympathies in the water dispute because they are generally not members of his poor and ***working class*** political base. The farmers live in the north, traditionally a stronghold of the conservative opposition against Mr. López Obrador, who ran on a leftist platform.

“He believes that we are rich and that nothing will happen to us if we don’t work next year, but that’s not true," Mr. Marta said. “I myself will migrate if I don’t have anywhere to work here.”

Mr. López Obrador has accused politicians and “big agriculture” of fomenting strife in Chihuahua, which, he said at a recent news conference, “has nothing to do with small farmers.”

But Jéssica Silva, 35, the protester who was killed the day the farmers took the Boquilla Dam, didn’t have a farm of her own, her parents said. She and her husband, Jaime Torres, rented about 22 acres of pecan trees and helped her parents cultivate an even smaller plot.

“She had so many plans,” said Ms. Silva’s mother, Justina Zamarripa, tears falling into the creases of her cheeks.

The National Guard shot Ms. Silva several times in the back through the window of her husband’s truck. He was wounded but survived.

“She was defending what belongs to us,” said her father, José Luis Silva.

In a photo her parents have of the two just after the attack, Ms. Silva is slumped over in the passenger seat, wearing her seatbelt and a mask to protect against the coronavirus.

“She was always so cautious,” her mother said.

PHOTOS: Receding water levels near the Boquilla Dam. “These tensions, these tendencies, are already there, and they’re just made so much worse by climate change,” one water policy expert said.; The parents of Jéssica Silva, who was killed while protesting, holding up a portrait of her. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DANIEL BEREHULAK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** October 16, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Big Myth Behind the ‘Real New Yorker’; BIG CITY***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y26-7GN1-JBG3-64WN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 24, 2020 Friday 14:22 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1038 words

**Byline:** Ginia Bellafante

**Highlight:** When a Brooklyn politician tells transplants to “go back to Ohio,” what exactly does that mean?

**Body**

When a Brooklyn politician tells transplants to “go back to Ohio,” what exactly does that mean?

This past week was not an ideal moment to be moving to New York from the Midwest, particularly if you were coming from Des Moines or Cleveland.

Delivering a speech in Harlem on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/02/nyregion/adams-mcguire-nyc-mayor.html), the Brooklyn borough president seeking to become mayor in 2021, railed against the crisis of displacement that gentrification has produced around the city.

To his mind, the face of the destructive interloper in Upper Manhattan or Crown Heights belongs not to the guy in digital marketing born in Scarsdale who can’t afford the West Village yet, but rather to the person who has landed in New York from what is so often derisively known as flyover country.

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His comments were criticized roundly and immediately — for divisiveness, for hypocrisy, for their refusal to acknowledge the essential role of the transplant to the city’s identity, for misplaced blame.

Two years ago, Mr. Adams said that “gentrification’’ was a term used to “demonize’’ Brooklyn’s evolution, a remark that suggested a lack of proper antipathy for the real-estate industry voraciously at the heart of the city’s housing emergencies. Mr. Adams has, in fact, taken contributions both from developers in New York and ordinary people around the country, including Ohio.

Although the outrage eventually prompted him to scale his comments back, the spirit in which they were rendered speaks to the broader problem of the invasion narrative in American politics and social thought — the horror of the outsider at the gate with a wrecking ball aimed at all that is pure and authentic in a place that belongs only to those who already occupy it.

On the right this plays out in the fear that immigrants are arriving to upend a stability among the ***working class*** that hasn’t existed for decades. On the left it often takes the shape of distaste or flat-out disgust — with the many natives living in all those places west of New York and east of Los Angeles who are always showing up to ruin things, voting against their own economic interests and handing the country to President Trump, clogging the streets of Midtown Manhattan to see “Jersey Boys” and eat at Red Lobster.

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Email [*bigcity@nytimes.com*](mailto:bigcity@nytimes.com); follow Ginia Bellafante on Twitter: @GiniaNYT

PHOTO: Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, stirred contention with his recent suggestion that Midwestern transplants should “go back to Iowa.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX WROBLEWSKI/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Genoa Applauds Its New Bridge While Lamenting the City's Challenges***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60H4-GWM1-DXY4-X55P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 3, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2020 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1292 words

**Byline:** By Gaia Pianigiani

**Body**

Built in less than two years to replace the collapsed Morandi bridge, the new span is already a point of pride for Italy. But residents fear it will not be enough to revive their aging port city.

GENOA, Italy -- Since the dramatic and deadly collapse of the Morandi bridge over the Italian port of Genoa two years ago, builders have worked around the clock, through a judicial investigation and the coronavirus pandemic, so a new bridge could open on time.

Designed by a native son of the city, the architect Renzo Piano, and built in a record 15 months, the new Genoa San Giorgio bridge, whose inauguration is Monday, has become a matter of pride for Genoa and all of Italy, a symbol of their can-do spirit.

Yet residents and business owners say the accomplishment will hardly cure the pains of the city, which was shrinking -- economically, demographically and culturally -- even before the collapse, which killed 43 people on Aug. 14, 2018.

The loss of one of the city's main arteries and its fastest east-west connection compounded all those problems, devastating businesses and paralyzing life. Today many in Genoa are still suffering and lament that the new bridge will not be enough to overcome the absence of a broad, long-term vision to revive their city.

Though the government and the company that manages the bridge, Autostrade per l'Italia, or Highways for Italy, gave aid to dozens of businesses in the area to help them stay afloat, many had to relocate or remained cut off from the rest of Genoa.

''I lost 50 percent of my business with the collapse; my patients who lived across the bridge could no longer get here,'' said Dr. Fabio Bertoldi, a veterinarian whose office is about 300 yards north of the bridge.

''Now I even bike to work,'' said Dr. Bertoldi, who lives about 15 miles away. If he drove, he added, ''It would take me three hours to get here with the construction on the highway.''

A surge of long-overdue infrastructure work has further snarled traffic. For many of those who live in Genoa, then, the opening of the new bridge is at best bittersweet.

''We are glad for the new bridge, built so fast, and the maintenance on the highways, but it all also leaves us a bitter feeling,'' said Egle Possetti, spokeswoman for a group of the victims' families. ''Had they done it before, our relatives might have been alive.'' Ms. Possetti's sister, brother-in-law, young nephew and niece were killed when the bridge fell.

Genoa's unique location -- wedged between mountains and sea in Italy's northeast -- makes it hard to reach and even harder to navigate. It takes five hours to reach Genoa by fast train from Rome, almost twice the time it takes to go from Rome to Milan, which is only about 40 miles farther north.

As high-speed trains near the port city, they must switch to older, slower two-way tracks, which are often flooded by the region's violent thunderstorms.

In recent months, dozens of new maintenance sites have forced officials to limit road traffic. Drivers endure traffic jams, accompanied by the metallic sound of drilling, that wind along the city's picturesque highways, an overlapping series of viaducts with stunning sea views.

After the vault of a tunnel northwest of Genoa partly collapsed last year, Italy's Transportation Ministry ordered a thorough inspection of the region's overpasses and bridges. Nearly all had safety problems and had to be repaired.

''We are prioritizing security,'' Placido Migliorino, the engineer in charge of highway inspections at the ministry, said in a phone interview.

In the past four months, Mr. Migliorino has traveled weekly to Genoa to monitor the progress of the maintenance work.

''About 50 of the galleries are around Genoa, and in some the problems couldn't be fixed overnight,'' Mr. Migliorino said, referring to the area's tunnels. ''That's why cars and trucks have limited circulation.''

Mr. Migliorino has also been examining viaducts and says they, too, have been poorly maintained.

Emanuele Piccardo, an architecture critic, said, ''For a country that tends to work in emergency mode, constant maintenance is difficult, from the local to the national level.''

''You can build the long bypass, or a new bridge,'' said Mr. Piccardo, the curator of ''The Collapse of Modernity,'' an upcoming book on the consequences of the Morandi disaster. ''But if you don't rethink mobility in this narrow valley to make it based on rails instead of wheels, it's a waste of time.''

Even with the new bridge's opening, Mr. Piccardo expects the outlying Polcevera River valley to remain greatly disconnected from the city center because of the heavy traffic.

''Building a bridge is an opportunity, but the valley won't improve just because of this new infrastructure,'' he said.

The valley's Certosa district, just north of the Morandi viaduct, was among the hardest hit by the bridge collapse. These days, its residents mingle in the mornings under trees in the cobblestone piazzas. By midday, the streets are almost empty as the elderly go indoors to nap.

The area, once home to the ***working class*** of Genoa's industrial port, is an urban sprawl divided by the river that the viaduct crossed. Large department stores and industries line one bank of the river, the port's containers and residential neighborhoods the other.

Certosa residents say that the new bridge will hardly bring them any closer to the city center. Even Marco Bucci, Genoa's mayor, admitted after the tragedy that he had never been to the district before.

Residents do not expect the area to be reshaped much, despite a subway stop and the introduction of a park with a memorial for the victims of the bridge collapse, designed by the famed Italian architect Stefano Boeri.

''I don't blame anyone,'' said Paolo Lecca, 68, a retiree, as he looked at the new bridge's huge working site, where his friends used to live. ''But we don't even have a hospital here. We need to get to Genoa.''

Christian Giannini, 48, who owns a bike store in Certosa, said: ''This new bridge is beautiful. I just hope they make what is underneath nice, too.''

Mr. Giannini signed his shop's lease four days before the Morandi viaduct collapsed. His store overlooks the large boulevard that ran under it, which was closed for eight months. Children once played soccer where cars are now parked.

''It was somewhat charming,'' he smiled. ''It reminded me of my childhood when we drove here to buy the best clothes in town.''

While some businesses relocated during the reconstruction, others closed for good.

''I open my store every day, but if people leave here, how are we supposed to make business?'' asked Marianna Correnti, 61, the owner of a flower shop in the Certosa district. ''I had many clients in the apartment buildings that were demolished, and of course they are gone.''

Gian Battista Cassano owns a large scrap center under the bridge and to the west. His cameras recorded the Morandi falling, and he was among those to relocate. Mr. Cassano's company navigated the red tape to move to a space half as large, and to install solar panels there. But it struggled to pay bills and salaries.

''We were left alone,'' he said.

Because of the congestion, some Polcevera Valley residents don't drive anymore.

''People need to wake up at night to travel with no traffic,'' said Teresa Altovino, 49, a health worker shopping at the local market in Certosa. ''I even stopped going to the beach.''

Ms. Altovino, who was working in the area when the bridge collapsed, said she walked out of the building that day to see what had happened. She can still hear the people screaming that morning two years ago.

''The new bridge looks solid, but I won't take it,'' she said. ''I am too scared.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/02/world/europe/genoa-Morandi-bridge-replacement.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/02/world/europe/genoa-Morandi-bridge-replacement.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The Genoa San Giorgio bridge, designed by the architect Renzo Piano, opens Monday. It replaces the Morandi bridge that collapsed in August 2018, killing 43 people. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUCA ZENNARO/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

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**End of Document**



[***‘There Was No Mercy’; DealBook Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6274-46M1-JBG3-60XC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BUSINESS; dealbook

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**Byline:** Andrew Ross Sorkin, Jason Karaian, Michael J. de la Merced, Lauren Hirsch and Ephrat Livni

**Highlight:** Amazon played hardball in opposing unionization drives.

**Body**

Amazon played hardball in opposing unionization drives.

Amazon’s anti-unionization playbook

Amazon faces a unionization drive at a warehouse in Bessemer, Ala. — the largest and most viable U.S. labor challenge in years. The Times’s David Streitfeld [*l*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) [*ooked into the e-commerce giant’s previous efforts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) to block organized labor. He found a host of tough tactics … that worked. Will they again?

Among Amazon’s steps to oppose a unionization drive in Chester, Va. five years ago, according to regulatory documents and employees:

* Human resources officials were brought in, and some were accused of following workers to glean their positions on the union drive.

1. Supporters of the effort were described as “a cancer and a disease to Amazon and the facility,” according to Bill Hough Jr., a leader of that organization effort, and a memo from the union sponsoring the effort.
2. Mr. Hough was accused of insubordination and was told he may lose his job if he continued to have a “negative impact.”
3. Mr. Hough’s verdict: “There was no mercy.”

Amazon secretly reached a settlement with the National Labor Relations Board, after the union behind the drive lodged a complaint. The company was required to post notices around the warehouse promising good behavior, though it did not have to admit to labor law violations or pay financial penalties.

* In the end, most employees who had supported the union drive quit.

Organizers of the Alabama unionization effort say the company has tried similar tactics. Amazon, they assert, tried to surveil employees while posting notices around the Bessemer warehouse bad-mouthing the union. (One claimed workers would need to skimp on dinner to pay union dues.) Management even changed a traffic signal to hinder organizers’ efforts to approach workers.

* Those accusations prompted [*President Biden to say*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) that “workers in Alabama” — Amazon wasn’t specifically named — shouldn’t face “intimidation or threats by employers.” Senator Marco Rubio, Republican of Florida, [*expressed support for Amazon workers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html), saying the company had “decided to wage culture war against ***working-class*** values.”

Union organizers who clashed with Amazon in the past are pessimistic. Nearly 6,000 workers at the Bessemer warehouse have until March 29 to decide whether to join the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. “They will fall to threats or think, ‘I won’t have a job, Amazon will replace me,’” Mr. Hough, who led the unionization effort in Virginia, told The Times. He added, “I’m hoping for the best.” In a statement, Amazon said it did not believe the union push in Alabama “represents the majority of our employees’ views.”

HERE’S WHAT’S HAPPENING

More European countries suspend the use of AstraZeneca’s vaccine. Germany, France, Italy and Spain [*paused the inoculations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) amid reports that a handful of recipients had developed blood clots. Medical experts said there was “no evidence” linking the vaccine to increased risk of clots, but the moves could add to the problems of Europe’s vaccination initiatives.

Volkswagen outlines plans to counter Tesla’s battery dominance. The European carmaker announced efforts to cut costs and [*improve vehicle charging times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html), as well as build six battery factories. One analyst said it served as “a blueprint for what legacy carmakers need to achieve.”

Warren Buffett bucks calls for E.S.G. disclosures. In Berkshire Hathaway’s [*annual proxy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html), Mr. Buffett’s conglomerate urged shareholders to [*reject proposals*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) for more transparency of climate-related risks and diversity and inclusion efforts. It’s a marked contrast to the increasing disclosure into environmental, social and corporate governance issues (more on that below).

The Sackler family may relinquish control of OxyContin’s maker. Purdue Pharma has released [*its bankruptcy restructuring plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html), which includes a pledge from its founding family to pay $4.3 billion — $1.3 billion more than previously offered — to reimburse the costs of the opioid epidemic.

Streaming giants dominate the Oscar race. [*Netflix collected 35 nominations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) — led by “Mank,” from the director David Fincher — while Amazon earned 12, as pandemic-driven theater shutdowns bolstered online video services and traditional studios shifted many contenders to next year.

Exclusive: Shareholder relations sour at Danone

A day after the chairman and C.E.O. of Danone, Emmanuel Faber, [*stepped down under pressure*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) from activist investors, other shareholders in the French food giant are turning on the activists. CtW, an adviser to union pension funds with over $250 billion in assets, sent a sharply worded letter yesterday to Artisan Partners, which led the revolt over Mr. Faber’s leadership. The twist in the letter, which was reviewed by DealBook, is that CtW owns a “substantial” number of Artisan shares — and said that the fund needs the sort of governance shake-up it pushed for Danone.

Danone’s commitment to social and environmental objectives is at the heart of the issue. Last year, Danone, which owns Evian and several yogurt brands, was the first public company to adopt the French legal framework of “[*Entreprise à Mission*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html),” which allows companies to take greater consideration of social and environmental issues in their business model. Some [*99 percent of shareholders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) backed the move, but not Artisan Partners. Danone’s performance has recently lagged behind competitors like Nestle and Unilever, [*Artisan said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) when calling for boardroom changes, including someone other than Mr. Faber becoming chairman.

* For some, there are bigger concerns at stake: Namely, whether the stakeholder model can survive resistance from activist investors focused primarily on shareholder returns.

CtW says Artisan’s own policies are inconsistent with its demands at Danone. Notably, Eric Colson serves as Artisan’s chairman and C.E.O. “Artisan’s call for an independent chair at Danone while maintaining the positions of C.E.O. and chair combined on its own board is inconsistent with best governance practices,” wrote Dieter Waizenegger, CtW’s executive director. He also questioned the firm’s use of “large discretionary cash bonuses” and demanded a discussion with management by the end of the month. Artisan did not respond to a request for comment.

“The economics of investing in bonds (and most financial assets) has become stupid.”

— Ray Dalio of Bridgewater Associates [*on the state of the markets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html).

We have questions for the S.E.C.

Yesterday, we flagged [*an important speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) by Allison Herren Lee, the acting chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission, on environmental, social and governance (E.S.G.) issues. Investors are increasingly demanding more corporate disclosure on these factors, and she suggested that voluntary regimes are not enough. “No single issue has been more pressing for me than ensuring that the S.E.C. is fully engaged in confronting the risks and opportunities that climate and E.S.G. pose for investors, our financial system and our economy,” [*she said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html).

We asked Ms. Lee a few more questions about the scope and timing of the agency’s initiatives. Her responses have been edited for clarity and length.

DealBook: Why act now?

Ms. Lee: We have a lot of ground to cover and a lot of time to make up for. What I don’t want to do is just be sitting here treading water.

Can companies focus on profits and the planet? Is there some tension?

This is one of the most profoundly complex issues that we’ve seen: climate change and how business needs to deal with it. We have got to allow companies leeway in order to experiment and consider how best to do this. It needs to be an iterative process. They need to have some safety around predictions and forward looking statements. We’ve got to work with them. I certainly don’t imply that there’s some set approach that every company needs to take.

What major fault lines do you anticipate in the E.S.G. debate?

One of the biggest questions is going to be, “what is the right mix of principles and metrics?” How are we going to identify what metrics make the most sense and will apply in the broadest way to help investors choose the businesses they wish to invest in?

Political spending is also a hot topic. Can you talk about that?

We’ve got in excess of a million comment letters telling us this is material. Everything I see and read and analyze and academic papers I’ve seen on it make it pretty clear that it can be material. Maybe not in all instances. But it can be. After Jan. 6, companies were making announcements about political spending. But we had no idea what they were doing before, right? How can investors test that? How do they know? There’s no question it is an integral issue — companies themselves plainly think so based on the statements they’ve been making.

In response to Ms. Lee’s remarks, Senator Patrick Toomey, a Pennsylvania Republican and ranking member of the Senate Banking Committee, [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html) that an increased focus on E.S.G. “would be a total abuse of power and a politicization of S.E.C.’s disclosure standard.”

THE SPEED READ

Deals

* China reportedly asked Alibaba to sell its media assets, including stakes in Weibo and The South China Morning Post, fearing its sway over public opinion. ([*WSJ*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))

1. Canada’s Rogers Communications agreed to buy a rival, Shaw, for $16 billion, but the deal faces antitrust hurdles. ([*Reuters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))
2. Blackstone and Starwood Capital teamed up to buy the hotel chain Extended Stay America for $6 billion, betting on a rebound in travel. ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))

Politics and policy

* Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is coordinating with other countries on a global minimum tax on multinational companies. ([*WaPo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))

1. Senator Elizabeth Warren has become one of the biggest influences on the Biden administration’s financial policy, judging by appointments. ([*Politico*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))
2. “The Financial Crisis the World Forgot” ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))

Tech

* Facebook agreed to pay News Corp for its media content in Australia, a month after it blocked news links in the country over legislation requiring platforms to compensate publishers. ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))

1. Electric-vehicle start-ups going public via SPACs are promising eye-popping revenue growth. ([*WSJ*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))
2. Peter Thiel’s biggest political donation yet is $10 million to a super PAC supporting the “Hillbilly Elegy” author J.D. Vance, who may run for the U.S. Senate in Ohio. ([*Recode*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))

Best of the rest

* Hand gel, dumbbells and sweatpants: The items Britain uses to calculate inflation got a pandemic makeover. ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))

1. Innovation happens in an environment where employees feel secure and safe. But women often don’t. ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))
2. The New York Times Book Review turns 125 this year. Here are some highlights. ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html))

We’d like your feedback! Please email thoughts and suggestions to [*dealbook@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/how-amazon-crushes-unions.html).

PHOTO: Union supporters outside an Amazon facility in Bessemer, Ala. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dustin Chambers/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Acrid Anxiety? Aisle 3, Next to the Financial Distress***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y20-YFY1-JBG3-63KT-00000-00&context=1519360)

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January 22, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1013 words

**Byline:** By Ben Brantley

**Body**

Racism is a stealth force in Eboni Booth's astute study of the (mostly) quiet desperation of minimum-wage workers in Vermont.

Christmas in Paris is a cheerless occasion. Or at least that's how the Yuletide season is experienced by those working at a big box store in the mid-1990s in the Vermont town of Paris, which gives Eboni Booth's coolly observant new play its title.

True, the employees of Berry's (which is likely to have you thinking of discount retailers with Mart in their names) may wear festive sweatshirts with their regulation lanyards and uniforms. And canned carols are piped, relentlessly, throughout the store.

But this aural wallpaper only underscores the bleakness of the lives unraveling in the staff rooms and loading docks of the non-unionized Berry's, where a typical salary is $5 an hour. In the world of ''Paris,'' which opened on Tuesday at the Atlantic Theater Company's Stage 2, there's no expectation of comfort and joy.

Like Samuel D. Hunter's ''Greater Clements,'' which recently ended its run at Lincoln Center, ''Paris'' is a solid addition to the expanding genre of sociologically detailed ***working-class*** American dramas. Booth, a playwriting fellow at the Juilliard School who is best known in New York as an actress in adventurous plays (''Dance Nation,'' ''Fulfillment Center''), shares with Hunter a rigorous economic fatalism.

But while ''Greater Clements'' deploys the grinding gears of melodrama to wear down its doomed characters, ''Paris'' takes an almost flatline approach to the unhappy existences it portrays. Yes, these people explode in fits of temper on a regular basis; they taunt and insult and scrap with one another; and at least one of them is involved in dangerously illegal activities.

Yet suspense rarely makes an appearance in this realistically acted, astutely written play, which is directed with a very even hand by Knud Adams. An ever-corrosive anxiety -- the kind that comes from never knowing if this week's paycheck will cover this week's living expenses -- is in the oxygen of Berry's. And it leaves those working in its airless confines (evoked mercilessly by David Zinn's gloomy set) in a state of depleted resignation.

This includes the store's newest staff member, Emmie. As embodied by the appealing newcomer Jules Latimer, in a bravely affectless performance, Emmie (birth name: Emaani) has the self-effacing mien of someone who aspires to invisibility. As it turns out, this is a not a state she has to work hard to achieve.

Emmie is black. And though she has lived most of her life in Paris, a small and insular town, and also works at a popular local bar (called Blonde Jovi), none of her fellow employees can remember having seen her before.

Racism is seldom openly acknowledged in ''Paris''; it is instead a stealthy, insistent part of its general climate. Gar (Eddie K. Robinson), the store manager who hires Emmie in the play's first scene, is also black. But that doesn't necessarily mean he's her ally.

He treats everyone badly, especially when he's in a bad mood. And as a boss, he has a secret weapon he holds over his employees. He knows how much -- and why -- they need their jobs. ''You want to quit?'' he typically says to one of them with the confidence of a fully briefed henchman. ''No, you can't quit. You have your grandmother to think about.''

There is little rousing esprit de corps among Emmie's fellow workers, though they can usually be relied upon to inventively cover up one another's mistakes. Logan (Christopher Dylan White) performs -- pathetically, one presumes -- in a local rap group. Wendy (a spot on Ann McDonough), a former nurse and a not-so-secret on-site drinker, is married to Dev (James Murtaugh), who fruitlessly peddles the gospel of success books.

The most outspoken of the lot is the misanthropic Maxine (Danielle Skraastad), who lives with her four children in a motel room behind the local Costco and snarls at pretty much everyone. Wendy winningly offers an explanation for such behavior: ''Her children are very bad people.''

Lines like that -- simple yet startling -- come along with welcome frequency in ''Paris.'' Yet while the play holds the attention, it seldom clutches it.

Ultimately, the wage slaves of Berry's register as the sums of their financial problems, fitted out with eccentricities that might show up in anecdotes of someone who had worked there for a summer. It is part of Booth's point, I think, that when money is as elusive as it is for these people, character is indeed primarily defined by privation.

Only Emmie -- who has spent an aborted year in college and is working to earn money to return -- would seem to have any chance of escaping this flattening destiny. Her status as a newcomer and an outsider makes her an effective, and increasingly dispirited, proxy for the audience's initiation into the Berry's universe.

She has also reached a nadir in her own life when she starts work there. Her mother has recently died, and her face is badly bruised -- her mouth intermittently bleeds without warning -- from a recent, drunken fall. Berry's seems like the next and natural circle of hell for her to enter.

In the show's most unsettling scene, Emmie encounters a visitor to the store named Carlisle, who's looking for her boss, and a whole other, deeper vista of darkness opens up behind him. Played with creepy, compelling understatement by Bruce McKenzie, Carlisle -- a soft-spoken man who runs his own mysterious and illicit business -- might have been teleported from a David Lynch movie.

''You want to be my little elf?'' he asks Emmie, proffering an unspecified alternative form of employment. He later adds, ''Your people are good workers.'' He asks her to open her injured mouth, so he can inspect it.

The cold wind of primal evil has entered the room. And for just a moment, a low-pay, tenuous job at Berry's seems, in contrast, like a pretty good way to make a living.

Paris

Tickets Through Feb. 16 at Atlantic Stage 2, Manhattan; 866-811-4111, atlantictheater.org. Running time: 1 hour 30 minutes.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/21/theater/paris-play-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/21/theater/paris-play-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Jules Latimer, above left, Christopher Dylan White, above right, and Ann McDonough, below left, play co-workers in a Vermont store in the play ''Paris,'' written by Eboni Booth. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAITLIN OCHS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2020

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[***Black New York Officials Push to Delay City's Switch to Ranked-Choice Voting***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61GN-08F1-DXY4-X3XX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Dana Rubinstein, Jeffery C. Mays and Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Body**

The new system was approved by voters in 2019, but critics, including at least one top mayoral candidate, fear that it may disenfranchise minority voters.

Next year was supposed to be when New York City would revolutionize how voters choose their mayor -- not merely selecting one candidate, but picking as many as five and ranking them in order of preference.

New York's take-no-prisoners political landscape was to be remade: Candidates would perhaps be more collegial and would be obliged to reach out to voters beyond their bases in the hope that other candidates' supporters would list them as a second or third choice. Runoff elections, often expensive and with limited turnout, would be eliminated.

But just as the city is poised to put the ranked-choice voting system in place, opposition is mounting. Black elected officials have raised objections, arguing that absent substantial voter education, the system will effectively disenfranchise voters of color.

On Tuesday night, six New York City Council members filed suit in State Supreme Court in Manhattan seeking to stop the city from starting the new voting system. One leading Black mayoral candidate -- Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, who once supported the system -- now says it's being rushed.

''From my discussions with New Yorkers in lower-income communities of color, I am concerned that not enough education has been done about rank-choice voting to ensure a smooth transition to that method so soon,'' Mr. Adams said in a statement.

Raymond J. McGuire, a Black business executive who is running for mayor, also questioned whether voters had received enough education about ranked-choice voting and said that without that education, he was ''concerned'' that the system would ''disenfranchise Black and brown voters.''

Seventy-four percent of New York City voters approved ranked-choice voting in 2019. Under the new system, if a candidate wins a majority of first-choice votes, that candidate wins outright. If no candidate wins a majority, the last-place winner is eliminated. The second-choice votes of those who had favored the last-place candidate would be counted instead. The process continues until there is a winner.

But with the mayoral primary less than seven months away, some campaigns are worried that the system could hurt Black candidates. They argue that a traditional approach would increase the chances of a runoff, where a Black candidate might perform better in a contest with only two names on the ballot.

Critics also question whether the city's problem-prone Board of Elections can roll out such a complicated system during a once-in-a-century pandemic.

Two of the six Council members who brought the lawsuit, Adrienne E. Adams and I. Daneek Miller, lead the Council's Black, Latino and Asian Caucus. The other four -- Laurie A. Cumbo, Robert E. Cornegy Jr., Farah N. Louis and Alicka Ampry-Samuel -- represent districts in Brooklyn, which is Mr. Adams's home base.

The suit was filed by a law firm where Frank V. Carone, the counsel to the Brooklyn Democratic Party, is an executive partner.

''They say all throughout the country that ranked-choice voting is working well for communities of color,'' Ms. Cumbo, who has endorsed Mr. Adams for mayor, said during a Council hearing on Monday. ''Well, New York City is a totally different city.''

The lawsuit was filed against the city, its Board of Elections and its Campaign Finance Board, contending that the city and the two boards had violated the law by failing to adequately explain the software that will be used to tabulate the votes and by failing to conduct a sufficient public education campaign to familiarize voters with the new system.

The suit seeks to prohibit the city from starting the new system in a February special election, a race that was poised to be a trial run for the June Democratic mayoral primary, which would use the same system and is likely to determine the city's next mayor.

''The board does not comment on pending litigation,'' said Valerie Vazquez, a spokeswoman for the elections board. ''However, as we have previously stated, we will be ready to implement ranked-choice voting just as we successfully implemented a new voting system in 2010 and launched early voting in 2019.''

Amy Loprest, executive director of the New York City Campaign Finance Board, said that the board has been working on its educational efforts all year, and a formal public awareness campaign will launch soon.

Since November of 2016, ranked-choice voting has been used in Maine for all its state and federal primary elections as well as all general congressional elections and the general election for president starting this year. It has also been used in five Democratic presidential caucuses and primaries this year and in at least 18 municipalities around the country, according to FairVote, a nonpartisan election reform group that is a leading proponent of ranked-choice voting.

Some mayoral candidates seem to be factoring the new voting system into their campaign strategies, including Shaun Donovan, the former Obama administration cabinet member who formally announced his run on Tuesday. An ''electability'' slide show circulated on his behalf argued that ''Shaun's broad appeal makes him a natural second and third choice for voters, even when they are already committed to another candidate.''

Carlos Menchaca, a councilman from Brooklyn who is running for mayor, said he has already had discussions with at least one other candidate about running together -- urging voters to choose a team of two candidates as their two top choices.

''Ranked-choice voting allows for partnership on the campaign trail,'' he said.

Maya Wiley, another Black candidate, supports ranked-choice voting and said runoffs in the prior system diluted the votes of people of color and ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

''I look forward to continuing my campaign to reach New Yorkers in every corner of the city with our vision for a reimagined city that is more fair and just for everyone,'' Ms. Wiley said in a statement.

Good-government groups say that the new system enhances democracy.

''The truth of the matter is that ranked-choice voting puts power into the hands of the voter,'' said Susan Lerner, the executive director of Common Cause New York. ''And to the extent that there are party officials who are used to having undue influence over who the winner might be, I can see where they would be frightened by ranked-choice voting.''

But critics of the system argue that without adequate public education, the system confuses voters and thus disenfranchises them. They also contend that the voting system targets a party system heavily populated by leaders of color.

Kirsten John Foy, president of the activism group Arc of Justice, said he was exploring a separate lawsuit with Hazel N. Dukes, the president of the New York State chapter of the NAACP, arguing that Black and other minority voters would be disenfranchised by ranked-choice voting.

''Some progressive white folks got together in a room and thought this would be good, but it's not good for our community,'' Ms. Dukes said. ''The voters did vote, so we can't overturn that, but we want a stay because there's been no education about this in our community.''

Mr. Foy also questioned the motives of those leading the effort to enact ranked-choice voting.

''The primary argument for ranked-choice voting is that it expands access to elected office for Black and brown officials, but we don't have that problem,'' said Mr. Foy, who listed a string of positions from state attorney general to borough presidents that are held by Black and Latino elected officials. ''This is a solution in search of a problem.''

But Bertha Lewis, president of the Black Institute, said that there was ''plenty of time for voters to learn to rank their vote.''

''Let me say it plainly: Black voters are not stupid,'' she said in testimony submitted to the Council hearing on Monday. ''It is insulting to say that they will not be able to understand.''

Ranked-choice voting has a long and complicated history in the United States.

''There was a period over 100 years ago when it was in use in some cities,'' but it fell out of favor around World War II, according to David C. Kimball, a political-science professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

In the past two decades, it has gained traction in places including San Francisco and Oakland, Calif., and in Maine.

The research on its impact on voter turnout is, however, mixed, he said, and voter education is a must, as American voters are accustomed to voting for just one candidate, not five.

''I don't know quite how to put this politely, but the New York City elections board has trouble tying its shoes, metaphorically speaking,'' Professor Kimball said. ''So asking them to roll out new voting rules in a matter of months is a big ask.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Polls in Brooklyn last summer. Nearly three-quarters of New York City voters approved a ranked-choice system in 2019. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 10, 2020

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[***How New York City Pulled Itself Out of the Lower Depths; nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6273-PW21-DXY4-X53G-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1726 words

**Byline:** Kevin Baker

**Highlight:** Thomas Dyja’s “New York, New York, New York” describes the city’s revival in recent years, and the problems it will face in the future.

**Body**

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Four Decades of Success, Excess, and Transformation

By Thomas Dyja

You will have a hard time getting through [*Thomas Dyja’s*](https://thomasdyja.com) “New York, New York, New York,” mostly because there is an idea on every page, if not in every paragraph — and usually attached to a perfect line from the host of sources he has collected for this history of New York City over its last four rollicking decades.

Here is the journalist Michael Tomasky fretting that “there’s only so much wholesomeness New York can take,” the graphic designer Tibor Kalman advising us that Times Square “should be a zoo, like the rest of New York, but a well-maintained zoo instead of a depressed, unemployed and crack-smoking kind of zoo,” and the philanthropist Andrew Heiskell promising a crime-free Bryant Park: “All the hiding places have been eliminated.” Here is Spy magazine headlining Rudy Giuliani as “The Toughest Weenie in America,” Jules Feiffer calling Elaine’s “a men’s club for the literary lonely,” the writer Lewis Lapham diagnosing money as “the sickness of the town” and the architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable calling Harry Helmsley’s Palace Hotel tower “a curtain wall of unforgivable, consummate mediocrity.”

And from Dyja himself: “In the Meatpacking District, both sides of beef and gay men hung from hooks”; hedge funds “meant leaving the rich to their own devices; historically, a dangerous idea,” and “while the smart money had been going to real estate, so had the stupid money.” “Bruce Ratner believed he made money doing good — the story many in New York had been telling about themselves for a decade”; Richard Ravitch “had the burly sense of purpose found in fighting mammals of the Upper Midwest”; Jeff Van Gundy “led the Knicks to the N.B.A. finals with all the ugly luck of finding a winning scratch-off on a bodega floor”; Al Sharpton “on the face of it … had a deathbed conversion, but really he’d just rebranded.” And “of all the things Abe Beame can be blamed for, Donald J. Trump is by far the worst.”

“New York x 3” begins on Feb. 14, 1978, designated [*“I Love New York Day”*](https://thomasdyja.com) for the ubiquitous jingle introduced that afternoon, part of a last-ditch publicity campaign to revive a city that even those who loved it feared was dying. But New York wasn’t dying, and why it wasn’t — the women and men, policies and plans, trends and revolutions in everything from music to technology to public spaces to private desires that transformed it — is Dyja’s story. What he has produced is a tour de force, a work of astonishing breadth and depth that encompasses seminal changes in New York’s government and economy, along with deep dives into hip-hop, the AIDS crisis, the visual arts, housing, architecture and finance.

It’s quite a high-wire act, and one that Dyja, who has previously written a cultural history of Chicago, pulls off without ever losing the rush of his narrative. He slips in telling statistics with the skill of a banderillero, using them always to secure a point and move his story forward. Thus we learn that 60 percent of the African-American population in Harlem left between 1950 and 1980. That there were about 86 publishing houses in New York at the start of the 1980s and that “between 1979 and 1989, 2,500 new magazines came out.” From the start of Ronald Reagan’s term to 2000, “the top 1 percent had gotten 86 percent of the stock gains”; and New York City lost over 100,000 single-room-occupancy units at roughly the same time New York State’s psychiatric units dumped 50,000 inmates back on the streets. At the nadir of the crack epidemic, “some 150,000 New Yorkers were plying the drug trade,” and in 1990 “2.28 million Black men were jailed in the U.S. while 23,000 earned a college degree.” And that “by the end of 1983, New York’s entire contribution to AIDS services and education totaled $24,500.”

Dyja’s narrative starts with the decline of what he calls, with only faint irony, “The Workers’ Paradise,” the legendary ***working-class***/middle-class city that emerged after World War II with a million manufacturing jobs and what was — for America — an unrivaled social welfare state. But even this fabled New York, as he notes, “existed during a period of exclusion” for most citizens who did not happen to be white, and crumbled under the batterings of deindustrialization, corruption, mismanagement and the usual neglect from Washington and Albany. Its aura lingered on, though, complicating things for those trying to forge a new city. (When a woman urged Ed Koch to “make the city what it once was,” the mayor told her with characteristic bluntness, “Lady, it was never that good.”)

What to do? Dyja frames the struggle as a fundamental shift in how New York operated, “from mass society to networks,” with “the collective world of unions, borough machines, the archdiocese and even the Mob” giving way “to one of individuals who define themselves primarily by the networks they belong to.” As he neatly puts it: “Information took over from Industry.”

I’m not sure this is as much of a change as Dyja believes it to be — but then, this is a good book to argue with. I, for one, don’t think that [*Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s “The Gates*](https://thomasdyja.com)” did a thing for Central Park. I believe Dyja exaggerates wildly when he describes New Yorkers as so shellshocked by 1990 that they “turned their self-imprisonment into a trend; they became couch potatoes.” And as someone who has lived his entire adult life in New York, beginning almost two years before “I Love New York Day,” I vehemently deny the claim, forwarded from the Koch parks commissioner Gordon Davis, that [*Urban Park Rangers*](https://thomasdyja.com) had to “help New Yorkers relearn how to behave in the city at large.” The acting out that Dyja and Davis refer to was largely the doing of the young and the crazy, and if the rest of us did not always interfere it was mostly because of a sentimental attachment to things like our teeth.

But go have your own argument with Dyja; you will enjoy it. In our current atmosphere of political fanaticism and fantasy, his reasoning is a joy, as are his sense of nuance and his willingness to question his own assumptions. He elides what he calls the “morality play” that has warped most arguments about New York for the last 40 years, giving each mayor his due — and his skewering — with astonishing objectivity, and each genuine reformer the benefit of the doubt. He looks at the city from all points of view, from that of the poorest outsiders to the Masters of the Universe, and best of all he brings to life the volunteers, everyday New Yorkers, who stepped forward to save their city when it needed them most.

What they accomplished was remarkable, as Dyja recognizes, a New York that was and is — at least pre-Covid — wealthier, healthier, safer, greener, longer-lived and more modern than it has ever been. The city has absorbed an entire Philadelphia’s worth of immigrants, from all over the world, more than 1.5 million new Americans since 1978, two-thirds of whom live in Brooklyn and Queens and have transformed those boroughs into the dynamic places they are today. They are “half of the city’s accountants and nurses, 40 percent of its doctors, real estate brokers and property managers.” Dyja celebrates how the city has indeed managed to monetize its culture in a postindustrial world, between tourist sites, high art and hip-hop, “New York’s most globally influential cultural invention.”

And yet, for Dyja, New York has become in too many ways a victim of its own success, or [*“oversuccess,” as Jane Jacobs called it*](https://thomasdyja.com). In the end, “too many good ideas, practical strategies and necessary temporary measures became permanent, inflexible policies applied to a place in constant flux.” A “proactive” police department that he credits with helping crush crime has devolved in many cases into what he calls racist “security guards and mercenaries” abusing their power. Runaway real estate speculation created a “Luxury City,” with more and more of it privatized by parks “conservancies” and business improvement districts, housing more and more unaffordable, small businesses steamrollered by chains and mega-developments, and the Upper East Side reduced to “a kind of jewelry store now,” with “a third of the apartments between 49th and 70th between Fifth and Park … vacant 10 months a year, owned by shell companies and L.L.C.s.”

The original sin was tying so much of New York’s fate to Wall Street, a dependence that has grown exponentially over the years, and that has set the city’s economy on its seemingly endless roller coaster ride. A trillion dollars “evaporated” after the 1987 stock market crash, nearly $4 trillion after the 2000 slump. And at the same time, like a bad dream, the city’s poverty levels have remained intractable, today “around 20 percent, with another 20 percent highly vulnerable” — or 3.4 million people in all — and “almost 50,000 people sleeping on the streets any given night.”

“The result” — well before the pandemic — “was a city flush with cash and full of poor people, diverse but deeply segregated, hopeful yet worryingly hollow underneath the shiny surface,” Dyja declares.

What is to be done? Dyja sees the need for another reinvention of New York, though he offers no easy answers — probably because there are none. He can counsel only that which has worked best, when it has been tried, which is selflessness, moderation, involvement, empathy, creativity; “a New York built on a bedrock of justice, not just noblesse oblige.” But he has already, in this outstanding work, done all that a historian can do to light the way forward, by so vividly illuminating the past.

Kevin Baker is the author, most recently, of “The Fall of a Great American City: New York and the Urban Crisis of Affluence.” NEW YORK, NEW YORK, NEW YORK Four Decades of Success, Excess, and Transformation By Thomas Dyja Illustrated. 544 pp. Simon & Schuster. $30.

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**Related Articles**

* [*A Time When Things Started in Chicago*](https://thomasdyja.com)

1. [*‘I Love New York’ Is More Than a Motto*](https://thomasdyja.com)

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2021

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[***Biden's Close-Knit Cabinet Lacks Rivalries, Critics Say***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61GN-08F1-DXY4-X3WY-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Michael D. Shear and Shane Goldmacher

**Body**

In making his picks for the new administration, the president-elect has put a premium on personal relationships.

WASHINGTON -- President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has worked with the former aide he wants to be secretary of state since their time at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the 1990s. His nominee for agriculture secretary endorsed his first presidential bid more than 30 years ago. And he knows his choice for Pentagon chief from the retired general's time in Iraq, where Mr. Biden's son Beau, a military lawyer, also served on the general's staff.

For all the talk that Mr. Biden is abiding by a complicated formula of ethnicity, gender and experience as he builds his administration -- and he is -- perhaps the most important criteria for landing a cabinet post or a top White House job appears to be having a longstanding relationship with the president-elect himself.

His chief of staff, Ron Klain, goes back with him to the days of Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas when Mr. Biden was the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and Mr. Klain was on his staff. John Kerry, his climate envoy, is an old Senate buddy. Even Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, who is not a longtime confidante and ran an aggressive campaign against Mr. Biden, had a close relationship with Beau Biden before he died -- a personal credential that is like gold with the man about to move into the Oval Office.

In accepting Mr. Biden's nomination to be the first Black man to run the Defense Department, Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III on Wednesday called Beau a ''great American'' and recalled the time he spent with him in Iraq, and their conversations after he returned home, before his death from a brain tumor in 2015.

''As you, too, can attest, madam vice president-elect, Beau was a very special person and a true patriot, and a good friend to all who knew him,'' General Austin said.

It is a sharp contrast to President Trump, who assembled a dysfunctional collection of cabinet members he barely knew and after an initial honeymoon spent their time constantly at risk of being fired. With nearly half of Mr. Biden's cabinet and many key White House jobs announced, his administration looks more like a close-knit family.

But there are risks in Mr. Biden's approach, which departs sharply from Abraham Lincoln's famous desire for a ''team of rivals'' in his cabinet who could challenge one another -- and the president. And while every president brings in a coterie of longtime advisers, few have had the longevity of Mr. Biden's nearly five decades in Washington, and prized so much the relationships he developed along the way.

Relying on advisers and cabinet officials steeped in old Washington -- and Mr. Biden's own worldview -- lends an air of insularity to his still-forming presidency at a time when many Americans are expecting fresh ideas to confront a world that is very different from the one that the president-elect and his friends got to know when they were younger.

Even some allies in the Democratic Party say they worry that Mr. Biden's reliance on the same people threatens to undermine his ability to find solutions to the country's problems that go beyond the usual ones embraced by the establishment in Washington.

Representative-elect Mondaire Jones of New York, 33, who will serve as the freshman representative to the House Democratic leadership, praised Mr. Biden's choices so far as ''highly competent'' but added that ''competency alone is insufficient for purposes of building back better.''

''One risk of Joe Biden nominating or otherwise appointing only people with whom he has close relationships is he may miss the moment,'' he said.

Faiz Shakir, who served as Senator Bernie Sanders's campaign manager and negotiated with the Biden team over the summer as part of a unity task force, said the biggest bias he has seen from the Biden transition team has been in favor of ''credentialing'' -- both in terms of Washington experience, often with the president-elect, and education.

He said he worried the team was leaning ''so much on technocratic competence based on credentialing that it misses the opportunity to introduce fresh blood and new thinking more closely associated with the struggles of the ***working class***.''

And Representative Adriano Espaillat, Democrat of New York, urged Mr. Biden to embrace ''a little bit more competitiveness inside'' a team that so far appears mostly like-minded. Tackling the big problems in American in the wake of the pandemic ''is going to require a lively debate,'' Mr. Espaillat said. ''It doesn't have to be a room full of people you like.''

But Mr. Biden has not been shy about describing what is important to him as he builds his team.

''I've seen him in action,'' Mr. Biden said of Antony J. Blinken, his incoming secretary of state and a longtime adviser.

''I've worked with her for over a decade,'' Mr. Biden said of his new director of national intelligence, Avril D. Haines.

''One of my closest friends,'' Mr. Biden hailed Mr. Kerry when he announced the former secretary of state's new climate role.

And in an article published in The Atlantic on Tuesday, the president-elect explained one of the key reasons he chose General Austin.

''I've spent countless hours with him, in the field and in the White House Situation Room,'' Mr. Biden wrote. ''I've sought his advice, seen his command, and admired his calm and his character.''

Those who know Mr. Biden say he is confident of his own ability as a judge of character and has leaned on some of the same team of counselors for decades. His longtime Senate chief of staff and brief successor in the Senate, Ted Kaufman, is helping to lead the transition. Among his top incoming White House advisers, his counselor, Steve Ricchetti, and senior adviser, Mike Donilon, are longtime loyalists.

Other aides are reprising roles they held in Mr. Biden's vice-presidential office -- only now at the White House itself. Jake Sullivan, the national security adviser, held that post for Mr. Biden, and Jared Bernstein, who was an economic adviser, is now a member of the Council of Economic Advisers.

''He's got this wonderful team -- not of rivals but of talented people that he's either worked with or observed over the years,'' said Joseph Riley, the former mayor of Charleston, S.C., and a man Mr. Biden once called ''America's mayor.''

''He has amassed a collection of talented people who he has watched, listened to, leaned on over the years, and he is a quick study,'' Mr. Riley said.

Not every appointee is a Biden intimate. This week, Mr. Biden rolled out his health care team and badly bungled the name of his incoming secretary of health and human services -- Xavier Becerra -- before correcting himself.

Turning to people close to him to run with long experience in government may be an advantage during confirmation battles in the deeply divided Senate. Many of his picks -- like Tom Vilsack, who served for eight years as secretary of agriculture under President Barack Obama and has been nominated for the same job again -- are well known to Republicans.

''I think he did an outstanding job for eight years and he'll do an outstanding job for no more than four years,'' Senator Charles E. Grassley, Republican of Iowa and the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, told reporters when asked about Mr. Biden's decision to nominate Mr. Vilsack.

But a bigger test for Mr. Biden will be his decision on who should be attorney general and run the Justice Department at a time when racial tensions have roiled the country.

On Tuesday, a group of activists met with Mr. Biden to press him on nominating a Black person who will focus on civil rights and social justice issues. But with an African-American now ready to lead the Defense Department -- ensuring that the State, Treasury, Justice and Defense Departments will not all be led by white people -- a number of prominent Democrats believe the president-elect may turn to Senator Doug Jones of Alabama, who is white.

Mr. Jones would most likely prove easy to confirm in a closely divided Senate given his warm relationships with senators in both parties, including Alabama's senior senator, Richard C. Shelby, a Republican.

But Mr. Jones has something else working in his favor: a long history with Mr. Biden.

As a young law student in Birmingham, Ala., Mr. Jones was wowed by a visit from a freshman senator from Delaware and introduced himself to Mr. Biden. They grew closer when Mr. Jones moved to Washington to work on the Senate Judiciary Committee. And in 1987, Mr. Jones served as Alabama co-chair on Mr. Biden's first campaign for president.

Jonathan Martin and Emily Cochrane contributed reporting.Jonathan Martin and Emily Cochrane contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/us/politics/biden-cabinet-personal-relationships.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/us/politics/biden-cabinet-personal-relationships.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Former Secretary of State John Kerry, above, climate envoy for President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr., and Ron Klain, below right, Mr. Biden's chief of staff, both go back to his years in the Senate. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

JACQUELYN MARTIN/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

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[***Review: Shrinking Lives at a Big Box Store in ‘Paris’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y1R-85F1-DXY4-X0MJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1043 words

**Byline:** Ben Brantley

**Highlight:** Racism is a stealth force in Eboni Booth’s astute study of the (mostly) quiet desperation of minimum-wage workers in Vermont.

**Body**

Racism is a stealth force in Eboni Booth’s astute study of the (mostly) quiet desperation of minimum-wage workers in Vermont.

Christmas in Paris is a cheerless occasion. Or at least that’s how the Yuletide season is experienced by those working at a big box store in the mid-1990s in the Vermont town of Paris, which gives Eboni Booth’s coolly observant new play its title.

True, the employees of Berry’s (which is likely to have you thinking of discount retailers with Mart in their names) may wear festive sweatshirts with their regulation lanyards and uniforms. And canned carols are piped, relentlessly, throughout the store.

But this aural wallpaper only underscores the bleakness of the lives unraveling in the staff rooms and loading docks of the non-unionized Berry’s, where a typical salary is $5 an hour. In the world of [*“Paris,” which opened on Tuesday at the Atlantic Theater Company’s Stage 2*](https://atlantictheater.org/production/paris/), there’s no expectation of comfort and joy.

Like [*Samuel D. Hunter’s “Greater Clements,”*](https://atlantictheater.org/production/paris/) which recently ended its run at Lincoln Center, “Paris” is a solid addition to the expanding genre of sociologically detailed ***working-class*** American dramas. Booth,   [*a playwriting fellow at the*](https://atlantictheater.org/production/paris/)Juilliard School who is best known in New York as an actress in adventurous plays   [*(“Dance Nation,”*](https://atlantictheater.org/production/paris/)   [*“Fulfillment Center”),*](https://atlantictheater.org/production/paris/) shares with Hunter a rigorous economic fatalism.

But while “Greater Clements” deploys the grinding gears of melodrama to wear down its doomed characters, “Paris” takes an almost flatline approach to the unhappy existences it portrays. Yes, these people explode in fits of temper on a regular basis; they taunt and insult and scrap with one another; and at least one of them is involved in dangerously illegal activities.

Yet suspense rarely makes an appearance in this realistically acted, astutely written play, which is directed with a very even hand by Knud Adams. An ever-corrosive anxiety — the kind that comes from never knowing if this week’s paycheck will cover this week’s living expenses — is in the oxygen of Berry’s. And it leaves those working in its airless confines (evoked mercilessly by David Zinn’s gloomy set) in a state of depleted resignation.

This includes the store’s newest staff member, Emmie. As embodied by the appealing newcomer Jules Latimer, in a bravely affectless performance, Emmie (birth name: Emaani) has the self-effacing mien of someone who aspires to invisibility. As it turns out, this is a not a state she has to work hard to achieve.

Emmie is black. And though she has lived most of her life in Paris, a small and insular town, and also works at a popular local bar (called Blonde Jovi), none of her fellow employees can remember having seen her before.

Racism is seldom openly acknowledged in “Paris”; it is instead a stealthy, insistent part of its general climate. Gar (Eddie K. Robinson), the store manager who hires Emmie in the play’s first scene, is also black. But that doesn’t necessarily mean he’s her ally.

He treats everyone badly, especially when he’s in a bad mood. And as a boss, he has a secret weapon he holds over his employees. He knows how much — and why — they need their jobs. “You want to quit?” he typically says to one of them with the confidence of a fully briefed henchman. “No, you can’t quit. You have your grandmother to think about.”

There is little rousing esprit de corps among Emmie’s fellow workers, though they can usually be relied upon to inventively cover up one another’s mistakes. Logan (Christopher Dylan White) performs — pathetically, one presumes — in a local rap group. Wendy (a spot on Ann McDonough), a former nurse and a not-so-secret on-site drinker, is married to Dev (James Murtaugh), who fruitlessly peddles the gospel of success books.

The most outspoken of the lot is the misanthropic Maxine (Danielle Skraastad), who lives with her four children in a motel room behind the local Costco and snarls at pretty much everyone. Wendy winningly offers an explanation for such behavior: “Her children are very bad people.”

Lines like that — simple yet startling — come along with welcome frequency in “Paris.” Yet while the play holds the attention, it seldom clutches it.

Ultimately, the wage slaves of Berry’s register as the sums of their financial problems, fitted out with eccentricities that might show up in anecdotes of someone who had worked there for a summer. It is part of Booth’s point, I think, that when money is as elusive as it is for these people, character is indeed primarily defined by privation.

Only Emmie — who has spent an aborted year in college and is working to earn money to return — would seem to have any chance of escaping this flattening destiny. Her status as a newcomer and an outsider makes her an effective, and increasingly dispirited, proxy for the audience’s initiation into the Berry’s universe.

She has also reached a nadir in her own life when she starts work there. Her mother has recently died, and her face is badly bruised — her mouth intermittently bleeds without warning — from a recent, drunken fall. Berry’s seems like the next and natural circle of hell for her to enter.

In the show’s most unsettling scene, Emmie encounters a visitor to the store named Carlisle, who’s looking for her boss, and a whole other, deeper vista of darkness opens up behind him. Played with creepy, compelling understatement by Bruce McKenzie, Carlisle — a soft-spoken man who runs his own mysterious and illicit business — might have been teleported from a David Lynch movie.

“You want to be my little elf?” he asks Emmie, proffering an unspecified alternative form of employment. He later adds, “Your people are good workers.” He asks her to open her injured mouth, so he can inspect it.

The cold wind of primal evil has entered the room. And for just a moment, a low-pay, tenuous job at Berry’s seems, in contrast, like a pretty good way to make a living.

Paris

Tickets Through Feb. 16 at Atlantic Stage 2, Manhattan; 866-811-4111, [*atlantictheater.org*](https://atlantictheater.org/production/paris/). Running time: 1 hour 30 minutes.

PHOTOS: Jules Latimer, above left, Christopher Dylan White, above right, and Ann McDonough, below left, play co-workers in a Vermont store in the play “Paris,” written by Eboni Booth. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CAITLIN OCHS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2020

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[***Courting Unions and Latino Voters: 5 Takeaways From the N.Y.C. Mayor’s Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626W-DCM1-DXY4-X4B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Dana Rubinstein, Andy Newman and Jeffery C. Mays

**Highlight:** Eric Adams won three big labor union endorsements, confirming his status as a top contender, and Loree Sutton dropped out of the race.

**Body**

Eric Adams won three big labor union endorsements, confirming his status as a top contender, and Loree Sutton dropped out of the race.

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)]

Labor leaders are throwing their weight behind Eric Adams in the New York City mayoral race.

Mr. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, has won three major labor endorsements in the past two weeks, cementing his status as one of the top candidates in the crowded Democratic primary field.

As Mr. Adams rose, Loree Sutton, one of the first women to join the race, dropped out, and the campaigns pushed to qualify for public matching funds. Andrew Yang, the former presidential candidate, announced over the weekend that he had raised an impressive fund-raising haul.

Here is what you need to know:

Adams wins key labor endorsements.

Mr. Adams is making the case that he is the candidate for ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

“We are building a blue-collar coalition that will deliver results for the New Yorkers who need them the most,” Mr. Adams said last week.

He has received support from three unions: Local 32BJ of the Service Employees International Union, which represents about [*85,000 building workers*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in New York; the Hotel Trades Council, which has nearly 40,000 members in the hotel and gaming industry; and the District Council 37 Executive Board, the city’s largest public employees union, representing 150,000 members and 50,000 retirees.

The string of endorsements shows that some Democrats believe Mr. Adams has the best chance of beating Mr. Yang, who has been leading the field in recent polls.

While Mr. Adams has secured some of the city’s most coveted labor endorsements, [*Maya Wiley*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio, was recently endorsed by another major union, Local 1199 of the S.E.I.U. The powerful United Federation of Teachers has not yet picked a candidate.

Scott Stringer, the New York City comptroller, had been a contender for the 32BJ endorsement, according to the union president, Kyle Bragg.

“But this is more than just about friendships,” Mr. Bragg said, adding that the union had to consider who had “the strongest path to victory.”

Sutton’s long-shot bid comes to an end.

For Loree Sutton, [*the retired Army brigadier general*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) who [*withdrew from the mayor’s race on Wednesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), the turning point came in late February when a state judge [*rejected a lawsuit*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) seeking to limit in-person petition-gathering during the coronavirus pandemic.

Candidates must gather a certain number of signatures in person in order to get their names on the ballot.

“I just would not go out and do in-person petition-gathering under these circumstances,” Ms. Sutton said. It was, she said, a matter of “public health principle.”

Her mayoral bid was always a long shot. The former commissioner for the city’s Department of Veterans’ Services, she had little in the way of political experience or name recognition. She was running as a law-and-order moderate in a Democratic primary that tilts left.

Some advisers had encouraged her to run as a Republican, but doing so would have felt inauthentic, she said. Centrism, she argues, remains an essential part of the Democratic Party.

But early on there were signs that her brand of moderation would be unwelcome.

She was [*excluded*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) from an early Democratic forum because she had argued that protesters should be required to obtain city permits.

She campaigned on the importance of public safety and rejected calls to defund the police, a posture that seemed out of step with many of her competitors.

“Some of the worst atrocities in human history have taken place under the misconception that somehow we can create a utopian society,” she said.

In the end, Ms. Sutton pulled out of the race, having raised only $200,000.

She has yet to decide whom she will endorse, but she was complimentary of Kathryn Garcia, the former Sanitation Department commissioner, who is running as a pragmatist. And she has not ruled out running for office again someday.

“It’s the journey of a lifetime,” she said.

Candidates debate how to fix public housing.

At a mayoral forum on housing on Thursday, a tenant leader at a city public-housing complex, Damaris Reyes, challenged the candidates: “I want to know if you will commit to preservation of public housing, and how you will repair trust and empower resident decision making.”

The 175,000 apartments in the city’s public housing system have been sliding into disrepair for decades, with the price tag for replacing leaky roofs, old heating systems, broken elevators and other problems now estimated at $30 billion to $40 billion.

But the city’s proposal to fund the repairs by using a program that would [*hand over management*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) of tens of thousands of apartments to private developers has been greeted with skepticism. Many New York City Housing Authority residents fear their apartments would be privatized, leading to rent increases and evictions.

At the housing forum, [*hosted by the local news channel NY1*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), two candidates with experience running housing systems said the city’s plans provided a realistic platform.

Ms. Garcia, who served as [*interim commissioner of NYCHA*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in 2019, said the blueprint would let the city leverage federal money that was already available. She said she could win over skeptics by taking them on tours of the Ocean Bay complex in Queens, where a private landlord [*has been making repairs*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html). “You know who the best spokespeople are?” she asked. “The people who have actually had their apartments renovated.”

Shaun Donovan, who ran the city’s department of housing preservation under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and who served as President Barack Obama’s commissioner of housing and urban development, said that partnering with the federal government provided “the only pathway where we can truly get to scale.”

Mr. Donovan’s [*plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) also calls for the city to kick in $2 billion a year and includes job-training programs for NYCHA residents who would be hired to do much of the work, he said.

Mr. Yang has promoted his own $48 billion — and entirely federally funded — “[*green new deal*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)” for NYCHA. To combat NYCHA residents’ “massive trust deficit,” the city should “make NYCHA residents the majority of the board of NYCHA itself,” he has said.

Public money comes rolling in.

Seven candidates now say they have qualified for public matching funds.

At the latest donation deadline last week, Mr. Yang proved that he is a strong fund-raiser. He reported that he had met the matching-funds threshold by raising more than $2.1 million from 15,600 individual donors in the 57 days that he has been in the race. Mr. Yang’s campaign said it expects to have raised $6.5 million once public dollars are received.

“With 100 days left, we have built the foundation and energy to win,” Mr. Yang’s campaign managers said in a statement.

To qualify for public matching funds, a candidate must raise $250,000 from at least 1,000 New York City residents. Those donations are matched at either an $8 to $1 rate or $6 to $1 rate, depending on which plan the campaign chose for a maximum of $1,400 to $2,000 per contributor.

Mr. Donovan reported meeting the threshold, which would bring his total raised to $4 million. Ms. Wiley, who announced that she had met the threshold last period before an audit determined that she had not, said Monday that she had officially qualified for matching funds and received $1.9 million in those payments, bringing her total amount raised to nearly $4 million.

Ms. Garcia reported meeting the threshold by raising over $315,000 in matchable contributions, for a total of $3.1 million raised. And Dianne Morales, a former nonprofit executive, said Monday she had qualified for matching funds as well, raising about $320,000 in matchable contributions.

The fund-raising leaders have also continued to rake in public dollars. Mr. Adams and Mr. Stringer, the only two candidates who have received matching funds so far, reported having raised a total of more than $9 million each once matching funds were factored in. The Campaign Finance Board will audit the donations received by the candidates before distributing matching funds.

Raymond J. McGuire, a former banking executive who shook up the race when he raised $5 million in three months, is not participating in the public funds program. His campaign said he had raised another $2.6 million since the last filing period.

According to campaign finance rules, if a nonparticipating candidate raises or spends more than half of the $7.3 million spending limit, the spending cap could be increased by 50 percent. Matthew Sollars, a spokesman for the board, said a determination on an increased spending cap would be made late next month.

A candidate looks for the Latino vote.

Little known fact about Scott Stringer, who is white and Jewish: His stepfather moved to New York from Puerto Rico as a toddler, his stepfamily is Latino and, partly on that basis, he hopes to win over Latino voters in the mayoral election.

“Buenos días a todos,” Mr. Stringer said on Sunday in Upper Manhattan, as he formally kicked off his “Latino agenda,” not far from the Washington Heights neighborhood where he grew up. His stepfamily joined him and lauded his record, character and intelligence. “Scott is simpático,” said Carlos Cuevas, Mr. Stringer’s stepbrother, a lawyer.

Mr. Stringer’s effort to highlight his family to identify with a particular constituency is not a novel one. Mr. de Blasio relied heavily on his African-American wife and biracial children in his 2013 run for mayor. [*At a forum about Jewish issues,*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) Ms. Wiley, whose father was African-American and mother was white, made a point of noting that her partner is Jewish and the son of Holocaust survivors.

The Latino vote — which is [*far from monolithic*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) — is coveted, representing [*about 20 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) of the New York City electorate.

The mayor’s race has several candidates of Latino descent: Ms. Morales and Carlos Menchaca, a councilman from Brooklyn, both of whom are Democrats, and Fernando Mateo, a Republican. None responded to requests for comment on Mr. Stringer’s Latino voter push.

The same day Mr. Stringer was rolling out his agenda, his competitor Mr. Yang made his pitch to Spanish-language viewers of Telemundo.

PHOTOS: Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, has won three major labor endorsements in the last two weeks. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL M. SANTIAGO/GETTY IMAGES); The campaign for Maya Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio, declined to release its fund-raising figures. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EDUARDO MUNOZ/REUTERS); Andrew Yang, the former presidential candidate, announced over the weekend that he had raised more than $2.1 million. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK LENNIHAN/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** June 28, 2021

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[***California Towns Rebel Against Dining Limits***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61GN-08F1-DXY4-X3YH-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Adam Popescu

**Body**

Frustrated over an order to temporarily ban outdoor dining across Los Angeles County, many elected officials have fought back -- with votes to form their own health departments.

LOS ANGELES -- Until late last month, outdoor dining -- no masks required -- was the closest thing to pre-pandemic normal for the 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. But amid a record-busting surge in hospitalizations and cases of the coronavirus, the county's health department recently said outdoor dining must come to a complete halt for the first time since May.

This time, angry at the order and worried it would be the death knell for many of the 30,000 eateries sprawled across the vast county's patchwork of 88 independent jurisdictions, several cash-strapped municipalities have pushed back and banded together -- with votes to form their own health departments.

''It's kind of like a mini secession,'' said Raphael J. Sonenshein, the executive director of the Pat Brown Institute for Public Affairs at California State University, Los Angeles. ''Their complaint is the county has a one-size-fits-all prescription.''

The discussions speak to the growing frustration over a countywide order that many elected officials said was inherently a hyperlocal issue.

While largely symbolic because there is no process for local jurisdictions to easily create their own health departments, city councils across the county have in recent days passed resolutions to do exactly that -- or to annex and join a city that already has its own.

West Covina's City Council was among the first to take such a vote. Lancaster, home to 158,000 in the high desert, followed suit last week, as did Beverly Hills. Now hard-hit Hawaiian Gardens, Commerce, Inglewood, West Hollywood and others are debating similar moves.

In West Covina, a San Gabriel Valley hub of 105,000 residents, Mayor Tony Wu called the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's outdoor dining ban, a three-week order that began the night before Thanksgiving, the spark that set off a state already in the throes of a major economic crisis.

''We've done everything they told us to do and now telling us to shut down isn't right,'' Mr. Wu said. ''Look, I'm an immigrant mayor trying to do the right thing and that means a local policy for a local issue.''

In Beverly Hills, which has seen tourism dwindle and which faces a $27 million budget shortfall compared with last year, Mayor Lester Friedman said the county had ''lost touch'' with Angelenos.

And in Hawaiian Gardens, a ***working-class*** Latino hamlet forced to close a casino that is the city's main employer and revenue generator, the city manager, Ernie Hernandez, said residents could not afford to eat or pay their bills. ''I don't know what the right answer is,'' he said, ''but shutting down again doesn't seem to be it.''

Across the state, daily case reports have tripled in the past month, with more than 25,000 new infections reported on Tuesday. About 8,500 of them were in Los Angeles County, which now has more daily cases than at any point in the pandemic, setting daily records for nearly a week straight. On Tuesday, the county had about 3,000 people hospitalized, with nearly a quarter in intensive care units.

Gov. Gavin Newsom recently issued a three-week lockdown order, which went into effect for much of the state on Monday, that also banned outdoor dining and superseded the Los Angeles County restrictions.

The county is a freeway-connected sprawl, with the city of Los Angeles's four million residents an island within it. There are so many invisible borders for the dozens of municipalities within its limits that motorists often do not realize when they enter one town or leave another -- confusion that could be exacerbated if there were multiple ordinances and orders across the county.

Many cities in the county operate their own law enforcement, fire and other government services, though only Pasadena and Long Beach have separate health departments -- and the decision-making power that comes with it. (Pasadena offered outdoor dining until last week; Long Beach, citing rising coronavirus cases, did not.)

But local mayors lack authority over public schools, transportation and public health -- control that largely rests with the county's board of supervisors, which upheld the health department's decision.

Last week, Judge James Chalfant of Los Angeles County temporarily agreed with the board of supervisors but ordered health officials to produce evidence supporting the ban. Then, in a decision on Tuesday, Judge Chalfant sided with the restaurants, limiting the ban to three weeks to prevent an ''indefinite'' closure order.

Although the state ban still supersedes this ruling, health officials now have about a week to provide a risk-benefit analysis in order to extend the closure. Epidemiologists have said prolonged gatherings without masks, even outside, drive spread.

It was not too long ago when California's elected officials -- among the first to impose wide-ranging lockdowns -- took pride in an approach that had appeared to stave off the coronavirus.

Then came a series of dining gaffes that undermined pleas to avoid crowds, including Mr. Newsom and others failing to heed their own rules. In recent days, businesses and officials have seen a disparity in the most recent dining ban, with outdoor film crew catering spots remaining open, for example, while restaurants a few feet away are without a single diner.

Despite more than 1.3 million virus cases and roughly 20,000 deaths statewide since March, anger is bubbling, with recent protests against the new restrictions staged outside the homes of the county's health director, county supervisors and Mayor Eric Garcetti.

Many elected leaders said that while they had not yet sorted out what it would take to create new health departments, they were nonetheless forging ahead, with many city councils meeting this week to discuss a range of ideas, such as contracting for services in an à la carte approach.

Starting a department would not be easy -- or without great financial cost.

Health departments inspect, grade and enforce restaurant safety, plus prepare and respond to health emergencies and outbreaks. Expensive to build from scratch -- especially during a health crisis -- they are staffed by specialists in short supply during a pandemic.

Plus, cities would need approval from the state's public health department. Erica Pan, the state's acting public health officer, who called this moment of rising cases ''a critical tipping point where inaction and division could lead to loss of life,'' said there was currently no process for approving new local health jurisdictions.

The spate of council decisions is not the first push to decentralize the county system. The city of Los Angeles proposed a health department in 2013 but shelved the idea after learning it would take up to two years to build and cost at least $333 million annually to operate, a plan that former County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky called ''crazy, stupid'' and ''dangerous to the public health.''

The financial and infrastructure requirements were ''impossible for us to implement,'' said Miguel Santana, the city's former chief administrative officer who is now the chief executive of Fairplex, a nonprofit space turned coronavirus testing center.

Los Angeles currently projects a budget shortfall of $675 million by June and is planning deep cuts. Mr. Garcetti has not spoken publicly about a new health department, and did not respond to requests for comment, but representatives said he continued to support the existing framework.

''If L.A. didn't feel the need to have its own department, with all its power, money and size, that says something,'' said Mr. Sonenshein, who has published three books on Los Angeles politics. ''The dissatisfaction cities are expressing should be taken seriously, but you don't necessarily need to redo everything.''

Rather than start from scratch, Mayor James Butts of Inglewood said, one option is regional alliances, like a collective South Bay health agency that is ''focused on dining and retail.''

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments, a joint powers authority of 16 cities and communities in unincorporated Los Angeles and Los Angeles County, is weighing ''annexing with a city that already has a health department,'' he said.

A West Hollywood councilman, John D'Amico, acknowledged that creating a health department would be difficult but said elected leaders would keep pushing, hoping to move the county toward ''sensible actions sooner to keep our community viable in 2021.''

While modifying blanket ordinances may have merits, the virus knows no borders. And with hospitals bracing for a post-Thanksgiving surge while also awaiting vaccine shipments, the wisest choice may be to exercise patience, some elected leaders said.

''Forming independent health departments on the fly, how many expert health officials do you think are out there to be hired?'' asked Mayor Kevin McKeown of Santa Monica, one of the few mayors aligned with the county. ''How many cities without money could hire them?''

''There's so much coronavirus that being in a relatively open place in the company of other people is inherently not safe,'' he continued. ''We've had a tremendous resurgence in Southern California. We haven't seen the worst of it. Not yet.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/us/coronavirus-california-outdoor-dining-ban.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/us/coronavirus-california-outdoor-dining-ban.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A closed restaurant patio in Los Angeles County, which has banned outdoor dining for three weeks. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIP CHEUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 10, 2020

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[***How Atlanta’s Politics Overtook the Suburbs, Too***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61GD-PHK1-DXY4-X0WK-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** UPSHOT

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**Byline:** Emily Badger

**Highlight:** Communities that defined themselves in opposition to the city have increasingly grown to resemble it.

**Body**

Communities that defined themselves in opposition to the city have increasingly grown to resemble it.

The suburbs of Cobb County, Ga., boomed during white flight on the promise of isolation from Atlanta. Residents there dating to the 1960s did not want Atlanta problems, or Atlanta transit, or Atlanta people. As a local commissioner once infamously put it, he would stock piranha in the Chattahoochee River that separates Cobb from Atlanta if it were necessary to keep the city out.

The county became a [*model of the conservative, suburban South*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html), opposed to the kind of federal meddling that integrates schools, or the kind of taxes that fund big infrastructure. And then, this year, after timidly embracing Hillary Clinton in 2016 (she won the area by just two points), Cobb County voted for Joe Biden by 14 percentage points. And Democrats [*swept the major countywide races*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html).

“It’s been this evolution of Cobb from a white-flight suburb to, now, I went to a Ramadan meal in a gated community in Cobb County that was multiracial,” said Andrea Young, the executive director of the Georgia A.C.L.U., and the daughter of the former Atlanta mayor Andrew Young. “This is the story,” she said, “of Atlanta spilling out into the metro area.”

Around the region, suburban communities that once defined themselves in opposition to Atlanta have increasingly come to resemble it: in demographics, in urban conveniences and challenges, and, finally, in politics. Rather than symbolizing a bulwark against Black political power, these places have become part of a coalition led by Black voters that is large enough to tip statewide races — and that could [*hand control of the Senate*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html) to Democrats next month.

“In Atlanta, they thought they could draw a line, and they thought it would be permanent, whether it was the Chattahoochee River, or Sandy Springs forming its own city to keep Atlanta out,” said Kevin Kruse, a Princeton historian whose book “[*White Flight*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html)” followed the mass migration from Atlanta in the civil rights era. “That was just a holding operation. It couldn’t stop those forces of progress.”

Mr. Kruse says these suburbs gave rise to a “politics of suburban secession.” Their voters prized private spaces over the public good, low taxes over big government, local autonomy over federal intervention. Newt Gingrich, a House member from Cobb County who embodied that agenda, became House Speaker in 1995. And neighboring counties were as reliably red. In 2004, George W. Bush carried Cobb by 25 points. He carried Gwinnett County to the east by 32 points, and Henry County south of Atlanta by 34 points.

Such suburban politics became national in scope. But in Atlanta, they emerged in reaction to a very particular political history.

In Atlanta, dating to the 1940s under Mayor William B. Hartsfield, who was white, African-American voters and the white business class have long had a political alliance, one born out of shared opposition to ***working-class*** white segregationists who were viewed as bad for both racial progress and for business.

“Atlanta’s ethic was ‘If you can show me how to make money, I can work with you on the prejudice part,’” Ms. Young said. “‘I’m willing to give up some of my white supremacy, if I can make some more money.’”

That fragile alliance helped integrate neighborhoods, parks and schools, often in tentative and token ways but without the violent mass resistance of other Southern cities. It also helped Atlanta establish what would become the busiest airport in the country, cementing the city’s reputation as a home of corporate headquarters and, eventually, the 1996 Olympics (the volleyball competition, originally planned for Cobb County, [*was moved*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html) after officials there passed a resolution condemning “lifestyles advocated by the gay community”).

What held the biracial coalition together — in “[*The Atlanta Way*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html)” — wasn’t exactly a shared moral mission.

“In fact, the corporate elite were very specific that they were pursuing enlightened self-interest — that’s the term they themselves used,” said Clarence Stone, whose 1989 book studying the coalition, “[*Regime Politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html),” is essential reading in the city even today. “It wasn’t that this was the moral path. This was the pragmatic path.”

White segregationists unwilling to share neighborhoods, schools and power with African-Americans left the city. Over time, many middle-class whites did, too, as the integration they supported in theory touched their own schools and blocks. The alliance also shifted, as African-Americans like Mr. Young won offices once held by white leaders in what became a smaller, more predominantly Black city.

But the success of the Atlanta economy ultimately helped seed the ground for Georgia’s political change. The region attracted new residents from all over — not just white families looking for low taxes, but also tech entrepreneurs from the West Coast, [*immigrants from Asia*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html), and Black professionals from Northern cities.

According to the real estate company Redfin, Los Angeles, Washington and the Bay Area are now among the most common metros where people appear to be searching for a move to the Atlanta area.

In the region’s four core counties of Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb and Gwinnett, the African-American population [*grew by 17 percent between 2010 and 2018*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html). It’s not so much that African-Americans moved across the Chattahoochee; they moved from Memphis and Chicago.

“Even when I was campaigning, there are those people who think ‘you shouldn’t be representing us because you didn’t grow up here,’” said Erick Allen, who won his second term as a Democratic state representative from Cobb County last month after flipping a Republican seat. “And I have to remind them, well that makes me the majority. Most of us that are here, we’re here by choice, not by lineage.”

Mr. Allen, who is African-American, grew up in Nashville. His wife, born in Jamaica, was raised in New York. They chose to live in Cobb County because of what it’s becoming, not because of what it was 30 years ago, he said.

“This isn’t Newt Gingrich’s Cobb County,” Mr. Allen said. “This truly is Lisa Cupid’s Cobb County.”

Ms. Cupid, a Democrat, [*became the first African-American woman*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html) to be elected the county commission chair this year.

Suburbs around the region have also become home to lower-income residents priced out by Atlanta’s rising housing costs. Suburban foreclosures during the housing crisis also opened up neighborhoods that were once owner-occupied [*to more renters*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html).

Add to these changes the efforts of some suburban communities to attract young professionals — by building denser, walkable [*town centers*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html).

“There’s a replication of urban life,” said A.J. Robinson, the president of Central Atlanta Progress, the business alliance that has been central to Atlanta’s coalition since the 1940s. “With that you begin to recognize, hey, we have urban issues that are very much like the city of Atlanta. You have more density, you have more people who are concerned about civic affairs, you have more issues of infrastructure.”

Denser and more diverse places create their own politics, he said, apart from the politics that new residents bring.

“You have to think about how if we want more stuff, we have to tax ourselves,” Mr. Robinson said. “That’s not a Republican concept.”

These trends have created a diverse region with both a growing Black population and new white residents whose politics differ from those of past white voters.

“You now have the basis for a multiracial electoral coalition,” said Andra Gillespie, a political scientist at Emory. “Whether or not they’re all voting for the same reasons — that’s a totally different topic that’s up for discussion.”

For the first time in Georgia, African-Americans made up the majority of a winning presidential candidate’s coalition, according to Bernard Fraga, another Emory political scientist. That is a remarkable evolution of the old biracial alliance that many white Georgians rejected.

“This really does feel like the old Hartsfield coalition — it’s just happened beyond the city limits,” said Professor Kruse, the historian. That alliance includes white college-educated suburbanites who, like the downtown business leaders before them, he said, “aren’t necessarily personally liberal but who see the forces of illiberalism as being hostile to their own interests.”

Now it is dog whistles and political conspiracy theories that are bad for business.

This larger Democratic coalition may also prove fragile, in some of the same ways. The Atlanta Way, for one, has often left out the interests of lower-income African-Americans.

“I don’t think it’s a strong enough coalition to create more equity in terms of improving majority-minority schools, or building more affordable housing,” said Deirdre Oakley, a sociologist at Georgia State. And some of these suburbs, with their rising diversity, [*still don’t want Atlanta transit*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/08/01/us/a-suburban-eden-where-the-right-rules.html).

But the coalition will have a chance to demonstrate its might again soon, in the Senate runoffs, and in a governor’s race likely to include Stacey Abrams again in 2022.

“One way you could characterize what happened a month ago is this was the first time — maybe the first time ever — where urban Georgia outvoted rural Georgia,” said Charles S. Bullock III, a political scientist at the University of Georgia.

That urban tally includes Savannah, Macon and Athens, but now, also, voters in suburban communities that, a generation ago, defined themselves as anything but urban.

Quoctrung Bui contributed to this article.

Quoctrung Bui contributed to this article.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***California Towns Rebel Against Pandemic Restaurant Restrictions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61GD-PHK1-DXY4-X0WH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1574 words

**Byline:** Adam Popescu

**Highlight:** Frustrated over an order to temporarily ban outdoor dining across Los Angeles County, many elected officials have fought back — with votes to form their own health departments.

**Body**

Frustrated over an order to temporarily ban outdoor dining across Los Angeles County, many elected officials have fought back — with votes to form their own health departments.

LOS ANGELES — Until late last month, outdoor dining — no masks required — was the closest thing to pre-pandemic normal for the 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. But amid a record-busting surge in hospitalizations and cases of the coronavirus, the county’s health department recently said [*outdoor dining*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) must come to a complete halt for the first time since May.

This time, angry at the order and worried it would be the death knell for many of the 30,000 eateries sprawled across the vast county’s patchwork of 88 independent jurisdictions, several cash-strapped municipalities have pushed back and banded together — with votes to form their own health departments.

“It’s kind of like a mini secession,” said Raphael J. Sonenshein, the executive director of the Pat Brown Institute for Public Affairs at California State University, Los Angeles. “Their complaint is the county has a one-size-fits-all prescription.”

The discussions speak to the growing frustration over a countywide order that many elected officials said was inherently a hyperlocal issue.

While largely symbolic because there is no process for local jurisdictions to easily create their own health departments, city councils across the county have in recent days passed resolutions to do exactly that — or to annex and join a city that already has its own.

West Covina’s City Council was among the first to take such a vote. Lancaster, home to 158,000 in the high desert, followed suit last week, as did Beverly Hills. Now hard-hit Hawaiian Gardens, Commerce, Inglewood, West Hollywood and others are debating similar moves.

In West Covina, a San Gabriel Valley hub of 105,000 residents, Mayor Tony Wu called the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health’s outdoor dining ban, [*a three-week order*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) that began the night before Thanksgiving, the spark that set off a state already in the throes of a major economic crisis.

“We’ve done everything they told us to do and now telling us to shut down isn’t right,” Mr. Wu said. “Look, I’m an immigrant mayor trying to do the right thing and that means a local policy for a local issue.”

In Beverly Hills, which has seen tourism dwindle and which faces a $27 million budget shortfall compared with last year, Mayor Lester Friedman said the county had “lost touch” with Angelenos.

And in Hawaiian Gardens, a ***working-class*** Latino hamlet forced to close a casino that is the city’s [*main employer and revenue generator*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html), the city manager, Ernie Hernandez, said residents could not afford to eat or pay their bills. “I don’t know what the right answer is,” he said, “but shutting down again doesn’t seem to be it.”

Across the state, daily case reports have tripled in the past month, with more than 25,000 new infections reported on Tuesday. About [*8,500 of them*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) were in Los Angeles County, which now has more daily cases than at any point in the pandemic, setting daily records for nearly a week straight. On Tuesday, the county had about 3,000 people hospitalized, with nearly a quarter in intensive care units.

Gov. Gavin Newsom recently [*issued a three-week lockdown order*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html), which [*went into effect for much of the state*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) on Monday, that also banned outdoor dining and superseded the Los Angeles County restrictions.

The county is a freeway-connected sprawl, with the city of Los Angeles’s four million residents an island within it. There are so many invisible borders for the dozens of municipalities within its limits that motorists often do not realize when they enter one town or leave another — confusion that could be exacerbated if there were multiple ordinances and orders across the county.

Many cities in the county operate their own law enforcement, fire and other government services, though only Pasadena and Long Beach have separate health departments — and the decision-making power that comes with it. ([*Pasadena*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) offered outdoor dining until last week; Long Beach, [*citing rising coronavirus cases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html), did not.)

But local mayors lack authority over public schools, transportation and public health — control that largely rests with the county’s board of supervisors, which [*upheld the health department’s decision*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html).

Last week, Judge James Chalfant of Los Angeles County temporarily [*agreed with the board of supervisors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) but ordered health officials to produce evidence supporting the ban. Then, in a decision on Tuesday, Judge Chalfant sided with the restaurants, limiting the ban to three weeks to prevent an “indefinite” closure order.

Although the state ban still supersedes this ruling, health officials now have about a week to provide a risk-benefit analysis in order to extend the closure. Epidemiologists have said [*prolonged gatherings without masks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html), even outside, drive spread.

It was not too long ago when California’s elected officials — among the [*first to impose wide-ranging lockdowns*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) — took pride in an approach that had appeared to stave off the coronavirus.

Then came a series of dining gaffes that undermined pleas to avoid crowds, including [*Mr. Newsom and others failing to heed their own rules*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html). In recent days, businesses and officials have seen a [*disparity in the most recent dining ban*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html), with outdoor film crew catering spots remaining open, for example, while restaurants a few feet away are without a single diner.

Despite more than 1.3 million virus cases and roughly [*20,000 deaths*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) statewide since March, [*anger is bubbling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html), with recent protests against the new restrictions staged outside the homes of the [*county’s health director*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html), [*county supervisors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) and [*Mayor Eric Garcetti*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html).

Many elected leaders said that while they had not yet sorted out what it would take to create new health departments, they were nonetheless forging ahead, with many city councils meeting this week to discuss a range of ideas, such as contracting for services in an à la carte approach.

Starting a department would not be easy — or without great financial cost.

Health departments inspect, grade and enforce restaurant safety, plus prepare and respond to health emergencies and outbreaks. Expensive to build from scratch — especially during a health crisis — they are staffed by specialists in short supply during a pandemic.

Plus, cities would need approval from the state’s public health department. Erica Pan, the state’s acting public health officer, who called this moment of rising cases “a critical tipping point where inaction and division could lead to loss of life,” said there was currently no process for approving new local health jurisdictions.

The spate of council decisions is not the first push to decentralize the county system. The city of Los Angeles proposed a health department in 2013 but [*shelved the idea*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) after learning it would take up to two years to build and [*cost at least $333 million annually*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) to operate, a plan that former County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky called “crazy, stupid” and “dangerous to the public health.”

The financial and infrastructure requirements were “impossible for us to implement,” said Miguel Santana, the city’s former chief administrative officer who is now the chief executive of Fairplex, a nonprofit space turned coronavirus testing center.

Los Angeles currently projects a budget shortfall of [*$675 million by June*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html) and is planning deep cuts. Mr. Garcetti has not spoken publicly about a new health department, and did not respond to requests for comment, but representatives said he continued to support the existing framework.

“If L.A. didn’t feel the need to have its own department, with all its power, money and size, that says something,” said Mr. Sonenshein, who has published three books on Los Angeles politics. “The dissatisfaction cities are expressing should be taken seriously, but you don’t necessarily need to redo everything.”

Rather than start from scratch, Mayor James Butts of Inglewood said, one option is regional alliances, like a collective South Bay health agency that is “focused on dining and retail.”

The [*South Bay Cities Council of Governments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/04/us/outdoor-dining-covid-california.html), a joint powers authority of 16 cities and communities in unincorporated Los Angeles and Los Angeles County, is weighing “annexing with a city that already has a health department,” he said.

A West Hollywood councilman, John D’Amico, acknowledged that creating a health department would be difficult but said elected leaders would keep pushing, hoping to move the county toward “sensible actions sooner to keep our community viable in 2021.”

While modifying blanket ordinances may have merits, the virus knows no borders. And with hospitals bracing for a post-Thanksgiving surge while also awaiting vaccine shipments, the wisest choice may be to exercise patience, some elected leaders said.

“Forming independent health departments on the fly, how many expert health officials do you think are out there to be hired?” asked Mayor Kevin McKeown of Santa Monica, one of the few mayors aligned with the county. “How many cities without money could hire them?”

“There’s so much coronavirus that being in a relatively open place in the company of other people is inherently not safe,” he continued. “We’ve had a tremendous resurgence in Southern California. We haven’t seen the worst of it. Not yet.”

PHOTO: A closed restaurant patio in Los Angeles County, which has banned outdoor dining for three weeks. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PHILIP CHEUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***With Relentless Ground Game, 49ers Complete Turnaround***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y19-TPR1-JBG3-60CR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 20, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Sports Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 928 words

**Byline:** By Ken Belson

**Body**

Winning over another team's fans can be a delicate exercise, even when you are on the doorstep of the Super Bowl and the other franchise has abandoned the region.

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- The timing couldn't have been any better.

After years of turmoil and losing, the San Francisco 49ers, who face the Green Bay Packers in the N.F.C. Championship game on Sunday, are one victory from returning to Super Bowl. There is no better way to drive demand for tickets, jerseys and support from a business community with cash to burn.

And one more thing -- the 49ers' bonanza is happening as their longtime rivals, the Raiders, abandon the Bay Area for Las Vegas, leaving the 49ers to reign as the lone West Coast team between Seattle and Los Angeles and in prime position to annex the East Bay, which has for years been enemy territory clad in black-and-silver.

Making inroads into Raider nation won't be easy. Raiders fans are among the most fiercely loyal in the N.F.L., and adopting the rival next door as their home team is not in their D.N.A. There were not many Brooklyn Dodgers fans who started rooting for the Yankees in 1958 either. Some fans will follow the team in Las Vegas, even flying there to see them play. Other Raiders fans may stop watching the N.F.L. entirely.

''You're either a Raiders fan or Niners fan, but you're never both,'' said Wayne Deboe, the president of the Oakland Raiders Booster Club and a fan since the team's inception in 1960.

Still, the 49ers ascendancy is likely to draw some fans who just want to watch a winner. The Bay Area is filled with transplants seeking Silicon Valley riches -- and maybe a local team to root for. Younger fans, even those whose parents have a proclivity for silver and black, may latch onto the rising Niners, who are delicately trying to jump on a golden opportunity.

''We would never try to convert Raiders fans,'' said Alex Chang, the chief marketing officer of the 49ers, before outlining what seemed like a pretty good plan to do just that. ''It's a multigenerational play here for people who are transplants or kids who are growing up here now and won't have the Raiders.''

There will be an expansion of 49er charities in the East Bay. The franchise will invite more East Bay school children to its science and technology programs and expand its free flag football programs. The efforts are not necessarily designed to sell tickets, but represent a kind of soft-sell to bring residents in the entire Easy Bay closer to a team more associated with the city of San Francisco and the peninsula stretching down to San Jose.

Last year, about 60,000 school children from the region visited Levi's Stadium. The 49ers also funded free flag football leagues for 3,000 boys and girls that were hosted by the Boys & Girls Club, Police Athletic League and city recreational programs there. Children who play in these leagues all receive a Niners reversible jersey. The team will also run one-time football clinics, often with 49ers, in the East Bay. The team intends to triple that number next season by working with those organizations in the East Bay.

''We want kids to be 49ers fans, but it's not like we want someone not to be a Raiders fan,'' said Hannah Gordon, the team's chief administrative officer.

Sports leagues have tried in the past to create boundaries so that neighboring teams do not encroach on each other's markets. In the N.F.L., a team's territory was a 75-mile radius from its home city. Because San Francisco and Oakland are just 10 miles apart, the 49ers and Raiders have informally stayed out of their each other's cities -- no billboards, instance.

But the growth of social media has made lines on a map obsolete, and now the Raiders are gone altogether.

Winning the hearts of abandoned fans is not easy. The Mets were created in 1962 five years after the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Giants moved to California. The Chargers, who abandoned San Diego three seasons ago, are struggling to gain traction in Los Angeles.

The Kansas City Chiefs have moved eastward across Missouri to St. Louis, which lost the Rams in 2016. Mark Donovan, the Chiefs president, said the team acknowledged that Rams fans may still be angry about the decision to move, but he said ticket sales and sponsorships from that part of the state are on the rise. There is a lot more Chiefs programming on local radio affiliates, too.

The Chiefs' success -- they play in their second consecutive A.F.C. title game on Sunday -- has also won over skeptical Rams fans. Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes and tight end Travis Kelce drew a big round of applause when they attended a Blues playoff game last year.

''I don't think the rivalry between the teams was so bad that people wouldn't root for the Chiefs,'' said Randy Karraker, a talk-show host on 101 ESPN in St. Louis.

That may not be the case in the Bay Area, where the Raiders and 49ers have different identities dating back decades -- the 49ers have long been the team of the elite, while the Raiders were the team of the ***working class***. Still, success changes the calculus. Sales of 49ers merchandise have been the strongest in the East Bay -- from San Leandro to Oakland to Fremont -- this season, up 250 percent compared with last year, according to Fanatics, the largest online seller of licensed merchandise.

''The Bay Area is very provincial,'' said Andy Dolich, who worked as a business executive for the Oakland A's, Golden State Warriors, and, from 2007 to 2010, the 49ers. ''But this Niners team has been able to jump the county barriers.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/sports/oakland-raiders-49ers.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/sports/oakland-raiders-49ers.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: 49ers running back Raheem Mostert rushing past the Packers' Ibraheim Campbell for one of his four touchdowns

DeForest Buckner sack- ing the Packers' Aaron Rodgers, who was pressured by the 49ers defense all game

and the 49ers offense after a touchdown in the second quarter. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY A J MAST FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

JUSTIN LANE/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

KYLE TERADA/USA TODAY SPORTS, VIA REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***France's Emboldened Far Right Attracts Voters It Once Horrified***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626P-B6C1-JBG3-61HD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 14, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1700 words

**Byline:** By Norimitsu Onishi and Constant Méheut

**Body**

In the southern city of Perpignan, voters who had long built a dam against the far right turned in the last election. Some wonder whether it's a harbinger of things to come.

PERPIGNAN, France -- Riding high in the polls ahead of the next presidential election, feeling they've won the battle over ideas, smelling blood in the Élysée Palace, leaders of France's far right cocked their eyes across the land at perhaps the one thing standing between them and power: beavers.

That is what some French call the voters who, time and again, have cast political differences aside and put in power anyone but far-right candidates -- raising a dam against them as real beavers do against predators. Voters did precisely that in 2014 in Perpignan, a medieval city of pastel-color buildings on the Mediterranean near the border with Spain.

But last year, the dam broke and Perpignan became the largest city under the control of the National Rally, the far-right party led by Marine Le Pen. Today the city of more than 120,000 is being closely watched as an incubator of far-right strategy and as a potential harbinger of what a presidential election rematch pitting Ms. Le Pen against President Emmanuel Macron could look like.

A victory for Ms. Le Pen would be earth-shattering for France, and all of Europe. It has been an article of faith in France that a party whose leadership has long shown flashes of anti-Semitism, Nazi nostalgia and anti-immigrant bigotry would never make it through the country's two-stage presidential electoral juggernaut.

But steadily her party has advanced farther than many French have been prepared to countenance, and Ms. Le Pen's debut in the final round of France's last presidential election in 2017 came as a shock to the system.

She may still be a relative long shot, given the party's history in France, but for now perhaps not as long as she once was. Recent polls show her matching Mr. Macron in the first round of next year's presidential contest and trailing by a few points in a second-round runoff. In a poll released Thursday, 48 percent of respondents said Ms. Le Pen would probably be France's next president, up seven percentage points compared with half a year ago.

''They've been forming dams since 2002 now,'' said Louis Aliot, the mayor of Perpignan and a longtime National Rally leader. ''So to ask them again to form a dam with Macron -- but what's changed? Nothing at all.'' Voter-built dams were no longer effective, unlike those made by the animal, he said, adding, ''When beavers build dams, it works.''

In 2014, many voters on the left and right had successfully united in a ''Republican front'' against Mr. Aliot -- the same way they raised a dam against Ms. Le Pen in the 2017 presidential election won by Mr. Macron.

But in the intervening years, Mr. Aliot succeeded in softening the party's image in Perpignan and won new converts, even as disillusioned beavers stayed home or left blank ballots on voting day in 2020. Mr. Aliot won handily -- in a rematch against his opponent of 2014 who, like Mr. Macron, had tilted rightward and marketed himself as the best check against the far right.

Nationally, Ms. Le Pen, who was Mr. Aliot's common-law partner for a decade until 2019, has hewed to the same playbook in sanitizing her party's image, even amid questions about the depth and sincerity of those efforts.

She has softened the party's longtime populist economic agenda -- for instance, by dropping a proposal to exit the euro and by promoting green reindustrialization -- while holding onto or even toughening the party's core, hard-line positions on immigration, Islam and security.

The effort by the party to wade into the mainstream has presented a special quandary for Mr. Macron. Sensing the political threat, and lacking a real challenge on his left, he has tried to fight the National Rally on its own turf -- moving to the right to vie for voters who might be tempted to defect to it. Doing so, Mr. Macron hopes to keep the far right at bay.

But the shift also helps destigmatize the far right, or at least many of its messages, argue National Rally leaders, some members of Mr. Macron's own party and political analysts. Mr. Macron's strategy may have the unintended consequence of helping the National Rally in its decades-long struggle to become a normal party, they say.

''It legitimizes what we've been saying,'' Mr. Aliot said. ''These are the people who've been saying for 30 years: Be careful, they're nasty, they're fascists, because they target Muslims. All of a sudden, they're talking like us.''

Mr. Macron and his ministers, in recent months, have tried to appropriate the extreme right's issues with new policies and dog whistles, talking tough on crime and pushing through a bill to limit filming of the police, which was dropped after protests, and one to crack down on what they call Islamist separatism. In a recent televised debate, the interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, even accused Ms. Le Pen of being ''shaky'' and ''softer than we are'' on Islamism.

They have turned to identity politics, ordering an investigation into ''Islamo-leftism'' at French universities and other so-called American-inspired ideas that they say threaten to undermine French values.

''The more we go on their ground, the stronger we make them,'' Jean-Michel Mis, a national lawmaker from Mr. Macron's party, said of the National Rally. ''So their leaders are very pleased because, in the end, we're legitimizing their campaign themes.''

Nicolas Lebourg, a political scientist specializing on the National Rally, said that adopting the far right's themes has often backfired. ''What they're currently doing is campaigning for Marine Le Pen,'' he said.

Even as Mr. Macron has portrayed himself as the best candidate to protect France from the far right, polls show voters may be growing weary of being asked to vote against a candidate, rather than for one.

Among the former beavers of Perpignan were Jacques and Régine Talau, a retired couple who had always voted for the mainstream right, helping build the dam against the far right in Perpignan in 2014 and in the presidential election of 2017.

Historically conservative and economically depressed, Perpignan was perhaps naturally receptive to Ms. Le Pen's party, which had won smaller, struggling cities in the south and north in recent years. But winning over the Talaus of Perpignan was a tipping point.

Their neighborhood, Mas Llaro, an area of stately homes on large plots amid vineyards on the city's eastern fringe, is Perpignan's wealthiest. In 2020, more than 60 percent of its residents voted for Mr. Aliot -- 7 percentage points higher than his overall tally and 10 percentage points more than in 2014.

Mas Llaro had always voted for the mainstream right.

But disillusioned and weary of the status quo, the Talaus, like many others, voted for the first time for the far right last year, drawn by Mr. Aliot's emphasis on cleanliness and crime, saying their home had been broken into twice.

Though satisfied with the mayor's performance, Mr. Talau said he would still join the dam against the far right in next year's presidential contest and hold his nose to vote for Mr. Macron. But Ms. Talau was now considering casting a ballot for Ms. Le Pen.

''She's put water in her wine,'' Ms. Talau said, adding that Mr. Macron was not ''tough enough.''

Mr. Aliot's opponent in 2014 and 2020, a center-right politician named Jean-Marc Pujol, had pressed further to the right in an unsuccessful move to fend off the far right. He increased the number of police officers, giving Perpignan the highest number per capita of any large city in France, according to government data.

Even so, many of his core supporters appeared to trust the far right more on crime and still defected, while many left-leaning beavers complained that they had been ignored and refused to take part in dam-building again, said Agnès Langevine, who represented the Greens and the Socialists in the 2020 mayoral election.

''And they told us, 'In 2022, if it's between Macron and Le Pen, I won't do it again,' '' she added.

Mr. Lebourg, the political scientist, said that Mr. Aliot had also won over conservative, upper-income voters by adopting a mainstream economic message -- the same strategy adopted by Ms. Le Pen.

Since taking over the party a decade ago, she has worked hard at ''dédiabolisation'' -- or ''de-demonizing'' -- the party.

In 2015, Ms. Le Pen expelled her own father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, who founded the party and had a long history of playing down the Holocaust.

While she popularized dog whistles like ''turning savage,'' she consciously stayed clear of explosive language conjuring up a supposed ''great replacement'' of France's white population by African and Muslim immigrants. In 2018, she rebranded the National Front as the more inclusive ''Rally.''

Still, the party wants to toughen migration policies for foreign students and reduce net immigration by twentyfold.

It also wants to ban the public wearing of the Muslim veil and limit the ''presence of ostentatious elements'' outside religious buildings if they clash with the environment, in an apparent reference to minarets.

In Perpignan, Mr. Aliot has focused on crime, spending $9.5 million to hire 30 new police officers, open new stations, and set up bicycle and nighttime patrols, responding to an increase in drug trafficking.

Jeanne Mercier, 24, a left-leaning voter, said many around her had been ''seduced'' by the far-right mayor.

''We're the test to show France that the National Front is making things work and that people are rallying and are happy,'' she said, referring to the party by its old name. ''In the end, it's not the devil that we imagined.''

Camille Rosa, 35, said she doesn't know whether she would join again in building a dam against Ms. Le Pen next year. The attacks by the president's ministers against ''Islamo-leftism'' and scholars on feminism, gender and race had fundamentally changed her view of the government of Mr. Macron.

''I have the impression that their enemies are no longer the extreme right at all,'' she said, ''but it's us, people on the left.''

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Louis Aliot, Perpignan's mayor and a National Rally leader. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1)

Clockwise from top: Jacques Talau, left, who remains wary, and his wife, Régine, center, who may back Marine Le Pen in 2022

a ***working-class*** area of Perpignan

Camille Rosa, at left in a bar, who is dismayed by the Macron government's rightward drift. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** March 17, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Why Some N.Y.C. Lawmakers Want to Rethink Ranked-Choice Voting***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61GD-PHK1-DXY4-X0WX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1505 words

**Byline:** Dana Rubinstein, Jeffery C. Mays and Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Highlight:** The new system was approved by voters in 2019, but critics, including at least one top mayoral candidate, fear that it may disenfranchise minority voters.

**Body**

The new system was approved by voters in 2019, but critics, including at least one top mayoral candidate, fear that it may disenfranchise minority voters.

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)]

Next year was supposed to be when New York City would revolutionize how voters choose their mayor — not merely selecting one candidate, but picking as many as five and ranking them in order of preference.

New York’s take-no-prisoners political landscape was to be remade: Candidates would perhaps be more collegial and would be obliged to reach out to voters beyond their bases in the hope that other candidates’ supporters would list them as a second or third choice. Runoff elections, often expensive and with limited turnout, would be eliminated.

But just as the city is poised to put the [*ranked-choice voting system*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in place, opposition is mounting. Black elected officials have raised objections, arguing that absent substantial voter education, the system will effectively disenfranchise voters of color.

On Tuesday night, six New York City Council members [*filed suit*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in State Supreme Court in Manhattan seeking to stop the city from starting the new voting system. One leading Black mayoral candidate — [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), the Brooklyn borough president, who once supported the system — now [*says it’s being rushed*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html).

“From my discussions with New Yorkers in lower-income communities of color, I am concerned that not enough education has been done about [*rank-choice voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) to ensure a smooth transition to that method so soon,” Mr. Adams said in a statement.

Raymond J. McGuire, a Black business executive who is running for mayor, also questioned whether voters had received enough education about [*ranked-choice voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) and said that without that education, he was “concerned” that the system would “disenfranchise Black and brown voters.”

Seventy-four percent of New York City voters [*approved*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) ranked-choice voting in 2019. Under the new system, if a candidate wins a majority of first-choice votes, that candidate wins outright. If no candidate wins a majority, the last-place winner is eliminated. The second-choice votes of those who had favored the last-place candidate would be counted instead. The process continues until there is a winner.

But with the mayoral primary less than seven months away, some campaigns are worried that the system could hurt Black candidates. They argue that a traditional approach would increase the chances of a runoff, where a Black candidate might perform better in a contest with only two names on the ballot.

Critics also question whether the city’s problem-prone [*Board of Elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) can roll out such a complicated system during a once-in-a-century pandemic.

Two of the six Council members who brought the lawsuit, Adrienne E. Adams and I. Daneek Miller, lead the Council’s Black, Latino and Asian Caucus. The other four — Laurie A. Cumbo, Robert E. Cornegy Jr., Farah N. Louis and Alicka Ampry-Samuel — represent districts in Brooklyn, which is Mr. Adams’s home base.

The suit was filed by a law firm where Frank V. Carone, the counsel to the Brooklyn Democratic Party, is an executive partner.

“They say all throughout the country that ranked-choice voting is working well for communities of color,” Ms. Cumbo, who has endorsed Mr. Adams for mayor, said during a Council hearing on Monday. “Well, New York City is a totally different city.”

The lawsuit was filed against the city, its Board of Elections and its Campaign Finance Board, contending that the city and the two boards had violated the law by failing to adequately explain the software that will be used to tabulate the votes and by failing to conduct a sufficient public education campaign to familiarize voters with the new system.

The suit seeks to prohibit the city from starting the new system in a February special election, a race that was poised to be a trial run for the June Democratic mayoral primary, which would use the same system and is likely to determine the city’s next mayor.

“The board does not comment on pending litigation,” said Valerie Vazquez, a spokeswoman for the elections board. “However, as we have previously stated, we will be ready to implement ranked-choice voting just as we successfully implemented a new voting system in 2010 and launched early voting in 2019.”

Amy Loprest, executive director of the New York City Campaign Finance Board, said that the board has been working on its educational efforts all year, and a formal public awareness campaign will launch soon.

Since November of 2016, ranked-choice voting has been used in Maine for all its state and federal primary elections as well as all general congressional elections and the general election for president starting this year. It has also been used in [*five Democratic presidential caucuses and primaries this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) and in at least 18 municipalities around the country, according to [*FairVote*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), a nonpartisan election reform group that is a leading proponent of ranked-choice voting.

Some mayoral candidates seem to be factoring the new voting system into their campaign strategies, including Shaun Donovan, the former Obama administration cabinet member who formally announced his run on Tuesday. An “electability” slide show [*circulated on his behalf*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) argued that “Shaun’s broad appeal makes him a natural second and third choice for voters, even when they are already committed to another candidate.”

Carlos Menchaca, a councilman from Brooklyn who is running for mayor, said he has already had discussions with at least one other candidate about running together — urging voters to choose a team of two candidates as their two top choices.

“Ranked-choice voting allows for partnership on the campaign trail,” he said.

[*Maya Wiley*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), another Black candidate, supports ranked-choice voting and said runoffs in the prior system diluted the votes of people of color and ***working-class*** New Yorkers.

“I look forward to continuing my campaign to reach New Yorkers in every corner of the city with our vision for a reimagined city that is more fair and just for everyone,” Ms. Wiley said in a statement.

Good-government groups say that the new system enhances democracy.

“The truth of the matter is that ranked-choice voting puts power into the hands of the voter,” said Susan Lerner, the executive director of Common Cause New York. “And to the extent that there are party officials who are used to having undue influence over who the winner might be, I can see where they would be frightened by ranked-choice voting.”

But critics of the system argue that without adequate public education, the system confuses voters and thus disenfranchises them. They also contend that the voting system targets a party system heavily populated by leaders of color.

Kirsten John Foy, president of the activism group Arc of Justice, said he was exploring a separate lawsuit with Hazel N. Dukes, the president of the New York State chapter of the NAACP, arguing that Black and other minority voters would be disenfranchised by ranked-choice voting.

“Some progressive white folks got together in a room and thought this would be good, but it’s not good for our community,” Ms. Dukes said. “The voters did vote, so we can’t overturn that, but we want a stay because there’s been no education about this in our community.”

Mr. Foy also questioned the motives of those leading the effort to enact ranked-choice voting.

“The primary argument for ranked-choice voting is that it expands access to elected office for Black and brown officials, but we don’t have that problem,” said Mr. Foy, who listed a string of positions from state attorney general to borough presidents that are held by Black and Latino elected officials. “This is a solution in search of a problem.”

But Bertha Lewis, president of the Black Institute, said that there was “plenty of time for voters to learn to rank their vote.”

“Let me say it plainly: Black voters are not stupid,” she said in testimony submitted to the Council hearing on Monday. “It is insulting to say that they will not be able to understand.”

Ranked-choice voting has a long and complicated history in the United States.

“There was a period over 100 years ago when it was in use in some cities,” but it fell out of favor around World War II, according to David C. Kimball, a political-science professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

In the past two decades, it has gained traction in places including San Francisco and Oakland, Calif., and in Maine.

The research on its impact on voter turnout is, however, mixed, he said, and voter education is a must, as American voters are accustomed to voting for just one candidate, not five.

“I don’t know quite how to put this politely, but the New York City elections board has trouble tying its shoes, metaphorically speaking,” Professor Kimball said. “So asking them to roll out new voting rules in a matter of months is a big ask.”

PHOTO: Polls in Brooklyn last summer. Nearly three-quarters of New York City voters approved a ranked-choice system in 2019. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Team of Rivals? Biden’s Cabinet Looks More Like a Team of Buddies***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61GK-57R1-JBG3-64B1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** In making his picks for the new administration, the president-elect has put a premium on personal relationships.

**Body**

In making his picks for the new administration, the president-elect has put a premium on personal relationships.

WASHINGTON — President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has worked with the former aide he wants to be secretary of state since their time at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the 1990s. His nominee for agriculture secretary endorsed his first presidential bid more than 30 years ago. And he knows his choice for Pentagon chief from the retired general’s time in Iraq, where Mr. Biden’s son Beau, a military lawyer, also served on the general’s staff.

For all the talk that Mr. Biden is abiding by a complicated formula of ethnicity, gender and experience as he builds his administration — and he is — perhaps the most important criterion for landing a [*cabinet post or a top White House job*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/joe-biden-cabinet.html) appears to be having a longstanding relationship with the president-elect himself.

His chief of staff, Ron Klain, goes back with him to the days of Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas when Mr. Biden was the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and Mr. Klain was on his staff. John Kerry, his climate envoy, is an old Senate buddy. Even Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, who is not a longtime confidante and ran an aggressive campaign against Mr. Biden, had a close relationship with Beau Biden before he died — a personal credential that is like gold with the man about to move into the Oval Office.

In accepting Mr. Biden’s nomination to be the first Black man to run the Defense Department, Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III on Wednesday called Beau a “great American” and recalled the time he spent with him in Iraq, and their conversations after he returned home, before his death from a brain tumor in 2015.

“As you, too, can attest, madam vice president-elect, Beau was a very special person and a true patriot, and a good friend to all who knew him,” General Austin said.

It is a sharp contrast to President Trump, who assembled a dysfunctional collection of cabinet members he barely knew. After an initial honeymoon, they spent their time constantly at risk of being fired. With nearly half of Mr. Biden’s cabinet and many key White House jobs announced, his administration looks more like a close-knit family.

But there are risks in Mr. Biden’s approach, which departs sharply from Abraham Lincoln’s famous desire for a “team of rivals” in his cabinet who could challenge one another — and the president. And while every president brings in a coterie of longtime advisers, few have had the longevity of Mr. Biden’s nearly five decades in Washington, and prized so much the relationships he developed along the way.

Relying on advisers and cabinet officials steeped in old Washington — and Mr. Biden’s own worldview — lends an air of insularity to his still-forming presidency at a time when many Americans are expecting fresh ideas to confront a world that is very different from the one that the president-elect and his friends got to know when they were younger.

Even some allies in the Democratic Party say they worry that Mr. Biden’s reliance on the same people threatens to undermine his ability to find solutions to the country’s problems that go beyond the usual ones embraced by the establishment in Washington.

Representative-elect Mondaire Jones of New York, 33, who will serve as the freshman representative to the House Democratic leadership, praised Mr. Biden’s choices so far as “highly competent” but added that “competency alone is insufficient for purposes of building back better.”

“One risk of Joe Biden nominating or otherwise appointing only people with whom he has close relationships is he may miss the moment,” he said.

Faiz Shakir, who served as Senator Bernie Sanders’s campaign manager and negotiated with the Biden team over the summer as part of a unity task force, said the biggest bias he has seen from the Biden transition team has been in favor of “credentialing” — both in terms of Washington experience, often with the president-elect, and education.

He said he worried the team was leaning “so much on technocratic competence based on credentialing that it misses the opportunity to introduce fresh blood and new thinking more closely associated with the struggles of the ***working class***.”

And Representative Adriano Espaillat, Democrat of New York, urged Mr. Biden to embrace “a little bit more competitiveness inside” a team that so far appears mostly like-minded. Tackling the big problems in America in the wake of the pandemic “is going to require a lively debate,” Mr. Espaillat said. “It doesn’t have to be a room full of people you like.”

But Mr. Biden has not been shy about describing what is important to him as he builds his team.

“I’ve seen him in action,” Mr. Biden said of Antony J. Blinken, his incoming secretary of state and a longtime adviser.

“I’ve worked with her for over a decade,” Mr. Biden said of his new director of national intelligence, Avril D. Haines.

“One of my closest friends,” Mr. Biden hailed Mr. Kerry when he announced the former secretary of state’s new climate role.

And in [*an article published in The Atlantic*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/joe-biden-cabinet.html) on Tuesday, the president-elect explained one of the key reasons he chose General Austin.

“I’ve spent countless hours with him, in the field and in the White House Situation Room,” Mr. Biden wrote. “I’ve sought his advice, seen his command, and admired his calm and his character.”

Those who know Mr. Biden say he is confident of his own ability as a judge of character and has leaned on some of the same team of counselors for decades. His longtime Senate chief of staff and brief successor in the Senate, Ted Kaufman, is helping to lead the transition. Among his top incoming White House advisers, his counselor, Steve Ricchetti, and senior adviser, Mike Donilon, are longtime loyalists.

Other aides are reprising roles they held in Mr. Biden’s vice-presidential office — only now at the White House itself. Jake Sullivan, the national security adviser, held that post for Mr. Biden, and Jared Bernstein, who was an economic adviser, is now a member of the Council of Economic Advisers.

“He’s got this wonderful team — not of rivals but of talented people that he’s either worked with or observed over the years,” said Joseph Riley, the former mayor of Charleston, S.C., and a man Mr. Biden once called “America’s mayor.”

“He has amassed a collection of talented people who he has watched, listened to, leaned on over the years, and he is a quick study,” Mr. Riley said.

Not every appointee is a Biden intimate. This week, Mr. Biden rolled out his health care team and badly bungled the name of his incoming secretary of health and human services — Xavier Becerra — before correcting himself.

Turning to people close to him to run with long experience in government may be an advantage during confirmation battles in the deeply divided Senate. Many of his picks — like Tom Vilsack, who served for eight years as secretary of agriculture under President Barack Obama and has been nominated for the same job again — are well known to Republicans.

“I think he did an outstanding job for eight years and he’ll do an outstanding job for no more than four years,” Senator Charles E. Grassley, Republican of Iowa and the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, told reporters when asked about Mr. Biden’s decision to nominate Mr. Vilsack.

But a bigger test for Mr. Biden will be his decision on who should be attorney general and run the Justice Department at a time when racial tensions have roiled the country.

On Tuesday, a group of activists met with Mr. Biden to press him on nominating a Black person who will focus on civil rights and social justice issues. But with an African-American now ready to lead the Defense Department — ensuring that the State, Treasury, Justice and Defense Departments will not all be led by white people — a number of prominent Democrats believe the president-elect may turn to Senator Doug Jones of Alabama, who is white.

Mr. Jones would most likely prove easy to confirm in a closely divided Senate given his warm relationships with senators in both parties, including Alabama’s senior senator, Richard C. Shelby, a Republican.

But Mr. Jones has something else working in his favor: a long history with Mr. Biden.

As a young law student in Birmingham, Ala., Mr. Jones was wowed by a visit from a freshman senator from Delaware and introduced himself to Mr. Biden. They grew closer when Mr. Jones moved to Washington to work on the Senate Judiciary Committee. And in 1987, Mr. Jones served as Alabama co-chair on Mr. Biden’s first campaign for president.

Jonathan Martin and Emily Cochrane contributed reporting.

Jonathan Martin and Emily Cochrane contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Former Secretary of State John Kerry, above, climate envoy for President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr., and Ron Klain, below right, Mr. Biden’s chief of staff, both go back to his years in the Senate. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JACQUELYN MARTIN/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

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[***Can France’s Far Right Rise to Power? One Mayor Shows How.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:626G-25H1-DXY4-X2JH-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** In the southern city of Perpignan, voters who had long built a dam against the far right turned in the last election. Some wonder whether it’s a harbinger of things to come.

**Body**

In the southern city of Perpignan, voters who had long built a dam against the far right turned in the last election. Some wonder whether it’s a harbinger of things to come.

PERPIGNAN, France — Riding high in the polls ahead of the next presidential election, feeling they’ve won the battle over ideas, smelling blood in the Élysée Palace, leaders of [*France’s far right*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/13/us/politics/france-far-right-extremists-qanon.html) cocked their eyes across the land at perhaps the one thing standing between them and power: beavers.

That is what some French call the voters who, time and again, have cast political differences aside and put in power anyone but far-right candidates — [*raising a dam against them*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/24/world/europe/french-election-macron-le-pen.html) as real beavers do against predators. Voters did precisely that in 2014 in Perpignan, a medieval city of pastel-color buildings on the Mediterranean near the border with Spain.

But last year, the dam broke and Perpignan became the largest city under the control of the National Rally, the far-right party led by [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/16/world/europe/france-le-pen-election.html). Today the city of more than 120,000 is being closely watched as an incubator of far-right strategy and as a potential harbinger of what a presidential election rematch pitting Ms. Le Pen against President Emmanuel Macron could look like.

A victory for Ms. Le Pen would be earth-shattering for France, and all of Europe. It has been an article of faith in France that a party whose [*leadership has long shown flashes of anti-Semitism, Nazi nostalgia and anti-immigrant bigotry*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/13/world/europe/marine-le-pen-national-front-party.html?searchResultPosition=14) would never make it through the country’s two-stage presidential electoral juggernaut.

But steadily her party has advanced farther than many French have been prepared to countenance, and Ms. Le Pen’s debut in the final round of France’s last presidential election in 2017 came as a shock to the system.

She may still be a relative long shot, given the party’s history in France, but for now perhaps not as long as she once was. Recent [*polls*](http://harris-interactive.fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2021/03/Rapport-Harris-Intentions-de-vote-Presidentielle-2022-mars-2021-Commstrat.pdf) show her matching Mr. Macron in the first round of next year’s presidential contest and trailing by a few points in a second-round runoff. In a [*poll*](https://elabe.fr/marine-le-pen2/) released Thursday, 48 percent of respondents said Ms. Le Pen would probably be France’s next president, up seven percentage points compared with half a year ago.

“They’ve been forming dams since 2002 now,” said Louis Aliot, the mayor of Perpignan and a longtime National Rally leader. “So to ask them again to form a dam with Macron — but what’s changed? Nothing at all.” Voter-built dams were no longer effective, unlike those made by the animal, he said, adding, “When beavers build dams, it works.”

In 2014, many voters on the left and right had successfully united in a “Republican front” against Mr. Aliot — the same way they raised a dam against Ms. Le Pen in the [*2017 presidential election won by Mr. Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/07/world/europe/emmanuel-macron-france-election-marine-le-pen.html).

But in the intervening years, Mr. Aliot succeeded in softening the party’s image in Perpignan and won new converts, even as disillusioned beavers stayed home or left blank ballots on voting day in 2020. Mr. Aliot won handily — in a rematch against his opponent of 2014 who, like Mr. Macron, had tilted rightward and marketed himself as the best check against the far right.

Nationally, Ms. Le Pen, who was Mr. Aliot’s common-law partner for a decade until 2019, has hewed to the same playbook in sanitizing her party’s image, even amid [*questions about the depth and sincerity of those efforts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/13/world/europe/marine-le-pen-national-front-party.html?searchResultPosition=14).

She has softened the party’s longtime populist economic agenda — for instance, by dropping a proposal to exit the euro and by promoting [*green reindustrialization*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/17/world/europe/france-far-right-environment.html) — while holding onto or even toughening the party’s core, hard-line positions on immigration, Islam and security.

The effort by the party to wade into the mainstream has presented a special quandary for Mr. Macron. Sensing the political threat, and lacking a real challenge on his left, he has tried to fight the National Rally on its own turf — [*moving to the right*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/16/world/europe/france-macron-right.html) to vie for voters who might be tempted to defect to it. Doing so, Mr. Macron hopes to keep the far right at bay.

But the shift also helps destigmatize the far right, or at least many of its messages, argue National Rally leaders, some members of Mr. Macron’s own party and political analysts. Mr. Macron’s strategy may have the unintended consequence of helping the National Rally in its decades-long struggle to become a normal party, they say.

 “It legitimizes what we’ve been saying,” Mr. Aliot said. “These are the people who’ve been saying for 30 years: Be careful, they’re nasty, they’re fascists, because they target Muslims. All of a sudden, they’re talking like us.”

Mr. Macron and his ministers, in recent months, have tried to appropriate the extreme right’s issues with new policies and [*dog whistles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/world/europe/france-ensauvagement-far-right-racism.html), talking tough on crime and pushing through a bill to limit filming of the police, which was [*dropped after protests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/25/world/europe/france-macron-muslims-police-laws.html?searchResultPosition=5), and one to crack down on[*what they call Islamist separatism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/16/world/europe/france-law-islamist-extremism.html). In a recent televised debate, the interior minister, [*Gérald Darmanin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/12/world/europe/macron-france-terrorism-darmanin.html?searchResultPosition=1), even accused Ms. Le Pen of being “shaky” and “softer than we are” on Islamism.

They have turned to identity politics, ordering an [*investigation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/world/europe/france-universities-culture-wars.html) into “Islamo-leftism” at French universities and other so-called [*American-inspired ideas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/09/world/europe/france-threat-american-universities.html?searchResultPosition=1) that they say threaten to undermine French values.

“The more we go on their ground, the stronger we make them,” [*Jean-Michel Mis*](https://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/deputes/fiche/OMC_PA719952), a national lawmaker from Mr. Macron’s party, said of the National Rally. “So their leaders are very pleased because, in the end, we’re legitimizing their campaign themes.”

Nicolas Lebourg, a political scientist specializing on the National Rally, said that adopting the far right’s themes has often backfired. “What they’re currently doing is campaigning for Marine Le Pen,” he said.

Even as Mr. Macron has portrayed himself as the best candidate to protect France from the far right, polls show voters may be growing weary of being asked to vote against a candidate, rather than for one.

Among the former beavers of Perpignan were Jacques and Régine Talau, a retired couple who had always voted for the mainstream right, helping build the dam against the far right in Perpignan in 2014 and in the presidential election of 2017.

Historically conservative and economically depressed, Perpignan was perhaps naturally receptive to Ms. Le Pen’s party, which had won smaller, struggling cities in the south and north in recent years. But winning over the Talaus of Perpignan was a tipping point.

Their neighborhood, Mas Llaro, an area of stately homes on large plots amid vineyards on the city’s eastern fringe, is Perpignan’s wealthiest. In 2020, more than 60 percent of its residents voted for Mr. Aliot — 7 percentage points higher than his overall tally and 10 percentage points more than in 2014.

Mas Llaro had always voted for the mainstream right.

But disillusioned and weary of the status quo, the Talaus, like many others, voted for the first time for the far right last year, drawn by Mr. Aliot’s emphasis on cleanliness and crime, saying their home had been broken into twice.

Though satisfied with the mayor’s performance, Mr. Talau said he would still join the dam against the far right in next year’s presidential contest and hold his nose to vote for Mr. Macron. But Ms. Talau was now considering casting a ballot for Ms. Le Pen.

“She’s put water in her wine,” Ms. Talau said, adding that Mr. Macron was not “tough enough.”

Mr. Aliot’s opponent in 2014 and 2020, a center-right politician named Jean-Marc Pujol, had pressed further to the right in an unsuccessful move to fend off the far right. He increased the number of police officers, giving Perpignan the highest number per capita of any large city in France, according to [*government data*](https://www.data.gouv.fr/fr/datasets/police-municipale-effectifs-par-commune/#_).

Even so, many of his core supporters appeared to trust the far right more on crime and still defected, while many left-leaning beavers complained that they had been ignored and refused to take part in dam-building again, said Agnès Langevine, who represented the Greens and the Socialists in the 2020 mayoral election.

“And they told us, ‘In 2022, if it’s between Macron and Le Pen, I won’t do it again,’ ” she added.

Mr. Lebourg, the political scientist, said that Mr. Aliot had also won over conservative, upper-income voters by adopting a mainstream economic message — the same strategy adopted by Ms. Le Pen.

Since taking over the party a decade ago, she has worked hard at “dédiabolisation” — or “de-demonizing” — the party.

In 2015, Ms. Le Pen [*expelled her own father*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/21/world/europe/jean-marie-le-pen-france-national-front-party.html), Jean-Marie Le Pen, who founded the party and had a long history of playing down the Holocaust.

While she popularized dog whistles like “[*turning savage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/world/europe/france-ensauvagement-far-right-racism.html),” she consciously stayed clear of explosive language conjuring up a supposed “[*great replacement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/world/europe/renaud-camus-great-replacement.html?searchResultPosition=1)” of France’s white population by African and Muslim immigrants. In 2018, she [*rebranded*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/11/world/europe/national-front-france.html) the National Front as the more inclusive “Rally.”

Still, [*the party wants*](https://rassemblementnational.fr/telecharger/publications/A4_LIVRET_ASILE_IMMIGRATION_DEF_HD_STC.pdf) to toughen migration policies for foreign students and reduce net immigration by twentyfold.

It also [*wants to ban*](https://rassemblementnational.fr/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/A4_Livret_ISLAMISME.pdf) the public wearing of the Muslim veil and limit the “presence of ostentatious elements” outside religious buildings if they clash with the environment, in an apparent reference to minarets.

In Perpignan, Mr. Aliot has focused on crime, spending $9.5 million to hire 30 new police officers, open new stations, and set up bicycle and nighttime patrols, responding to an increase in drug trafficking.

Jeanne Mercier, 24, a left-leaning voter, said many around her had been “seduced” by the far-right mayor.

“We’re the test to show France that the National Front is making things work and that people are rallying and are happy,” she said, referring to the party by its old name. “In the end, it’s not the devil that we imagined.”

Camille Rosa, 35, said she doesn’t know whether she would join again in building a dam against Ms. Le Pen next year. The attacks by the president’s ministers against “[*Islamo-leftism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/world/europe/france-universities-culture-wars.html)” and scholars on feminism, gender and race had fundamentally changed her view of the government of Mr. Macron.

“I have the impression that their enemies are no longer the extreme right at all,” she said, “but it’s us, people on the left.”

PHOTOS: Louis Aliot, Perpignan’s mayor and a National Rally leader. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1); Clockwise from top: Jacques Talau, left, who remains wary, and his wife, Régine, center, who may back Marine Le Pen in 2022; a ***working-class*** area of Perpignan; Camille Rosa, at left in a bar, who is dismayed by the Macron government’s rightward drift. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** October 13, 2021

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[***49ers Moving to Fill Raider-Shaped Hole In Bay Area Market***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y14-RKV1-JBG3-601M-00000-00&context=1519360)

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Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Sports Desk; Pg. 10

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**Byline:** By Ken Belson

**Body**

Winning over another team's fans can be a delicate exercise, even when you are on the doorstep of the Super Bowl and the other franchise has abandoned the region.

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- The timing couldn't have been any better.

After years of turmoil and losing, the San Francisco 49ers, who face the Green Bay Packers in the N.F.C. Championship game on Sunday, are one victory from returning to Super Bowl. There is no better way to drive demand for tickets, jerseys and support from a business community with cash to burn.

And one more thing -- the 49ers' bonanza is happening as their longtime rivals, the Raiders, abandon the Bay Area for Las Vegas, leaving the 49ers to reign as the lone West Coast team between Seattle and Los Angeles and in prime position to annex the East Bay, which has for years been enemy territory clad in black-and-silver.

Making inroads into Raider nation won't be easy. Raiders fans are among the most fiercely loyal in the N.F.L., and adopting the rival next door as their home team is not in their D.N.A. There were not many Brooklyn Dodgers fans who started rooting for the Yankees in 1958 either. Some fans will follow the team in Las Vegas, even flying there to see them play. Other Raiders fans may stop watching the N.F.L. entirely.

''You're either a Raiders fan or Niners fan, but you're never both,'' said Wayne Deboe, the president of the Oakland Raiders Booster Club and a fan since the team's inception in 1960.

Still, the 49ers ascendancy is likely to draw some fans who just want to watch a winner. The Bay Area is filled with transplants seeking Silicon Valley riches -- and maybe a local team to root for. Younger fans, even those whose parents have a proclivity for silver and black, may latch onto the rising Niners, who are delicately trying to jump on a golden opportunity.

''We would never try to convert Raiders fans,'' said Alex Chang, the chief marketing officer of the 49ers, before outlining what seemed like a pretty good plan to do just that. ''It's a multigenerational play here for people who are transplants or kids who are growing up here now and won't have the Raiders.''

There will be an expansion of 49er charities in the East Bay. The franchise will invite more East Bay school children to its science and technology programs and expand its free flag football programs. The efforts are not necessarily designed to sell tickets, but represent a kind of soft-sell to bring residents in the entire Easy Bay closer to a team more associated with the city of San Francisco and the peninsula stretching down to San Jose.

Last year, about 60,000 school children from the region visited Levi's Stadium. The 49ers also funded free flag football leagues for 3,000 boys and girls that were hosted by the Boys & Girls Club, Police Athletic League and city recreational programs there. Children who play in these leagues all receive a Niners reversible jersey. The team will also run one-time football clinics, often with 49ers, in the East Bay. The team intends to triple that number next season by working with those organizations in the East Bay.

''We want kids to be 49ers fans, but it's not like we want someone not to be a Raiders fan,'' said Hannah Gordon, the team's chief administrative officer.

Sports leagues have tried in the past to create boundaries so that neighboring teams do not encroach on each other's markets. In the N.F.L., a team's territory was a 75-mile radius from its home city. Because San Francisco and Oakland are just 10 miles apart, the 49ers and Raiders have informally stayed out of their each other's cities -- no billboards, instance.

But the growth of social media has made lines on a map obsolete, and now the Raiders are gone altogether.

Winning the hearts of abandoned fans is not easy. The Mets were created in 1962 five years after the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Giants moved to California. The Chargers, who abandoned San Diego three seasons ago, are struggling to gain traction in Los Angeles.

The Kansas City Chiefs have moved eastward across Missouri to St. Louis, which lost the Rams in 2016. Mark Donovan, the Chiefs president, said the team acknowledged that Rams fans may still be angry about the decision to move, but he said ticket sales and sponsorships from that part of the state are on the rise. There is a lot more Chiefs programming on local radio affiliates, too.

The Chiefs' success -- they play in their second consecutive A.F.C. title game on Sunday -- has also won over skeptical Rams fans. Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes and tight end Travis Kelce drew a big round of applause when they attended a Blues playoff game last year.

''I don't think the rivalry between the teams was so bad that people wouldn't root for the Chiefs,'' said Randy Karraker, a talk-show host on 101 ESPN in St. Louis.

That may not be the case in the Bay Area, where the Raiders and 49ers have different identities dating back decades -- the 49ers have long been the team of the elite, while the Raiders were the team of the ***working class***. Still, success changes the calculus. Sales of 49ers merchandise have been the strongest in the East Bay -- from San Leandro to Oakland to Fremont -- this season, up 250 percent compared with last year, according to Fanatics, the largest online seller of licensed merchandise.

''The Bay Area is very provincial,'' said Andy Dolich, who worked as a business executive for the Oakland A's, Golden State Warriors, and, from 2007 to 2010, the 49ers. ''But this Niners team has been able to jump the county barriers.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/sports/oakland-raiders-49ers.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/17/sports/oakland-raiders-49ers.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: With star players like defensive end Nick Bosa, above, the 49ers are hoping their recent success will help their pitch for new fans. Longtime Raiders fans, among the most loyal in the N.F.L., may follow the relocated team from afar or give up on the sport.(PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/ASSOCIATED PRESS

D. ROSS CAMERON/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2020

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[***The Filibuster Fight***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61VW-JKG1-DXY4-X00H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1768 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** And what else you need to know today.

**Body**

And what else you need to know today.

Want to get The Morning by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Good morning. Why is there a big debate over the filibuster? Because it benefits one political party much more than the other.

If you examine the history of the filibuster — a Senate rule requiring a supermajority vote on many bills, rather than a straight majority — you will quickly notice something: It has benefited the political right much more than the left.

* In the 1840s (before the term “filibuster” existed), Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina used the technique to [*protect slavery*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

1. Over the next century, Southern Democrats [*repeatedly*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) used the filibuster to prevent Black Americans from voting and to defeat anti-lynching bills.
2. From the 1950s through the 1990s, Senate Republicans, working with some conservative Democrats, blocked the passage of laws that would have [*helped labor unions organize workers*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
3. Over the past two decades, the filibuster has enabled Republicans to defeat [*a long list of progressive bills*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), on climate change, oil subsidies, campaign finance, Wall Street regulation, corporate offshoring, gun control, immigration, gender pay equality and [*Medicare expansion*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

The early days of Joe Biden’s presidency, with the Democrats narrowly controlling the Senate, [*have intensified a debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) over whether the party should eliminate the filibuster. If Senate Democrats did, they could try to pass many bills — say, on climate change, voting rights, Medicare expansion and tax increases on the rich — with 51 votes, rather than 60.

As part of the debate, many observers have pointed out that both parties have used the filibuster, and both could suffer from its demise. Democrats, for example, filibustered some of President George W. Bush’s [*judicial nominees*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), as well as abortion restrictions and an estate-tax cut. A Senate without the current filibuster really would cause problems for Democrats at times.

On balance, however, there is no question about which party benefits more from the filibuster. Republicans do, and it’s not close.

The dictionary test

This makes sense, too. Consider the words conservative and progressive. A conservative tends to prefer the status quo, while a progressive often favors change. “The filibuster is a tool to preserve the status quo and makes it harder to make change,” Adam Jentleson, a former Democratic Senate aide and the author of [*“Kill Switch,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) a new book on the filibuster, told me. (I’m reading the book now and recommend it.)

Jentleson documents that the country’s founders did not intend for most legislation to require a supermajority and that the filibuster [*emerged*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) only in the 1800s. Alexander Hamilton and [*James Madison*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) both wrote passionate defenses of simple majority rule. They protected minority rights by creating a government — with a president, two legislative chambers and a judiciary — in which making a law even with simple majorities was onerous.

“What at first sight may seem a remedy,” [*Hamilton wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), referring to supermajority rule, “is, in reality, a poison.” If a majority could not govern, he explained, it would lead to “tedious delays; continual negotiation and intrigue; contemptible compromises of the public good.”

What now?

The filibuster isn’t going anywhere yet. Some past Democratic supporters of the filibuster — like Senator [*Jon Tester*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of Montana and [*Biden himself*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) — have said they might consider eliminating it if Republicans continued to reject compromise. Others — like [*Joe Manchin*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and [*Kyrsten Sinema*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) — say they remain opposed.

But the issue won’t be decided in the abstract, as the Republican strategist [*Liam Donovan*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) has noted. When the Senate is next considering a specific bill that has the support of a majority but not a supermajority, that will be the crucial moment.

Related: [*Jamelle Bouie*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), a Times Opinion columnist, has made cases for scrapping the filibuster. In The Washington Post, [*Carl Levin*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), a former senator, and Richard Arenberg have [*made the case for keeping it*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). And [*Molly Reynolds*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of the Brookings Institution has described how it might be reformed.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* The world [*surpassed 100 million known virus cases*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). The true number is probably much higher.

1. The C.D.C. says schools [*could reopen safely*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) if people continued to wear masks and practice social distancing.
2. Biden said the U.S. government [*was nearing a deal with Pfizer and Moderna*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to increase its order of vaccine doses from 400 million to 600 million by the end of the summer. But this may not accelerate the current pace of vaccination for a few months.
3. So far, 6 percent of the U.S. population has received a first vaccine dose and 1 percent has gotten both doses. [*Here’s how the vaccine rollout is going*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
4. [*Britain and the European Union are feuding*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)over how to share available vaccine doses.
5. Hong Kong’s first virus lockdown is in a ***working-class*** neighborhood, raising questions [*about whether residents are being treated fairly*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Trump Fallout

* Forty-five Republican senators [*voted to dismiss*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) the new impeachment charges against Donald Trump, arguing that the Senate cannot try a former president. It’s a sign that conviction is unlikely.

1. The Capitol Police apologized for [*failing to prevent*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) the Capitol riot, acknowledging that the agency had known that there was a “strong potential for violence” and was slow to act.

The Biden Administration

* Chuck Schumer, the Senate majority leader, [*signaled that*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) Democrats could try to pass Biden’s pandemic relief plan through the budget reconciliation process, which requires only a majority vote.

1. In their first phone call as fellow presidents, Biden and Vladimir Putin agreed to extend the last remaining nuclear arms treaty between their countries, but Biden also confronted Putin on several topics, including Russian election interference.
2. “The call was, in essence, the opening act of what promises to be a deeply adversarial relationship between the two leaders,” [*The Times’s David E. Sanger and Anton Troianovski write*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
3. Biden plans to announce executive actions today to deal with climate change, but [*hurdles lie ahead*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Here are [*four things to watch for*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
4. Kamala Harris, the first female vice president, [*swore in Janet Yellen*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), the first woman to be Treasury secretary. (Fun fact: Yellen is also the first woman who has had all three top economic jobs in the government.)

Other Big Stories

* Thousands of farmers [*protested in New Delhi*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) over India’s new laws that critics say will leave small farmers at the mercy of corporate giants.

1. A former mayor of Seoul who disappeared and died in July [*had sexually harassed*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and verbally humiliated a secretary, a human rights watchdog concluded.
2. Two people died in a medical office in Austin, Texas, in [*a hostage standoff*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) that lasted more than five hours.
3. Marty Baron, whose journalistic instincts were celebrated in the Oscar-winning movie “Spotlight,” will retire as executive editor of The Washington Post. “Keep at it,” [*he wrote to the newspaper’s staff*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Morning Reads

Trilobites: The Spinosaurus, a dinosaur with some water-loving features, roamed the earth 99 million years ago. Today, researchers are wondering: Was this creature more [*subaquatic killer or giant wading bird*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

From Opinion: The writer Stuart Thompson spent weeks inside a QAnon chat room, and [*here’s what he heard*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). And Iran’s ambassador to the U.N. has [*an Op-Ed*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) on reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

Lives Lived: After a bicycle accident left her paralyzed in 2003, the feminist scholar Christina Crosby wrote a memoir, “A Body, Undone,” which explored pain and refused to draw tidy lessons about overcoming hardship. [*She died at 67*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

ARTS AND IDEAS

The price of college

The list price at selective private colleges approaches a mind-blowing [*$80,000 a year*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and it’s not far behind for out-of-state students at some public colleges in the U.S. But as Ron Lieber, a personal-finance columnist for The Times, notes, “list prices are increasingly irrelevant for most families.”

Middle-class and low-income students typically receive [*large scholarships*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) — and can receive larger ones if they have excellent grades in high school. Even affluent students can receive a lot of financial aid with top grades.

Ron has just published a book that tries to explain the maddeningly complex subject of college finances, called “[*The Price You Pay for College.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) In it, he makes a fascinating point: Many parents talk in great detail with their children about the ways in which sports can earn them college acceptances and scholarships.

Yet athletics are not the best route to a scholarship for most students, Ron writes. Academics are. “Each spring, I hear from otherwise well-informed parents of high school seniors who had no idea that this so-called merit aid existed, let alone how to predict where good grades might yield the lowest price or the best value,” Ron told me. “I wanted to make sure that families knew all about it, much sooner.”

[*You can read an excerpt here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

This [*vegetarian kofta curry*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) is a saucy dish that’s delicious with rice or flatbread.

What to Read

The writer [*Durga Chew-Bose reviews “Let Me Tell You What I Mean,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) a collection of essays by Joan Didion from 1968 through 2000.

Science Talk

Trying to learn more about the wonders of science? [*These seven podcasts will help*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) answer questions like whether there’s any scientific basis to astrology, and whether lab-grown meat can replace the real thing.

Go Outside

Teachers [*share tips on how to get outside more this winter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Late Night

The late-night hosts [*just can’t quit Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was logotype. Today’s puzzle is above — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) if you have a Games subscription.

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and a clue: Pandemonium (five letters).

And attention quiz fans: You have until noon Eastern today [*to submit a question*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) for this week’s News Quiz.

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

P.S. Astead Herndon, a national political reporter for The Times, [*spoke with Slate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) about covering Trump and the work of journalists of color.

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” is about why virus infections are falling, and if it will last. On [*a bonus episode of “Sway,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) The Times’s Kevin Roose discusses Substack.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer returns to his office after a speech on the Senate floor. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A 'Real Housewives' Legal Drama by Marriage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TG-6YV1-JBG3-62YM-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 2715 words

**Byline:** By Matthew Goldstein and Katherine Rosman

**Body**

From a bit part as a dead body on ''Law & Order'' to six seasons on ''The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills,'' television has been a crucial part of Erika Girardi's careful cultivation of her branded glamorous life.

But now the reality show is offering a glimpse into the real-world legal drama surrounding Ms. Girardi, her renowned lawyer husband, and millions of dollars he's accused of misappropriating from vulnerable clients -- including burn victims and relatives of those killed in the 2018 Lion Air jet crash -- to support the couple's lavish lifestyle.

Ms. Girardi's husband, Tom Girardi, helped win the trial that made Erin Brockovich famous. But he has swiftly fallen from grace.

Mr. Girardi, 82, has been suspended from practicing law in California. He and his firm are bankrupt; he's been moved into a nursing home; and a judge ruled him incompetent to handle his financial affairs. And last November, after 20 years of marriage, Ms. Girardi filed for divorce.

Filming for the current season of ''The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills'' had begun just weeks before. Over the next several months, as Bravo cameras continued to roll, details about Mr. Girardi's financial and legal troubles were reported in the news.

What has transpired since is made-for-TV drama: accusations of stolen money, Twitter feuds and televised backbiting from Ms. Girardi's reality co-stars. So it's no wonder that the couple's rapidly unfolding drama quickly became the central plotline of the 11th season of the show.

A few weeks after Bravo broadcast the first episode on May 19, lawyers disclosed that Mr. Girardi's law firm may have paid up to $25 million of his wife's personal and professional expenses. In July, Ms. Girardi, 50, was named as a defendant in a lawsuit filed by a bankruptcy trustee seeking to recoup some of those dollars.

In a subsequent court filing, the expenses were enumerated in a six-page exhibit and included at least $850,000 on hair, makeup and nail stylists; at least $1.3 million on promotion and marketing; and $14 million in American Express charges.

The dollar amounts, on their own, may not have surprised ''Beverly Hills'' viewers. Ms. Girardi has bragged on the show about her expensive tastes and the way she has spent the couple's money.

In her 2018 memoir, ''Pretty Mess,'' she wrote that several years into her marriage she decided to develop a career in music (she performs under the stage name Erika Jayne) because ''there was nothing more I could buy.'' (Her best-known song, ''XXpen$ive,'' includes the lyrics ''Bentleys and Benzes/Through cash-colored lenses/Them dollars and cents/Cha-ching!'')

But her lavish spending is now associated with the alleged misappropriation by her husband of money owed to victims of horrible tragedies.

To date, she has been named in a half-dozen civil lawsuits. Just this week, lawyers for one of those lawsuits sent a subpoena to the show's producers seeking outtakes that involve her. Additionally, Ms. Girardi may owe millions in unpaid taxes, court filings show.

Ms. Girardi declined to comment for this article. Her lawyer Evan Borges said Ms. Girardi did not have any knowledge of the wrongdoing that her husband is accused of, nor did she know how he managed his law firm's finances. ''Erika doesn't have personal liability for any of those transactions,'' Mr. Borges said.

Most people in Ms. Girardi's situation would be trying to maintain the lowest possible profile. But she is a Housewife, and discretion doesn't make for good TV.

Relishing the Attention

Ms. Girardi's legal and marital turmoil has drawn rabid interest among newcomers and veteran viewers of ''The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills,'' who are glued to a spectacle that is unusual even by the standards of the Bravo network, which is basking in the glow of reality TV narrative gold.

The series is currently drawing the highest ratings in the ''Real Housewives'' franchise.

''The show is an authentic reflection of what occurred in real time,'' said Alex Baskin, the president of Evolution Media, which produces the ''Beverly Hills'' show for Bravo. ''No accommodation was made for Erika while shooting.'' (What about in editing? ''No,'' Mr. Baskin said.)

Ms. Girardi appears to be relishing the attention, even as much of it -- especially on social media -- focuses on her perceived lack of sympathy for the people her estranged husband has been accused of fleecing. This week, she reposted a fan's Instagram post that compared her suffering to that of Jesus Christ.

When Bravo announced that it would broadcast a four-part reunion show for this season of ''Beverly Hills'' (only the second time Bravo has broadcast that many episodes for an end-of-season reunion), Ms. Girardi tweeted, ''Now what would make it 4 parts?? Me.''

But she also sat down for sessions with her lawyers to prepare for the reunion special, the first episode of which will be broadcast on Oct. 13.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

''There is a certain kind of toughness that she presents,'' said Mr. Borges. In prepping her for the reunion show, he said, ''The first comment to her was: You don't have to be the tough one. Also, it is OK to be humble.''

Ms. Girardi was raised in Atlanta and moved to New York after high school with dreams of becoming an actress. Her most stable income in those days came from her work as a dancer at go-go clubs in New Jersey.

In 1996, she left for Los Angeles. She met Mr. Girardi at Chasen's, a restaurant where he was a customer and investor and she was an employee, according to her memoir, which was written with Brian Moylan. The Girardis married in 2000.

In the marriage's early years, Ms. Girardi devoted herself to her husband, traveling to legal events and awards dinners with him. When they flew to New York on their Gulfstream, she wrote, they could see a club called Shakers where she had once danced, close to Teterboro Airport in New Jersey. ''It only took you 10 years to get across the street,'' her husband once told her.

Eventually, with Mr. Girardi's support (financial and otherwise), she hired image consultants, choreographers and music producers to help start her career as a recording artist. Mr. Girardi drew up incorporation papers for his wife's company, EJ Global.

No expense was spared. Mr. Girardi's firm began picking up the tab for EJ Global's mounting bills, including payments of $1.5 million to McDonald Selznick, a talent agency; $260,000 to the law firm Greenberg Traurig; and $252,000 to Troy Jensen, a celebrity makeup artist and image consultant, court filings show.

Ms. Girardi joined ''The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills'' in 2015. Despite the name of the series, Ms. Girardi's scenes were occasionally shot in her and Mr. Girardi's Pasadena mansion, which is currently listed for sale at $8.9 million. Sometimes her husband would make a cameo.

Maintaining a Lavish Lifestyle

Mr. Girardi used to be a towering presence in the legal community in Los Angeles. A pioneer in so-called toxic tort cases, he had been respected for his advocacy on behalf of vulnerable clients. His firm, Girardi Keese, represented tens of thousands of clients, often teaming up with other lawyers in big-dollar personal injury lawsuits, including ones filed against pharmaceutical giants and the manufacturers of pelvic mesh products, which have led some women to experience intense pain and bleeding.

His courtroom contributions to the groundwater pollution case made famous in the film ''Erin Brockovich'' helped secure a $333 million judgment for victims.

Then, last December, Jay Edelson, a lawyer who had worked closely with Mr. Girardi in successfully suing Boeing on behalf of the relatives of victims of the Lion Air plane crash that killed 189 people in 2018, filed papers in federal court in Chicago, claiming that Mr. Girardi had embezzled at least $2 million in settlement money owed to these families. Mr. Girardi's brother, Robert, who is serving as his conservator, did not return requests for comment.

Other claims soon arose. The biggest so far alleges that Mr. Girardi never turned over the proceeds from an $11 million settlement he had secured eight years ago for a California man named Joseph Ruigomez who suffered burns on over 90 percent of his body.

The bankruptcy trustee has said that at least $24 million for clients may have been misappropriated. Mr. Girardi is facing lawyer disciplinary charges in California, and the state bar said in June that an audit found mishandled complaints about Mr. Girardi going back 40 years.

Mr. Edelson has said, in court proceedings, that Mr. Girardi was running a ''Ponzi scheme,'' using client money to keep his firm running and to pay for the extravagant lifestyle he and his wife shared. Mr. Edelson's law firm on Monday filed a motion in the bankruptcy proceeding to go after Ms. Girardi for any ''traceable assets that were embezzled by Tom and potentially given to Erika.''

Mr. Edelson's law firm also sent a civil subpoena this week to Evolution Media, the show's production company, for any unaired recordings in which Ms. Girardi may have said anything relevant to that asset hunt.

The debts owed by Mr. Girardi's defunct law firm continue to mount. The firm owes more than $101 million to clients, a half-dozen legal lenders and other lawyers, according to an August filing by the bankruptcy trustee in the case. To raise cash, an auction of most everything in the law firm's office was held in August. Among the items was an ''Erin Brockovich'' poster, signed by the actress Julia Roberts, which sold for $1,550.

Ms. Brockovich, who still works as an environmental activist and legal advocate, has worked with Mr. Girardi on several other cases. In an interview, she said that until allegations became public, she had been unaware that clients were not receiving their money. She expressed disgust and exasperation at the disparity between the attention paid to the reality show and that given to Mr. Girardi's clients who are still owed their money.

''It sickens me, it frustrates me, it saddens me,'' Ms. Brockovich said. ''I cannot fathom how they feel. And yet we keep sensationalizing Tom and Erika.''

Unfolding Dramas, Onscreen

The Beverly Hills show is not the first ''Housewives'' series to milk narrative value from a legal drama that has affected vulnerable targets. In 2015, one of the cast members from ''The Real Housewives of New Jersey,'' Teresa Giudice, spent 11 months in federal prison after she pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud and bankruptcy fraud.

This year, a ''Real Housewives of Salt Lake City'' cast member, Jen Shah, and an assistant were arrested on federal charges of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering through a telemarketing business that promised tax-preparation and web services to ***working-class***, often aging customers. (They denied the allegations.)

Legal drama on the series ''keeps people so intrigued,'' said Heather McDonald, who analyzes the show's episodes and the legal case on her podcast ''Juicy Scoop With Heather McDonald.'' ''It makes you wonder if the only way the show is going to survive is if at all times one or two of these housewives is facing indictment.''

This time, part of the draw for viewers is in dissecting Ms. Girardi's shifting narrative as it has evolved with news reports of her estranged husband's legal and health troubles.

In the first episode, during footage filmed before she filed for divorce in November, Ms. Girardi is seen going through her enormous wardrobe and fretting about when she may wear certain items again because of the coronavirus pandemic. She says that one bright spot of the pandemic was that it allowed her and her husband to reconnect.

''Tom and I had dinner at the kitchen table every night,'' she says in the episode.

From the time Ms. Girardi files for divorce, however -- an action that appears to genuinely surprise her cast mates -- she recasts her long-cultivated air of marital bliss in a harsher light. The separation was, she says, a long time coming.

As the season progresses, and more detailed accusations of Mr. Girardi's misdeeds appear in The Los Angeles Times and other news outlets, the conversations among the Housewives revolve with greater frequency around the gravity of the claims, and how much Ms. Girardi knew.

Ms. Girardi, in turn, grows increasingly defensive.

Over rack-of-lamb and caviar pie at a dinner party at Kathy Hilton's Bel Air estate in one episode, one ''Beverly Hills'' Housewife, Dorit Kemsley, says to Ms. Girardi: ''I am going to support you to the bitter end.''

But ''when you're reading about the victims and the orphans and the widows,'' she adds, ''that's very hard to digest.''

''How do you think I feel?'' Ms. Girardi responds.

Sutton Stracke, a newer cast member, expresses little sympathy.

''I don't trust that what you've told us is the truth,'' Ms. Stracke says to Ms. Girardi.

''I'll go head-on with you all day,'' Ms. Girardi fires back, adding an expletive that she also uses when telling Ms. Stracke to ''shut up.''

As men in uniforms, white gloves and masks serve food and drinks at the event, Ms. Girardi laments: ''Look at my life,'' she says, adding the same expletive.

Ms. Girardi is likely earning more than $600,000 from her turn this year on the show, which is still pennies compared to the amount of money she is used to having at her disposal.

But she will end this season banking a valuable reality TV commodity: notoriety. ''She is going to be more famous than ever,'' Ms. McDonald said.

Looking for Hidden Treasure

Ronald Richards, a Beverly Hills lawyer hired by the bankruptcy trustee to help recoup the $25 million from Ms. Girardi, has sought to cast himself as the best hope for clients and creditors of Mr. Girardi's law firm. ''She got $25 million of firm revenue diverted to her, and she and her lawyer are pretending she is clueless,'' Mr. Richards said.

Ms. Girardi and Mr. Richards (who was once married to Louise Linton, the actress and current wife of Steven Mnuchin, the former Treasury secretary) have taken their legal battle to social media. In one instance Ms. Girardi accused Mr. Richards on Twitter of ''extortion'' after he offered to waive some of his legal fees if she started returning some of the money. Mr. Richards responded by posting the legal definition of extortion. ''Not even close,'' he tweeted.

Filing a lawsuit is one thing. Collecting on it is an entirely different matter. Mr. Richards, in an interview, acknowledged it's unlikely that Ms. Girardi's assets -- clothes, jewelry and other items -- are worth anything close to $25 million. Mr. Richards said he does not want to hurt Ms. Girardi and is open to a settlement.

But her lawyer said it's premature to discuss a deal. ''Everyone keeps piling on and trashing Erika for things she didn't do,'' Mr. Borges said, adding, ''there is no hidden treasure.''

Meanwhile, the legal spectacle has left some victims exasperated.

Mr. Ruigomez was 19 when, in 2010, a gas explosion destroyed his family's home in San Bruno, Calif., killing his girlfriend, burning him and severely damaging his lungs. He has since had nearly three dozen surgeries.

In 2013, Mr. Girardi secured an $11 million settlement on behalf of Mr. Ruigomez. Pacific Gas & Electric, the giant power company, paid the money to Mr. Girardi's firm years ago. According to court documents, he and his family are still waiting for most of their money.

Kathleen Ruigomez, Mr. Ruigomez's mother, needs the settlement money for her son's continuing medical care, she said. ''I do worry about getting paid.''

Ms. Ruigomez used to watch and enjoy ''The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills.'' But as time passed and Mr. Girardi kept giving her excuses for why they hadn't been paid the full settlement, she began to regard Ms. Girardi with skepticism.

''The first few seasons we kind of liked her, but then we began becoming more and more concerned about our money. Is she spending our money? Now she is very unlikable on the show,'' Ms. Ruigomez said. ''She seems like she almost has an attitude that we victims ruined her gig.''

Kitty Bennett contributed research.Kitty Bennett contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/09/style/erika-girardi-real-housewives.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/09/style/erika-girardi-real-housewives.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUSTIN J WEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

PAUL ARCHULETA/GETTY IMAGES) (ST8)

Erika Girardi, left, and Lisa Rinna in an episode of ''The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY ISABELLA VOSMIKOVA/BRAVO AND NBCU, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (ST9)

**Load-Date:** October 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Raiders Left Oakland. The 49ers Want to Take It.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y0W-CDT1-JBG3-6265-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 17, 2020 Friday 13:03 EST

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**Section:** SPORTS

**Length:** 993 words

**Byline:** Ken Belson

**Highlight:** Winning over another team’s fans can be a delicate exercise, even when you are on the doorstep of the Super Bowl and the other franchise has abandoned the region.

**Body**

Winning over another team’s fans can be a delicate exercise, even when you are on the doorstep of the Super Bowl and the other franchise has abandoned the region.

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — The timing couldn’t have been any better.

After years of turmoil and losing, the [*San Francisco 49ers*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/packers-49ers/), who face the   [*Green Bay Packers*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/packers-49ers/) in the N.F.C. Championship game on Sunday, are one victory from returning to Super Bowl. There is no better way to drive demand for tickets, jerseys and support from a business community with cash to burn.

And one more thing — the 49ers’ bonanza is happening as their longtime rivals, the Raiders, [*abandon the Bay Area for Las Vegas*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/packers-49ers/), leaving the 49ers to reign as the lone West Coast team between Seattle and Los Angeles and in prime position to annex the East Bay, which has for years been enemy territory clad in black-and-silver.

Making inroads into Raider nation won’t be easy. Raiders fans are among the most fiercely loyal in the N.F.L., and adopting the rival next door as their home team is not in their D.N.A. There were not many Brooklyn Dodgers fans who started rooting for the Yankees in 1958 either. Some fans will follow the team in Las Vegas, even flying there to see them play. Other Raiders fans may stop watching the N.F.L. entirely.

“You’re either a Raiders fan or Niners fan, but you’re never both,” said Wayne Deboe, the president of the Oakland Raiders Booster Club and a fan since the team’s inception in 1960.

Still, the [*49ers*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/packers-49ers/) ascendancy is likely to draw some fans who just want to watch a winner. The Bay Area is filled with transplants seeking Silicon Valley riches — and maybe a local team to root for. Younger fans, even those whose parents have a proclivity for silver and black, may latch onto the rising Niners, who are delicately trying to jump on a golden opportunity.

“We would never try to convert Raiders fans,” said Alex Chang, the chief marketing officer of the 49ers, before outlining what seemed like a pretty good plan to do just that. “It’s a multigenerational play here for people who are transplants or kids who are growing up here now and won’t have the Raiders.”

There will be an expansion of 49er charities in the East Bay. The franchise will invite more East Bay school children to its science and technology programs and expand its free flag football programs. The efforts are not necessarily designed to sell tickets, but represent a kind of soft-sell to bring residents in the entire Easy Bay closer to a team more associated with the city of San Francisco and the peninsula stretching down to San Jose.

Last year, about 60,000 school children from the region visited Levi’s Stadium. The 49ers also funded free flag football leagues for 3,000 boys and girls that were hosted by the Boys &amp; Girls Club, Police Athletic League and city recreational programs there. Children who play in these leagues all receive a Niners reversible jersey. The team will also run one-time football clinics, often with 49ers, in the East Bay. The team intends to triple that number next season by working with those organizations in the East Bay.

“We want kids to be 49ers fans, but it’s not like we want someone not to be a Raiders fan,” said Hannah Gordon, the team’s chief administrative officer.

Sports leagues have tried in the past to create boundaries so that neighboring teams do not encroach on each other’s markets. In the N.F.L., a team’s territory was a 75-mile radius from its home city. Because San Francisco and Oakland are just 10 miles apart, the 49ers and Raiders have informally stayed out of their each other’s cities — no billboards, for instance.

But the growth of social media has made lines on a map obsolete, and now the Raiders are gone altogether.

Winning the hearts of abandoned fans is not easy. The Mets were created in 1962 five years after the Brooklyn Dodgers and New York Giants moved to California. The Chargers, who abandoned San Diego three seasons ago, are struggling to gain traction in Los Angeles.

The Kansas City Chiefs have moved eastward across Missouri to St. Louis, which lost the Rams in 2016. Mark Donovan, the Chiefs president, said the team acknowledged that Rams fans may still be angry about the decision to move, but he said ticket sales and sponsorships from that part of the state are on the rise. There is a lot more Chiefs programming on local radio affiliates, too.

The Chiefs’ success — they play in their second consecutive A.F.C. title game on Sunday — has also won over skeptical Rams fans. Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes and tight end Travis Kelce drew a big round of applause when they attended a Blues playoff game last year.

“I don’t think the rivalry between the teams was so bad that people wouldn’t root for the Chiefs,” said Randy Karraker, a talk-show host on 101 ESPN in St. Louis.

That may not be the case in the Bay Area, where the Raiders and 49ers have different identities dating back decades — the 49ers have long been the team of the elite, while the Raiders were the team of the ***working class***. Still, success changes the calculus. Sales of 49ers merchandise have been the strongest in the East Bay — from San Leandro to Oakland to Fremont — this season, up 250 percent compared with last year, according to Fanatics, the largest online seller of licensed merchandise.

“The Bay Area is very provincial,” said Andy Dolich, who worked as a business executive for the Oakland A’s, Golden State Warriors, and, from 2007 to 2010, the 49ers. “But this Niners team has been able to jump the county barriers.”

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: 49ers running back Raheem Mostert rushing past the Packers’ Ibraheim Campbell for one of his four touchdowns; DeForest Buckner sack- ing the Packers’ Aaron Rodgers, who was pressured by the 49ers defense all game; and the 49ers offense after a touchdown in the second quarter. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY A J MAST FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JUSTIN LANE/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK; KYLE TERADA/USA TODAY SPORTS, VIA REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Inside the C.I.A.; nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6111-P391-DXY4-X24W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 7, 2020 Wednesday 22:36 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1411 words

**Byline:** Charlie Savage

**Highlight:** John O. Brennan’s memoir, “Undaunted,” describes his career at the C.I.A., including his years as head of the agency.

**Body**

Looking back on his youth, [*John O. Brennan*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/morning-i-met-donald-trump/616556/), the former director of the Central Intelligence Agency, recalls having been an earring-wearing, at least one-time hashish-smoking rebel who in the 1976 election cast a ballot for the Communist Party’s presidential candidate — a protest vote spurred by his disgust at “the partisan politics of both the Democrats and the Republicans,” he writes in his memoir, “Undaunted: My Fight Against America’s Enemies, at Home and Abroad.” A few years later, when he applied for a job at the C.I.A., Brennan confessed this vote but was assured that it would not affect his application — a response “affirming my rights as a citizen” that “dispelled any concerns I had about joining an organization that had been routinely accused over the years of flouting American values and liberties.” Brennan had found his own group: the permanent national security bureaucracy that President Trump would someday portray as an evil “deep state.”

Before Donald Trump’s rise, Brennan had been something of a nomadic public figure in polarized America. At the start of the Obama administration, many liberals viewed him with suspicion because he had been a C.I.A. official during the time of the agency’s post-9/11 torture program, although he was not directly involved and has long maintained that he opposed it; his book for the first time publicly names three officials to whom he says he expressed concerns in 2002. Brennan went on to oversee President Obama’s drone strikes targeting terrorism suspects in non-battlefield zones, and publicly claimed in June 2011 that they had caused no civilian casualties over that past year; Brennan writes that he stands by that claim without addressing the reasons many were skeptical: For example, a high-profile March 2011 strike appears to have [*killed Pakistani tribal elders who had gathered to discuss a chromite mining dispute*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/morning-i-met-donald-trump/616556/).

But Republicans have viewed Brennan with suspicion, too. He recounts making enemies in the George W. Bush White House in 2006, during a brief period in the private sector, by writing an op-ed that criticized the president’s hyping of purported links between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda; while he never published it, the Bush White House found out about the draft and blocked him from becoming deputy C.I.A. director. That seeming career setback cleared the way for him to become an even more senior official in the Obama administration, during which he often hit back when he thought Republican lawmakers were politicizing national security matters for partisan gain.

Brennan’s pugnacious personality hasn’t changed since 2017, when he left the C.I.A., but political conditions have. He has lashed into Trump for disparaging the intelligence community and suggested that [*the president did collude with Russia*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/morning-i-met-donald-trump/616556/). Even as some Democrats came to see him as a #Resistance hero, the White House in August 2018 accused him of leveraging his experience and access to information to make unfounded accusations and declared that Trump had [*revoked Brennan’s security clearance*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/morning-i-met-donald-trump/616556/). This was false, he writes — there was no legal basis to strip his clearance and he still has it today. Nevertheless, Trump did apparently instruct the executive branch not to share any classified information with him, and the C.I.A. even denied his request to review his own records as he worked on his memoir, despite having routinely permitted other former directors to do so.

Brennan’s memoir presents a rich portrait of his unusual life, which took him from a ***working-class*** New Jersey neighborhood to a position as a Middle East specialist who met with kings and presidents and witnessed the rise of Al Qaeda. But as a reporter who has spent much of the last two decades writing about counterterrorism matters in which Brennan played an important role, I recognized the virtual absence of certain topics — like his significant support, both internally and in public, for using traditional civilian courts rather than Guantánamo’s dysfunctional military commissions system to prosecute terrorism suspects, a topic that led to a great deal of partisan demagoguery during the Obama years. One wonders if his inability to use his files to refresh his memory resulted in such holes.

Still, memoirs by former national security officials always exhibit a certain Swiss cheese quality because so much about their professional experiences remains classified. Brennan sometimes writes around that problem, as when he invents a hypothetical briefing to President Obama about whether to approve a drone strike. And he takes advantage of the large amounts of information that has been declassified about the raid on Osama bin Laden’s compound to produce a dramatic chapter on that episode. This is now an oft-told tale, but he adds fresh details, like his firsthand account of his call to a Saudi official who declined to take custody of the Qaeda leader’s corpse for burial.

Nevertheless, much else surely remains submerged, as is suggested by a few episodes that involve publicly known but technically still classified information. Regarding a debate over whether to arm Syrian rebels, Brennan writes that he is “unable to address many important aspects and details of U.S. policy toward Syria during the Obama administration because they remain highly classified.” One thing he omits is that, as has been widely reported, the [*C.I.A. covertly funneled arms to certain rebels*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/morning-i-met-donald-trump/616556/). And discussing his conversations with a since-assassinated Yemeni president about what he vaguely refers to as “gaining Yemeni government support for U.S. counterterrorism actions,” Brennan provides a vivid description of the leader — a diminutive, mafia don-like figure with restless leg syndrome — but leaves out the substance of the deal they cut. L[*eaked diplomatic cables revealed*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/morning-i-met-donald-trump/616556/) that it permitted strikes on Yemeni soil, so long as the Americans did not publicly acknowledge it.

Brennan also has personal blind spots. He dismisses a 2014 call by two Senate Democrats for him to resign as “life in the highly partisan waters of Washington.” The context was that the C.I.A. had objected to findings of the Senate Intelligence Committee about the agency’s defunct torture program, but then it turned out that the Senate had obtained an internal C.I.A. review that instead supported those findings; furious, the agency responded by treating Senate staffers like spies, searching their computers and making a criminal referral to the Justice Department.

Brennan suggests the Democratic lawmakers really just wanted to score political points against the Bush administration officials who authorized the torture program. But the Senate report made those Republicans look better because one of its key disputed findings was that the C.I.A. had lied to them to win and maintain that authorization — so, fair or not, the senators’ criticism was not partisan.

But even if Brennan’s narrative often cannot stand alone as a one-stop-shopping account of the events it covers, his own reflections on his long and momentous career are a worthy addition to the available history of the post-9/11 era. And his high-profile criticism of Trump since leaving the agency, along with the backlash that has provoked, has only added to his consequential public life. “Undaunted” opens and closes with scathing discussions of Trump. There can be little doubt whom the book’s subtitle, with its reference to fighting America’s enemies “at home,” is pointing to.

“I have received many welcome words of encouragement from friends and strangers alike to continue with my public commentary,” he writes. “If, after 33 years of public service, I also must endure a steady stream of derisive and offensive comments, false allegations and physical threats from those who are upset with me, so be it. It is a path I have freely and willingly chosen. I remain undaunted.”

Charlie Savage is a Washington correspondent for The Times. His most recent book is “Power Wars: The Relentless Rise of Presidential Authority and Secrecy.” UNDAUNTED My Fight Against America’s Enemies, at Home and Abroad By John O. Brennan 464 pp. Celadon Books. $30.

PHOTO: The former C.I.A. director John Brennan before a House committee, May 2017. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AL DRAGO/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Related Articles**

* [*Brennan Rebuffed Requests to Lower Confidence in Key Russia Finding*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/morning-i-met-donald-trump/616556/)

1. [*John Brennan: President Trump’s Claims of No Collusion Are Hogwash*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/morning-i-met-donald-trump/616556/)
2. [*John Brennan, Former C.I.A. Spymaster, Steps Out of the Shadows*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/10/morning-i-met-donald-trump/616556/)

**Load-Date:** October 28, 2020

**End of Document**



[***In Stockton, a Powerful Program to Prevent Violence; California Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60FN-3BF1-JBG3-619K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 27, 2020 Monday 15:10 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1292 words

**Byline:** Betty Márquez Rosales

**Highlight:** With the pandemic, and then the eruption of protests in response to the killing of George Floyd, Julian Balderama’s work has become all the more challenging.

**Body**

With the pandemic, and then the eruption of protests in response to the killing of George Floyd, Julian Balderama’s work has become all the more challenging.

Good morning.

(This article is part of the California Today newsletter. [*Sign up here*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716) to receive it by email.)

Today, we have another dispatch from the [*University of California, Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716), written by Betty Márquez Rosales:

Julian Balderama’s daily mission, stated starkly, is to keep a dozen boys and young men in Stockton alive and out of jail.

His official job title is “Neighborhood Change Associate” for a violence-prevention program called Advance Peace. But on the streets, Mr. Balderama is what is known as an “interrupter” — he defuses conflict. Through constant home visits, sometimes bearing takeout meals, he shows his 12 mentees how to steer clear of crime and violence, and nudges them toward schools and jobs. “These guys,” he said, “have been let down so many times in their lives.”

Mr. Balderama works with boys as young as 15 and men as old as 40, all of them either Black or Latino. At the start of the year, his biggest worry was how to keep his mentees out of the gunfire that erupts with terrifying frequency in Stockton, his hometown. But with the pandemic, and then the eruption of protests in response to the killing of George Floyd, Mr. Balderama’s work has become all the more challenging.

[Read about Mayor Michael Tubbs’s renewed [*push for a guaranteed income*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716).]

Now his daily rounds include offering advice on how to avoid catching the coronavirus, while also navigating how he, as a Mexican-American, can approach the complex subject of police brutality with his Black mentees.

[See The Times’s [*map tracking coronavirus cases*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716) across the state.]

“When the looting and rioting was happening, I did not tell them to not do that,” Mr. Balderama said. “How could I? The anger and the frustration and the ‘I’ve had enough.’ I could push somebody away like that.”

“I just said: ‘Listen, we both know what’s going on. I’m not going to tell you what to do and what not to do. But the decisions you make, you make sure they’re based on what you’re passionate about. If you’re going to do something, make sure you understand there’s consequences to your actions.’”

The multiplying risks underscore how in low-income places like Stockton, Covid-19 and the issue of police brutality have intertwined with the existing problems of gun violence and unemployment to create fresh ways of ensnaring young Black and Latino men.

Standing against these threats in Stockton are a handful of “interrupters” like Mr. Balderama and a few modestly funded city and county social service programs.

Stockton sits in the vast agricultural flatlands of central California, about 80 miles east of San Francisco. It is a ***working-class*** community that fell into steep decline after the Great Recession. A universal basic income project, investments in its downtown, and [*the election of its youngest and first Black mayor*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716) have generated optimism in the city. But violence remains a challenge. A 2018[*F.B.I. report*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716) found that Stockton’s violent crime rate was the highest of 70 California cities with more than 100,000 residents. “A lot of folks in our community were in a crisis before the coronavirus crisis,” Michael Tubbs, Stockton’s mayor, said.

Mr. Balderama’s credibility with his fellows comes from his own difficult past. He was first incarcerated at 15, a few months before his older brother was shot and killed. In 2016, Mr. Balderama was sentenced to state prison on drug charges. He served 27 months. “You can’t talk to somebody about struggling if you’ve never struggled,” he said. “You can’t talk to somebody about starving if you’ve never starved.”

[Read about the [*development of enormous warehouses in the Central Valley*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716) and what it means for the region.]

But with Covid-19, Mr. Balderama faces a tricky problem. Across the country, neighborhoods like the ones he visits grapple with a layered history of economic instability and institutional racism. One consequence of that history is inadequate access to decent medical care. Another is distrust of government, which helps misinformation about the pandemic spread quickly.

California’s surgeon general, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, has specifically warned against rumors that endanger marginalized populations, particularly “in our communities of color, in our tribal communities, and other communities” that official information may not reach.

This is what Mr. Balderama now contends with in a region where Latinos and African-Americans account for 44 percent of Covid-19 deaths. The first stop during Mr. Balderema’s rounds is always Cesar Zuniga, 17, who would skip school and stay up all night with his brother to guard their home from gunmen who sometimes target them after dark.

Mr. Zuniga is the kind of young man who gives Mr. Balderama fits of worry. During their conversations he learned Mr. Zuniga shrugged off the coronavirus memes popping up on his social media, believing the virus was a distant threat that wouldn’t reach California and would never touch him. He refused to wear a mask.

Only after encouragement from Mr. Balderama did that begin to change. Mr. Zuniga also took a job in the local grape fields and saw all the workers wearing masks. And it really sank in after a close family member fell sick.

Before leaving Mr. Zuniga’s house to continue his rounds, Mr. Balderama reminded him he may hear President Trump is trying to roll back shelter-in-place orders. Even if that happens, he warned, you need to stay inside as much as possible. This virus is real, he repeated. All day, he ended every visit with that same message.

Another of Mr. Balderama’s mentees, a man who goes by the name Curly, believed the virus was a lie. “We thought it was people just getting colds,” he said. “I thought it was all fake.” Part of the reason he didn’t believe it, he said, was because he didn’t know anyone who was sick. Mr. Balderama urged him to take the virus seriously. Curly listened, all the more so after his girlfriend’s grandmother died from it.

Mr. Balderama said that although he avoided street protests in the past, and never would have encouraged his mentees to participate, he admits that his experience working in Advance Peace has changed him. “I was never really as passionate and emotionally affected by the way the African-American community was treated,” he said. “But a lot of people I met through this work — all these people who have affected my life in a positive way — they are Black people.”

In recent weeks Mr. Balderama has attended protests over the killing of Mr. Floyd, as have some of his mentees, although not with him. And while he advises his mentees, as always, to stay out of trouble, he also understands how vital this moment is to them. “I don’t believe any non-Black person should tell a Black person what to do in this time,” he said. “I don’t want to tell them don’t go out there, because maybe that’s all they have left.”

[Track [*coronavirus cases in California*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716) by county.]

California Today goes live at 6:30 a.m. Pacific time weekdays. Tell us what you want to see: [*CAtoday@nytimes.com*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716). Were you forwarded this email? [*Sign up for California Today here*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716) and [*read every edition online here*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716).

Jill Cowan grew up in Orange County, went to school at U.C. Berkeley and has reported all over the state, including the Bay Area, Bakersfield and Los Angeles — but she always wants to see more. Follow along here or on [*Twitter*](https://nl.nytimes.com/f/a/QE_H_iSy0iMrwZzKJDp_ZA~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRg4dmEP4Q7Amh0dHBzOi8vbmwubnl0aW1lcy5jb20vZi9hL00wQ3JpUGxualV0QS1CNlpGakRHZkF-_n1bplIbbWFyaWUubWNkZXJtb3R0QG55dGltZXMuY29tWAQAAAAA?te=1&amp;nl=california-today&amp;emc=edit_ca_20200716).

California Today is edited by Julie Bloom, who grew up in Los Angeles and graduated from U.C. Berkeley.

PHOTO: Julian Balderama, right, a “Neighborhood Change Associate,” dropping off bags of food and masks in May.  (PHOTOGRAPH BY Wesaam Al-Badry FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 27, 2020

**End of Document**



[***This Luxury Tower Has Everything: Pools. A Juice Bar. And Flood Resilience.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60BV-S0H1-JBG3-6343-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 30, 2020 Thursday 23:15 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1236 words

**Byline:** Matt Shaw

**Highlight:** Unless we learn to adapt, only the rich will be able to avoid the ravages of climate change.

**Body**

Unless we learn to adapt, only the rich will be able to avoid the ravages of climate change.

At Monad Terrace, a new high-end development in Miami South Beach, luxury isn’t just about uninterrupted views and a juice bar. The developers behind the 14-floor tower, designed by the Pritzker Prize-winning French firm Ateliers Jean Nouvel, [*are marketing*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/) its readiness to survive the oncoming impact of climate change.

Monad Terrace is “the​ ​first luxury condos Miami has seen be built above updated​ ​flood and sea level elevations,” the marketing material claims. It is “designed to ​reflect ​the light and water of its surroundings, while living in harmony with the time and place in which it rises.”

We have entered an era when fortification against sea-level rise is a core selling point, a luxury amenity alongside porte-cochère drop-offs, 116-foot swimming pools and hot tubs with views of Biscayne Bay.

At first glance, this might seem like just common sense; some might even praise its nod to climate awareness. But Monad Terrace’s version of resiliency is limited. The building is simply lifted above the flood line (and the height of competing developments) to avoid sea-level rise. It does nothing to mitigate the impact beyond the property line — and in fact, a flood-fortified tower in low-lying Miami Beach could make things worse for its neighbors by directing rising seawater into the already volatile water table.

Taken further, the vision behind Monad Terrace’s strategy of resilience is dystopian: As water levels rise, what will happen to waterfront neighborhoods that can’t afford similar defenses? What if in some distant future, flood-resilient housing is a luxury affordable only to the privileged few?

Resilience — defending current conditions as a response to climate change, rather than fully adapting to and anticipating it — is a slippery concept, and in general it needs to be a part of any climate response. But on its own, it represents an outdated way of thinking, the idea that we can somehow stop or contain the forces of nature. It can also be exclusionary and unjust; if we can never stop or contain nature, we will just deflect it — onto those who cannot afford to get out of the way.

Instead, we should focus on equity-minded climate adaptation, on structural changes that will reimagine new urban futures under climate change. Effective adaptation will protect both the physical environment and the social fabric of neighborhoods.

The problem is that adaptation at scale requires collective action; resilience can mean simply leveraging power. Take, for example, [*the efforts by Peter Secchia*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/), a Michigan businessman, Republican political donor and former U.S. ambassador to Italy, to secure funds to stop beach erosion along a stretch of Lake Michigan — along which Mr. Secchia happens to own a $6 million summer home. When at first his request failed to get a response, he wrote to lawmakers: “This lack of concern mystifies me. Our property values will diminish greatly” — adding, as if to say the quiet part out loud, “hence, our donations will also diminish.”

In [*California beachfront communities*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/) like Pacifica, just south of San Francisco, sea walls are going up to fortify individual homes to protect from coastal erosion. But they come with a cost, disrupting tide patterns and erasing publicly accessible beaches. The plan is controversial, and it has spurred a debate about whether managed retreat — moving inland — would be a more socially and economically viable solution. Needless to say, many opponents of managed retreat stand to benefit from the “resilient” sea walls.

If single homes in Pacifica raise big questions about what to save and how, imagine the difficult decisions when large, dense cities are forced to triage usable land and limited relocation resources. Or will cities simply wall off financial districts and wealthy neighborhoods, in the name of protecting jobs and the tax base? Could Manhattan below 14th Street, for instance, be turned into one giant Monad Terrace?

And even if we could do resilience equitably, it comes at an enormous cost — both in dollars and in the opportunity to pursue alternative strategies. Can we buy our way out of the dire situation posed by climate change?

This cynical co-optation can be used to assert economic control over how neighborhoods are built. Like all progressive ideas, resilience rhetoric can be used as a smokescreen to further economic interests that disproportionately affect vulnerable communities, such as minorities, older people and the ***working class***.

In fact, America’s entire disaster-response strategy is designed to push back against nature, rather than adapt to it. Federal aid, like the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, aims at [*recovery to pre-disaster conditions*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/) rather than preparedness to weather future storms, further entrenching the status quo and preventing adaptation at the structural or ecological level.

It doesn’t have to be this way. Adapting to climate change, rather than resisting it, is a more equitable, sustainable and affordable long-term strategy. But doing so means rethinking and revaluing the urban landscape.

For instance, along Miami’s [*Miracle Mile*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/), landscape architects, led by the firms Local Office Landscape and Urban Design, and Cooper Robertson, designed an “adaptable” street using a permeable paving surface and structural soils to connect the roots of street trees. That way, when it rains, water can flow into the ground rather than flooding into homes and businesses. During Hurricane Irma, in 2017, it successfully drained a remarkable eight inches of rainfall an hour.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, a team led by the firm SCAPE has proposed an extensive redesign of the [*Alameda Creek basin*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/), returning section of drained land to wetlands and estuaries, and elevating roadways to make way for frequent flooding.

And in the New Jersey [*Meadowlands*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/), the Regional Plan Association has proposed moving away from decades of efforts to contain the expanding wetlands by turning it into “a new model of national park that grows as the climate continues to change.”

All of these plans incorporate elements of resilience; none of them considers abandoning neighborhoods or cities altogether. But they recognize that fortification alone is a dead end, and that true resilience that leads to adaptation will require us to give up any notion of maintaining the status quo.

The real challenge comes not from the environment but from wealth-vested interests, both public and private, that use the language of resilience to fortify themselves at the expense of lower-income and vulnerable populations.

Rather than systemic change and a path toward cities and communities adapted for new climate realities, we risk building a green-washed version of what is already not working: a built environment that is both environmentally and socially unjust.

Matt Shaw ([*@mockitecture*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/)) is a member of the faculty at the Southern California Institute of Architecture and a former executive editor of The Architect’s Newspaper.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](http://monadterrace.miami/innovations/resilience/).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ana Galvañ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***New York's Victory Garden***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60FF-2NX1-JBG3-64PR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 26, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1201 words

**Byline:** By Rachel Wharton

**Body**

Governors Island had a charming teaching farm that was a field trip destination. Now it's producing hundreds of pounds of fresh produce every week.

This was supposed to be the busiest summer yet for Governors Island. After 15 years of careful redevelopment, a semi-abandoned isle off the southern tip of Manhattan had blossomed into a lush day-trip destination.

There were plans for a new tram, ferries designed to shuttle in a thousand people at a time, and field trips for hundreds of city children to scramble around a one-acre teaching garden on the island's southeastern shore, one of its last unrenovated parcels. Then the city shut down.

''Now it's crazy quiet,'' said Shawn Connell, who manages the seven-year-old garden on behalf of the environmental organization GrowNYC. ''You can hear the water and the boats.''

It was just before noon one recent weekday, and his three seasonal staffers were packing pints of berries, tying beets into bunches and cooling down several hundred pounds of just-picked greens in the shade of a gazebo. All it of was headed to emergency food distributions in the Bronx, Harlem and central and eastern Brooklyn.

Those staffers were hired to wrangle students on field trips from April to November, but during lockdown they became farmhands. And they say the farm transformed them. If they couldn't use it to teach, they would use it help the one in four New Yorkers who now need food.

Mr. Connell and his team reimagined their mandate and converted their land -- with its fruit trees and its 50-foot demonstration farm rows -- into a victory garden for New York City.

Six months on, their shift has been so successful that it has changed their whole approach, and it even has the potential to alter the future of this piece of the island, perhaps to the dismay of any developers still hoping to turn it into a Hudson Yards in the harbor.

''We were so preoccupied in past seasons by the work of engaging with these young people that we never gave much thought to producing food,'' said Mr. Connell, 37, one of a handful of people who ferry to work on the island year-round.

Most of what they grew was eaten by students, Mr. Connell said. Some was left to wither and die in order to show the life cycle of a plant.

''We knew in past seasons we'd been able to grow 10,000 pounds of food, and we thought, You know, that's a good number to shoot for,'' he said. ''We're certainly on track to produce more than that -- twice that,'' he added, and that's not even factoring in the extra beds planted this spring with squash and potatoes.

His staff also put out feelers to the network of organizations already connected to GrowNYC -- which also runs greenmarkets and builds community gardens -- to find neighborhood groups that were giving out food.

The Black Feminist Project in the southeastern Bronx, for example, was eager to work with the farm. Since June, the group has been taking deliveries every other week from the teaching farm -- 400-pound parcels with red-leaf lettuce, hand-tied sprays of basil, freshly picked eggplant. All of it goes to the free or low-cost coronavirus relief food boxes the group has been preparing for families in the area.

There is plenty of free food from other sources, said Tanya Fields, the group's founder, but it usually arrives in cans or boxes, lacking in both nutrients and in dignity. ''There is this belief that when we provide things to ***working-class*** people,'' Ms. Fields said, ''they should just be happy with what they get.''

The quality of the produce from the garden on Governors Island, she maintains, is better than the food you find at a farmers' market.

''The collard greens are big and beautiful and abundant and green and not full of holes,'' said Ms. Fields. ''The mint was like -- I've not seen mint like that except when we're growing it. People, particularly older people, they recognize how fresh it is as well. It triggers memories for them of being in Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic, or folks who did subsistence farming down South.''

Margaret Chin, a city councilwoman whose Lower Manhattan district includes Governors Island, has seen similar reactions from her constituents when they've received extra produce from the island.

Some have even grown their own at a public garden run by Earth Matter, a composting organization on Governors Island that is also donating everything it's growing this year, most of it to Lower Manhattan soup kitchens in Ms. Chin's district.

''The city really needs to look at, how do we look at this, how do we use urban agriculture?'' said Ms. Chin, who also sits on the board of the Trust for Governors Island, which manages the land.

''There's money for emergency food,'' she added. ''How can we use some of that money to support fresh produce?''

The United States Department of Agriculture has already made a move in that direction: In May, it announced $3 million in grants to support urban agriculture projects this year.

That urban farming is being considered as a way to feed large numbers of New Yorkers is a big shift, even to urban growers like Mr. Connell, who has been able to hire an extra employee this summer through city funds for emergency food distribution.

Until the pandemic, he always believed the best use of large city farm projects was education, because that reaches the largest number of people.

''This kind of turned that on its head,'' he added.

Everything has changed for Mr. Connell: When students do return, he has decided that his staff will continue to produce as much food as they can on their acre, which still has room to expand. And in addition to lesson plans built around an appreciation of the environment and where food comes from, Mr. Connell is also going to teach students how and why to grow produce.

Before the pandemic, the future of Governors Island looked a lot less agrarian. In addition to hosting a growing glamping scene and huge parties like Pinknic, the Trust for Governors Island has been actively searching for income-generating real estate developers for its last two undeveloped parcels.

One of those is the half-empty 26-acre plot with a row of crumbling old residential buildings once called Brick Village. This is where Earth Matter and GrowNYC lease about three acres of space.

James Yolles, a spokesman for the Trust for Governors Island, said that both organizations -- which share a crescent-shaped piece of land the trust calls the Urban Farm -- will be a part of the island's future. ''We are committed to providing space for both of them on the island for the long term, regardless of any development plans,'' he wrote in an email.

Last week, the trust finally reopened Governors Island to the public. People can tour the garden in small groups at set times on weekends.

After months alone in the fields, Mr. Connell and his farmers at last had a few curious visitors to show around. But he still misses his kids.

''One of my greatest regrets about this season,'' he said, ''is that as the teaching garden literally blossoms in ways it never has before, our students aren't able to be here with us to see the impact that this little sliver of New York City soil is having.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/23/nyregion/governors-island-nyc-urban-farm.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/23/nyregion/governors-island-nyc-urban-farm.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The GrowNYC urban farm on Governors Island has been quiet this summer, with field trips canceled. So the staff reimagined its mandate and converted the land into a garden for New York City. (MB1)

Top, Cordelia Alquist farming in the shadow of skyscrapers. Second row, flowers and produce grown on Governors Island. Above, Shawn Connell teaming with Ms. Alquist. ''We were so preoccupied in past seasons by the work of engaging with these young people that we never gave much thought to producing food,'' he said. Above right, Chloe Hirschhorn digging in. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB6)

**Load-Date:** July 26, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Real Trials of a ‘Real Housewife’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63T7-NRV1-JBG3-62H8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 9, 2021 Saturday 15:10 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 2719 words

**Byline:** Matthew Goldstein and Katherine Rosman

**Highlight:** Erika Girardi is famous for her lavish lifestyle. Now her husband’s law firm has been accused of misappropriating millions of dollars. It’s all unfolding on TV.

**Body**

From a bit part as a dead body on “Law &amp; Order” to six seasons on “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills,” television has been a crucial part of Erika Girardi’s careful cultivation of her branded glamorous life.

But now the reality show is offering a glimpse into the real-world legal drama surrounding Ms. Girardi, her renowned lawyer husband, and millions of dollars he’s accused of misappropriating from vulnerable clients — including burn victims and relatives of those killed in the 2018 Lion Air jet crash — to support the couple&#39;s lavish lifestyle.

Ms. Girardi’s husband, Tom Girardi, helped win the trial that made Erin Brockovich famous. But he has [*swiftly fallen from grace*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/13/business/erin-brockovich-thomas-girardi-boeing.html).

Mr. Girardi, 82, has been suspended from practicing law in California. He and his firm are bankrupt; he’s been moved into a nursing home; and a judge ruled him incompetent to handle his financial affairs. And last November, after 20 years of marriage, Ms. Girardi filed for divorce.

Filming for the current season of “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills” had begun just weeks before. Over the next several months, as Bravo cameras continued to roll, details about Mr. Girardi’s financial and legal troubles were reported in the news.

What has transpired since is made-for-TV drama: accusations of stolen money, Twitter feuds and televised backbiting from Ms. Girardi’s reality [*co-stars*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/tv/story/2021-10-06/real-housewives-of-beverly-hills-crystal-sutton-garcelle). So it’s no wonder that the couple’s rapidly unfolding drama quickly became the central plotline of the 11th season of the show.

A few weeks after Bravo broadcast the first episode on May 19, lawyers disclosed that Mr. Girardi’s law firm may have paid up to $25 million of his wife’s personal and professional expenses. In July, Ms. Girardi, 50, was named as a defendant in a lawsuit filed by a bankruptcy trustee seeking to recoup some of those dollars.

In a subsequent court filing, the expenses were enumerated in a six-page exhibit and included at least $850,000 on hair, makeup and nail stylists; at least $1.3 million on promotion and marketing; and $14 million in American Express charges.

The dollar amounts, on their own, may not have surprised “Beverly Hills” viewers. Ms. Girardi has bragged on the show about her expensive tastes and the way she has spent the couple’s money.

In her 2018 memoir, “Pretty Mess,” she wrote that several years into her marriage she decided to develop a career in music (she performs under the stage name Erika Jayne) because “there was nothing more I could buy.” (Her best-known song, “[*XXpen$ive*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hL99eTKil8),” includes the [*lyrics*](https://genius.com/Erika-jayne-xxpen-ive-lyrics) “Bentleys and Benzes/Through cash-colored lenses/Them dollars and cents/Cha-ching!”)

But her lavish spending is now associated with the alleged misappropriation by her husband of money owed to victims of horrible tragedies.

To date, she has been named in a half-dozen civil lawsuits. Just this week, lawyers for one of those lawsuits sent a subpoena to the show’s producers seeking outtakes that involve her. Additionally, Ms. Girardi may owe millions in unpaid taxes, court filings show.

Ms. Girardi declined to comment for this article. Her lawyer Evan Borges said Ms. Girardi did not have any knowledge of the wrongdoing that her husband is accused of, nor did she know how he managed his law firm’s finances. “Erika doesn’t have personal liability for any of those transactions,” Mr. Borges said.

Most people in Ms. Girardi’s situation would be trying to maintain the lowest possible profile. But she is a Housewife, and discretion doesn’t make for good TV.

Relishing the Attention

Ms. Girardi’s legal and marital turmoil has drawn rabid interest among newcomers and veteran viewers of “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills,” who are glued to a spectacle that is unusual even by the standards of the Bravo network, which is basking in the glow of reality TV narrative gold.

The series is currently drawing the highest ratings in the “Real Housewives” franchise.

“The show is an authentic reflection of what occurred in real time,” said Alex Baskin, the president of Evolution Media, which produces the “Beverly Hills” show for Bravo. “No accommodation was made for Erika while shooting.” (What about in editing? “No,” Mr. Baskin said.)

Ms. Girardi appears to be relishing the attention, even as much of it — especially on social media — focuses on her perceived lack of sympathy for the people her estranged husband has been accused of fleecing. This week, she [*reposted a fan’s Instagram post*](https://pagesix.com/2021/10/07/erika-jayne-slammed-for-comparing-herself-to-jesus-christ/?_ga=2.45052388.1396148809.1633476457-2.20454961.880216486.1559840817-2.78628893.880216486.1559840817-1066020416.1557167879) that compared her suffering to that of Jesus Christ.

When Bravo announced that it would broadcast a four-part reunion show for this season of “Beverly Hills” (only the second time Bravo has broadcast that many episodes for an end-of-season reunion), Ms. Girardi [*tweeted*](https://twitter.com/erikajayne/status/1441639978983825415?s=10), “Now what would make it 4 parts?? Me.”

But she also sat down for sessions with her lawyers to prepare for the reunion special, the first episode of which will be broadcast on Oct. 13.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/zNtNTpCVCbE)]

“There is a certain kind of toughness that she presents,” said Mr. Borges. In prepping her for the reunion show, he said, “The first comment to her was: You don’t have to be the tough one. Also, it is OK to be humble.”

Ms. Girardi was raised in Atlanta and moved to New York after high school with dreams of becoming an actress. Her most stable income in those days came from her work as a dancer at go-go clubs in New Jersey.

In 1996, she left for Los Angeles. She met Mr. Girardi at Chasen’s, a restaurant where he was a customer and investor and she was an employee, according to her memoir, which was written with [*Brian Moylan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/13/style/reunions-bravo-tlc-reality.html). The Girardis married in 2000.

In the marriage’s early years, Ms. Girardi devoted herself to her husband, traveling to legal events and awards dinners with him. When they flew to New York on [*their Gulfstream*](https://www.bravotv.com/the-real-housewives-of-beverly-hills/photos/before-they-were-housewives-erika-girardi#10790611), she wrote, they could see a club called [*Shakers*](https://shakersgogo.com/) where she had once danced, close to Teterboro Airport in New Jersey. “It only took you 10 years to get across the street,” her husband once told her.

Eventually, with Mr. Girardi’s support (financial and otherwise), she hired image consultants, choreographers and music producers to help start her career as a recording artist. Mr. Girardi drew up incorporation papers for his wife’s company, EJ Global.

No expense was spared. Mr. Girardi’s firm began picking up the tab for EJ Global’s mounting bills, including payments of $1.5 million to McDonald Selznick, a talent agency; $260,000 to the law firm Greenberg Traurig; and $252,000 to Troy Jensen, a celebrity makeup artist and image consultant, court filings show.

Ms. Girardi joined “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills” in 2015. Despite the name of the series, Ms. Girardi’s scenes were occasionally shot in her and Mr. Girardi’s Pasadena mansion, which is [*currently listed for sale at $8.9 million*](https://www.sfgate.com/realestate/article/Price-on-Erika-Jayne-and-Tom-Girardi-s-Pasadena-16463838.php). Sometimes her husband would make a cameo.

Maintaining a Lavish Lifestyle

Mr. Girardi used to be a towering presence in the legal community in Los Angeles. A pioneer in so-called toxic tort cases, he had been respected for his advocacy on behalf of vulnerable clients. His firm, Girardi Keese, represented tens of thousands of clients, often teaming up with other lawyers in big-dollar personal injury lawsuits, including ones filed against pharmaceutical giants and the manufacturers of [*pelvic mesh products,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/01/business/pelvic-mesh-settlements-lawyers.html) which have led some women to experience intense pain and bleeding.

His courtroom contributions to the groundwater pollution case made famous in the film “Erin Brockovich” helped secure a $333 million judgment for victims.

Then, last December, Jay Edelson, a lawyer who had worked closely with Mr. Girardi in successfully suing Boeing on behalf of the relatives of victims of the Lion Air plane crash that killed 189 people in 2018, [*filed papers in federal court*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/13/business/erin-brockovich-thomas-girardi-boeing.html) in Chicago, claiming that Mr. Girardi had embezzled at least $2 million in settlement money owed to these families. Mr. Girardi’s brother, Robert, who is serving as his conservator, did not return requests for comment.

Other claims soon arose. The biggest so far alleges that Mr. Girardi never turned over the proceeds from an $11 million settlement he had secured eight years ago for a California man named Joseph Ruigomez who suffered burns on over 90 percent of his body.

The bankruptcy trustee has said that at least $24 million for clients may have been misappropriated. Mr. Girardi is facing lawyer disciplinary charges in California, and the state bar said in June that an audit found [*mishandled complaints*](https://www.calbar.ca.gov/About-Us/News/News-Releases/board-of-trustees-announces-actions-following-special-disciplinary-audit) about Mr. Girardi going back 40 years.

Mr. Edelson has said, in court proceedings, that Mr. Girardi was running a “Ponzi scheme,” using client money to keep his firm running and to pay for the extravagant lifestyle he and his wife shared. Mr. Edelson’s law firm on Monday filed a motion in the bankruptcy proceeding to go after Ms. Girardi for any “traceable assets that were embezzled by Tom and potentially given to Erika.”

Mr. Edelson’s law firm also sent a civil subpoena this week to Evolution Media, the show’s production company, for any unaired recordings in which Ms. Girardi may have said anything relevant to that asset hunt.

The debts owed by Mr. Girardi’s defunct law firm continue to mount. The firm owes more than $101 million to clients, a half-dozen legal lenders and other lawyers, according to an August filing by the bankruptcy trustee in the case. To raise cash, an auction of most everything in the law firm’s office was held in August. Among the items was an “Erin Brockovich” poster, signed by the actress Julia Roberts, which sold for $1,550.

Ms. Brockovich, who still works as an environmental activist and legal advocate, has worked [*with Mr. Girardi*](https://www.facebook.com/BestofLosAngelesAward/videos/819402921866708/?extid=CL-UNK-UNK-UNK-IOS_GK0T-GK1C&amp;ref=sharing)on several other cases. In an interview, she said that until allegations became public, she had been unaware that clients were not receiving their money. She expressed disgust and exasperation at the disparity between the attention paid to the reality show and that given to Mr. Girardi’s clients who are still owed their money.

“It sickens me, it frustrates me, it saddens me,” Ms. Brockovich said. “I cannot fathom how they feel. And yet we keep sensationalizing Tom and Erika.”

Unfolding Dramas, Onscreen

The Beverly Hills show is not the first “Housewives” series to milk narrative value from a legal drama that has affected vulnerable targets. In 2015, one of the cast members from “The Real Housewives of New Jersey,” Teresa Giudice, spent 11 months in federal prison after she pleaded guilty to charges of conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud and bankruptcy fraud.

This year, a “Real Housewives of Salt Lake City” cast member, Jen Shah, and an assistant were arrested on federal [*charges of conspiracy*](https://www.cnn.com/2021/04/02/celebrities/real-housewives-salt-lake-city-jen-shah-not-guilty-plea/index.html) to commit wire fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering through a telemarketing business that promised tax-preparation and web services to ***working-class***, often aging customers. (They denied the allegations.)

Legal drama on the series “keeps people so intrigued,” said Heather McDonald, who analyzes the show’s episodes and the legal case on her podcast “[*Juicy Scoop*](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/juicy-scoop-with-heather-mcdonald/id1135332109) With Heather McDonald.” “It makes you wonder if the only way the show is going to survive is if at all times one or two of these housewives is facing indictment.”

This time, part of the draw for viewers is in [*dissecting Ms. Girardi’s shifting narrative*](https://www.vulture.com/article/erika-jayne-rhobh-season-11-performance-divorce-allegations.html?utm_medium=s1&amp;utm_source=tw&amp;utm_campaign=nym) as it has evolved with news reports of her estranged husband’s legal and health troubles.

In the first episode, during footage filmed before she filed for divorce in November, Ms. Girardi is seen going through her enormous wardrobe and fretting about when she may wear certain items again because of the coronavirus pandemic. She says that one bright spot of the pandemic was that it allowed her and her husband to reconnect.

“Tom and I had dinner at the kitchen table every night,” she says in the episode.

From the time Ms. Girardi files for divorce, however — an action that appears to genuinely surprise her cast mates — she recasts her long-cultivated air of marital bliss in a harsher light. The separation was, she says, a long time coming.

As the season progresses, and more detailed accusations of Mr. Girardi’s misdeeds appear in [*The Los Angeles Times*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-12-17/tom-girardi-erika-jayne-rhobh-divorce) and other news outlets, the conversations among the Housewives revolve with greater frequency around the gravity of the claims, and how much Ms. Girardi knew.

Ms. Girardi, in turn, grows increasingly defensive.

Over rack-of-lamb and caviar pie at a dinner party at Kathy Hilton’s Bel Air estate in one episode, [*one “Beverly Hills” Housewife, Dorit Kemsley*](https://www.bravotv.com/the-real-housewives-of-beverly-hills/season-11/episode-15/videos/erika-girardi-breaks-down-in-tears), says to Ms. Girardi: “I am going to support you to the bitter end.”

But “when you’re reading about the victims and the orphans and the widows,” she adds, “that’s very hard to digest.”

“How do you think I feel?” Ms. Girardi responds.

[*Sutton Stracke*](https://www.instagram.com/suttonstracke/?hl=en), a newer cast member, expresses little sympathy.

“I don’t trust that what you’ve told us is the truth,”[*Ms. Stracke says to Ms. Girardi*](https://www.bravotv.com/the-real-housewives-of-beverly-hills/season-11/episode-15/videos/sutton-stracke-to-erika-girardi-i).

“I’ll go head-on with you all day,” Ms. Girardi fires back, adding an expletive that she also uses when telling Ms. Stracke to “shut up.”

As men in uniforms, white gloves and masks serve food and drinks at the event, Ms. Girardi laments: “Look at my life,” she says, adding the same expletive.

Ms. Girardi is likely earning more than $600,000 from her turn this year on the show, which is still pennies compared to the amount of money she is used to having at her disposal.

But she will end this season banking a valuable reality TV commodity: notoriety. “She is going to be more famous than ever,” Ms. McDonald said.

Looking for Hidden Treasure

Ronald Richards, a Beverly Hills lawyer hired by the bankruptcy trustee to help recoup the $25 million from Ms. Girardi, has sought to cast himself as the best hope for clients and creditors of Mr. Girardi’s law firm. “She got $25 million of firm revenue diverted to her, and she and her lawyer are pretending she is clueless,” Mr. Richards said.

Ms. Girardi and Mr. Richards (who was once married to [*Louise Linton*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/style/louise-linton-steve-mnuchin-wife-movie.html?.?mc=aud_dev&amp;ad-keywords=auddevgate&amp;gclid=Cj0KCQjwwNWKBhDAARIsAJ8Hkhdolz9gh4Uo-n7JFO-JBYZo9zLdDCLtTpuz14z637_jhdqAFuD-cc4aAvlMEALw_wcB&amp;gclsrc=aw.ds), the actress and current wife of Steven Mnuchin, the former Treasury secretary) have taken their legal battle to social media. In one instance Ms. Girardi accused Mr. Richards on Twitter of[*“extortion”*](https://twitter.com/erikajayne/status/1436587032306847745) after he offered to waive some of his legal fees if she started returning some of the money. Mr. Richards responded by posting the legal definition of extortion. “[*Not even close,”*](https://twitter.com/RonaldRichards/status/1436666162327298049) he tweeted.

Filing a lawsuit is one thing. Collecting on it is an entirely different matter. Mr. Richards, in an interview, acknowledged it’s unlikely that Ms. Girardi’s assets — clothes, jewelry and other items — are worth anything close to $25 million. Mr. Richards said he does not want to hurt Ms. Girardi and is open to a settlement.

But her lawyer said it’s premature to discuss a deal. “Everyone keeps piling on and trashing Erika for things she didn’t do,” Mr. Borges said, adding, “there is no hidden treasure.”

Meanwhile, the legal spectacle has left some victims exasperated.

Mr. Ruigomez was 19 when, in 2010, a gas explosion destroyed his family’s home in San Bruno, Calif., killing his girlfriend, burning him and severely damaging his lungs. He has since had nearly three dozen surgeries.

In 2013, Mr. Girardi secured an $11 million settlement on behalf of Mr. Ruigomez. Pacific Gas &amp; Electric, the giant power company, paid the money to Mr. Girardi’s firm years ago. According to court documents, he and his family are still waiting for most of their money.

Kathleen Ruigomez, Mr. Ruigomez’s mother, needs the settlement money for her son’s continuing medical care, she said. “I do worry about getting paid.”

Ms. Ruigomez used to watch and enjoy “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills.” But as time passed and Mr. Girardi kept giving her excuses for why they hadn’t been paid the full settlement, she began to regard Ms. Girardi with skepticism.

“The first few seasons we kind of liked her, but then we began becoming more and more concerned about our money. Is she spending our money? Now she is very unlikable on the show,” Ms. Ruigomez said. “She seems like she almost has an attitude that we victims ruined her gig.”

Kitty Bennett contributed research.

Kitty Bennett contributed research.

PHOTOS: PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUSTIN J WEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; PAUL ARCHULETA/GETTY IMAGES) (ST8); Erika Girardi, left, and Lisa Rinna in an episode of “The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY ISABELLA VOSMIKOVA/BRAVO AND NBCU, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (ST9)

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[***Debating Stimulus Checks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61VF-K4P1-JBG3-62F4-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** And what else you need to know today.

**Body**

And what else you need to know today.

Want to get The Morning by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Good morning. Are $2,000 stimulus checks a good way to help the economy and fight poverty — or “an abomination”?

The idea to send [*$2,000 checks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to most Americans began circulating in the spring, pushed by progressive Democrats like Senator Bernie Sanders and Representative Pramila Jayapal. But the proposal has never fit into a neat ideological box.

[*Some moderate Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) also saw the checks as a good way to help people during the pandemic. And [*some Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) liked that the checks went directly to Americans, rather than being filtered through a government program. By the end of last year, Josh Hawley, a conservative Republican senator, and President Donald Trump were backing the idea, as well.

The checks have since become a centerpiece of [*President Biden’s coronavirus response plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), accounting for [*$465 billion*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of his proposed $1.9 trillion in spending. Polls show that the idea [*is popular*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

And yet some economists — and politicians, in both parties — have [*deep reservations*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Today, I want to lay out three main arguments both for and against the idea, based on my conversations with experts and people on Capitol Hill and in the Biden administration. I hope these points will help you decide what you think.

First, [*the basic facts*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing): Because the virus-response bill that passed in December included $600 checks, Biden is now proposing $1,400 checks, with bonuses for children. A typical family with two parents and three children could receive $4,600. Families making less than $150,000 a year would likely be eligible for the full amount.

The case for the checks

1. People need help. Almost [*10 million fewer Americans*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) are working now than when the pandemic began, and normal life is still months from returning. “Doing too little has enormous downside cost,” Sharon Parrott, president of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, told me.

Many households are also coping with the long-term effects of [*slow-growing incomes and wealth*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) over the past four decades. The checks will let people decide for themselves how to spend the money — be it to cover medical expenses, pay tuition, save for retirement or buy a car. Much of this spending will stimulate the economy and create jobs.

2. It’s simple. At a time when many people don’t trust the government, easy-to-understand policies can build trust. Matthew Yglesias, author of the Slow Boring newsletter, calls this the [*“does exactly what it says on the tin”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) principle. The Obama administration designed a complex [*stimulus*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) program in 2009 and didn’t get much political credit for it. The Biden administration can [*heed this lesson*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

3. It’s surprisingly progressive. A $4,600 check [*means much more*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to a poor or ***working-class*** family than it does to an upper-middle-class family. (Very affluent families don’t qualify for the checks.)

Consider this chart, which shows how the two rounds of pandemic checks that the government sent last year — equaling $1,800 combined for many people — affected after-tax incomes:

The checks aren’t simply a stimulus program. They are an important part of [*Biden’s ambitious effort to fight poverty*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

The case against the checks.

1. Many people don’t need the money. The current recession is a strange one. Neither [*house prices*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) nor [*stock prices*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) have fallen — and many people’s expenses have declined — leaving most Americans financially better off than a year ago:

As a result, many people [*will save the money*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) the government sends them, which won’t help put other people back to work. “I think the checks are an abomination,” Michael Strain of the American Enterprise Institute told me.

2. It’s possible to target the money. Biden’s stimulus could instead increase [*unemployment benefits*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) even more than it now proposes. Or it could do more to help [*small businesses*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) stay open. Or more to expand child care.

3. F.D.R. wouldn’t have done it. Sending people money does little to address the country’s deepest problems — like climate change and the underlying causes of inequality. Those problems require [*coordinated government action*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). So why has Biden embraced an expensive, Trump-backed idea that’s basically a big tax cut?

“I don’t ever remember F.D.R. recommending sending a damn penny to a human being. He gave ’em a job and gave ’em a paycheck,” Senator Joe Manchin, a West Virginia Democrat, [*has said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). “Can’t we start some infrastructure program to help people, get ’em back on their feet?”

What’s next

The checks will be a central part of the debate over Biden’s first virus bill. Many Senate Republicans oppose the checks, which means they may fall short of the 60 votes needed to overcome a filibuster.

In that case, Democrats would have to choose between altering their plan and passing the bill through a process known as reconciliation, which requires only 51 votes.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* West Virginia [*has become a leader in the U.S. vaccine rollout*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), using 83 percent of its allotted doses. But there still aren’t enough shots to go around.

1. Millions more in the U.S. will get the virus unless people keep wearing masks and maintaining social distance in coming months. [*This scientific model shows why*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
2. Biden will [*ban travel from South Africa*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to contain a variant of the virus detected there. (U.S. citizens and permanent residents are exempt.) Biden will extend travel restrictions on other parts of the world, too, including Brazil and Europe.
3. “They knew that nonsense could not be spouted without my pushing back on it,” Dr. Anthony Fauci told The Times, referring to his time in the Trump administration. [*Here’s the interview*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
4. Mexico’s president [*is the latest world leader*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to contract the virus.
5. The Miami Heat will screen fans at its arena with coronavirus-sniffing dogs, [*The Associated Press reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
6. It’s cold, it’s a pandemic, and [*New Yorkers are layering up and going out for meals*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). But, one of them asked, “How many mimosas do I really want when it’s 30 degrees outside?”

* The House will [*transmit its article of impeachment*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to the Senate today. Senate leaders say they will start Trump’s trial in two weeks.

1. Thousands of workers at an Amazon warehouse in Alabama [*will soon vote on whether to unionize*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), the biggest labor effort the company has faced.
2. Before the Capitol riot, an 18-year-old [*told the F.B.I.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) that his father was part of plans for “something big.”
3. The Super Bowl will be [*a battle of old and young quarterbacks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing): Tom Brady, 43, of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, is seeking his seventh title, and Patrick Mahomes, 25, of the Kansas City Chiefs, his second in a row.

Morning Reads

Nicaragua Dispatch: Hunting for spiny lobsters is so dangerous that one lobsterman, every time he drops in the water, recites: [*“God, help me one more time.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

From Opinion: The columnists Gail Collins and Bret Stephens [*hold their first Conversation*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of the Biden presidency.

Lives Lived: Junior Mance began playing the upright piano in his family’s apartment when he was 5. His buoyant, bluesy style put him alongside Lester Young, Dizzy Gillespie and other big names in jazz. [*Mance died at 92*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Reality TV &amp; Netflix

Once, Netflix’s original content consisted largely of prestige series like “House of Cards” and “Orange Is the New Black.” In 2015, [*The Verge’s Julia Alexander*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) has pointed out, one of the company’s executives referred to reality television as “disposable.”

But as Netflix tries to dominate streaming, its [*view of the genre has changed*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

The latest evidence is [*“Bling Empire,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) a spiritual successor to the movie “Crazy Rich Asians” that follows a circle of wealthy Asian-Americans in Los Angeles. The executive producer is an alum of “Keeping Up With the Kardashians.”

Other popular recent shows on the platform include “[*Love Is Blind*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing),” about dating; “[*Selling Sunset*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing),” about high-end real estate; and “[*The Fabulous Lives of Bollywood Wives.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)”

As Yomi Adegoke [*writes in The Guardian*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), Netflix’s recent string of hits has helped cement its place as a competitor for reality-driven networks like Bravo. Netflix executives acknowledge as much. “If we’re trying to become more of your go-to destination for entertainment,” one said on an earnings call last year, “to ignore a form of programming that kind of dominates broadcast would be silly of us.”

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Make [*a variation of lasagna*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), swapping the pasta for polenta. While you wait for it to bake, we recommend [*Sarah Jessica Parker’s “Grub Street Diet” diary*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

What to Read

Michelle Burford has worked on 10 books in eight years — half of them Times best sellers. Her expertise: helping Black women like Cicely Tyson, Alicia Keys and Gabby Douglas [*write their memoirs*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Now Time to Play

The pangrams from Friday’s Spelling Bee were connective, convection, convective, convenient, convention, eviction and inconvenient. Today’s puzzle is above — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) if you have a Games subscription.

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and a clue: “Just a \_\_\_!” (three letters).

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

P.S. Recent U.S. presidents have all had short names: Bush, Obama, Trump and now Biden. But in the 1950s, The Times narrowed the letters in “Eisenhower” to accommodate the president’s name in headlines. [*A 2016 story in The Atlantic tells the tale*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” is about the Russian dissident Aleksei Navalny. On [*the Book Review podcast*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), Gabrielle Glaser talks about adoption, and Kenneth Rosen discusses behavioral treatment for young people.

Lalena Fisher, Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: A store in Brooklyn advertised to cash stimulus checks in April. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Blesener for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Adapt Architecture to Nature. Don't Fight It.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YSV-PKT1-DXY4-X377-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Unless we learn to adapt, only the rich will be able to avoid the ravages of climate change.

At Monad Terrace, a new high-end development in Miami South Beach, luxury isn't just about uninterrupted views and a juice bar. The developers behind the 14-floor tower, designed by the Pritzker Prize-winning French firm Ateliers Jean Nouvel, are marketing its readiness to survive the oncoming impact of climate change.

Monad Terrace is ''the first luxury condos Miami has seen be built above updated flood and sea level elevations,'' the marketing material claims. It is ''designed to reflect the light and water of its surroundings, while living in harmony with the time and place in which it rises.''

We have entered an era when fortification against sea-level rise is a core selling point, a luxury amenity alongside porte-cochère drop-offs, 116-foot swimming pools and hot tubs with views of Biscayne Bay.

At first glance, this might seem like just common sense; some might even praise its nod to climate awareness. But Monad Terrace's version of resiliency is limited. The building is simply lifted above the flood line (and the height of competing developments) to avoid sea-level rise. It does nothing to mitigate the impact beyond the property line -- and in fact, a flood-fortified tower in low-lying Miami Beach could make things worse for its neighbors by directing runoff into the already volatile water table.

Taken further, the vision behind Monad Terrace's strategy of resilience is dystopian: As water levels rise, what will happen to waterfront neighborhoods that can't afford similar defenses? What if in some distant future, flood-resilient housing is a luxury affordable only to the privileged few?

Resilience -- defending current conditions as a response to climate change, rather than fully adapting to and anticipating it -- is a slippery concept, and in general it needs to be a part of any climate response. But on its own, it represents an outdated way of thinking, the idea that we can somehow stop or contain the forces of nature. It can also be exclusionary and unjust; if we can never stop or contain nature, we will just deflect it -- onto those who cannot afford to get out of the way.

Instead, we should focus on equity-minded climate adaptation, on structural changes that will reimagine new urban futures under climate change. Effective adaptation will protect both the physical environment and the social fabric of neighborhoods.

The problem is that adaptation at scale requires collective action; resilience can mean simply leveraging power. Take, for example, the efforts by Peter Secchia, a Michigan businessman, Republican political donor and former U.S. ambassador to Italy, to secure funds to stop beach erosion along a stretch of Lake Michigan -- along which Mr. Secchia happens to own a $6 million summer home. When at first his request failed to get a response, he wrote to lawmakers: ''This lack of concern mystifies me. Our property values will diminish greatly'' -- adding, as if to say the quiet part out loud, ''hence, our donations will also diminish.''

In California beachfront communities like Pacifica, just south of San Francisco, sea walls are going up to fortify individual homes to protect from coastal erosion. But they come with a cost, disrupting tide patterns and erasing publicly accessible beaches. The plan is controversial, and it has spurred a debate about whether managed retreat -- moving inland -- would be a more socially and economically viable solution. Needless to say, many opponents of managed retreat stand to benefit from the ''resilient'' sea walls.

If single homes in Pacifica raise big questions about what to save and how, imagine the difficult decisions when large, dense cities are forced to triage usable land and limited relocation resources. Or will cities simply wall off financial districts and wealthy neighborhoods, in the name of protecting jobs and the tax base? Could Manhattan below 14th Street, for instance, be turned into one giant Monad Terrace?

And even if we could do resilience equitably, it comes at an enormous cost -- both in dollars and in the opportunity to pursue alternative strategies. Can we buy our way out of the dire situation posed by climate change?

This cynical co-optation can be used to assert economic control over how neighborhoods are built. Like all progressive ideas, resilience rhetoric can be used as a smokescreen to further economic interests that disproportionately affect vulnerable communities, such as minorities, older people and the ***working class***.

In fact, America's entire disaster-response strategy is designed to push back against nature, rather than adapt to it. Federal aid, like the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, aims at recovery to pre-disaster conditions rather than preparedness to weather future storms, further entrenching the status quo and preventing adaptation at the structural or ecological level.

It doesn't have to be this way. Adapting to climate change, rather than resisting it, is a more equitable, sustainable and affordable long-term strategy. But doing so means rethinking and revaluing the urban landscape.

For instance, along Miami's Miracle Mile, landscape architects, led by the firms Local Office Landscape and Urban Design, and Cooper Robertson, designed an ''adaptable'' street using a permeable paving surface and structural soils to connect the roots of street trees. That way, when it rains, water can flow into the ground rather than flooding into homes and businesses. During Hurricane Irma, in 2017, it successfully drained a remarkable eight inches of rainfall an hour.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, a team led by the firm SCAPE has proposed an extensive redesign of the Alameda Creek basin, returning section of drained land to wetlands and estuaries, and elevating roadways to make way for frequent flooding.

And in the New Jersey Meadowlands, the Regional Plan Association has proposed moving away from decades of efforts to contain the expanding wetlands by turning it into ''a new model of national park that grows as the climate continues to change.''

All of these plans incorporate elements of resilience; none of them considers abandoning neighborhoods or cities altogether. But they recognize that fortification alone is a dead end, and that true resilience that leads to adaptation will require us to give up any notion of maintaining the status quo.

The real challenge comes not from the environment but from wealth-vested interests, both public and private, that use the language of resilience to fortify themselves at the expense of lower-income and vulnerable populations.

Rather than systemic change and a path toward cities and communities adapted for new climate realities, we risk building a green-washed version of what is already not working: a built environment that is both environmentally and socially unjust.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ana Galvañ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***New Hampshire Primary: Polls Are Closed and Sanders Leads***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YV5-D401-JBG3-640N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 11, 2020 Tuesday 21:01 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 2347 words

**Byline:** Alexander Burns, Shane Goldmacher and Lisa Lerer

**Highlight:** The Democratic presidential candidates are watching closely as the nation’s first primary unfolds. The Times is providing live updates and political analysis.

**Body**

* The New Hampshire polls started to close at 7 p.m. The secretary of state has said final numbers could arrive as early as 9:30 p.m. [*Follow along with results here*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/11/us/elections/results-new-hampshire-live-updates.html).

1. Eight Democratic candidates entered New Hampshire mounting a competitive campaign. They are: Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, the former tech executive Andrew Yang, Representative Tulsi Gabbard and the former hedge fund investor Tom Steyer. [*Mr. Yang*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/11/us/elections/results-new-hampshire-live-updates.html) and   [*Senator Michael Bennet of Colorado*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/11/us/elections/results-new-hampshire-live-updates.html) dropped out Tuesday night.
2. There was also a Republican primary, which President Trump won handily, The Associated Press projected.
3. There are [*24 delegates up for grabs*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/11/us/elections/results-new-hampshire-live-updates.html) for the Democrats, a relatively tiny number given that a candidate needs 1,991 delegates to win the party’s presidential nomination.

Here’s an early picture of how the race is shaping up.

All the polls have closed in New Hampshire and we’re starting to get an early sense of how the race is shaping up.

As expected, Mr. Sanders and Mr. Buttigieg are in the lead. Yet Ms. Klobuchar is mounting a surprisingly strong challenge, trailing a close third.

Hailing from just over the border with Vermont, Mr. Sanders was the overwhelming favorite in the contest. If the two Midwestern moderates keep the margins close, it could presage a longer battle for the nomination.

Ms. Warren remains far behind, with early numbers that have to disappoint her supporters, despite an effort by her campaign to describe her path forward in terms of accumulating delegates on a district-by-district level, rather than carrying entire states. Mr. Biden, who worked hard to lower expectations, is stuck in single digits. Two brutal losses may further undercut the central argument for his candidacy: That the former vice president is the most electable in the field.

The early results are rough for Warren and Biden.

The early results do not look good for Ms. Warren and Mr. Biden.

With about a quarter of precincts reporting across New Hampshire, those two once-leading candidates are sitting in a distant fourth and fifth place, both in the single digits for the percentage of the overall vote and with less than half the totals of the three leaders.

Mr. Biden all but knew the results would be bleak. He left the state earlier on Tuesday after telegraphing his bad finish in Friday’s debate.

But Ms. Warren, as a neighboring senator, had designs more recently on a strong New Hampshire finish that could serve as a springboard toward Super Tuesday. But that nearby state factor did not seem to be helping in Massachusetts-bordering Salem, where 100 percent of precincts were reported, and Ms. Warren was in fifth place with 6.9 percent of the vote.

High spirits at Sanders’s primary night party.

Supporters filled a college gymnasium for Mr. Sanders’s primary night party. Cheers echoed around the room as the big screen, which had been displaying the Sanders campaign logo, switched to CNN. Even bigger cheers came when CNN showed Mr. Sanders in first place with the votes flowing in.

Expectations in the room were high — for good reason. The state is in Mr. Sanders’s backyard, and he won the New Hampshire primary in 2016 against Hillary Clinton by 22 percentage points. Tons of reporters were here, and the fire marshal said he was expecting to let in 1,000 supporters, then assess if there was room for more. Anything less than a victory would be a major disappointment.

A stage was set up at the front of the room, with American flags and Sanders signs. Every time new numbers came in, there was more cheering.

A concession stand outside the gymnasium sold pizza and popcorn, making this reporter hungry.

No sign of Mr. Sanders yet, but some of his senior staff members were milling around. They were in a good mood.

Klobuchar supporters are in a celebratory mood.

CONCORD — The hotel conference room in this Courtyard Marriott just off the highway was buzzing, as supporters for Ms. Klobuchar steadily filled her primary night party since 7 p.m.

With CNN on the TV screen, the campaign playlist on the playlist and the bar open and stocked with local New Hampshire craft beers, occasional cheers accompanied shifts in returns.

For the Klobuchar campaign, landing in the top three in New Hampshire, or any primary outside Minnesota, seemed a long shot just months ago. But with a winnowed field and a dedicated moderate pitch, Ms. Klobuchar may have found a core of support in New Hampshire, which allows independents to vote in its primary.

Even before many results had been reported, some attendees felt pretty confident.

“I think third is great,” said Peter Bartlett, 72, of Concord. “She won our ward, so as far as I’m concerned, the sky is the limit.”

Warren denounces ‘harsh tactics’ in the primary race.

Ms. Warren addressed supporters early Tuesday evening, conceding that she was likely to finish in fourth place.

She sought to play down the results, suggesting a long primary fight, and she congratulated her rivals before issuing some of her most direct criticism of them yet.

Ms. Warren mentioned her fellow candidates by name, saying that she respected Mr. Sanders and Mr. Buttigieg but that they represented small factions of the Democratic Party.

She spoke about the uptick in negative advertisements in the primary and the behavior of some candidates’ supporters. Ms. Warren framed it as “harsh tactics” not befitting a Democratic nominee.

“Harsh tactics might work if you’re willing to burn down the party, in order to be the last man standing,” she said. “We will need a nominee that the broadest coalition of our party feels they can get behind.”

She also tossed a compliment to Ms. Klobuchar. “I also want to congratulate my friend and colleague Amy Klobuchar for showing just how wrong the pundits can be when they count a woman out,” she said.

Ms. Warren’s early results were disappointing for the senator of a neighboring state, once hailed as a Democratic primary front-runner. Now, instead of leading from a position of strength, she was discussing plans to cobble together delegates throughout the country.

“I’m here to get big things done,” Ms. Warren said. “Our campaign is built for the long haul, and we’re just getting started.”

Ashley Tauber, 42, a supporter of Ms. Warren, said before the speech that she expected the senator to win states that were more diverse and voted later.

“New Hampshire isn’t the full picture,” she said. “She needs more diversity of income and of thought and other races of people.”

Donald Long, 58, said he was perturbed by the rise of Mr. Buttigieg.

“Now is not the time for a middle-of-the-road candidate,” he said.

Ms. Tauber jumped in: “That’s where roadkill happens.”

Voters were making last-minute decisions in Manchester.

Ward One here, in New Hampshire’s largest city, is an affluent precinct, and interviews with people emerging from their polling place Tuesday night revealed a number of highly informed voters.

Very highly informed.

It’s almost a cliché by now to say that voters in early nominating states can sound like political professionals in their discussions of electability, but, well, that’s because it’s often true.

Take Anand Natrajan and Kusum Ailawadi, a married couple who came to vote together — but not for the same candidate.

Mr. Natrajan, a scientist, said he had backed Mr. Sanders because he thinks he has “a realistic chance” to defeat President Trump. But Ms. Ailawadi, a college professor, said she had written in Mr. Bloomberg, who is not even competing in the early nominating states, because she’s skeptical that the more progressive candidates can win the general election.

“Despite my being a really left-wing liberal myself, I know that’s not where the country is,” she said.

Both said they had decided at the last minute.

Then there’s Kristi Gaynor, who works at a health care company, came out of the polls with her infant and said she had voted for Ms. Warren because she thought “she has the best chance of winning against Trump.” Ms. Gaynor chose Ms. Warren over Mr. Sanders in part because she believed Ms. Warren was stronger against Mr. Trump.

As for the president, he was facing little serious competition on the ballot, but he still had a steady flow of Republicans showing up to vote for him. And they, too, said things that could have just as easily come from political strategists.

Tiffany Cripps, an office manager, said Mr. Trump “might make me cringe in the things that he says” but quickly added that she cared more about his performance.

“The economy is great, my 401(k) is up,” Ms. Cripps explained.

Buttigieg: ‘It’s been a fantastic day.’

With less than an hour before New Hampshire polls closed, Pete Buttigieg thanked supporters and expressed optimism outside Bedford High School in Bedford, N.H.

“From before dawn until just before the polls are about to close, it’s been a fantastic day,” the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., said in remarks that lasted 40 seconds. “We’ve seen the energy across the state.”

The scene was a bit chaotic, as late-arriving voters walked through a sidewalk lined by sign-waving supporters of Mr. Buttigieg, Ms. Warren, Mr. Yang, and Mr. Trump, who is on the state’s G.O.P. primary ballot.

After Mr. Buttigieg finished his brief remarks, he was swarmed by reporters and television camera operators.

“How are you feeling?” an MSNBC anchor asked.

“We’ve feeling very strong,” Mr. Buttigieg replied. “We’ll see the numbers coming in soon.”

An Australian television reporter tried to ask Mr. Buttigieg how he planned to appeal to younger voters. But at that moment Mr. Buttigieg’s personal assistant got her hair stuck in the Australian TV network’s camera. With both the photographer and the assistant walking backward in the scrum, her head was jerked backward.

“Careful, careful!” Mr. Buttigieg yelled, in an unusual-for-him moment of anger. “Stop moving!”

Everyone stopped. Mr. Buttigieg and his assistant collected themselves.

“That is a first,” he said, as he walked to his waiting S.U.V.

Andrew Yang and Michael Bennet dropped out.

Mr. Yang, the former tech executive, and Senator Michael Bennet of Colorado ended their [*longer-than-long-shot bids*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/11/us/elections/results-new-hampshire-live-updates.html) for president on Tuesday night.

Mr. Yang made the announcement at his primary night party. Speaking to supporters here inside a ballroom in Manchester, Mr. Yang said that “endings are hard” and that he had intended to stay in the race until the end.

“I am the math guy, and it’s clear from the numbers we’re not going to win this campaign,” he said. “So tonight I’m announcing that I am suspending my campaign.”

Both Mr. Yang and Mr. Bennet had spent considerable time and resources in the state. Mr. Bennet had staked all his hopes there, holding 50 town hall events there in the 10 weeks leading up to the primary and campaigning exclusively there in the final stretch, even on the night of the Iowa caucuses.

Here’s a New Hampshire geography lesson.

Here are some of the places we’re watching for early clues about how the candidates are doing.

Bedford: Four years ago, this affluent town was one of the few areas that Hillary Clinton carried in 2016, and Mr. Buttigieg sees opportunity for him to gain support with his appeals to “future former Republicans.” He stopped at a polling place in the town to thank supporters just before polls closed. But it’s also possible that Ms. Klobuchar could make some inroads.

Claremont: A ***working-class*** town close to the Vermont border, Claremont flipped from backing Barack Obama — twice — to Donald J. Trump in 2016. Results here could offer a good barometer of white ***working-class*** views in a battleground state that’s been trending slightly more red.

Manchester and Nashua: The two largest cities in the state are some of the most racially diverse areas and include a huge part of the Democratic electorate. They’re a mix of blue- and white-collar workers, with a large number of Boston transplants living in the suburbs. A candidate who can run up their margins in these cities and the surrounding areas is probably headed for a good night.

Durham: Mr. Sanders will have to run up turnout in this town, the home of the University of New Hampshire. A Sanders rally with the Strokes brought out 7,500 people on Monday night. The size of his margin in this area will give a good indication of the kind of night he may have.

The confusion continues in Iowa.

The results of the New Hampshire primary may well be in the books later tonight before officials are done counting in Iowa, where the caucuses have been in chaos for over a week.

This past weekend, the Iowa Democratic Party released results showing Mr. Buttigieg with a lead of less than one-tenth of a percent in total “state delegate equivalents,’’ the metric it uses to declare a winner. But underlying problems have kept The Associated Press, which traditionally calls election winners, from awarding the state to Mr. Buttigieg.

On Monday, the campaigns of Mr. Sanders, who won the popular Iowa vote, and Mr. Buttigieg requested a “recanvass” of 143 precincts, about 8 percent of the total. The Sanders campaign said it did not expect the recanvass to change the outcome, but it was a necessary first step before requesting a “recount” — a deeper level of scrutiny — that could potentially reset the order. The state party chairman gave no timeline for the recanvass.

While many voters have moved on, and the impact of some unexpected finishes in Iowa — higher for Mr. Buttigieg, much lower for Mr. Biden — has been absorbed by voters in New Hampshire and elsewhere, supporters of Mr. Sanders seem to want to see things through, hoping for at least a moral victory.

Reporting was contributed by Sydney Ember, Reid J. Epstein, Nick Corasaniti, Jonathan Martin, Katie Glueck, Astead W. Herndon and Matt Stevens from Manchester, N.H., and Trip Gabriel and Maggie Astor from New York.

PHOTO: Voters at a polling place at the town office in Hancock, N.H., on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Addressing That Word, and Indicting Vulgarity and a Culture***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60F0-SVP1-JBG3-60VS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1271 words

**Byline:** By Lisa Lerer

**Body**

Few prominent women in power have publicly addressed a particular vulgarity that men have leveled against them for years. Today, on the floor of the House, that changed.

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How many times was Hillary Clinton called a bitch over the course of her decades in public life?

I suspect the answer lies somewhere in the range between 500 and 10 million. At one point in the 2016 campaign, I even witnessed a 10-year-old boy chant the vulgarity at a Trump rally in exurban Washington.

Yet, through all those years and all those expletives, we never heard Mrs. Clinton publicly address that word.

Few prominent women have, in any memorable way, even though men have leveled it against women in power since before they ever had any real power at all.

Today, on the august floor of the House of Representatives, the world saw a very different reckoning with that word, power and sexism.

''Representative Yoho called me, and I quote, a fucking bitch,'' Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said from the floor this morning. ''These are the words Representative Yoho levied against a congresswoman.''

Two days ago, Representative Ted Yoho, Republican of Florida, made headlines when a reporter overhead him using the vulgar language against Ms. Ocasio-Cortez. Yesterday, he gave an ''apology'' from the House floor that did not seem to involve any, well, actual apologizing. He denied uttering the vulgarity on Wednesday when he said, ''I cannot apologize for my passion or for loving my god, my family and my country.''

Today, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez delivered her response, a searing indictment not only of Mr. Yoho but also of a culture that allows men to use abusive language and supports violence against women.

''I honestly thought I was going to pack it up and go home -- it's just another day,'' Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said, recalling how many times she has been called racist and sexist names by men, from the governor of Florida to drunk patrons in the New York City bar where she once waited tables.

But then, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said, she decided she could not allow her nieces and other girls to see Congress accept this kind of behavior with silence. Watching Mr. Yoho cite his own wife and daughters on the House floor in his speech was the last straw.

''Mr. Yoho mentioned that he has a wife and two daughters. I am two years younger than Mr. Yoho's youngest daughter. I am someone's daughter, too,'' she said. ''Having a daughter does not make a man decent. Having a wife does not make a decent man. Treating people with dignity and respect makes a decent man. And when a decent man messes up, as we all are bound to do, he tries his best and does apologize.''

Obviously, Mr. Yoho's comments signal an outrageous breach of civility. Even Mrs. Clinton was never called that word on the Capitol grounds by a sitting congressman in front of reporters. As several Democrats mentioned on the House floor, race certainly plays a role, too. A way for a white man to try to put a young, Latina congresswoman in her place.

Even so, the fact that Ms. Ocasio-Cortez felt free to shame Mr. Yoho from the House floor signifies a shift in our politics.

In the past, a female politician would have -- as Ms. Ocasio-Cortez alluded -- shrugged off the insult, warned by advisers that addressing the issue could backfire against her own political reputation. Instead, several of Ms. Ocasio-Cortez's colleagues followed her speech with comments of their own from the House floor.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, a sharp political mind, is well aware that there's a constituency for those remarks, a crucial 2020 voting bloc fueled by the anger of women.

Rage moms, if you will.

It's quite the evolution in the cliché ways that strategists think about female voters. Over the past three decades, we've gone from suburban ''soccer moms'' to Alaskan ''hockey Moms'' to anti-gun moms to fed-up, tired and simply out of you-know-what-to-give moms.

Look at the polling numbers. During the Trump administration, the traditional gender gap has become a ''canyon.'' Even among white ***working-class*** women, who supported Mr. Trump in 2016, support has plummeted. In the suburbs, a place not exactly known as a hotbed of political radicalism, majorities of female voters reject Mr. Trump by whopping margins.

Look at the foot soldiers of the Democratic Party. As I frequently hear from candidates and strategists, the people at the helm of organizations, staffing campaign offices and volunteering are overwhelmingly women.

And look at the liberal activists. In Portland, Ore., a ''wall of moms,'' clad in bike helmets and goggles, faces off against federal agents. Black female activists lead Black Lives Matter protests and steer the exploding racial justice movement.

Clearly, a lot of Democratic and independent women in America are angry. They're tired of dysfunction in Washington. They're tired of inaction on the issues that matter most to their daily lives, like school and child care closures. And they're really tired of Mr. Trump's chaotic style and lack of empathy.

Starting in a few weeks, these angry women will cast ballots for the presidency. And after years of Mr. Trump letting his supporters use that word against them, it's their anger that may end up being his undoing.

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From Opinion: A republic, if you can keep it

This morning the Opinion section published an essay by Gary Hart, a former Democratic senator from Colorado and a presidential candidate in the 1984 race. Mr. Hart calls for a reconsideration of presidential power in light of President Trump's insistence that his ''authority is total.''

Mr. Hart noted that he and former Vice President Walter Mondale were the last surviving members of the Church Committee that was convened in the 1970s to study the executive branch's intelligence arms.

''We have recently come to learn of at least a hundred documents authorizing extraordinary presidential powers in the case of a national emergency, virtually dictatorial powers without congressional or judicial checks and balances,'' he wrote.

''No matter who occupies the office, the American people have a right to know what extraordinary powers presidents believe they have. It is time for a new select committee to study these powers and their potential for abuse, and advise Congress on the ways in which it might, at a minimum, establish stringent oversight.''

Mr. Hart continued: ''Among the questions to be addressed: Where did these secret powers come from? Where are they kept? Who has access to them? What qualifies as a national emergency sufficient to suspend virtually all constitutional protection? And critically, why must these powers be secret?''

He concludes by asserting that ''regardless of party or candidate preference, we can all agree there is no justification for a president to have dictatorial powers.''

-- Talmon Joseph Smith

... Seriously

''We'll have a very nice something,'' said Mr. Trump, announcing tonight that he had decided to cancel the Republican National Convention in Jacksonville, Fla. ''We'll figure it out.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***‘If He Doesn’t Win Ohio, It’s Over’: Trump Slips in the Heartland; Poll Watch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60YX-WSR1-JBG3-61KJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** Four years ago, the president easily won Ohio by building a balanced coalition among white voters across educational lines. But his support has waned since then, particularly in the suburbs.

**Body**

Four years ago, the president easily won Ohio by building a balanced coalition among white voters across educational lines. But his support has waned since then, particularly in the suburbs.

[[*Watch live VP debate and analysis*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/10/07/us/politics/vp-debate-live-analysis-kamala-pence.html).]

No Republican has ever won a presidential election without taking Ohio, and Donald J. Trump carried it with ease in 2016, performing strongly with white voters in almost every demographic.

If he doesn’t capture the state in November, it’s hard to see him winning the election — but the polling picture looks more worrisome for him this time around.

In a [*Quinnipiac University*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/10/07/us/politics/vp-debate-live-analysis-kamala-pence.html) poll released last week, Joe Biden had a statistically insignificant edge of one percentage point on the president, while a survey released the same day by [*Fox News*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/10/07/us/politics/vp-debate-live-analysis-kamala-pence.html) put Mr. Biden ahead by five points.

After the president said early Friday morning that he had tested positive for the coronavirus, the future of the race was thrown even further into doubt. But Ohio’s bellwether status remains a dependable fact of political life.

“If he doesn’t win Ohio, it’s over,” David Cohen, a political scientist at the University of Akron, said in an interview. He noted that Mr. Trump had traveled to Ohio several times last month, holding rallies in white, ***working-class*** areas in a tacit acknowledgment of how badly he’ll need the state in order to eke out an Electoral College victory.

“If you think about it, why the heck is he spending any time in Ohio in September, in a state that he won by over eight points?” Dr. Cohen said. “The only answer is that he and his campaign know that he’s in trouble.”

Four years ago, Mr. Trump built a particularly balanced coalition among Ohio’s white voters, winning across education levels. But his support in the state has waned over the past four years, particularly in the suburbs.

In the process, white voters in Ohio have become about as heavily divided along educational lines as they are in the rest of the country. It is evidence, from a conservative Midwestern stronghold where most state offices are consistently held by Republicans, that Mr. Trump’s divisive brand of politics has been more effective at sifting voters out of his coalition than at bringing them in.

In 2016, exit polls showed that Hillary Clinton actually did better among non-college white voters in Ohio than she did nationally, reflective of a longstanding blue-collar Democratic tradition in parts of the state. Among white voters with college degrees, meanwhile, the opposite was true: She underperformed especially badly in Ohio, where staunch white-collar conservatism is a long-held custom.

The result is that Mr. Trump did almost as well among white people with a degree in Ohio — who deeply distrusted Mrs. Clinton — as he did among those without a college education.

But this has all changed. Averaging together the recent Fox and Quinnipiac polls, Mr. Trump was running 12 points behind his 2016 totals among white voters with degrees.

As a result, while exit polls four years ago showed Mr. Trump winning the suburbs in Ohio by 20 points — leagues better than his support in suburbs elsewhere in the country — the Fox poll last week put him 10 points behind Mr. Biden in the state’s suburbs.

Thomas Sutton, the director of the [*Community Research Institute*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/10/07/us/politics/vp-debate-live-analysis-kamala-pence.html) at Baldwin Wallace University outside Cleveland, pointed out that the only part of the state with a significant growth in population in recent years had been the Columbus area, home of the state capital and its major public university, where there has been an influx of health care industry jobs and other white-collar work in recent years.

Columbus’s growth, and the expansion of suburbs and exurbs into what used to be rural and blue-collar areas, might have once spelled an opportunity for Republicans. But under Mr. Trump the Republican Party has lost its footing among specifically these kinds of voters — and the growth in Franklin County, which includes Columbus, plays into Mr. Biden’s hands.

Mrs. Clinton barely had the advantage in the Columbus area in 2016, according to exit polls; this year, Mr. Biden appears poised to far outmatch her totals there.

“Trump’s support has peaked, and particularly in the suburbs, people are turning toward Biden,” Dr. Sutton said. “Some of them were Obama voters before that; some of them are dyed-in-the-wool Republican types. And in both cases, they’ve had enough of Trump, is what they say.”

In the case of disenchanted Republican voters, “they support the politics of his administration — lower taxes, deregulation, conservative judges and justices being appointed,” Dr. Sutton added. “But it’s Trump himself that they’ve had enough of. It’s not that they’re embracing Biden, but they’re ready to move away from Trump.”

The Quinnipiac poll found Mr. Biden with an approval rating of just 45 percent, while 49 percent saw him unfavorably. For Mr. Trump, the numbers were similar: Forty-five percent saw him favorably, 51 percent unfavorably.

While the president maintains a commanding lead among rural voters, recent polling has put him more than 10 points behind his 2016 numbers with this group. Dr. Cohen, the University of Akron professor, said that Mr. Trump had also worn on the patience of some in these areas, after making great promises to them in 2016.

“When he came to Ohio and told people to not sell their houses, that he was going to bring all their jobs back — and he clearly hasn’t — people pay attention,” Dr. Cohen said. “The people that worked at that G.M. Lordstown plant, they know the jobs haven’t come back,” he added, referring to a General Motors factory whose [*abrupt closure*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/10/07/us/politics/vp-debate-live-analysis-kamala-pence.html) in 2018 Mr. Biden has [*sought to exploit*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/10/07/us/politics/vp-debate-live-analysis-kamala-pence.html) on the campaign trail.

Dr. Cohen added that the president’s decision to target Goodyear in a public spat had alienated some voters in northeastern Ohio, where the company is both iconic and a major employer.

The Quinnipiac poll found that when given a list of eight political issues, Ohio voters selected the economy and “law and order” as their top areas of concern, with 27 percent and 17 percent naming those two — a positive sign for Mr. Trump, who has sought to center voters’ focus on these topics. An additional 14 percent named the coronavirus, and 11 percent cited issues of racial injustice — more favorable political terrain for Mr. Biden.

But the virus has been a matter of major concern across the state, and Dr. Cohen said that a poll that he and his colleagues conducted at the University of Akron’s [*Ray C. Bliss Institute of Applied Politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/10/07/us/politics/vp-debate-live-analysis-kamala-pence.html) had shown that worries about it cut across demographic divides.

The Fox poll last week found that 69 percent of likely voters said they thought the virus was no better than “somewhat” under control.

Ohio has been conducting no-excuse absentee voting in statewide elections for over a decade and is offering an array of early-voting options this year. Other than a legal dispute over how many early-voting drop boxes to allow in each county, there have not been many high-profile examples of legal challenges to ballot access.

According to the Fox poll, just 42 percent of voters said they would vote in person on Election Day. About the same number planned to vote by mail. Democrats were twice as likely as Republicans to say they would vote by mail, the poll found.

Ohio allows election officials to open and scan absentee ballots before Election Day, contacting voters whose ballots have errors so that they can fix them and preparing the ballots to be counted at polling places. As soon as polls close at 7:30 p.m., those ballots can be counted.

Therefore, unlike in other key states that wait longer to count mail-in ballots, it’s possible that in Ohio, votes cast by mail — which are likely to be more heavily Democratic than others — will be among the first to be counted.

PHOTO: People waved as President Trump’s motorcade passed through Clyde, Ohio, in August. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Anna Moneymaker for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 7, 2020

**End of Document**



[***How This N.Y. Island Went From Tourist Hot Spot to Emergency Garden***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60DS-KCX1-DXY4-X0N0-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Rachel Wharton

**Highlight:** Governors Island had a charming teaching farm that was a field trip destination. Now it’s producing hundreds of pounds of fresh produce every week.

**Body**

Governors Island had a charming teaching farm that was a field trip destination. Now it’s producing hundreds of pounds of fresh produce every week.

This was supposed to be the busiest summer yet for [*Governors Island*](https://govisland.com/). After 15 years of careful redevelopment, a semi-abandoned isle off the southern tip of Manhattan had blossomed into a lush [*day-trip destination*](https://govisland.com/).

There were plans for a new tram, ferries designed to shuttle in a thousand people at a time, and field trips for hundreds of city children to scramble around a [*one-acre teaching garden*](https://govisland.com/) on the island’s southeastern shore, one of its last unrenovated parcels. Then the city shut down.

“Now it’s crazy quiet,” said Shawn Connell, who manages the seven-year-old garden on behalf of the environmental organization GrowNYC. “You can hear the water and the boats.”

It was just before noon one recent weekday, and his three seasonal staffers were packing pints of berries, tying beets into bunches and cooling down several hundred pounds of just-picked greens in the shade of a gazebo. All it of was headed to emergency food distributions in the Bronx, Harlem and central and eastern Brooklyn.

Those staffers were hired to wrangle students on field trips from April to November, but during lockdown they became farmhands. And they say the farm transformed them. If they couldn’t use it to teach, they would use it help the [*one in four New Yorkers who now need food*](https://govisland.com/).

Mr. Connell and his team reimagined their mandate and converted their land — with its fruit trees and its 50-foot demonstration farm rows — into a victory garden for New York City.

Six months on, their shift has been so successful that it has changed their whole approach, and it even has the potential to alter the future of this piece of the island, perhaps to the dismay of any developers still hoping to turn it into a Hudson Yards in the harbor.

“We were so preoccupied in past seasons by the work of engaging with these young people that we never gave much thought to producing food,” said Mr. Connell, 37, one of a handful of people who ferry to work on the island year-round.

Most of what they grew was eaten by students, Mr. Connell said. Some was left to wither and die in order to show the life cycle of a plant.

“We knew in past seasons we’d been able to grow 10,000 pounds of food, and we thought, You know, that’s a good number to shoot for,” he said. “We’re certainly on track to produce more than that — twice that,” he added, and that’s not even factoring in the extra beds planted this spring with squash and potatoes.

His staff also put out feelers to the network of organizations already connected to GrowNYC — which also runs greenmarkets and builds community gardens — to find neighborhood groups that were giving out food.

The Black Feminist Project in the southeastern Bronx, for example, was eager to work with the farm. Since June, the group has been taking deliveries every other week from the teaching farm — 400-pound parcels with red-leaf lettuce, hand-tied sprays of basil, freshly picked eggplant. All of it goes to the free or low-cost [*coronavirus relief food boxes*](https://govisland.com/) the group has been preparing for families in the area.

There is plenty of free food from other sources, said Tanya Fields, the group’s founder, but it usually arrives in cans or boxes, lacking in both nutrients and in dignity. “There is this belief that when we provide things to ***working-class*** people,” Ms. Fields said, “they should just be happy with what they get.”

The quality of the produce from the garden on Governors Island, she maintains, is better than the food you find at a farmers’ market.

“The collard greens are big and beautiful and abundant and green and not full of holes,” said Ms. Fields. “The mint was like — I’ve not seen mint like that except when we’re growing it. People, particularly older people, they recognize how fresh it is as well. It triggers memories for them of being in Puerto Rico or the Dominican Republic, or folks who did subsistence farming down South.”

Margaret Chin, a city councilwoman whose Lower Manhattan district includes Governors Island, has seen similar reactions from her constituents when they’ve received extra produce from the island.

Some have even grown their own at a public garden run by [*Earth Matter*](https://govisland.com/), a composting organization on Governors Island that is also donating everything it’s growing this year, most of it to Lower Manhattan soup kitchens in Ms. Chin’s district.

“The city really needs to look at, how do we look at this, how do we use urban agriculture?” said Ms. Chin, who also sits on the board of the Trust for Governors Island, which manages the land.

“There’s money for emergency food,” she added. “How can we use some of that money to support fresh produce?”

The United States Department of Agriculture has already made a move in that direction: In May, it announced [*$3 million in grants*](https://govisland.com/) to support urban agriculture projects this year.

That urban farming is being considered as a way to feed large numbers of New Yorkers is a big shift, even to urban growers like Mr. Connell, who has been able to hire an extra employee this summer through city funds for emergency food distribution.

Until the pandemic, he always believed the best use of large city farm projects was education, because that reaches the largest number of people.

“This kind of turned that on its head,” he added.

Everything has changed for Mr. Connell: When students do return, he has decided that his staff will continue to produce as much food as they can on their acre, which still has room to expand. And in addition to lesson plans built around an appreciation of the environment and where food comes from, Mr. Connell is also going to teach students how and why to grow produce.

Before the pandemic, the future of Governors Island looked a lot less agrarian. In addition to hosting a growing [*glamping scene*](https://govisland.com/) and huge parties like [*Pinknic*](https://govisland.com/), the Trust for Governors Island has been actively searching for income-generating [*real estate developers*](https://govisland.com/) for its last two undeveloped parcels.

One of those is the half-empty 26-acre plot with a row of crumbling old residential buildings once called Brick Village. This is where Earth Matter and GrowNYC lease about three acres of space.

James Yolles, a spokesman for the Trust for Governors Island, said that both organizations — which share a crescent-shaped piece of land the trust calls the Urban Farm — will be a part of the island’s future. “We are committed to providing space for both of them on the island for the long term, regardless of any development plans,” he wrote in an email.

Last week, the trust [*finally reopened Governors Island to the public*](https://govisland.com/). People can tour the garden in small groups at set times on weekends.

After months alone in the fields, Mr. Connell and his farmers at last had a few curious visitors to show around. But he still misses his kids.

“One of my greatest regrets about this season,” he said, “is that as the teaching garden literally blossoms in ways it never has before, our students aren’t able to be here with us to see the impact that this little sliver of New York City soil is having.”

PHOTOS: The GrowNYC urban farm on Governors Island has been quiet this summer, with field trips canceled. So the staff reimagined its mandate and converted the land into a garden for New York City. (MB1); Top, Cordelia Alquist farming in the shadow of skyscrapers. Second row, flowers and produce grown on Governors Island. Above, Shawn Connell teaming with Ms. Alquist. “We were so preoccupied in past seasons by the work of engaging with these young people that we never gave much thought to producing food,” he said. Above right, Chloe Hirschhorn digging in. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMR ALFIKY/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB6)

**Load-Date:** September 17, 2020

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[***For Harris, an Influential Voice and a Key Senate Vote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61TK-8HH1-JBG3-6021-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Michael Crowley and Katie Glueck

**Body**

With a tiebreaking vote in an evenly divided Senate, Ms. Harris may be returning to the Capitol frequently. But her history-making role is likely to include many more responsibilities.

WASHINGTON -- Vice President Kamala Harris represented the march of history when she was sworn in on Wednesday by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. As a Californian of Jamaican and Indian descent, she is the first woman and the first woman of color to hold the nation's second-highest office.

It was a landmark moment. But just hours later Ms. Harris was on the job, returning to the U.S. Capitol to execute her constitutional role as president of the Senate and swear in three new Democratic senators: Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock, the two Democrats elected in a Georgia special election this month, and Alex Padilla, her own successor to the California seat she resigned on Monday.

Presiding in the Senate shortly before 5 p.m., Ms. Harris was visibly amused as she announced that she would swear in Mr. Padilla ''to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Senator Kamala D. Harris of California.''

At that, she let loose a hearty laugh. ''Yes, that was very weird!'' she added.

The light moment belied the serious stakes at play with the swearing in of three new Democrats. It also served notice of how important the Senate will be to the start of Ms. Harris's tenure as vice president in the Biden administration.

With the Senate divided 50-50 between Republicans and Democrats and President Biden hoping to pass ambitious legislation on the coronavirus, the economy, climate change and other policy matters, Ms. Harris -- who as vice president will break any tiebreaking votes -- may find herself returning often to the Capitol.

''There's definitely going to be a demand, I think, in a 50-50 Senate, like I've never seen in the Senate before,'' said Senator Cory Booker, Democrat of New Jersey.

''For the Biden-Harris agenda, she will be in Congress very, very often or reaching out to senators very often, to try to push that agenda through,'' Mr. Booker said. An aide to Ms. Harris said that she had already begun reaching out to other senators about White House nominations, including that of retired Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III to be secretary of defense.

But Ms. Harris, 56, is sure to be far more than a 51st Democratic senator to Mr. Biden. She will bring to her history-making role at the White House an array of skills that Mr. Biden will draw on, including the prosecutorial chops that she displayed in Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, her personal energy that balances Mr. Biden's low-key approach and the voice she will offer to women and people of color.

''She'll bring a justice lens, a racial justice lens, racial equity, to everything and every policy and every decision that's going to be made,'' said Representative Barbara Lee, Democrat of California and a longtime ally of Ms. Harris's. ''That's so important, to have a Black woman, a South Asian woman's perspective, on the big issues that this administration has to tackle.''

Current and former aides to both Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris say that while dealing with the Senate will be important to her job, she has not been assigned a specific issue portfolio, at least at the outset, and will instead serve as a governing partner to Mr. Biden on all of his top priorities. If fulfilled, that mandate could make her among the most influential vice presidents in history.

In one sign of how much she may be involved in legislative campaigns, Ms. Harris has been in touch with mayors around the country to preview Mr. Biden's coronavirus relief package, the Harris aide said.

From the moment Ms. Harris was chosen as Mr. Biden's running mate, Republicans sought to paint her as a radical who would co-opt the more centrist Mr. Biden's agenda and push any administration far to the left, often relying on sexist personal attacks in the process. Yet while Ms. Harris and Mr. Biden had sharp disagreements on a number of issues during the primary, as his running mate she made a point at every turn to demonstrate that she not only embraced his agenda, but had studied his proposals in detail and was fully on board as his partner.

On Wednesday, she reveled in the moment as she appeared outside the Capitol for her inauguration. ''So proud of you,'' former President Barack Obama told her as they fist bumped shortly before her swearing-in. Minutes later, Ms. Harris, clad in a purple coat, barely suppressed a smile as she finished taking her oath from Justice Sotomayor, her hand on a bible once belonging to Thurgood Marshall, the former Supreme Court justice.

After the inaugural ceremony, Ms. Harris and her husband, Douglas Emhoff, escorted her predecessor, Mike Pence, and his wife, Karen Pence, down the Capitol steps for Mr. Pence's departure. The couples stopped midway for a friendly chat punctuated by laughter.

In her next role, though, Ms. Harris may face inherent challenges, including finding her place in a West Wing stocked with veterans of the Obama White House who have known and worked with one another for years and advising a president with deeply fixed ideas of how Washington operates. And given speculation that the 78-year-old Mr. Biden may not seek a second term in office, Ms. Harris, who mounted her own unsuccessful 2020 White House bid, is sure to face scrutiny about her electoral future much earlier than did her predecessors.

One factor that may work in Ms. Harris's favor is Mr. Biden's own experience as vice president, especially at the beginning when he joined an Obama White House team that at times had a clubby quality. Ms. Harris's allies hope and expect that Mr. Biden -- and many of the aides who worked with him, like the incoming chief of staff, Ron Klain -- will remember what it was like to be ''on the other side'' and ensure that Ms. Harris and her team are included and empowered.

''So many people in the Biden orbit are sympathetic to what it's like to sit on the O.V.P. side,'' said Liz Allen, a former campaign aide to Ms. Harris and to Mr. Biden in the Obama White House, using the official abbreviation for the Office of the Vice President. ''I think people are going to be jumping through hoops to make sure she can break through.''

Ms. Harris and Mr. Biden bring starkly different political profiles to the new administration. When Mr. Biden walks into the White House on Wednesday, he will be returning to a building he knows intimately from eight years as vice president and countless visits during a 36-year Senate career. Ms. Harris, who was in the Senate for less than one term, has had far less exposure to the inner workings of a presidential administration.

Their differences in many ways flip the dynamic that existed between Mr. Biden and Mr. Obama. Back then Mr. Obama was a young, relative newcomer to the capital seeking experience and credibility with ***working-class*** white America. Mr. Biden, a Beltway veteran, was his West Wing partner.

In this case, Ms. Harris will play the role of relative Washington newcomer and offer Mr. Biden, the consummate insider, a starkly different perspective on the world and a bridge to a diverse nation.

Sometimes she may also offer him a decisive vote. Although the Senate filibuster means that much legislation requires 60 votes to pass, Mr. Biden and Chuck Schumer, who will become the Senate majority leader, may turn to the parliamentary tactic of budget reconciliation, which prohibits the filibuster and allows for 51-vote approvals.

Senator Chris Coons, Democrat of Delaware, said he hoped Ms. Harris would wind up ''less as the tiebreaking vote but more as a consensus builder'' to help Mr. Biden win bipartisan majorities for his agenda. But bipartisanship has been in short supply and Democrats expect Mr. Biden to operate on narrow legislative margins.

''If not, she will indeed have to be a regular presence in the Senate,'' Mr. Coons allowed.

As vice president, Mr. Biden himself cast no tiebreaking votes. But Vice President Mike Pence was required to break deadlocks 13 times over the past four years.

More broadly, Mr. Biden will most likely feel that he needs little guidance in the workings of an institution where he served for so long, and where Ms. Harris spent just four years. But Ms. Harris has relationships with newer members of the Senate with whom Mr. Biden did not overlap.

One early task for Ms. Harris will be ramping up her national security expertise. Aides say that she will support Mr. Biden's broader agenda of re-engaging with allies, dealing with the challenges China presents and combating climate change. But she is likely to pay particular interest to certain issues, including global health and democracy, and human rights. Ms. Harris also has a strong interest in cybersecurity, informed by her service on the Senate's Intelligence and Homeland Security Committees.

Mr. Biden has suggested that he sees himself as a ''bridge'' to the next generation of leaders -- and many Democrats expect that Ms. Harris would be a part of that next generation. If Mr. Biden does not run again, Ms. Harris would almost certainly be considered the early Democratic front-runner for 2024.

Robert Shrum, who served as a top political strategist to former Vice President Al Gore, whose presidential aspirations during President Bill Clinton's second term were widely understood, said that Ms. Harris should focus only on serving Mr. Biden, not pursuing an independent political profile.

''I think she will be very careful to do her job as vice president, and unless and until he tells her, and tells the country, that he's not ready to run again, she's not going to focus on that at all,'' Mr. Shrum said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/kamala-harris-vice-president.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/20/us/politics/kamala-harris-vice-president.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Representative Barbara Lee, Democrat of California (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

After being sworn in as vice president, top, Ms. Harris planned to return to the U.S. Capitol to swear in three new Democratic senators. Above, a group gathers at Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington, D.C., to celebrate the inauguration. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY new administration. Mr. McERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES

KENNY HOLSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A24-A25)

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2021

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[***That Word; On Politics With Lisa Lerer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60DW-00K1-DXY4-X1CP-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Few prominent women in power have publicly addressed a particular vulgarity that men have leveled against them for years. Today, on the floor of the House, that changed.

**Body**

Few prominent women in power have publicly addressed a particular vulgarity that men have leveled against them for years. Today, on the floor of the House, that changed.

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How many times was Hillary Clinton called a bitch over the course of her decades in public life?

I suspect the answer lies somewhere in the range between 500 and 10 million. At one point in the 2016 campaign, I even[*witnessed a 10-year-old boy*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) chant the vulgarity at a Trump rally in exurban Washington.

Yet, through all those years and all those expletives, we never heard Mrs. Clinton publicly address that word.

Few prominent women have, in any memorable way, even though men have leveled it against women in power since before they ever had any real power at all.

Today, on the august floor of the House of Representatives, the world saw a very different reckoning with that word, power and sexism.

“Representative Yoho called me, and I quote, a fucking bitch,” [*Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said from the floor this morning*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline). “These are the words Representative Yoho levied against a congresswoman.”

Two days ago, Representative Ted Yoho, Republican of Florida, made headlines when a reporter overhead him using the vulgar language against Ms. Ocasio-Cortez. Yesterday, he gave an “apology” from the House floor that did not seem to involve any, well, [*actual apologizing*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline). He [*denied uttering the vulgarity*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) on Wednesday when he said, “I cannot apologize for my passion or for loving my god, my family and my country.”

Today, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez delivered her response, a searing indictment not only of Mr. Yoho but also of a culture that allows men to use abusive language and supports violence against women.

“I honestly thought I was going to pack it up and go home — it’s just another day,” Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said, recalling how many times she has been called racist and sexist names by men, from the governor of Florida to drunk patrons in the New York City bar where she once waited tables.

But then, Ms. Ocasio-Cortez said, she decided she could not allow her nieces and other girls to see Congress accept this kind of behavior with silence. Watching Mr. Yoho cite his own wife and daughters on the House floor in his speech was the last straw.

“Mr. Yoho mentioned that he has a wife and two daughters. I am two years younger than Mr. Yoho’s youngest daughter. I am someone’s daughter, too,” she said. “Having a daughter does not make a man decent. Having a wife does not make a decent man. Treating people with dignity and respect makes a decent man. And when a decent man messes up, as we all are bound to do, he tries his best and does apologize.”

Obviously, Mr. Yoho’s comments signal an outrageous breach of civility. Even Mrs. Clinton was never called that word on the Capitol grounds by a sitting congressman in front of reporters. As several Democrats mentioned on the House floor, race certainly plays a role, too. A way for a white man to try to put a young, Latina congresswoman in her place.

Even so, the fact that Ms. Ocasio-Cortez felt free to shame Mr. Yoho from the House floor signifies a shift in our politics.

In the past, a female politician would have — as Ms. Ocasio-Cortez alluded — shrugged off the insult, warned by advisers that addressing the issue could backfire against her own political reputation. Instead, several of Ms. Ocasio-Cortez’s colleagues followed her speech with comments of their own from the House floor.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez, a sharp political mind, is well aware that there’s a constituency for those remarks, a crucial 2020 voting bloc fueled by the anger of women.

Rage moms, if you will.

It’s quite the evolution in the cliché ways that strategists think about female voters. Over the past three decades, we’ve gone from suburban “soccer moms” to Alaskan “hockey Moms” to anti-gun moms to fed-up, tired and simply out of you-know-what-to-give moms.

Look at the polling numbers. During the Trump administration, the traditional gender gap has [*become a “canyon*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline).” Even among white ***working-class*** women, who supported Mr. Trump in 2016, support [*has plummeted*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline). In the suburbs, a place not exactly known as a hotbed of political radicalism, majorities of female voters reject Mr. Trump [*by whopping margins*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline).

Look at the foot soldiers of the Democratic Party. As I frequently hear from candidates and strategists, the people at the helm of organizations, staffing campaign offices and volunteering are overwhelmingly women.

And look at the liberal activists. In Portland, Ore., a “wall of moms,” clad in bike helmets and goggles, faces off against federal agents. Black female activists [*lead Black Lives Matter protests*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) and steer the exploding racial justice movement.

Clearly, a lot of Democratic and independent women in America are angry. They’re tired of dysfunction in Washington. They’re tired of inaction on the issues that matter most to their daily lives, like school and child care closures. And they’re really tired of Mr. Trump’s chaotic style and lack of empathy.

Starting in a few weeks, these angry women will cast ballots for the presidency. And after years of Mr. Trump letting his supporters use that word against them, it’s their anger that may end up being his undoing.

Drop us a line!

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From Opinion: A republic, if you can keep it

This morning the Opinion section [*published an essay by Gary Hart*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline), a former Democratic senator from Colorado and a presidential candidate in the 1984 race. Mr. Hart calls for a reconsideration of presidential power in light of President Trump’s insistence that his “authority is total.”

Mr. Hart noted that he and former Vice President Walter Mondale were the last surviving members of the Church Committee that was convened in the 1970s to study the executive branch’s intelligence arms.

“We have recently come to learn of at least a hundred documents authorizing extraordinary presidential powers in the case of a national emergency, virtually dictatorial powers without congressional or judicial checks and balances,” he wrote.

“No matter who occupies the office, the American people have a right to know what extraordinary powers presidents believe they have. It is time for a new select committee to study these powers and their potential for abuse, and advise Congress on the ways in which it might, at a minimum, establish stringent oversight.”

Mr. Hart [*continued*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline): “Among the questions to be addressed: Where did these secret powers come from? Where are they kept? Who has access to them? What qualifies as a national emergency sufficient to suspend virtually all constitutional protection? And critically, why must these powers be secret?”

He concludes by asserting that “regardless of party or candidate preference, we can all agree there is no justification for a president to have dictatorial powers.”

— Talmon Joseph Smith

… Seriously

“We’ll have a very nice something,” said Mr. Trump, announcing tonight that [*he had decided to cancel the Republican National Convention*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) in Jacksonville, Fla. “We’ll figure it out.”

Thanks for reading. On Politics is your guide to the political news cycle, delivering clarity from the chaos.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 24, 2020

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[***The 22-Year-Old Force Behind Egypt's #MeToo***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:610C-1NB1-DXY4-X098-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 3, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 15; THE SATURDAY PROFILE

**Length:** 1409 words

**Byline:** By Declan Walsh

**Body**

In a moment of rage, Nadeen Ashraf created an Instagram page naming a man accused of being a sexual harasser. Within a week, it had 70,000 followers.

CAIRO -- Nadeen Ashraf had a burning secret. Earlier this summer, an anonymous Instagram page that named and shamed a man accused of being a notorious sexual harasser at Egypt's most prestigious university was causing a sensation among her friends. Unknown to them, she was running it.

The experiment started, in a flash of fury, in the dead of night. On July 1 Ms. Ashraf, a 22-year-old philosophy major, was up late to cram for an exam the next morning when she became preoccupied with the fate of a Facebook post that had mysteriously disappeared.

Days earlier, a fellow student at the American University in Cairo had posted a warning on Facebook about a man she said was a sexual predator -- a brash, manipulative young man from a rich family said to be harassing and blackmailing women on campus. Now, Ms. Ashraf realized as she stared at her laptop, the post had been deleted without explanation.

Enraged, she set aside her textbooks and created an Instagram page under a pseudonym -- @assaultpolice -- that identified the man, Ahmed Bassam Zaki, alongside his photo and a list of accusations of misdeeds against women.

''This guy had been getting away with stuff since the 10th grade,'' she said. ''Every time a woman opened her mouth, someone taped it shut. I wanted to stop that.''

After creating the page, Ms. Ashraf flopped into bed at 6 a.m. and slept through her exam. But when she awoke, she found hundreds of notifications from people who applauded her post, and about 30 messages from women who confided that they, too, had been assaulted by Mr. Zaki. Some said they had been raped.

An Egyptian #MeToo moment was born.

Within a week, Mr. Zaki had been arrested, the @assaultpolice account had amassed 70,000 followers and the page had prompted an outpouring of testimonies from other Egyptian women fed up with being humiliated and violated.

Sexual assault is endemic in Egypt -- a United Nations study in 2013 found that 99 percent of women had experienced harassment or violence -- but reporting it is notoriously difficult. Police officials are reluctant to register assault cases. Powerful institutions prefer to sweep accusations under the carpet. Even the families of victims, wary of scandal or feeling a misplaced sense of shame, tend to hush it up.

Ms. Ashraf's bold page offered a new way.

''It was so wonderful,'' she recalled, sitting in her family home. ''A lot of the girls who got in touch said 'I can't believe I'm finally being heard.' Even though it was a dark time, here they were speaking out. There was a sense of empowerment, of relief.''

On Sept. 1, the authorities charged Mr. Zaki, 21, with three counts of sexual assault against underage women, as well as multiple counts of blackmail and harassment. He remains in detention, awaiting trial.

But then a second high-profile case came to light, also through Ms. Ashraf's Instagram page, that complicated matters. It promised to be even more sensational -- an account of a gang rape by five young men in a five-star hotel overlooking the Nile. In recent weeks, however, the case has become clouded in a murk of counter-accusations and leaked images that threatens to overshadow the progress Ms. Ashraf has made -- and possibly even reverse it.

''It's very worrisome,'' she said.

Ms. Ashraf, 22, is not an archetypal Egyptian rebel. She comes from an apolitical family that lives in a gated community in eastern Cairo -- a place of manicured lawns and hushed streets lined with luxury vehicles where support for Egypt's authoritarian leader, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, runs relatively high.

Her father owns a software company, her mother is a nutritionist, and her family stayed in the suburbs during the 2011 uprising that toppled Egypt's longtime ruler, Hosni Mubarak, and the 2013 protests that ushered in a military takeover and Mr. el-Sisi's rule.

When the #MeToo movement erupted in the United States in 2017, driven by accusations against the disgraced film producer Harvey Weinstein, she didn't pay much attention -- even if she did have her own experience of assault.

When she was 11 years old, a delivery man carrying laundry approached her as she walked down the street and slapped her bottom. ''I had no idea why he was doing this,'' she said. ''It took me years to realize it was sexual.''

Public outrage over sexual assault has been growing in Egypt for about a decade, driven by high-profile attacks and, last year, harassment accusations against a famous soccer player. Even so, men continue to assault with impunity.

***Working-class*** women run a gantlet of harassment in crowded public buses, Ms. Ashraf said. Among the rich, although dating is tolerated, young men exploit their family connections to misbehave with license, she said, and many parents reflexively blame their daughters when things go wrong.

''The first response is that it's your fault,'' she said. ''How did he get your number? Why did you let him in?''

Ms. Ashraf initially shielded her activism from her parents, who thought she was locked into her bedroom to study. When she finally came clean to her father, weeks later, he was alarmed. ''He went silent for three minutes,'' she recalled. ''Then he said, 'You can't tell anyone.'''

Ms. Ashraf told him it was a little late for that.

Is her brand of vigilantism open to abuse, or even fair? False accusations are a hazard, she admitted, adding that she tried to confirm the charges against Mr. Zaki through her network of friends. Even so, she had to delete one accusation, from his time as a business student in Spain, after it was found to be untrue.

In a country like Egypt, such methods were necessary, she said. ''It's not like the West. You can't just walk into a police station.''

The real difficulties started, though, with the second high-profile case.

In late July, Ms. Ashraf posted to Instagram about five men in their 20s, from wealthy families, who were said to have gang-raped a teenage woman in a suite at the Fairmont Nile City hotel after a party in 2014. A video of the assault, made by a sixth man, had been distributed to their friends.

The accusation caused a sensation. Although Ms. Ashraf didn't identify the accused men, copycat accounts sprang up on Instagram that did. One is the son of a prominent steel tycoon; another is the son of a well-known soccer coach.

Within one week the victim, who said her drink had been spiked by the assailants, approached the police and pressed charges. In late August, Egypt's prosecutor general announced five arrests -- two men in Egypt and three in Lebanon, who have since been extradited to Egypt. At least three other men are being sought.

But the investigation became muddied after investigators moved against several people who had come forward in connection to the case. Two men were accused of ''debauchery'' -- code for homosexuality -- based on photos found in their phones that were later leaked to the news media.

They have been detained, as has a woman -- a former partner of one of those accused of rape -- whose intimate photos have been leaked onto the internet.

Just who leaked those photos is unclear, and the cases are expected to come to court in the coming weeks. But they have already sent a chill through the ranks of Egyptian women who hoped it had become safer to report sexual violence.

''Fairmont has become our case of the century,'' Ms. Ashraf said. ''But it shouldn't be a precedent for assault cases. There's so many other things coming up that prove we are on the side of girls.''

After threats to her security, Ms. Ashraf suspended her Instagram page for 10 days in August. Now it is up and running again, but with a focus on educating women about their rights.

''You use the word consent all the time in English,'' she said. ''But I've never heard its Arabic equivalent -- taraadi. So we try to translate these concepts, break them down, explain.''

The only name she's made public of late is her own. Realizing that her identity was leaking out, and fearing retribution from men who were threatened by the page, she decided it was safest to end her anonymity. ''I figured that if the bad guys knew who I was, good people should too,'' she said. ''There's protection in that.''

Nada Rashwan contributed reporting.Nada Rashwan contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/world/middleeast/egypt-metoo-sexual-harassment-ashraf.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/world/middleeast/egypt-metoo-sexual-harassment-ashraf.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, Nadeen Ashraf at her home in Cairo. Above, a mural reading ''Safe streets against harassment'' in Cairo. Left, the Fairmont Nile City hotel. An @assaultpolice post about an accusation of gang rape there in 2014 quickly spread on social media. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SIMA DIAB FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

AMR ABDALLAH DALSH/REUTERS

SAMER ABDALLAH/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** October 4, 2020

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[***Female Parts***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YS1-R571-DXY4-X4BW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 26, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 11; FICTION

**Length:** 1254 words

**Byline:** By Katie Kitamura

**Body**

BREASTS AND EGGS By Mieko Kawakami

For decades, Haruki Murakami defined contemporary Japanese literature for the Anglophone reader. In such bona fide masterpieces as ''The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle'' and ''A Wild Sheep Chase,'' the author created a surreal world of talking sheep and lost cats, jazz bars and manic pixie dream girls.

But in the decades since the publication of those novels, Murakami's tropes haven't always aged well. In particular, his depictions of women have seemed, at least to some of us, troublingly thin. As his oeuvre kept proliferating, it sometimes felt as if the Murakami machine were eating up what limited oxygen there was for Japanese fiction in translation.

Thankfully, of late, a number of female writers have stepped out from the Murakami shadow and into English translation. Long acclaimed in Japan, they arrive here festooned with prizes and critical relevance. We are seeing the emergence of an alternate lineage, an entirely female canon, that reaches back to the postwar period even as it builds in the present.

Recent translations have brought us work from established greats: Yuko Tsushima (''Territory of Light''), Yoko Tawada (''The Emissary''), Yoko Ogawa (''The Memory Police'') and Hiromi Kawakami (''The Ten Loves of Nishino''). Then there's the current generation of young writers, a fearsomely talented group that includes Sayaka Murata (''Convenience Store Woman''), Yukiko Motoya (''The Lonesome Bodybuilder''), Hiroko Oyamada (''The Factory'') and now Mieko Kawakami, with ''Breasts and Eggs,'' her first novel to be translated into English.

In Japan, Kawakami (no relation to Hiromi Kawakami) is already a literary sensation. Like Murakami -- who has enthusiastically endorsed her work -- she too has a loose and colloquial style. But unlike her forebear, Kawakami writes with a bracing lack of sentimentality, particularly when describing the lives of women. One character terms her mother ''free labor'' with a vagina. The narrator, Natsu, a writer, says sex with her former boyfriend felt ''like somebody had slipped a black bag over my head.''

Focusing almost exclusively on female characters and spaces, ''Breasts and Eggs'' often made me think of Tsushima's ''Territory of Light.'' Although tonally distinct, both novels describe single ***working-class*** motherhood and small urban apartments in unflinching detail. Writing 30 years apart, both authors reveal the ways in which those circumstances in turn shape the inner lives of their characters.

''Breasts and Eggs'' underlines this connection by placing the female form at its center. Kawakami writes with unsettling precision about the body -- its discomforts, its appetites, its smells and secretions. And she is especially good at capturing its longings, those in this novel being at once obsessive and inchoate, and in one way or another about transformation.

In the novel's first part, Natsu's sister, Makiko, has traveled to Tokyo from Osaka to consult a doctor about breast augmentation. It's a subject Makiko has deeply researched, and she expounds at length about surgical procedures, outcomes, concerns: '''You see the part about the fat injections?' she asked. 'The only reason they say they're safe is because the fat comes from your own body, but they still have to open all these holes in you.'''

That singular focus on cosmetics is questioned not only by Natsu but also by Makiko's daughter, Midoriko, who is herself going through puberty, its series of bodily changes leaving her both mute and enraged. Natsu starts to see her sister differently, as an object of pity. ''It actually made me sad,'' she says. ''It was the same feeling you get at a train station, or in a hospital, or on the street, when you stop at a safe distance away from someone who can't seem to help but talk and talk, whether or not anyone is there to listen.''

Cut to the second part of the novel, and it's Natsu who's in the grips of her own obsession. Single and desperate to have a child, she enters the labyrinthine bureaucracy of sperm donation. The process thrusts her into psychological isolation from her loved ones (she hesitates to discuss her desire for motherhood with family or acquaintances, lest they react to her the way she did to Makiko's surgery) and from society at large (she's a single woman exploring sperm donation in a culture where that is far from the norm).

''Breasts and Eggs'' was originally published in Japan as a novella in 2008, before Kawakami expanded it for this current edition. Book 1, which takes place over a handful of days as Makiko and her daughter visit Natsu, has the feel of a stand-alone work. This effect is partially temporal and partially tonal: Here, Natsu possesses some level of certainty, at least about Makiko's mania and what it says about female identity.

In Book 2 Natsu is far more uncertain, as she turns to her own desires and struggles with whether or not to honor them. It's here that the novel releases the narrative tightness of its first half and becomes increasingly discursive: ''If I tried to delve below the surface, my thoughts dispersed,'' she thinks, pouring herself a glass of whiskey as she reads about infertility. ''All the books and blogs catered to couples. What about the rest of us, who were alone and planned to stay that way? Who has the right to have a child? Does not having a partner or not wanting to have sex nullify this right?''

Kawakami's prose is supple and casual, unbothered with the kinds of sentences routinely described as ''luminous.'' But into these stretches of plain speech she regularly drops phrases that made me giddy with pleasure. Natsu's fridge is stocked so sparely and haphazardly it ''looked like a lost and found for condiments.'' Meanwhile, outside, ''spring came and went, like someone opening the door to an empty room only to slam it shut again.''

Osaka haunts the novel, in Natsu's memories of its landscape and cuisine, but above all in Kawakami's use of its regional dialect, Osaka-ben. I grew up hearing my father speak in dialect whenever he was with a fellow Osakan. In those moments, I heard the incredible elasticity of the Japanese language -- maybe of all language -- the way its rhythms can suddenly realign, its tones shift. The politesse that I tended to associate with traditional Japanese disappeared into a language that was raucous and full of swagger.

Throughout the skillful translation by Sam Bett and David Boyd, we get indications of this code switching, and at one point Natsu's novelist friend Rika riffs on the relationship between a narrative and its idiom: ''The real thing, the real Osaka dialect, isn't even about communicating,'' she says. ''It's a contest. Somehow, you're both in the audience and on the stage. ... Language is always art, but in order to achieve its highest form, the language itself -- intonation, grammar, speed, everything -- had to mutate over time.''

''Breasts and Eggs'' is about this kind of mutation, this irrepressibility. What exactly is so wrong about Makiko wanting breast implants? For Natsu, it's the shamelessness of her sister's fixation that's so alienating. But that shamelessness is also what gives Makiko's desire -- and eventually Natsu's as well -- its dignity. Its brazenness, its unruliness, its full expression. That's radical -- and not just in Japan.Katie Kitamura is the author, most recently, of ''A Separation.''BREASTS AND EGGSBy Mieko KawakamiTranslated by Sam Bett and David Boyd448 pp. Europa Editions. Paper, $15.99.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/07/books/review/breasts-and-eggs-mieko-kawakami.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/07/books/review/breasts-and-eggs-mieko-kawakami.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mieko Kawakami (PHOTOGRAPH BY WAKABA NODA/TRON)

**Load-Date:** April 26, 2020

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[***Mixing Memoir and Theory to Explore Blackness***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YS6-T0K1-DXY4-X056-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 27, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 5; 5 THINGS ABOUT YOUR BOOK

**Length:** 1106 words

**Byline:** By John Williams

**Body**

In his new book, ''Afropessimism,'' Frank B. Wilderson III writes that earlier in life he saw himself, as an African-American, ''as a degraded Human,'' his plight ''analogous to the plight of the Palestinians, the Native American and the ***working class***.'' But at some point he came to question this comparison.

Instead, as he described in an interview, ''there is something essential about the suffering of black people that can't be reconciled with the suffering of other people.'' The title of his book is the name for this school of thought.

Wilderson, who leads the African-American Studies department at the University of California, Irvine, mixes both memoir and theory in ''Afropessimism,'' moving from his childhood in Minnesota to academic ideas about why black people ''are not Human subjects, but are instead structurally inert props.'' Below, he talks about pivotal time he spent in South Africa during apartheid, the tensions between theory and storytelling, and the inspiration he's taken from the singer Sarah Vaughan.

When did you first get the idea to write this book?

It's like there's two trains running on tracks right next to each other. And I'm trying to use a milder metaphor than ''they collide.'' They meld together. One is the critical theory and political theory track, and the other is creative writing.

I was in the MFA program at Columbia from 1989 to 1991, and I was writing a novel. There was a day when it had to be workshopped. I didn't have my chapter ready, so I wrote about a harrowing experience from my childhood. There was such a firewall between nonfiction and fiction at the time, so I lied and said, ''Here's a short story I wrote.'' The way in which people responded to this story was amazing. I began, on the side, writing vignettes about my childhood.

So the memoir writing starts in the fiction program. And then I went to South Africa. I was working outside Johannesburg, where I wrote about the massacres. And by night (in the metaphorical sense), we helped provide arms to self-defense units in paramilitary units. There were two warring factions of the African National Congress where we were, in the Vaal Triangle, south of Johannesburg, and we needed them to stop the tit for tat. Chris Hani was the only person on the national executive committee who I could get to come to the Triangle to stop the violence. He was also the only person who said that we needed a ''revolutionary theory,'' a book like Frantz Fanon wrote for Algeria, ''The Wretched of the Earth.'' We needed that book for South Africa. Chris knew the value of intellectual writing as well as action. His generosity of spirit, and the way he saw the need to do critical theory while you're fighting a revolution, really sparked my imagination.

What's the most surprising thing you learned while writing it?

I'm trained as a traditional storyteller, and I'm also trained as a critical theorist in narratology, psychoanalysis, Marxism. I had never tried to map story -- the elements of narrative that move from a state of equilibrium for the protagonist to disequilibrium to equilibrium restored -- onto theory. I had never interrogated that artistically. That arc is not available to blackness, there is no equilibrium to be regained. It was painful to find that in the episodes of my life, and to work with what we call gratuitous violence. In a narrative in which someone experiences the violence of the state or interpersonal aggression, it's often because they've transgressed in some way. It's called contingent violence. But what does it mean to tell the story of a sentient being who does not need to transgress to experience the violence of lynchings, of slavery, of incarceration? What does it mean to not have an arc from innocence to guilt?

My wife taught writing and is a poet, and we have these conversations all the time. What does it mean to be a slave and the subject of narrative? One of her mantras is: ''Make the problem your subject.'' So rather than try to fix what could not be reconciled, I allowed that sore to fester on the page -- as beautifully as I could.

In what way is the book you wrote different from the book you set out to write?

I did not for the slightest moment think I would begin this book with a psychotic episode that I had at the age of 40-something, and that it would end with the death of my mother. Those two things, which frame the book, were the furthest things from my mind. The first iterations of the book were too direct, too didactic and dry. When I decided to start writing experimentally about this breakdown, I didn't think I could get it on the page.

I was really fortunate in working with my editor, Bob Weil. He was a godsend. He is a consummate intellectual, and he also knows what makes literary writing sing. He knew I wanted to make people laugh and cry. He was really encouraging.

Who is a creative person (not a writer) who has influenced you and your work?

Sarah Vaughan. If jazz, opera, the blues and soul were all one voice, that voice would be hers. Which really speaks to my blending of genres. But also on a cosmological level, she was born under the sign of Aries, which I am -- and there's something big and arrogant and sometimes irritating about Aries.

I remember visiting New York City from Minneapolis at 8 years old for the World's Fair, and the Concorde broke the sound barrier. I asked my mother what that sound was, and she said, ''It's a sonic boom.'' And I told her, ''That's what I want to be when I grow up.'' ''It's impossible to be a sonic boom,'' she said. ''You can be a pilot and make a sonic boom, but you can't be one.''

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Vaughan gives me permission to write, and to turn moans into music. Back in 1993, on April 10, my patron saint Chris Hani was assassinated. I attended a lot of rallies and demonstrations afterward with rage and anger, but at night I would cry to sleep with Sarah Vaughan's music. She got me through that.

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This interview has been condensed and edited.Follow John Williams on Twitter: @johnwilliamsnyt.AfropessimismBy Frank B. Wilderson III352 pages. Liveright. $29.95.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/05/books/afropessimism-frank-wilderson-interview.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/05/books/afropessimism-frank-wilderson-interview.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN L. BLOM)

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[***In ‘Afropessimism,’ a Black Intellectual Mixes Memoir and Theory; 5 Things About Your Book***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YKJ-9C01-JBG3-62YH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 26, 2020 Sunday 23:13 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1100 words

**Byline:** John Williams

**Highlight:** Frank B. Wilderson III talks about his experimental approach to writing about blackness and violence, as well as the solace he found in Sarah Vaughan.

**Body**

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PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN L. BLOM)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***For Kamala Harris, an Influential Voice and a Decisive Vote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61TD-BFT1-DXY4-X494-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1686 words

**Byline:** Michael Crowley and Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** With a tiebreaking vote in an evenly divided Senate, Ms. Harris may be returning to the Capitol frequently. But her history-making role is likely to include many more responsibilities.

**Body**

With a tiebreaking vote in an evenly divided Senate, Ms. Harris may be returning to the Capitol frequently. But her history-making role is likely to include many more responsibilities.

WASHINGTON — Vice President [*Kamala Harris*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/24/us/politics/harris-vietnam.html) represented the march of history when she was sworn in on Wednesday by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. As a Californian of Jamaican and Indian descent, she is the first woman and the first woman of color to hold the nation’s second-highest office.

It was a landmark moment. But just hours later Ms. [*Harris*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/24/us/politics/harris-vietnam.html) was on the job, returning to the U.S. Capitol to execute her constitutional role as president of the Senate and swear in three new Democratic senators: Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock, the two Democrats elected in a Georgia special election this month, and Alex Padilla, her own successor to the California seat she resigned on Monday.

Presiding in the Senate shortly before 5 p.m., Ms. Harris was visibly amused as she announced that she would swear in Mr. Padilla “to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Senator Kamala D. Harris of California.”

At that, she let loose a hearty laugh. “Yes, that was very weird!” she added.

The light moment belied the serious stakes at play with the swearing in of three new Democrats. It also served notice of how important the Senate will be to the start of Ms. Harris’s tenure as vice president in the Biden administration.

With the Senate divided 50-50 between Republicans and Democrats and President Biden hoping to pass ambitious legislation on the coronavirus, the economy, climate change and other policy matters, Ms. Harris — who as vice president will break any tiebreaking votes — may find herself returning often to the Capitol.

“There’s definitely going to be a demand, I think, in a 50-50 Senate, like I’ve never seen in the Senate before,” said Senator Cory Booker, Democrat of New Jersey.

“For the Biden-Harris agenda, she will be in Congress very, very often or reaching out to senators very often, to try to push that agenda through,” Mr. Booker said. An aide to Ms. Harris said that she had already begun reaching out to other senators about White House nominations, including that of retired Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III to be secretary of defense.

But Ms. Harris, 56, is sure to be far more than a 51st Democratic senator to Mr. Biden. She will bring to her history-making role at the White House an array of skills that Mr. Biden will draw on, including the prosecutorial chops that she displayed in Senate Judiciary Committee hearings, her personal energy that balances Mr. Biden’s low-key approach and the voice she will offer to women and people of color.

“She’ll bring a justice lens, a racial justice lens, racial equity, to everything and every policy and every decision that’s going to be made,” said Representative Barbara Lee, Democrat of California and a longtime ally of Ms. Harris’s. “That’s so important, to have a Black woman, a South Asian woman’s perspective, on the big issues that this administration has to tackle.”

Current and former aides to both Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris say that while dealing with the Senate will be important to her job, she has not been assigned a specific issue portfolio, at least at the outset, and will instead serve as a governing partner to Mr. Biden on all of his top priorities. If fulfilled, that mandate could make her among the most influential vice presidents in history.

In one sign of how much she may be involved in legislative campaigns, Ms. Harris has been in touch with mayors around the country to preview Mr. Biden’s coronavirus [*relief package*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/24/us/politics/harris-vietnam.html), the Harris aide said.

From the moment Ms. Harris was chosen as Mr. Biden’s running mate, Republicans sought to paint her as a radical who would co-opt the more centrist Mr. Biden’s agenda and push any administration far to the left, often relying on [*sexist personal attacks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/24/us/politics/harris-vietnam.html) in the process. Yet while Ms. Harris and Mr. Biden had sharp disagreements on a number of issues during the primary, as his running mate she made a point at every turn to demonstrate that she not only embraced his agenda, but had studied his proposals in detail and was fully on board as his partner.

On Wednesday, she reveled in the moment as she appeared outside the Capitol for her inauguration. “So proud of you,” former President Barack Obama told her as they fist bumped shortly before her swearing-in. Minutes later, Ms. Harris, clad in a purple coat, barely suppressed a smile as she finished taking her oath from Justice Sotomayor, her hand on a bible once belonging to Thurgood Marshall, the former Supreme Court justice.

After the inaugural ceremony, Ms. Harris and her husband, Douglas Emhoff, escorted her predecessor, Mike Pence, and his wife, Karen Pence, down the Capitol steps for Mr. Pence’s departure. The couples stopped midway for a friendly chat punctuated by laughter.

In her next role, though, Ms. Harris may face inherent challenges, including finding her place in a West Wing stocked with veterans of the Obama White House who have known and worked with one another for years and advising a president with deeply fixed ideas of how Washington operates. And given speculation that the 78-year-old Mr. Biden may not seek a second term in office, Ms. Harris, who mounted her own unsuccessful 2020 White House bid, is sure to face scrutiny about her electoral future much earlier than did her predecessors.

One factor that may work in Ms. Harris’s favor is Mr. Biden’s own experience as vice president, especially at the beginning when he joined an Obama White House team that at times had a clubby quality. Ms. Harris’s allies hope and expect that Mr. Biden — and many of the aides who worked with him, like the incoming chief of staff, Ron Klain — will remember what it was like to be “on the other side” and ensure that Ms. Harris and her team are included and empowered.

“So many people in the Biden orbit are sympathetic to what it’s like to sit on the O.V.P. side,” said Liz Allen, a former campaign aide to Ms. Harris and to Mr. Biden in the Obama White House, using the official abbreviation for the Office of the Vice President. “I think people are going to be jumping through hoops to make sure she can break through.”

Ms. Harris and Mr. Biden bring starkly different political profiles to the new administration. When Mr. Biden walks into the White House on Wednesday, he will be returning to a building he knows intimately from eight years as vice president and countless visits during a 36-year Senate career. Ms. Harris, who was in the Senate for less than one term, has had far less exposure to the inner workings of a presidential administration.

Their differences in many ways flip the dynamic that existed between Mr. Biden and Mr. Obama. Back then Mr. Obama was a young, relative newcomer to the capital seeking experience and credibility with ***working-class*** white America. Mr. Biden, a Beltway veteran, was his West Wing partner.

In this case, Ms. Harris will play the role of relative Washington newcomer and offer Mr. Biden, the consummate insider, a starkly different perspective on the world and a bridge to a diverse nation.

Sometimes she may also offer him a decisive vote. Although the Senate filibuster means that much legislation requires 60 votes to pass, Mr. Biden and Chuck Schumer, who will become the Senate majority leader, may turn to the parliamentary tactic of budget reconciliation, which prohibits the filibuster and allows for 51-vote approvals.

Senator Chris Coons, Democrat of Delaware, said he hoped Ms. Harris would wind up “less as the tiebreaking vote but more as a consensus builder” to help Mr. Biden win bipartisan majorities for his agenda. But bipartisanship has been in short supply and Democrats expect Mr. Biden to operate on narrow legislative margins.

“If not, she will indeed have to be a regular presence in the Senate,” Mr. Coons allowed.

As vice president, Mr. Biden himself cast no tiebreaking votes. But Vice President Mike Pence was required to break deadlocks 13 times over the past four years.

More broadly, Mr. Biden will most likely feel that he needs little guidance in the workings of an institution where he served for so long, and where Ms. Harris spent just four years. But Ms. Harris has relationships with newer members of the Senate with whom Mr. Biden did not overlap.

One early task for Ms. Harris will be ramping up her national security expertise. Aides say that she will support Mr. Biden’s broader agenda of re-engaging with allies, dealing with the challenges China presents and combating climate change. But she is likely to pay particular interest to certain issues, including global health and democracy, and human rights. Ms. Harris also has a strong interest in cybersecurity, informed by her service on the Senate’s Intelligence and Homeland Security Committees.

Mr. Biden [*has suggested*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/24/us/politics/harris-vietnam.html) that he sees himself as a “bridge” to the next generation of leaders — and many Democrats expect that Ms. Harris would be a part of that next generation. If Mr. Biden does not run again, Ms. Harris would almost certainly be considered the early Democratic front-runner for 2024.

Robert Shrum, who served as a top political strategist to former Vice President Al Gore, whose presidential aspirations during President Bill Clinton’s second term were widely understood, said that Ms. Harris should focus only on serving Mr. Biden, not pursuing an independent political profile.

“I think she will be very careful to do her job as vice president, and unless and until he tells her, and tells the country, that he’s not ready to run again, she’s not going to focus on that at all,” Mr. Shrum said.

PHOTOS: Representative Barbara Lee, Democrat of California (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES); After being sworn in as vice president, top, Ms. Harris planned to return to the U.S. Capitol to swear in three new Democratic senators. Above, a group gathers at Black Lives Matter Plaza in Washington, D.C., to celebrate the inauguration. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY new administration. Mr. McERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES; KENNY HOLSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A24-A25)

**Load-Date:** August 24, 2021

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[***Y.A. Crossover***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YS1-R571-DXY4-X4C5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 26, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 18; CHILDREN'S BOOKS

**Length:** 1117 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Harlan

**Body**

There are scores of novels about World War II, but far fewer about what happened next. When we meet Zofia Lederman in August 1945 in Monica Hesse's THEY WENT LEFT (Little, Brown, 364 pp., $17.99; ages 14 and up), she has spent her adolescence surviving the Birkenau and Gross-Rosen concentration camps. But as her liberators celebrate the end of a nightmarish era, Zofia can't seem to join in.

''What did they mean, it was over?'' she asks. ''What was over? I was miles from home, and I didn't own so much as my own shoes. How was any of this over?''

Zofia is driven by a mission: to find her younger brother, Abek, the only other member of her family not sent left, to the gas chambers, by the camp guards. When he doesn't turn up at their apartment, Zofia leaves Poland to search for him.

At Foehrenwald, a displaced persons camp in Germany, she finds the possibility of a new life -- and of romance, with an enigmatic man consumed by a secret. But a black hole in her memory protects some trauma she doesn't want to touch, its dreadful shadow looming ever larger as the book goes on.

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Alex Rosario is a baseball star from a ***working-class*** Dominican family. Isa Warren attends private school, lives in a doorman building and does ballet. The 1 train is their Verona, its screeching brakes their violins. But all is not sneaky smooches, hidden love notes and dancing bachata between the subway poles. While Alex rides back and forth between his overworked mom and his domineering dad (who believes baseball is his son's only ticket out of poverty), Isa is so busy taking care of her volatile Cuban mom (who doesn't want her daughter to date Latino boys), her recently unemployed dad and her mentally ill older brother that she has no time left for herself, hiding her struggles behind a perfect bun and a shiny smile.

We root for these young lovers -- the self-conscious poet with the killer fastball and the shy ballerina who would take a bullet for those she loves -- as they learn to let their guards down and be more honest with each other, and with themselves. When their story rolls into its final stop we're sad the ride is over but delighted we caught this train.

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The result, ALL BOYS AREN'T BLUE: A Memoir-Manifesto (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 320 pp., $17.99; ages 14 and up), is an exuberant, unapologetic memoir infused with a deep but cleareyed love for its subjects. Johnson lays bare the darkest moments in his life with wit and unflinching vulnerability, from the bullying he suffered as a child to the losses of his cousin -- an early model for him of what a joyful queer life could look like -- his fraternity brother and his grandmother, who died as Johnson was working on the book and whose presence looms largest in it.

In one particularly moving chapter, Johnson recounts how he was molested by a trusted family member -- a story addressed to his now-dead abuser with startling empathy.

Johnson initially intended to end each chapter of his ''memoir-manifesto'' with ''solutions for all the uncomfortable or confusing life circumstances I experienced as a gay black child in America.'' Thankfully, he changed his mind. While there are still some bits of sermonizing, mainly in the first half of the book, the most rewarding moments come when Johnson allows himself to sit with uncertainty -- not offering neat solutions to life's messiest problems but simply telling readers: I see you. I feel you. I've been there, too.

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Anyone's except Ivy's, that is.

When Autumn goes missing, the adults all write it off as just another incident in a long string of delinquent behavior. But Ivy is convinced that something is wrong. No matter how callous her sister may be, she is still her sister. And if she's in trouble, it's Ivy's job to help.

Ivy's instincts are spot on: Autumn has been brutally beaten and abducted in an apparent drug deal gone wrong. Suspended between life and death, Autumn leaves her body and follows the little sister she pushed away.

Tate toggles effectively between the sisters' points of view: Ivy's dogged attempts to untangle the life of a girl who armored herself with secrets and Autumn's desperate haunting of the world she may shortly vacate for good.

One by one, the puzzle pieces start to click into place as this breakneck thriller accelerates, turning up skeletons that the sisters, their family and their community thought had been shoved permanently in the closet.

Autumn's disappearance, Tate writes in the author's note, is a metaphor for the way victims are so often gaslighted and shamed. Autumn spends much of the book invisible and ''shouting into the void.'' But this tale of undeterred sisterly love is a primal scream that will not be ignored.Jennifer Harlan is a member of the special projects desk at The Times.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/18/books/review/new-young-adult-crossover.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/18/books/review/new-young-adult-crossover.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** April 26, 2020

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[***We Need a More Resilient American Economy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YPT-RVW1-JBG3-61K7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 24, 2020 Friday 12:32 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1278 words

**Byline:** Marco Rubio

**Highlight:** With a sensible industrial policy, workers will take precedence over short-term corporate gain.

**Body**

With a sensible industrial policy, workers will take precedence over short-term corporate gain.

Americans are a resilient people. We persevere through difficult circumstances and arrive triumphant on the other side of adversity. It’s in our national DNA.

Once again, Americans are rising to the challenge before us. Medical professionals are meeting the call of duty and tending to our sick at great personal risk. Grocery stores, takeout restaurants and pharmacies remain open as Americans show up for work to give the rest of us access to essential goods. Families are working to overcome the tremendous economic damage they face as a result of the coronavirus.

Though I believe resilience is one of the defining traits of an American, I also believe it’s been absent from our public policy for too long. And this has become devastatingly clear in the current crisis.

Over the past several decades, our nation’s political and economic leaders, Democratic and Republican, made choices about how to structure our society — choosing to prize economic efficiency over resiliency, financial gains over Main Street investment, individual enrichment over the common good.

Any prudent policymaker should recognize that both efficiency and resiliency are values we should prioritize and seek to balance. But that’s not what we have done in recent decades. Those choices, from offshoring to building an economy based on finance and service, have produced one of the most efficient economic engines of all time. But a pendulum can swing too far in one direction. And when an economy lacks resiliency, it can be devastating in a crisis.

On the 2016 campaign trail, I spoke repeatedly with hard-working Americans who felt helpless as they watched jobs disappear and their communities crumble because businesses and lawmakers prioritized maximizing short-term gains over the long-term security of America, its communities and its people.

My time serving on the Select Committee on Intelligence was similarly transformative; in instance after instance, it was clear that many of the serious problems we face originated in our economic relationship with China. As did many, I believed capitalism would change China for the better; instead, China changed capitalism for the worse. This new status quo means younger generations, including my children, will grow up in an America of reduced economic prospects.

Today, the result of these failed policy choices is that our manufacturing base is severely diminished, and [*millions of productive jobs*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/) that relied on it are gone. The American domestic supply chain devoted to producing vital medical supplies like generic pharmaceuticals and respirators has withered. For decades America made the conscious choice to facilitate offshoring to China, where labor was cheap, and, critically, the Chinese Communist Party assisted businesses in long-term productive capital development that might seem irrational in the short term. Decisions such as to allow Beijing into the World Trade Organization threw fuel on the fire.

And look at what happened the moment the world faced a pandemic — an inevitability, considering the historical record.

Having monopolized those critical supply chains, the Chinese Communist Party pointed them inward. It ensured that face masks being manufactured in China, for example, went to domestic consumption and their own fight against the virus.

Largely unable to import supplies from China, America has been left scrambling because we by and large lack the ability to make things, as well as the state capacity needed for reorienting production to do so. As a result, doctors are forced to [*ration supplies*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/) and, in some cases, [*cease using*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/) necessary protective equipment.

And while some heroic businesses have shifted production to help fill this gap and produce masks, hand sanitizer and other goods, the nation is still behind.

One reason is that as manufacturers fled to China, our nation’s economy transformed into one dominated by service industries, which survive on person-to-person transactions like the ones now restricted. And unlike industrial economies, service-based economies lack the flexibility that comes with producing physical goods that can either be sold later or repurposed to meet a sudden shortage. This makes us especially vulnerable to this kind of shock.

A commensurate shift in corporate behavior away from investment in workers, equipment and facilities, and toward churning out short-term financial gains to shareholders has only further sapped our resiliency. Why didn’t we have enough N95 masks or ventilators on hand for a pandemic? Because buffer stocks don’t maximize financial return, and there was no shareholder reward for protecting against risk. Even in government, we became infatuated with the “just in time” acquisition model, as opposed to “just in case” contingency acquisitions.

Today, we see the consequences of this short-term, hyperindividualistic ethos. Americans cannot leave their homes. Neighbors are unable to shake hands. Places of worship are closed. The labor market, especially for ***working-class*** Americans in those [*service industries*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/), is in free-fall.

With the steadfast resolve of American communities and with government support to provide businesses [*the resources they need*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/) to pull through, Americans will overcome the challenge before us. But the society that follows should not be what it was before. We won’t properly absorb the lessons from the coronavirus crisis if we fall back into the traditional Republican and Democratic model of politics. We need a new vision to create a more resilient economy.

I have worked to put forward a foundation for this, calling for the [*re-shoring*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/) of supply chains integral to our national interest — everything from basic medicines and equipment to vital rare-earth minerals and technologies of the future. Before the pandemic, I proposed a [*reauthorization*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/) of the Small Business Act to serve as a template for how we could make our economy more productive. There is a clear need for a sweeping [*pro-American industrial policy*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/), brought into sharp relief by this crisis.

We need to apply this thinking to the conditions that intensified the continuing pandemic. In February, I submitted [*a bipartisan plan*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/) to require drug producers to identify where ingredients are produced, create tax breaks for U.S. producers of these ingredients and mandate that federal buyers purchase drugs made in America.

A sensible industrial policy will also mean creating federal incentives for productive investment in workers and equipment through tax policy and robust federal guarantees, while discouraging unproductive corporate behavior like stock buybacks. Where foreign subsidies draw away investment outside our own borders, the federal government should introduce cooperatives to spur the creation of domestic supply chains.

Though rebuilding a more productive and pro-worker economy will take time, we can achieve it and ensure that America’s next economic chapter will owe its character to the same spirit of resiliency, solidarity and collective pursuit of the common good that our people are now displaying to the world.

Mr. Rubio, a Republican, is chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship and a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://money.cnn.com/2016/03/29/news/economy/us-manufacturing-jobs/).

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

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***From Missing Persons to Mistaken Identities, Books About Seeing and Being Seen; Children’s Books***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YP8-SMF1-DXY4-X3KS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 25, 2020 Saturday 23:23 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1108 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Harlan

**Highlight:** Slices of young adult life, from Monica Hesse (“They Went Left”), Ismée Williams (“This Train Is Being Held”), George M. Johnson (“All Boys Aren’t Blue”) and Meredith Tate (“The Last Confession of Autumn Casterly”).

**Body**

There are scores of novels about World War II, but far fewer about what happened next. When we meet Zofia Lederman in August 1945 in Monica Hesse’s THEY WENT LEFT (Little, Brown, 364 pp., $17.99; ages 14 and up), she has spent her adolescence surviving the Birkenau and Gross-Rosen concentration camps. But as her liberators celebrate the end of a nightmarish era, Zofia can’t seem to join in.

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Tate toggles effectively between the sisters’ points of view: Ivy’s dogged attempts to untangle the life of a girl who armored herself with secrets and Autumn’s desperate haunting of the world she may shortly vacate for good.

One by one, the puzzle pieces start to click into place as this breakneck thriller accelerates, turning up skeletons that the sisters, their family and their community thought had been shoved permanently in the closet.

Autumn’s disappearance, Tate writes in the author’s note, is a metaphor for the way victims are so often gaslighted and shamed. Autumn spends much of the book invisible and “shouting into the void.” But this tale of undeterred sisterly love is a primal scream that will not be ignored.

Jennifer Harlan is a member of the special projects desk at The Times.

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Celebrating Sloth: Or, the Slacker as Superhero***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YRT-J3N1-DXY4-X2SX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 25, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 6; CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

**Length:** 1111 words

**Byline:** By Dwight Garner

**Body**

Not everyone is having a bad lockdown. In The Spectator, the English weekly, Tom Stoppard wrote, ''This is the life I've always wanted -- social distancing without social disapproval.'' Me? I've grown twitchy. The song I can't stop listening to is Cab Calloway's ''I Gotta Go Places and Do Things.''

With so many hours to obliterate, I've found myself turning to the experts. I've pushed away the Tootsie Roll wrappers and empty root beer cans and gathered around my bed what I will call my library of indolence.

A lot of the writing I value is, in one way or another, about the seven deadly sins, especially sloth and gluttony. People who are sophisticated in these two areas tend to be congenial sorts who have good advice about how to live in most other areas, too.

By ''library of indolence'' I mean novels like ''Oblomov,'' Ivan Goncharov's satire about a man who hates to leave his bed, and ''Bartleby, the Scrivener,'' Herman Melville's long short story about the clerk whose motto is ''I would prefer not to.''

I mean essays like G. K. Chesterton's ''On Lying in Bed,'' Robert Morley's ''In Praise of Obesity,'' Adam Phillips's ''On Being Bored'' and Bertrand Russell's ''In Praise of Idleness.'' With a nap between each, these essays will fill a whole day.

I also mean nonfiction books like Eva Hoffman's ''How to Be Bored,'' Jenny Odell's ''How to Do Nothing'' and Patricia Hampl's ''The Art of the Wasted Day.'' Then there is Keith Waterhouse's slim primer ''The Theory and Practice of Lunch.'' Waterhouse writes, ''Lunch is free will.''

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It was a best seller in some places, though it never made The New York Times list. In a sane world it would top lists again now, the way that ''It's the End of the World as We Know It (And I Feel Fine),'' the R.E.M. song, recently returned to the Billboard charts.

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''This book seeks to recover an alternative tradition in literature, poetry and philosophy, one that says not only is idleness good, but that it is essential for a pleasurable life,'' Hodgkinson writes in his preface. ''Where do our ideas come from? When do we dream? When are we happy? It is not when staring at a computer terminal worrying about what our boss will say about our work. It is in our leisure time, our own time, when we are doing what we want to do.''

He recommends not clicking on news radio upon waking. He nails me entirely when he writes, ''A certain type of person feels it is their duty to listen to it, as if the act of merely listening is somehow going to improve the world.''

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In a chapter on staying in, Hodgkinson advises readers on how to ''create your own little paradise of duvets, televisions and pizzas, your own castle of indolence.'' Maybe we can watch just enough TV news to witness lockdown protesters last-laughing themselves to death. With a few chili pepper lights, your living room can become its own sort of nightclub, with bottle service.

And why not? As Hodgkinson writes elsewhere, ''You'll have plenty of opportunity to be miserable later, so why not enjoy yourself now.''Follow Dwight Garner on Twitter: @DwightGarner.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/20/books/idleness-lockdown-how-to-be-idle-tom-hodgkinson.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/20/books/idleness-lockdown-how-to-be-idle-tom-hodgkinson.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: <p>During lockdown, essays like G.K. Chesterton's ''On Lying in Bed,'' Adam Phillips's ''On Being Bored'' and Bertrand Russell's ''In Praise of Idleness'' make good company. ''With a nap between each, these essays will fill a whole day,'' Dwight Garner writes.</p> <p></p> (PHOTOGRAPH BY Czarek Sokolowski/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 25, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Celebrating Literature’s Slacker Heroes, Idlers and Liers-In; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YPS-Y4D1-DXY4-X2GR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 24, 2020 Friday 22:02 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1149 words

**Byline:** Dwight Garner

**Highlight:** Dwight Garner surveys the varied and glorious classic works on indolence.

**Body**

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**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***A Kennedy Joins Fray to Challenge New Jersey's Democratic Defector***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y1C-5WJ1-JBG3-6038-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 7, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 997 words

**Byline:** By Tracey Tully

**Body**

The wife of former Representative Patrick Kennedy is vying to oust a congressman who pledged loyalty to President Trump.

The field of Democrats vying to oust Representative Jeff Van Drew got more crowded on Monday as Amy Kennedy, the wife of former Representative Patrick Kennedy, entered the race, bringing the instant name recognition of a political dynasty to the New Jersey congressional race.

Ms. Kennedy, who described herself as a former teacher and a mother of five in a minute-long YouTube video announcing her candidacy, did not mention Mr. Van Drew's defection from the Democratic Party last month or his pledge of ''undying support'' for President Trump.

But the video did include an image of Mr. Van Drew shaking the president's hand in the Oval Office as he announced he would join the Republicans, one day after the South Jersey lawmaker voted against impeaching Mr. Trump. (The president repaid the favor on Monday, with his campaign saying he would appear at a rally in Mr. Van Drew's district on Jan. 28.)

''Too many of our leaders have lost their moral compass,'' she said in the video clip. ''Trump and Van Drew are symptoms of a bigger sickness infecting our country and our politics.''

Ms. Kennedy's husband is a former Rhode Island congressman and the son of former Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts.

Mr. Van Drew, a first-term congressman who was elected as a conservative Democrat, represents a district the Republican president won by about 5 points in 2016.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Ms. Kennedy, in the brief video, touched on what are likely to form the broad themes of her campaign: civility, climate change, mental health and addiction, and corporate tax incentives.

''We continue to ignore the biggest public health emergency of our time -- the mental health and addiction crisis that affects virtually every family,'' she said.

She added, ''People in South Jersey can't find good jobs, but the richest corporations pay almost no taxes.''

Ms. Kennedy, who lives north of Atlantic City in Brigantine, could not be reached for comment.

If Ms. Kennedy were to win the nomination, she would not be the only Kennedy campaigning for Congress. Representative Joe Kennedy III, the grandson of the former attorney general, Robert F. Kennedy, is running for the Senate from Massachusetts.

Four other Democrats have already entered the primary race in the Second Congressional District, which cuts across New Jersey's southernmost counties and stretches from Cape May to the Pennsylvania border.

Brigid Callahan Harrison, a professor who teaches political science at Montclair State University, announced her candidacy the same week Mr. Van Drew said he would join the Republicans, a shift that prompted most of his staff members to quit.

Professor Harrison was quickly endorsed by many of the Democratic Party leaders in the district who hold sway over whose name will appear on the party's coveted ballot line in the June primary.

Ashley Bennett, a freeholder representing Atlantic County who appeared on a 2018 cover of Time magazine with other progressive women, also has announced she is running for the Democratic nomination for the congressional seat.

Ms. Bennett has said she intends to focus on issues affecting New Jersey's ***working class***, and is likely to draw support from the state's increasingly active grass-roots organizations.

John Francis III, a commissioner in West Cape May, and Robert Turkavage, a former F.B.I. agent who last month switched from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party, have also announced they will run in the Democratic primary.

At least three Republicans, including David Richter, a former businessman who has said he will spend $1 million of his own money on his campaign, also are expected to compete against Mr. Van Drew for the Republican nomination.

Benjamin A. Dworkin, a professor of political science at Rowan University and the director of the school's Institute for Public Policy & Citizenship, said Ms. Kennedy's entry into the race had the potential to change the playing field.

He noted that the Democratic candidates' success at raising campaign funds is likely to be key to the primary race and the general election, especially in southern New Jersey, which is within the pricey Philadelphia media market.

Professor Harrison's support from established Democratic Party leaders in the area will presumably help her fund-raising efforts, he said, and the Kennedy family's network of donors is expected to work to Ms. Kennedy's advantage.

''There is an established Kennedy fund-raising network that she will be able to tap into and will allow her to be well financed in this race, which really matters,'' Dr. Dworkin said.

A candidate's ability to independently generate funds is even more crucial in a year when the national Democratic organization is likely to be focused on protecting the three other congressional seats that the party flipped in 2018 in New Jersey swing districts, he said.

''Democrats don't need it as much as they did in 2018,'' Dr. Dworkin said. ''You could lose Van Drew's seat and still maintain the majority, so it's not nearly as critical.''

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The Democrat who does win is expected to face a major challenge in November's general election in a conservative district that for 24 years before Mr. Van Drew's election was held by a Republican. Last year, Republicans captured several seats in the State Legislature in an election area that overlaps much of Mr. Van Drew's district.

Still, Mr. Trump's support for the Republican candidate is also a wild-card factor that could cut both ways in a state where the president remains deeply unpopular.

''This is going to be a very tough race in November,'' Professor Harrison said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/06/nyregion/amy-kennedy-jeff-van-drew.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/06/nyregion/amy-kennedy-jeff-van-drew.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Amy Kennedy, daughter-in-law of former Senator Ted Kennedy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN LAMPARSKI/GETTY IMAGES)

Representative Jeff Van Drew, who was elected as a conservative Democrat, shaking hands with President Trump in December. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2020

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[***Kennedy Family Member Joins N.J. Race Against Democratic Defector Jeff Van Drew***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XXH-PCR1-DXY4-X0VY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 6, 2020 Monday 00:20 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1033 words

**Byline:** Tracey Tully

**Highlight:** The wife of former Representative Patrick Kennedy is vying to oust a congressman who pledged loyalty to President Trump.

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**Load-Date:** January 8, 2020

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[***Klobuchar's Moment***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XXB-7341-JBG3-6445-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 6, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1020 words

**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

Why Amy Klobuchar still has a chance.

If you're like a lot of Democrats, you worry that Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren are too liberal -- or at least that other voters think so. You're also not buying the Pete Buttigieg hype. And you get nervous every time Joe Biden opens his mouth.

So where are you supposed to find a comfortably electable, qualified candidate who won't turn 80 while in office?

Senator Amy Klobuchar has become an answer to that question in the final month before voting begins. She has outlasted more than a dozen other candidates and has two big strengths: A savvy understanding of how to campaign against President Trump and a track record of winning the sorts of swing voters Democrats will likely need this year.

Klobuchar, to be sure, is not a finished product as a presidential candidate. Too often, she sounds like a senator speaking in legislative to-do lists rather than a future president who can inspire voters. That tendency -- along with too much needling of other candidates, instead of focusing on her own message -- was evident in the most recent debate.

Yet she still emerged as one of the debate's winners, and she is enjoying a burst of new attention. She raised more than twice as much money, $11.4 million, in the fourth quarter of 2019 than the third quarter. When I ask top Democrats which candidate has the best chance of beating Trump, Klobuchar is often their answer. If party leaders still chose nominees, she might now be the favorite.

In that way, she reminds me of another Midwestern senator who once seemed too ordinary to be president: Harry Truman. In the summer of 1944, an even more perilous time for global democracy than now, Democratic Party grandees chose Truman as vice president with the belief that he would soon be president, given Franklin Roosevelt's declining health.

Truman was (as Klobuchar is) a loyal Democrat with populist leanings whom many Republicans, both senators and voters, nonetheless felt some affection for. He had a folksy manner and heartland accent. He was also a long shot for the nomination when the process began. The analogy extends to Klobuchar's best-known weakness: Truman had a temper, too.

Of course, Klobuchar needs to win over millions of primary voters, not just hundreds of convention delegates, which is why she remains an underdog. But the path is the same one that her campaign had always seen: Do well enough in Iowa, which is next door to her home state of Minnesota, and then in New Hampshire to be one of the final two or three candidates standing.

Her greatest strength is her understanding of how to beat Republicans. They like to portray Democrats as self-serious elites who look down on ordinary Americans. (Think about the caricatures of John Kerry, Al Gore and Michael Dukakis.) Klobuchar has built her political career on an image that combines ***working class*** and middle class.

She grew up in a family that struggled with alcoholism and divorce, and she talks about it. When her husband, John Bessler, was a child, he lived with his five brothers and parents in a trailer home. Klobuchar's memoir is called, ''The Senator Next Door.'' She tells too many self-deprecating jokes to seem earnest. Some of them are even funny.

She is still a relative city slicker, having lived most of her life around the Twin Cities and attended Yale and the University of Chicago's law school. But she knows how to persuade voters who are different from her that she respects them. She has learned the minutia of farm policy and rural development. She visits all of Minnesota's 87 counties every year.

Klobuchar combines this persona with tough, clear explanations of how Republican policies will hurt the middle class: They will make prescription drugs more expensive, health insurance harder to get and climate destruction worse. If she's elected, she promises to raise taxes on the rich, lift take-home pay for everyone else, take on big-business abuses and combat climate change.

In the 2018 midterms, as Klobuchar points out, Democrats focused on bread-and-butter issues while largely avoiding divisive ideas like Medicare for All. ''If you don't think that worked, I have four words for you: Former Gov. Scott Walker,'' she said on Pod Save America, referring to the Wisconsin conservative hero who lost. Democrats also won the statewide congressional vote in Iowa, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Florida, on their way to retaking the House.

Yet 2020 will probably be harder, because incumbent presidents usually win re-election. But Klobuchar's own electoral history is deeply impressive. She has won all three of her Senate elections by more than 20 percentage points. In 2018, she carried 51 of Minnesota's 87 counties; two years earlier, Hillary Clinton had carried only nine.

I am also struck by Klobuchar's views about how to run against Trump this time -- to talk about how he has let down the country (which gives his old supporters permission to switch sides), to use humor against his demagoguery and to appeal to voters' emotions and patriotism.

On that last point, her primary campaign could benefit from her own advice: Klobuchar would improve her chances if she could find the grace notes that lift the best campaigns by telling a story about America.

I'm not saying that Democrats should necessarily vote for Klobuchar. Other candidates have strengths she doesn't. Buttigieg, for example, summons those grace notes naturally. And Warren has an unmatched grasp of the economy's problems, which could make her a transformational president.

I'm merely saying this: Many Democratic voters care more about beating Trump than anything else. For them, Klobuchar deserves a look.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/05/opinion/amy-klobuchar-2020.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/05/opinion/amy-klobuchar-2020.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Amy Klobuchar at a campaign event in Las Vegas. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Joe Buglewicz for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 6, 2020

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[***Creating a More Resilient Economy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YPX-YVY1-DXY4-X3ST-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 21, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 27

**Length:** 1273 words

**Byline:** By Marco Rubio

**Body**

With a sensible industrial policy, workers will take precedence over short-term corporate gain.

Americans are a resilient people. We persevere through difficult circumstances and arrive triumphant on the other side of adversity. It's in our national DNA.

Once again, Americans are rising to the challenge before us. Medical professionals are meeting the call of duty and tending to our sick at great personal risk. Grocery stores, takeout restaurants and pharmacies remain open as Americans show up for work to give the rest of us access to essential goods. Families are working to overcome the tremendous economic damage they face as a result of the coronavirus.

Though I believe resilience is one of the defining traits of an American, I also believe it's been absent from our public policy for too long. And this has become devastatingly clear in the current crisis.

Over the past several decades, our nation's political and economic leaders, Democratic and Republican, made choices about how to structure our society -- choosing to prize economic efficiency over resiliency, financial gains over Main Street investment, individual enrichment over the common good.

Any prudent policymaker should recognize that both efficiency and resiliency are values we should prioritize and seek to balance. But that's not what we have done in recent decades. Those choices, from offshoring to building an economy based on finance and service, have produced one of the most efficient economic engines of all time. But a pendulum can swing too far in one direction. And when an economy lacks resiliency, it can be devastating in a crisis.

On the 2016 campaign trail, I spoke repeatedly with hard-working Americans who felt helpless as they watched jobs disappear and their communities crumble because businesses and lawmakers prioritized maximizing short-term gains over the long-term security of America, its communities and its people.

My time serving on the Select Committee on Intelligence was similarly transformative; in instance after instance, it was clear that many of the serious problems we face originated in our economic relationship with China. As did many, I believed capitalism would change China for the better; instead, China changed capitalism for the worse. This new status quo means younger generations, including my children, will grow up in an America of reduced economic prospects.

Today, the result of these failed policy choices is that our manufacturing base is severely diminished, and millions of productive jobs that relied on it are gone. The American domestic supply chain devoted to producing vital medical supplies like generic pharmaceuticals and respirators has withered. For decades America made the conscious choice to facilitate offshoring to China, where labor was cheap, and, critically, the Chinese Communist Party assisted businesses in long-term productive capital development that might seem irrational in the short term. Decisions such as to allow Beijing into the World Trade Organization threw fuel on the fire.

And look at what happened the moment the world faced a pandemic -- an inevitability, considering the historical record.

Having monopolized those critical supply chains, the Chinese Communist Party pointed them inward. It ensured that face masks being manufactured in China, for example, went to domestic consumption and their own fight against the virus.

Largely unable to import supplies from China, America has been left scrambling because we by and large lack the ability to make things, as well as the state capacity needed for reorienting production to do so. As a result, doctors are forced to ration supplies and, in some cases, cease using necessary protective equipment.

And while some heroic businesses have shifted production to help fill this gap and produce masks, hand sanitizer and other goods, the nation is still behind.

One reason is that as manufacturers fled to China, our nation's economy transformed into one dominated by service industries, which survive on person-to-person transactions like the ones now restricted. And unlike industrial economies, service-based economies lack the flexibility that comes with producing physical goods that can either be sold later or repurposed to meet a sudden shortage. This makes us especially vulnerable to this kind of shock.

A commensurate shift in corporate behavior away from investment in workers, equipment and facilities, and toward churning out short-term financial gains to shareholders has only further sapped our resiliency. Why didn't we have enough N95 masks or ventilators on hand for a pandemic? Because buffer stocks don't maximize financial return, and there was no shareholder reward for protecting against risk. Even in government, we became infatuated with the ''just in time'' acquisition model, as opposed to ''just in case'' contingency acquisitions.

Today, we see the consequences of this short-term, hyperindividualistic ethos. Americans cannot leave their homes. Neighbors are unable to shake hands. Places of worship are closed. The labor market, especially for ***working-class*** Americans in those service industries, is in free-fall.

With the steadfast resolve of American communities and with government support to provide businesses the resources they need to pull through, Americans will overcome the challenge before us. But the society that follows should not be what it was before. We won't properly absorb the lessons from the coronavirus crisis if we fall back into the traditional Republican and Democratic model of politics. We need a new vision to create a more resilient economy.

I have worked to put forward a foundation for this, calling for the re-shoring of supply chains integral to our national interest -- everything from basic medicines and equipment to vital rare-earth minerals and technologies of the future. Before the pandemic, I proposed a reauthorization of the Small Business Act to serve as a template for how we could make our economy more productive. There is a clear need for a sweeping pro-American industrial policy, brought into sharp relief by this crisis.

We need to apply this thinking to the conditions that intensified the continuing pandemic. In February, I submitted a bipartisan plan to require drug producers to identify where ingredients are produced, create tax breaks for U.S. producers of these ingredients and mandate that federal buyers purchase drugs made in America.

A sensible industrial policy will also mean creating federal incentives for productive investment in workers and equipment through tax policy and robust federal guarantees, while discouraging unproductive corporate behavior like stock buybacks. Where foreign subsidies draw away investment outside our own borders, the federal government should introduce cooperatives to spur the creation of domestic supply chains.

Though rebuilding a more productive and pro-worker economy will take time, we can achieve it and ensure that America's next economic chapter will owe its character to the same spirit of resiliency, solidarity and collective pursuit of the common good that our people are now displaying to the world.

Mr. Rubio, a Republican, is chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship and a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/20/opinion/marco-rubio-coronavirus-economy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/20/opinion/marco-rubio-coronavirus-economy.html)

**Graphic**

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

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2020

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[***A Democrat Who Can Beat Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XX9-R6P1-DXY4-X44S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 5, 2020 Sunday 10:09 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1059 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** Why Amy Klobuchar still has a chance.

**Body**

Why Amy Klobuchar still has a chance.

If you’re like a lot of Democrats, you worry that Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren are too liberal — or at least that other voters [*think so*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html). You’re also not buying the Pete Buttigieg hype. And you get nervous every time Joe Biden opens his mouth.

So where are you supposed to find a comfortably electable, qualified candidate who won’t turn 80 while in office?

Senator Amy Klobuchar has become an answer to that question in the final month before voting begins. She has outlasted more than a dozen other candidates and has two big strengths: A savvy understanding of how to campaign against President Trump and [*a track record*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) of winning the sorts of swing voters Democrats will likely need this year.

Klobuchar, to be sure, is not a finished product as a presidential candidate. Too often, she sounds like a senator speaking in legislative to-do lists rather than a future president who can inspire voters. That tendency — along with too much needling of other candidates, instead of focusing on her own message — was evident in the most recent debate.

Yet she still emerged as one of the debate’s [*winners*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html), and she is enjoying a   [*burst*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) of   [*new*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html)   [*attention*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html). She raised more than twice as much money, $11.4 million, in the fourth quarter of 2019 than the third quarter. When I ask top Democrats which candidate has the best chance of beating Trump, Klobuchar is often their answer. If party leaders   [*still chose*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) nominees, she might now be the favorite.

In that way, she reminds me of another Midwestern senator who once seemed too ordinary to be president: Harry Truman. In the summer of 1944, an even more perilous time for global democracy than now, Democratic Party grandees chose Truman as vice president with [*the belief*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) that he would soon be president, given Franklin Roosevelt’s declining health.

Truman was (as Klobuchar is) a loyal Democrat with [*populist leanings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) whom many Republicans, both senators and voters, nonetheless felt some affection for. He had a folksy manner and heartland accent. He was also a long shot for the nomination when the process began. The analogy extends to Klobuchar’s best-known   [*weakness*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html): Truman had   [*a temper*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html), too.

Of course, Klobuchar needs to win over millions of primary voters, not just hundreds of convention delegates, which is why she remains an underdog. But [*the path*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) is the same one that her campaign had always seen: Do well enough in Iowa, which is next door to her home state of Minnesota, and then in New Hampshire to be one of the final two or three candidates standing.

Her greatest strength is her understanding of how to beat Republicans. They like to portray Democrats as self-serious elites who look down on ordinary Americans. (Think about the caricatures of John Kerry, Al Gore and Michael Dukakis.) Klobuchar has built her political career on an image that combines ***working class*** and middle class.

She grew up in a family that struggled with alcoholism and divorce, and she [*talks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) about it. When her husband, John Bessler, was a child, he lived with his five brothers and parents in a trailer home. Klobuchar’s   [*memoir*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) is called “The Senator Next Door.” She tells too many self-deprecating jokes to seem earnest. Some of them are even funny.

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Klobuchar combines this persona with tough, clear explanations of how Republican policies will hurt the middle class: They will make prescription drugs more expensive, health insurance harder to get and climate destruction worse. If she’s elected, she [*promises*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) to raise taxes on the rich, lift take-home pay for everyone else, take on big-business abuses and combat climate change.

In the 2018 midterms, as Klobuchar points out, Democrats [*focused*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) on bread-and-butter issues while largely avoiding divisive ideas like Medicare for All. “If you don’t think that worked, I have four words for you: Former Gov. Scott Walker,”   [*she said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) on Pod Save America, referring to the Wisconsin conservative hero who lost. Democrats also won   [*the statewide congressional vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) in Iowa, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Florida, on their way to retaking the House.

This year will probably be harder, because incumbent presidents usually win re-election. But Klobuchar’s own electoral history is deeply impressive. She has won all three of her Senate elections by more than 20 percentage points. In 2018, she [*carried*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) 51 of Minnesota’s 87 counties; two years earlier, Hillary Clinton had carried   [*only nine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html).

I am also struck by Klobuchar’s views about how to run against Trump this time — to talk about how he has let down the country (which gives his old supporters permission to switch sides), to use [*humor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) against his demagoguery and to appeal to voters’ emotions and patriotism.

On that last point, her primary campaign could benefit from her own advice: Klobuchar would improve her chances if she could find the grace notes that lift the best campaigns by telling a story about America.

I’m not saying that Democrats should necessarily vote for Klobuchar. Other candidates have strengths she doesn’t. Buttigieg, for example, summons those grace notes naturally. And Warren has [*an unmatched grasp*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) of the economy’s problems, which could make her a transformational president.

I’m merely saying this: Many Democratic voters [*care more*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) about beating Trump than anything else. For them, Klobuchar deserves a look.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/10/upshot/2020-North-Carolina-moderate-democrats.html).

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PHOTO: Amy Klobuchar at a campaign event in Las Vegas. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Joe Buglewicz for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 11, 2020

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[***Trump and His Allies Are Worried About More Than November***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YP3-DKK1-DXY4-X2DD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 19, 2020 Sunday 12:20 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1204 words

**Byline:** Jamelle Bouie

**Highlight:** The temporary imposition of popular relief programs in response to the coronavirus makes Republicans nervous.

**Body**

The temporary imposition of popular relief programs in response to the coronavirus makes Republicans nervous.

In the face of mass unemployment and a rapidly contracting economy, President Trump is desperate to end the pandemic lockdown and bring the country back on line. That’s why he spent the past week asserting his “total” authority to reopen the economy (“The president of the United States calls the shots”) and promising a rapid return to normal: “Our country has to get open, and it will get open, and it’ll get open safely and hopefully quickly — some areas quicker than others,” [*he said*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) on Tuesday.

Republicans in Congress, likewise, are urging an end to the freeze. “It should have happened yesterday,” Representative Andy Biggs of Arizona, chairman of the hard-line House Freedom Caucus, [*told Politico*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html). Representative Trey Hollingsworth of Indiana acknowledged the chance of “loss of life” from an early end to social distancing but asserted, nonetheless, that it was better than the alternative. “It is policymakers’ decision to put on our big boy and big girl pants and say it is the lesser of these two evils,” he said to [*a local radio station*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html). Senator John Kennedy of Louisiana was even more blunt during [*an interview*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) on Fox News on Wednesday. “We gotta reopen, and when we do, the coronavirus is going to spread faster, and we got to be ready for it.”

No doubt there is real concern for the economic and health consequences of an extended shutdown. But Republicans, and Trump in particular, are also thinking about November. If the president knows anything, it’s that his fate rises and falls with the state of the economy. And if he loses his campaign for re-election, then in this polarized environment of nationalized politics, he’s likely to take congressional Republicans down with him.

But I think there’s another element underlying the push to reopen the economy despite the threat it poses to American lives, a dynamic beyond partisanship that explains why much of [*the conservative political ecosystem*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html), from politicians and donors to activists and [*media personalities*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html), has joined the fight to end the lockdown.

To even begin to tackle this crisis, Congress had to contemplate policies that would be criticized as unacceptably radical under any other circumstances. At $2.2 trillion, the initial relief package was a bill that was more than twice the size of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act passed in 2009. Further aid is almost certainly forthcoming, and Democrats, at least, are contemplating trillions more in additional stimulus, including [*universal basic income*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) for the duration of the crisis, [*a COBRA expansion*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) that would cover 100 percent of health care costs for laid-off and furloughed workers and a proposal to [*cover payrolls*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) for nearly every business in America. On top of all of this, [*the Federal Reserve*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) is flooding the economy with trillions of dollars in rescue loans and bond purchases, to stabilize markets and keep interest rates low.

In one short month, the United States has made a significant leap toward a kind of emergency social democracy, in recognition of the fact that no individual or community could possibly be prepared for the devastation wrought by the pandemic. Should the health and economic crisis extend through the year, there’s a strong chance that Americans will move even further down that road, as businesses shutter, unemployment continues to mount and the federal government is the only entity that can keep the entire economy afloat.

But this logic — that ordinary people need security in the face of social and economic volatility — is as true in normal times as it is under crisis. If something like a social democratic state is feasible under these conditions, then it is absolutely possible when growth is high and unemployment is low. And in the wake of two political campaigns — Bernie Sanders’s and Elizabeth Warren’s — that pushed progressive ideas into the mainstream of American politics, voters might begin to see this essential truth.

If the electoral danger for the Republican Party is that voters will blame the president for high unemployment and mass death — a reasonable fear, given how Trump [*loudly denied*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) the threat in the face of warnings from inside and outside his administration — then the ideological danger is that it undermines the ideological project that captured the state with President Ronald Reagan and is on the path to victory under Donald Trump.

Republicans haven’t openly expressed this, but they seem aware of it, to the extent that on the eve of approval of the first coronavirus bill, they tried to kill the most generous provisions of relief — an enormous expansion of unemployment insurance. The reason? “The moment we go back to work, we cannot create an incentive for people to say, ‘I don’t need to go back to work because I can do better someplace else,’” Senator Rick Scott of Florida [*explained*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) on the Senate floor. In other words, we cannot help people so much that they can effectively bargain for better wages; crisis or not, we must discipline the ***working class***.

There’s no guarantee that Americans will respond to the pandemic and economic collapse with support for more and greater assistance from the federal government. But the possibility is there and it will become more apparent the longer this continues. If the rolling depressions of the late 19th century disrupted the social order enough to open the space for political radicalism — from the agrarian uprising of the Farmers’ Alliance to the militant agitation of the industrial labor movement — then the one-two punch of the Great Recession and the Pandemic Depression might do the same for us.

In which case, it makes all the sense in the world for Trump, the Republican Party and the conservative movement to push for the end of the lockdown, public health be damned. After years of single-minded devotion, the conservative movement is achingly close to dismantling the New Deal political order and turning the clock back to when capital could act without limits or restraints.

But in trying to destroy the administrative state — in trying to make government small enough to “[*drag it into the bathroom*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) and drown it in the bathtub” — conservatives left the country vulnerable to a deadly disease that has undermined that project and galvanized its opponents.

And all of this is happening as one of the most progressive generations in history begins to take its place in our politics, its views informed by two decades of war and economic crisis.

Yes, nothing is set in stone and, yes, events still have to unfold. But at this moment in American life, it feels as if one movement, a reactionary one, is beginning to unravel and another, very different in its outlook, is beginning to take shape.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-wants-to-declare-country-open-by-may-1--but-the-reality-will-be-much-slower/2020/04/14/42f7a318-7e5e-11ea-a3ee-13e1ae0a3571_story.html).

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PHOTO: President Trump discusses small business relief at the White House last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Amazing Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YPH-XW61-JBG3-61CR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 19, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1136 words

**Byline:** By Danielle Jackson

**Body**

SPIRIT RUN A 6,000-Mile Marathon Through North America's Stolen LandBy Noé Álvarez

In a 1979 address at Brown University, Ralph Ellison called cultural exchange an American inevitability, the logical outcome of the waves of movement and migration that formed the country. His parents, who had been born in South Carolina and Georgia, understood how the arbitrary borders of the Mason-Dixon line, the 49th parallel and the Mississippi River defined the limits on their freedom. By the early 1900s they had moved west, to Oklahoma, then a ''relatively unformed frontier state.'' Ellison said they understood the extent to which ''geography has performed the role of fate.''

Some 140 miles southeast of Seattle sits Yakima, a fertile desert city of 94,000 known for its apples, wine and hops. First inhabited by the Yakama people, the town grew as waves of workers washed in over the centuries -- white, Japanese and, eventually, Mexican, who began arriving in the 1940s with the advent of warehousing and corporatized farming. As the 20th century wore on, Central Americans arrived, too, urged along by economic collapse and political destabilization at home. The poet and short story writer Raymond Carver, son of a sawmill worker, grew up in Yakima and drew heavily on the town's grittiness to enrich his stories of desolation. So did Noé Álvarez, whose lyrical if uneven debut book, ''Spirit Run: A 6,000-Mile Marathon Through North America's Stolen Land'' -- part travelogue, part traditional memoir -- comes face to face with the many strands of his inheritance, revisiting Carver territory while treading a new path.

In Yakima, ''a paradise on the surface,'' white families live on the town's west side while a growing Latino population concentrates on the east. Álvarez's mother was born in the Mexican state of Michoacán. At 15, she fled to the United States and has worked for decades in fruit production and distribution centers. It's thankless and grueling work. ICE agents lurk, shift leaders menace. Álvarez tallies the physical toll on his mother's body -- her knee deformities, her eroding posture, the disfigurement wrought by tendinitis in the joints of her fingers.

His father, ''a spirit born of hunger'' descended from Indigenous Purépecha, was born in unmapped Mexican territory and hunted birds and iguanas for food when he was young. He made the trek north at 16, working for a time in the hop fields in Washington, before being deported and returning stateside with the help of a coyote.

The story of the striving, first-generation kid made good is a familiar one; Álvarez makes his ache. He excels in honors classes and is aware from a young age of a yearning to free his mother from ''the assault of the fruit industry.'' To do so, he knows he must outrun his geography -- a metaphor he comes to embrace literally when in high school he becomes a serious runner. ''When the rhythms of ***working-class*** life cut inside me like broken beer glass, I run,'' he writes. He wins a full scholarship to Whitman College in Walla Walla, but is thwarted by his own high expectations and shame about his upbringing. The dining hall presents a challenge, as does going to class and staying on top of assignments. Only while running does he feel solid in his skin.

At a conference, he learns about Peace and Dignity Journeys, a six-month-long quadrennial run through the whole of North America, in which ''numerous and diverse Indigenous nations reunite and reclaim dignity for their families and communities.'' Pacquiao, the calm young man in charge of the journey, speaks of running as ''connective tissue,'' ''a form of prayer'' that ''renews our responsibility to community.''

Álvarez drops out of college to join the group, never more than a couple dozen runners, in one of its early stops in British Columbia, and the intricately threaded narrative about his family morphs into a journal of his travels -- on foot, and also, at times, in the vans the runners use to transport themselves and their supplies in their relay-style race across the continent. As they go, they learn the different ways ''the rain strikes, strums and plucks at our skins.'' They run through mountainsides, forests, small towns and large urban blocks. When they are dropped off for a shift, they receive few instructions. ''When in doubt, turn left,'' is a motto. Food is scarce.

Sometimes Álvarez's language seems vague and overly laden with the weight of his mission. (''People's paths are unique, beautiful,'' he notes to himself upon meeting a new recruit to the team.) At other times, it's not clear how this epic run, with its attendant difficulties, relates to Álvarez's desire to help his family. At one point, alone on the trail in Oregon, he meets a snarling mountain lion. At the last minute, recalling instructions from an older runner about surviving such encounters, he remembers to ''thank the animal.'' Moreover, some of the marathon's leaders behave in ways that border on sadistic. The majority of the runners are recovering addicts or otherwise seeking redemption, and, like many of them, Álvarez believes in the transformative power of extreme sacrifice. ''I run to follow as closely as I can the path of those who came before me,'' he insists. ''I run to find fragments of my own parents sprinkled over the earth.'' When the group enters his home state of Washington after a month of running, he realizes he is ''submerging myself in pain ... so that I may control the turmoil within me.''

The runners practice a hodgepodge of Indigenous rituals along the way. At the conclusion of each shift, they gather in a circle for sacred reflection and to try to resolve conflicts among them. Álvarez experiences moments of true connection with fellow runners such as Zyanya Lonewolf, whose parents are survivors of residential schools for Native Americans. But it is when the group approaches the United States-Mexico border in Nogales, Ariz., that the disparate elements of the memoir cohere. ''I too desired to retrace my origin story to a specific spot on this earth,'' Álvarez writes, ''a specific soil from which my people's spirit first sprouted its first words.''

As he runs through Mexico's states, through towns held by the Zapatistas and sites holy to the Aztecs, it becomes obvious that what Álvarez is attempting to recover on the marathon is his pride. ''My father has come a long way,'' he realizes, dipping his fingers into the Pacific Ocean on the coast of Oaxaca. By the run's end, he is eager to go home, to see his parents, to rest and restart his life. The run, it seems, has absolved him of his need to flee.Danielle Jackson is a writer and the managing editor at The Oxford American.SPIRIT RUN A 6,000-Mile Marathon Through North America's Stolen LandBy Noé Álvarez218 pp. Catapult. $26.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/books/review/spirit-run-noe-alvarez.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/books/review/spirit-run-noe-alvarez.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Noé Álvarez (PHOTOGRAPH BY MIA CONCORDIA)

**Load-Date:** April 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Victory Gardens Were More About Solidarity Than Survival; Beyond the World War II We Know***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60C3-8KF1-DXY4-X511-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1319 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Steinhauer

**Highlight:** During World War II, millions of Americans grew their own vegetables, but the movement was driven much more by government and corporate messaging than by the threat of starvation.

**Body**

During World War II, millions of Americans grew their own vegetables, but the movement was driven much more by government and corporate messaging than by the threat of starvation.

In the latest article from “[*Beyond the World War II We Know*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/beyond-wwii),” a series from The Times that documents lesser-known stories from World War II, we recount the history of victory gardens and some of the misconceptions of how they emerged after the United States joined the conflict.

Of all the celebrated nostalgic markers of World War II, few are as memorable as America’s victory gardens — those open lots, rooftops and backyards made resplendent with beets, broccoli, kohlrabi, parsnips and spinach to substitute for the commercial crops diverted to troops overseas during the war.

The gardens were strongly encouraged by the American government during World War I as part of the at-home efforts, yet they became immensely more popular with the introduction of food rationing during the Second World War as processed and canned foods were shipped abroad.

It’s often said that this later era of victory gardens emerged out of grass-roots collective action to prevent the risk of running out of food, which was already hurting countries all over Europe. Despite the millions of pounds of food being diverted from American kitchen tables for the war effort, there was little threat of citizens going hungry. Rather, the victory-garden movement was driven much more by government and corporate messaging meant to invoke American solidarity.

“Americans like to portray that they worked hard and would have starved had they not gardened,” said Allan M. Winkler, a distinguished professor emeritus of history at Miami University of Ohio. “Victory gardens were a symbol of abundance and doing it yourself, but that was more symbolism than reality.”

Nearly two-thirds of American households participated in some form of national harvest; even Eleanor Roosevelt [*planted*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/beyond-wwii) a victory garden on the White House lawn. By 1943, close to 20 million families planted seven million acres of gardens across the United States, producing more than 15 billion pounds, or roughly 40 percent, of the fresh produce Americans consumed that year.

Public service advertisements urging Americans to grow vegetables and to can them peppered libraries, community centers and newsreels in movie theaters. They offered motivational messages such as “Your country needs soybeans,” and [*“Can all you can. It’s a real war job!”*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/beyond-wwii) One poster featured a fresh-faced girl in overalls holding a hoe and a basket of bounty, with the tagline “Grow vitamins at your kitchen door.”

Still, food-production levels throughout American involvement in the war were pretty stable. The peak year of rationing in the United States was in 1943, and food shortages never neared those in Europe and Asia. In 1942, for example, Americans consumed 138 pounds of meat per capita, a mere three pounds less than the prior year, according to Amy Bentley’s 1998 book “Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity.” Americans were pressed to leave more for troops, with government campaigns stressing that fighting men would get their [*strength*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/beyond-wwii)from meat.

“Look and Life magazines were where people got information,” said Bentley, a professor of food studies at New York University. “Citizens had a clear understanding of the threats of war and what their efforts were supposed to be, and corporations wanted to be associated with that.”

The National Victory Garden Program, which was created by the War Food Administration in 1941, got early and strong support from corporations. It was a very top-down movement, with a board composed of chief executives from agriculture companies who saw the gardens as an exercise both in expressing their patriotism and product placement, according to Anastasia Day, a scholar in the University of Delaware’s history department. Many of the companies gave packs of seeds — often labeled “Victory Seeds” — with purchase of their products. In return, corporations received tax breaks for promoting the war efforts to consumers.

“I think one modern-day analogue is how big oil companies promote alternative energies and green washing, ostensibly working against their own interest,” said Day. “Just as Green Giant peas were big supporters of victory gardens.”

The messaging from the top also attempted to shift American eating habits through promotional campaigns and even changing nutritional guidelines that often celebrated specific sectors of agriculture. For example, as the government tried to further ration meat intended for servicemen, Americans were pushed to enjoy soybeans, peanut butter, eggs and organ meats. Newspapers printed how-to columns on building chicken houses and caring for hens.

While it feels easy to draw narrative lines between victory gardens and the organic, local food movement of today, in truth the fresh-vegetable trends of World War II were almost immediately subsumed by postwar Jell-O molds, cake mixes and frozen dinners — all markers of modern living at the time. Many women did most of the cooking and enjoyed being free of domestic gardening and canning, and celebrated all forms of culinary convenience during the baby boom era. That was especially true of white families who populated the newly developing suburbs after the war.

“The rise of suburbs was the culmination of this urge that owning property and having your own space of land is something that is inherently American,” Day explained. “Victory gardens were a transitional phase on the way to the promise that was largely fulfilled for white, upwardly mobile ***working-class*** Americans as they moved to the suburbs,” where victory gardens all but disappeared.

The gleaming new suburban developments tended not to include garden plots. What is more, entrusting corporations with food preparation was the ultimate postwar cultural shift (so cleverly captured in the show “Mad Men”).

As a result of the new processed food trends, American tastes evolved too, trending away from fresh flavors and seasonal produce. A generation later, those preferences would return to become the centerpieces of upscale restaurants in the contemporary United States. While many Black families in the South and Latinos in the Southwest kept up gardening traditions, predominantly white suburban homes were big on shelf-stable products to fill newly expansive pantries, and technology that had gone toward the war effort was transplanted to things used in the home.

“The golden age of food processing created a plethora of products, and consumers were enamored by them,” Bentley said. “Fresh-tasting produce becomes less important than convenience, shelf stability, price and storage capacity. People also learned they like the heavy sugars and salt used in canned vegetables and fruit.”

This spring, there was a spurt of [*new attention*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/beyond-wwii) to the wartime victory gardens, and a search for lessons and inspiration for Americans locked down in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Some citizens were turning to their own gardens for dinner. There was a spate of replanting [*onions*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/beyond-wwii) from scraps and a [*run on seeds.*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/beyond-wwii) But that attention has been eclipsed by ominous news from the home front, where coronavirus infections and deaths have surged, and backyard gardening in 2020 has lacked a unified, depoliticized social movement to fuel it.

“As I think about the victory gardens of World War II, I think their most important value was in getting the public to feel involved in the war,” Winkler said. “In the Covid-19 pandemic, there is some of that. Wearing masks is protective, and necessary, to be sure, but it also gives us a sense of doing our part.”

PHOTO: Public service advertisements urging Americans to grow vegetables and to can them peppered magazines, libraries, community centers and newsreels in movie theaters during World War II. (PHOTOGRAPH BY National Archives FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 16, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Biden’s National Security Team Offers a Sharp Turn. But in Which Direction?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61CC-S3N1-DXY4-X41X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Annie Karni and David E. Sanger

**Highlight:** The picks are a repudiation of President Trump’s isolationism, but they will have to resolve tensions between an Obama-era approach and the “fresh thinking” the president-elect says he wants.

**Body**

The picks are a repudiation of President Trump’s isolationism, but they will have to resolve tensions between an Obama-era approach and the “fresh thinking” the president-elect says he wants.

WILMINGTON, Del. — President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. formally introduced a national security team on Tuesday custom designed to repudiate President Trump’s nationalistic isolationism.

His nominee for secretary of state said in his remarks that Americans needed the “humility and confidence” to depend on allies. His choice to execute the nation’s immigration policy is a Cuban-American whose parents were refugees from Fidel Castro. And his new intelligence chief warned Mr. Biden when she spoke that she would bring him news that would be politically “inconvenient or difficult.”

They were joined by a career Foreign Service officer who will serve as ambassador to the United Nations and John Kerry, who ran for president unsuccessfully 16 years ago and then became President Barack Obama’s secretary of state. Mr. Biden appointed him to a new role inside the National Security Council to put “climate change on the agenda in the Situation Room,” after four years in which the Trump administration tried to have the words struck from summit communiqués and international agreements.

But it was in Avril Haines’s paean to the intelligence community — which Mr. Trump often regarded as a group of “deep state” renegades who wrongly tied him to Russia — that the contrast with the outgoing administration became clear. “To our intelligence professionals, the work you do — oftentimes under the most austere conditions imaginable — is just indispensable,” said Ms. Haines, who would be the first woman to serve as director of national intelligence, overseeing 16 separate agencies.

Mr. Biden has hardly created a team of rivals. Many of his nominees have worked together for years and as the “deputies” in the Obama administration who ran the gears of government at the White House, the State Department and the C.I.A. That also includes the Department of Homeland Security, where Alejandro N. Mayorkas, who will oversee immigration policy, had served as deputy secretary before Mr. Biden named him to lead the department.

Several are close friends. And most would be considered “liberal interventionists” who led the charge against Mr. Trump’s dismissal of America’s traditional role as the keystone in both Atlantic and Pacific alliances.

It all gave the Tuesday announcement at Mr. Biden’s headquarters in Wilmington the air of a restoration, or at least a class reunion.

Yet in his comments, Mr. Biden also seemed to acknowledge that the dangers his team would confront were starkly different from the ones they dealt with during the Obama presidency. “While this team has unmatched experience and accomplishments, they also reflect the idea that we cannot meet these challenges with old thinking and unchanged habits,” he said.

Mr. Biden talked about the need for “fresh thinking.” But achieving that balance will be his biggest challenge, both his own aides and outside experts have noted.

“His presidency may be the establishment’s last, best chance to demonstrate that liberal internationalism is a superior strategy to populist nationalism,” Thomas Wright, the Brookings Institution foreign policy scholar, [*wrote in The Atlantic*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/11/biden-must-master-politics-foreign-policy/617181/) recently.

That means resolving a subtle but clear debate within the Democratic establishment, one on which Mr. Biden has not yet chosen sides. It boils down to whether Mr. Biden should pursue the kind of foreign policy one might have expected in an Obama “third term” — one marked by caution, repairing alliances and an avoidance of talk of new Cold Wars — or one that pursues new, more confrontational paths in recognition of how much global competition has changed over the past four years, starting with China.

Mr. Biden tried to dispel the idea that he was restoring Mr. Obama’s policies in an interview with Lester Holt of NBC News on Tuesday. “This is not a third Obama term,” he said, because “we face a totally different world than we faced in the Obama-Biden administration.” He added: “President Trump has changed the landscape. It’s become America first, it’s been America alone.”

Jake Sullivan, Mr. Biden’s 43-year-old choice for national security adviser, whom Mr. Biden also introduced, has come to embody the new thinking the president-elect referred to. “He is a once-in-a-generation intellect with the experience and temperament for one of the toughest jobs in the world,” he said, noting that when he was in his 30s Mr. Sullivan conducted the talks that led to a cease-fire in Gaza in 2012 and the secret opening of negotiations with Iran that led to the 2015 nuclear deal.

It is Mr. Sullivan who has argued most vociferously for new approaches to China that recognize the changed nature of the challenge. And some of the appointees who shared the stage in Delaware with Mr. Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris have made clear in recent times that they have regrets from the Obama years.

Those regrets include underreacting to the plight of Syrians being attacked by their own government, not recognizing the scope of Russia’s interference in the 2016 election until it was too late and moving too slowly in responding to the China challenge.

“Any of us, and I start with myself, who had any responsibility for our Syria policy in the last administration has to acknowledge that we failed,” Antony J. Blinken, the nominee for secretary of state, [*said in May*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/11/biden-must-master-politics-foreign-policy/617181/), in one of the starkest of those admissions. “We failed to prevent a horrific loss of life,” he said. “It is something I will take with me for the rest of my days.” He went on to criticize Mr. Trump for pulling American troops out of Syria, and making the problem “arguably even worse.”

Conspicuously missing from the stage in Wilmington was one major player who is likely to have the biggest voice in the next Syria debate: Mr. Biden’s choice for defense secretary. He has not named one yet, though the leading candidate is believed to be [*Michèle A. Flournoy*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/11/biden-must-master-politics-foreign-policy/617181/), who served as the under secretary of defense for policy under Mr. Obama and, in the Trump years, created a foreign policy advisory firm with Mr. Blinken, WestExec Advisors.

Ms. Flournoy, who has served in many senior roles in the Pentagon and was a co-founder of the Center for a New American Security, could be named next week, alongside Janet L. Yellen, the former chair of the Federal Reserve, who is widely reported to be [*Mr. Biden’s choice for Treasury secretary*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/11/biden-must-master-politics-foreign-policy/617181/). If selected and confirmed, Ms. Flournoy and Ms. Yellen would be the first woman in either role.

Like Mr. Blinken, Ms. Flournoy has tended toward a more interventionist approach to the use of American power — and sometimes found herself on the other side of issues from Mr. Biden, which in the end could preclude her selection. That included the debate over when the United States should “surge” troops in Afghanistan, where Mr. Biden, then and now, has argued for only a small counterterrorism force.

Mr. Blinken argued for robust NATO military action in Libya when Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi was being driven from power in 2011; Mr. Biden was skeptical. (Colonel Qaddafi was overthrown and ultimately killed by rebels, but the ensuing chaos reinforced Mr. Biden’s instinct for caution.)

Preparing for what may be some brutal confirmation fights in two months, Mr. Biden’s nominees avoided any discussion of policy on Tuesday and focused on their personal stories.

Mr. Blinken said his grandfather “fled pogroms in Russia,” and he repeated the chilling story of his stepfather, Samuel Pisar, who was the only one of 900 schoolchildren in a town in Poland to survive the Holocaust, fleeing a death march in Bavaria. He was rescued by an American soldier who opened the hatch of his tank. Mr. Pisar, Mr. Blinken said, uttered the only three words he knew in English: “God bless America.”

Mr. Mayorkas talked about his parents, Jewish émigrés who escaped Castro’s Cuba in 1960 and brought him to the United States as a baby. He described the Department of Homeland Security’s mission in terms meant to declare that Mr. Trump’s era of wall-building and immigration bans was over: The department is meant to “keep us safe and to advance our proud history as a country of welcome,” he said.

And perhaps the most powerful story came from Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the Black woman who is Mr. Biden’s choice for U.N. ambassador. She was one of the senior diplomats who left the State Department in the era of Rex W. Tillerson and Mike Pompeo, two secretaries of state who incited near rebellion among the diplomatic corps.

“Her dad couldn’t read or write, but she says he was the smartest person she knew,” Mr. Biden said, describing how Ms. Thomas-Greenfield, who served across Africa and in Pakistan, Switzerland and Jamaica, was the first in her family to go to high school or college.

It is the kind of story Mr. Biden likes to tell, and to compare to his own ***working-class*** roots. Ms. Thomas-Greenfield ended the tale with a description of how Southern cooking is a source of American soft power: At her diplomatic posts, she said, “I would invite people of different backgrounds and beliefs” to her kitchen to make the signature dish of her native Louisiana. “I called it gumbo diplomacy.”

PHOTO: Antony J. Blinken, the secretary of state pick, has criticized the Obama administration’s Syria policy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** December 8, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Biden Picks Team Set on Fortifying World Alliances***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61CF-7CN1-DXY4-X4CH-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Annie Karni and David E. Sanger

**Body**

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His nominee for secretary of state said in his remarks that Americans needed the ''humility and confidence'' to depend on allies. His choice to execute the nation's immigration policy is a Cuban-American whose parents were refugees from Fidel Castro. And his new intelligence chief warned Mr. Biden when she spoke that she would bring him news that would be politically ''inconvenient or difficult.''

They were joined by a career Foreign Service officer who will serve as ambassador to the United Nations and John Kerry, who ran for president unsuccessfully 16 years ago and then became President Barack Obama's secretary of state. Mr. Biden appointed him to a new role inside the National Security Council to put ''climate change on the agenda in the Situation Room,'' after four years in which the Trump administration tried to have the words struck from summit communiqués and international agreements.

But it was in Avril Haines's paean to the intelligence community -- which Mr. Trump often regarded as a group of ''deep state'' renegades who wrongly tied him to Russia -- that the contrast with the outgoing administration became clear. ''To our intelligence professionals, the work you do -- oftentimes under the most austere conditions imaginable -- is just indispensable,'' said Ms. Haines, who would be the first woman to serve as director of national intelligence, overseeing 16 separate agencies.

Mr. Biden has hardly created a team of rivals. Many of his nominees have worked together for years and as the ''deputies'' in the Obama administration who ran the gears of government at the White House, the State Department and the C.I.A. That also includes the Department of Homeland Security, where Alejandro N. Mayorkas, who will oversee immigration policy, had served as deputy secretary before Mr. Biden named him to lead the department.

Several are close friends. And most would be considered ''liberal interventionists'' who led the charge against Mr. Trump's dismissal of America's traditional role as the keystone in both Atlantic and Pacific alliances.

It all gave the Tuesday announcement at Mr. Biden's headquarters in Wilmington the air of a restoration, or at least a class reunion.

Yet in his comments, Mr. Biden also seemed to acknowledge that the dangers his team would confront were starkly different from the ones they dealt with during the Obama presidency. ''While this team has unmatched experience and accomplishments, they also reflect the idea that we cannot meet these challenges with old thinking and unchanged habits,'' he said.

Mr. Biden talked about the need for ''fresh thinking.'' But achieving that balance will be his biggest challenge, both his own aides and outside experts have noted.

''His presidency may be the establishment's last, best chance to demonstrate that liberal internationalism is a superior strategy to populist nationalism,'' Thomas Wright, the Brookings Institution foreign policy scholar, wrote in The Atlantic recently.

That means resolving a subtle but clear debate within the Democratic establishment, one on which Mr. Biden has not yet chosen sides. It boils down to whether Mr. Biden should pursue the kind of foreign policy one might have expected in an Obama ''third term'' -- one marked by caution, repairing alliances and an avoidance of talk of new Cold Wars -- or one that pursues new, more confrontational paths in recognition of how much global competition has changed over the past four years, starting with China.

Mr. Biden tried to dispel the idea that he was restoring Mr. Obama's policies in an interview with Lester Holt of NBC News on Tuesday. ''This is not a third Obama term,'' he said, because ''we face a totally different world than we faced in the Obama-Biden administration.'' He added: ''President Trump has changed the landscape. It's become America first, it's been America alone.''

Jake Sullivan, Mr. Biden's 43-year-old choice for national security adviser, whom Mr. Biden also introduced, has come to embody the new thinking the president-elect referred to. ''He is a once-in-a-generation intellect with the experience and temperament for one of the toughest jobs in the world,'' he said, noting that when he was in his 30s Mr. Sullivan conducted the talks that led to a cease-fire in Gaza in 2012 and the secret opening of negotiations with Iran that led to the 2015 nuclear deal.

It is Mr. Sullivan who has argued most vociferously for new approaches to China that recognize the changed nature of the challenge. And some of the appointees who shared the stage in Delaware with Mr. Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris have made clear in recent times that they have regrets from the Obama years.

Those regrets include underreacting to the plight of Syrians being attacked by their own government, not recognizing the scope of Russia's interference in the 2016 election until it was too late and moving too slowly in responding to the China challenge.

''Any of us, and I start with myself, who had any responsibility for our Syria policy in the last administration has to acknowledge that we failed,'' Antony J. Blinken, the nominee for secretary of state, said in May, in one of the starkest of those admissions. ''We failed to prevent a horrific loss of life,'' he said. ''It is something I will take with me for the rest of my days.'' He went on to criticize Mr. Trump for pulling American troops out of Syria, and making the problem ''arguably even worse.''

Conspicuously missing from the stage in Wilmington was one major player who is likely to have the biggest voice in the next Syria debate: Mr. Biden's choice for defense secretary. He has not named one yet, though the leading candidate is believed to be Michèle A. Flournoy, who served as the under secretary of defense for policy under Mr. Obama and, in the Trump years, created a foreign policy advisory firm with Mr. Blinken, WestExec Advisors.

Ms. Flournoy, who has served in many senior roles in the Pentagon and was a co-founder of the Center for a New American Security, could be named next week, alongside Janet L. Yellen, the former chair of the Federal Reserve, who is widely reported to be Mr. Biden's choice for Treasury secretary. If selected and confirmed, Ms. Flournoy and Ms. Yellen would be the first woman in either role.

Like Mr. Blinken, Ms. Flournoy has tended toward a more interventionist approach to the use of American power -- and sometimes found herself on the other side of issues from Mr. Biden, which in the end could preclude her selection. That included the debate over when the United States should ''surge'' troops in Afghanistan, where Mr. Biden, then and now, has argued for only a small counterterrorism force.

Mr. Blinken argued for robust NATO military action in Libya when Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi was being driven from power in 2011; Mr. Biden was skeptical. (Colonel Qaddafi was overthrown and ultimately killed by rebels, but the ensuing chaos reinforced Mr. Biden's instinct for caution.)

Preparing for what may be some brutal confirmation fights in two months, Mr. Biden's nominees avoided any discussion of policy on Tuesday and focused on their personal stories.

Mr. Blinken said his grandfather ''fled pogroms in Russia,'' and he repeated the chilling story of his stepfather, Samuel Pisar, who was the only one of 900 schoolchildren in a town in Poland to survive the Holocaust, fleeing a death march in Bavaria. He was rescued by an American soldier who opened the hatch of his tank. Mr. Pisar, Mr. Blinken said, uttered the only three words he knew in English: ''God bless America.''

Mr. Mayorkas talked about his parents, Jewish émigrés who escaped Castro's Cuba in 1960 and brought him to the United States as a baby. He described the Department of Homeland Security's mission in terms meant to declare that Mr. Trump's era of wall-building and immigration bans was over: The department is meant to ''keep us safe and to advance our proud history as a country of welcome,'' he said.

And perhaps the most powerful story came from Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the Black woman who is Mr. Biden's choice for U.N. ambassador. She was one of the senior diplomats who left the State Department in the era of Rex W. Tillerson and Mike Pompeo, two secretaries of state who incited near rebellion among the diplomatic corps.

''Her dad couldn't read or write, but she says he was the smartest person she knew,'' Mr. Biden said, describing how Ms. Thomas-Greenfield, who served across Africa and in Pakistan, Switzerland and Jamaica, was the first in her family to go to high school or college.

It is the kind of story Mr. Biden likes to tell, and to compare to his own ***working-class*** roots. Ms. Thomas-Greenfield ended the tale with a description of how Southern cooking is a source of American soft power: At her diplomatic posts, she said, ''I would invite people of different backgrounds and beliefs'' to her kitchen to make the signature dish of her native Louisiana. ''I called it gumbo diplomacy.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/us/politics/biden-nominees-national-security.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/24/us/politics/biden-nominees-national-security.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Antony J. Blinken, the secretary of state pick, has criticized the Obama administration's Syria policy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A14)

**Load-Date:** November 25, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Turkey’s Islamist Dream Finally Becomes a Reality***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60BX-JYD1-DXY4-X4FH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 14, 2020 Tuesday 08:05 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1322 words

**Byline:** Selim Koru

**Highlight:** The Hagia Sophia has been designated as a mosque again, its status as a museum viewed for decades as a seal on the country’s spirit.

**Body**

The Hagia Sophia has been designated as a mosque again, its status as a museum viewed for decades as a seal on the country’s spirit.

IZMIR, Turkey — President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of [*Turkey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/29/world/europe/turkey-social-media-control.html) on Friday issued a decree ordering the Hagia Sophia, a majestic 65,000-square-foot stone structure from the sixth century in Istanbul, to be opened for Muslim prayers. The same day, a [*top Turkish court*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/29/world/europe/turkey-social-media-control.html) had revoked the 1934 decree by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish republic, which had turned it into a museum.

The Hagia Sophia was built as a cathedral and converted into a mosque, and then a museum. It has for centuries been the object of fierce civilizational rivalry between the Ottoman and Orthodox worlds.

The reconversion of the Hagia Sophia into a mosque was an old dream of Turkey’s Islamists. In the Islamist political tradition of President Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party, Ataturk’s experiment in secular republican government was a foreign imposition on Turkey, and the Hagia Sophia’s status as a museum a seal on the country’s spirit.

After making the announcement, [*according to one report*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/29/world/europe/turkey-social-media-control.html), Mr. Erdogan was so shaken with emotion that he did not sleep until first light the next morning. What he thought of as an era of humiliation had ended.

After 1950, when the Kemalist regime held the country’s first free elections, its political enemies began to organize. Ataturk had died more than a decade before, and the power of his memory was gradually waning.

Sections of Islamist and pan-Turkic romanticists began campaigning for the reopening of the Hagia Sophia. They believed that the secular republic, far from having saved Turkey’s sovereignty, wounded it in the deepest sense possible: It had sold its soul to Western modernity. The conversion of the Hagia Sophia was the symbol of this humiliation.

The most articulate expression of this view was delivered by Necip Fazil Kisakurek, Turkey’s most prominent Islamist poet and polemicist of the time, on Dec. 29, 1965, at a conference on the Hagia Sophia. Mr. Kisakurek [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/29/world/europe/turkey-social-media-control.html) the decision to convert the structure into a museum was to “put the Turks’ essential spirit inside a museum.”

Referring to Ataturk’s cabinet as a “clique,” Mr. Kisakurek accused them of committing an act of unspeakable self-harm. “What the Western world has made us do inside, through its agents among us, neither Crusaders, nor the Moskof [the Soviets] nor the Hagia Sophia’s salacious coveters, the Greeks, have been able to do,” he said.

The poet said in that 1965 speech that the opening of the Hagia Sophia was a question of time. “It shall be opened in such a way that all lost meaning, like the bloodied and chained innocent, shall emerge from it weeping, in tatters,” he said. “It shall be opened in such a way that in its cellars shall be found the files of the evil ones who were thought to have done the nation good, and the good ones who were thought to have done it evil.”

The dome of the Hagia Sophia was erected by Emperor Justinian in the sixth century as the central cathedral of Byzantium, or the Eastern Roman Empire. In 1453, the Ottomans launched a spectacular siege on the capital city of Constantinople and consummated their victory by converting the Hagia Sophia, its main cathedral, into a mosque, as was customary at the time.

It was this moment of reversal —  from Christian to Muslim —  that fired imaginations across Europe and the Middle East. Many dreamed of a day of reckoning as the Ottoman Empire unraveled in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the World War I, Istanbul was occupied by British, French, Italian and Greek forces, but even then, Muslims did not give up the Hagia Sophia. When a group of Greeks wanted to enter the building and install a cathedral bell, Ottoman soldiers drove them away by threatening to blow up the entire structure.

Turkish forces fought off the allied invaders under the leadership of a rebellious Ottoman field marshal, Mustafa Kemal (later Ataturk), who went on to rebuild modern Turkey. During his single-party rule, Ataturk abolished the sultanate and set up a secular republic, enacting reforms to westernize the country by decree.

There are various myths about the reasons behind Ataturk’s decision to convert the Hagia Sophia into a museum in 1934. What is certain is that he decided after convening with Thomas Whittemore, a visiting American scholar of Byzantium, and was interested in restoring the structure’s mosaics. Ataturk seemed to have wanted to move the country past the medieval concepts of myth and holy conquest.

When Mr. Kisakurek, the powerful Islamist poet, raised the rallying cry for the reconversion of the Hagia Sophia into a mosque in 1965, it is likely that Recep Tayyip Erdogan, an 11-year-old boy in the ***working-class***, religious neighborhood of Kasimpasa near the Golden Horn in Istanbul, would have heard the poet’s call.

He would also have heard how even Nihal Atsiz, a writer who advocated a pan-Turkic identity over that of the Islamists, revered the Hagia Sophia and thought its status a humiliation. And the young Erdogan might even have heard how Nazim Hikmet, the great poet of the socialists, devoted stanzas to the Hagia Sophia’s spirit in his youth.

As Turkey’s prime minister between 2003 to 2014 and as the country’s president, Mr. Erdogan has gradually dismantled all checks on his power and shifted the country’s political center of gravity in his favor. The idea was always that opening the Hagia Sophia for prayers would mark the maturation of Islamist power and cement its gains. Do it too soon, however, and it could backfire, just as Ataturk’s conversion had.

When Mr. Erdogan addressed Turkey on July 10 after the court’s judgment, [*he cited*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/29/world/europe/turkey-social-media-control.html) Mr. Kisakurek’s 1965 Hagia Sophia Conference and cited the other poets as well. The Turkish president wanted the entire nation, not just the Islamists, to make the spiritual journey with him.

In this address to the nation, Mr. Erdogan did not mention Ataturk by name. He did not have to. He quoted at length Mehmet the Conqueror’s will, which states that whoever changes the status of the Hagia Sophia “has committed the most grave sin of all” and that “the curse of God, the Prophet, the angels and all rulers and all Muslims shall forever be upon him. May their suffering not lighten, may none look at their face on the day of Hajj.”

Various authorities of the Greek and Russian Orthodox churches voiced their indignation, and the pope expressed “profound sadness.” The governments of the European Union and the United States muttered their regrets. There are also Christian extremists who care deeply about the Hagia Sophia and its symbolism. These sentiments make the decision all the more exciting to many Turks.

The first prayer at the Hagia Sophia mosque will take place on July 24, the anniversary of the Treaty of Lausanne, signed between the Allied powers and Turkey, which drew the boundaries of modern Turkey. Mr. Erdogan will want the Western world especially to watch closely, because the ceremony will represent what he considers the reclamation of Turkish sovereignty from its clutches.

What comes out of the Hagia Sophia’s gates today is a spirit that sees itself as inherently good and its chosen enemies as inherently evil. It is the spirit of revenge, and it has catching up to do.

Selim Koru is an analyst at the Economic Policy Research Foundation in Ankara and a writing fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/29/world/europe/turkey-social-media-control.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/2020/07/29/world/europe/turkey-social-media-control.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/29/world/europe/turkey-social-media-control.html).

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PHOTO: A 19th-century illustration of the interior of the Hagia Sophia, before it became a museum in 1935. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Mansell/The LIFE Picture Collection, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 29, 2020

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[***Explosions Shake a Texas Town, and Its View on Thanksgiving***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XM6-V6T1-JBG3-60NM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 15, 2020 Wednesday 18:01 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1244 words

**Byline:** Rick Rojas

**Highlight:** Two explosions forced tens of thousands of people to leave the area around a chemical plant. “As long as we know that we’re O.K., that’s all that really matters,” one resident said.

**Body**

Two explosions forced tens of thousands of people to leave the area around a chemical plant. “As long as we know that we’re O.K., that’s all that really matters,” one resident said.

PORT NECHES, Texas — It was a Thanksgiving of pies abandoned at homes that had been left in a hurry, turkey eaten in hotel rooms, and naps on cots handed out by Red Cross volunteers.

Doug Hinson had planned to be at his son’s house, gathered with his family. But that was before he and most everyone else in Port Neches, Texas, were jolted awake early Wednesday by a blast at the Texas Petroleum Chemical plant that sent flames shooting into the sky, punched out windows of nearby homes and injured eight people.

He was at work on Wednesday afternoon, a few miles away, when he felt the second explosion. “I got home and said, ‘Let’s go,’” he said, sitting outside an arena in Beaumont that had taken in some of the tens of thousands of people who had been displaced because of the explosions and the fire that still burned at the plant on Thursday.

“Fifteen miles away is better than a half-mile away,” Mr. Hinson, a trailer mechanic, said.

Instead of a Thanksgiving meal, he ate a stick of beef jerky in his pickup truck.

The explosions have unsettled a community enmeshed with the oil refineries and chemical plants that surround it, one accustomed to a skyline of galvanized pipes and flare stacks. The plant, still gushing a plume of ominous black smoke visible from many miles away on Thursday, is right in the middle of a bustling community. Parks with playgrounds, a high school and a middle school, blocks of homes, fast-foot joints, churches and a grocery store are all within a couple of miles.

The petrochemical industry, in many ways, forms the area’s backbone, underpinning much of the local economy and providing a bounty of ***working-class*** jobs with decent wages. But the explosions have been a reminder of the trade-offs that come with the plants’ proximity.

“That’s what’s made Southeast Texas for the last 100 years or more,” said Glenn Johnson, the mayor of Port Neches. “We understand that. You know, when you have an industry like this, there’s inherent danger inside those refineries.”

Environmentalists have expressed their alarm about the dangers the community faces, not just from the fire but from the broader petrochemical industry.

“This should not be anyone’s reality,” Yvette Arellano, a policy researcher with Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services, said in a statement. “Unfortunately, it is for communities sitting at the fence-line of the petrochemical corridor along the Gulf Coast.”

The Port Neches plant, which produces a chemical compound that is an ingredient in synthetic rubber for tires and automobile hoses, has a history of violations and fines that stretches back more than a decade.

In 2014, the plant’s owner, TPC Group, was fined $45,750 by state regulators for exceeding “the volatile organic compounds annual emissions rate” by letting off too much carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides during the previous two years, according to records from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

In January of this year, the company was fined $214,388 for air quality violations “stemming from its failure to comply with allowable emissions limits,” according to a statement from environmental officials. The facility’s history of violations were [*reported by The Texas Tribune*](https://www.texastribune.org/2019/11/27/texas-plant-rocked-explosions-mandatory-evacuations-ordered/).

TPC officials speaking at a news conference on Thursday declined to comment on the violations. But in an interview, Mr. Johnson, the mayor, described TPC as a “good corporate citizen” and a major taxpayer in the city.

“Without them, we wouldn’t be able to do a lot of the things we do in the city,” he said. “My hope is that they’re able to get through this event. I hope they’re able to repair the facilities and get started again.”

The explosions in Port Neches follow two fires near Houston at petrochemical facilities, including one that killed one person and critically injured two others. The blasts also come just after federal environmental officials eased rules enacted after a deadly explosion at a fertilizer plant in West, Texas, in 2013, which was one of the state’s worst industrial disasters.

In Port Neches, the first blast happened just before 1 a.m., erupting into a ball of fire that lit up the night sky. The explosion shattered windows and even blew out doors. Then, on Wednesday afternoon, a second explosion rocked the plant, shooting a flaming tower into the air like a rocket.

The authorities said on Thursday that firefighters had made considerable headway in containing the fire, but it was not enough to lift the evacuation order. It was also unclear how long the fire would burn.

“We’re not out of the woods yet,” Judge Jeff Branick, the top elected official for Jefferson County who is overseeing the response, said at the news conference on Thursday afternoon. “I think there’s been very significant progress that has been made. But I want to tell you, my job as county judge is to keep our citizens safe.”

On Thursday, the neighborhoods around the plant were dead quiet as black smoke continued to billow into the air. Some streets had been blocked off and an abundance of law enforcement officers were on patrol, telling curious onlookers and residents to get going.

The plant sits in a tangle of communities — including Port Neches, Groves and Nederland — where suburban neighborhoods and industry are wedged together.

The blasts riled an area that had endured devastating floods in September, as well as Hurricane Harvey in 2017. The disruption was an unwelcome reminder of the routine evacuations that come during hurricane season, when residents have to load up and head north.

“This is not our first rodeo,” Mr. Johnson said, pointing out the evacuations his constituents had experienced in recent years. “We’ve been down this road before. They’re very, very good about making sure they protect themselves, their family and their property.”

The American Red Cross took in about 80 people at an emergency shelter in Beaumont, where children played in boxes and adults ate donated turkey dinners on their cots.

“We’ve been hammered pretty hard,” said Chester Jourdan, the executive director of the Red Cross in southeast Texas, who himself lives within the evacuation area and whose home was destroyed by Hurricane Rita in 2005. But because of that shared history, he added, “we just have a lot of folks who understand we live in an area where we have to take care of each other.”

Melissa Quevedo, who lives within the evacuated area in Groves, had plans for a Thanksgiving feast: turkey, dirty rice, the ingredients for coconut and lemon pies. “All that’s back home,” she said. Instead, she was with her parents and their two German shepherds, Prince and Piper, in a hotel in Sulphur, La., just over the state line. Her gratitude outweighed her frustration.

“As long as we know that we’re O.K., that’s all that really matters,” said Ms. Quevedo, the legislative director for a local state lawmaker, Joe Deshotel. “We have a lot to be thankful for because things certainly could have been different.”

David Montgomery contributed reporting from Austin, Texas, and Farah Stockman from Boston.

PHOTOS: A fire still burned on Thanksgiving at the Texas Petroleum Chemical plant in Port Neches, Texas. Doug Hinson, above, a Port Neches resident, spent the day safely parked miles away in Beaumont. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK FELIX FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 15, 2020

**End of Document**



[***They Haven’t Gotten a Covid Vaccine Yet. But They Aren’t ‘Hesitant’ Either.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62N8-26H1-DXY4-X4NT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 12, 2021 Wednesday 15:49 EST

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**Section:** US

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**Byline:** Amy Harmon and Josh Holder

**Highlight:** Much has been said about people opposed to or skeptical of coronavirus vaccines. But there’s another group that has yet to get shots, and their reasons are more complex.

**Body**

Much has been said about people opposed to or skeptical of coronavirus vaccines. But there’s another group that has yet to get shots, and their reasons are more complex.

It had been weeks since Acy Grayson III, owner of Let It Shine, a home improvement outfit he runs out of his own home in the suburbs of Cleveland, had vowed to get a [*Covid-19 vaccine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/28/health/us-vaccine-rate.html).

Appointments were available.

But Mr. Grayson, who never knows how long a job will take or when a new one will come along, had found it hard to commit to a time and a place. The mass vaccination site where appointments were not required was off his beaten path. He did not know that a nearby church, Lee Road Baptist, had been dispensing vaccines on Fridays — but the truth is, even if he had, it is unlikely he would have made the short trek to get one there, either.

“I know you’re trying to find out the reason people aren’t doing it,” Mr. Grayson said on a recent afternoon. “I’m going to tell you. People are trying to take care of their household. You don’t have much time in the day.”

The slowdown in vaccinations across the country has often been attributed to a blend of misinformation and mistrust among Americans known as “[*vaccine hesitanc*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/24/nyregion/new-york-workers-refuse-vaccine.html)y.” But Mr. Grayson belongs to an overlooked but sizable group whose reasons for remaining unvaccinated are not about opposition to the shots or even skepticism about them.

According to a new U.S. census estimate, some 30 million American adults who are open to getting a coronavirus vaccine have not managed to actually do so. Their ranks are larger than the hesitant — more than the 28 million who said they would probably or definitely not get vaccinated, and than the 16 million who said they were unsure. And this month, as the Biden administration set a goal of 70 percent of adults getting at least one dose by July 4, they became an official new focus of the nation’s mass vaccination campaign.

In addition to “the doubters,” President Biden said at a news briefing last week, the mission is to get the vaccine to those who are “just not sure how to get to where they want to go.”

If the attention has centered on the vaccine hesitant, these are the vaccine amenable. In interviews, their stated reasons for not getting vaccines are disparate, complex and sometimes shifting.

They are, for the most part, America’s ***working class***, contending with jobs and family obligations that make for scarce discretionary time. About half of them live in households with incomes of less than $50,000 a year; another 30 percent have annual household incomes between $50,000 and $100,000, according to an analysis of the census data by Justin Feldman, a social epidemiologist at Harvard. Eighty-one percent do not have a college degree. Some have health issues or disabilities or face language barriers that can make getting inoculated against Covid-19 seem daunting. Others do not have a regular doctor, and some are socially isolated.

Technically, they have access to the vaccine. Practically, it is not that simple.

“Hesitancy makes a better story because you’ve got controversy,” said Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, a former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “But there’s a bigger problem of access than there is of hesitancy.”

Socioeconomic disparities in vaccination stem partly from the scarcity of supply in the first phases of the vaccine rollout, when Americans lacking the time or ability to scour the internet for appointments lost out: Counties that rank high in a C.D.C. index of “[*social vulnerability*](https://svi.cdc.gov/Documents/FactSheet/SVIFactSheet.pdf)” had lower vaccination rates on average by early April, a New York Times analysis shows. But over the last month, even as supplies have exceeded demand, that disparity has grown.

For some socially vulnerable counties — characterized by high poverty rates, crowded housing and poor access to transportation, among other factors — low vaccination rates correspond to a high proportion of residents who are reluctant to get vaccinated. The lowest overall vaccination rates are found in counties with both high hesitancy and high vulnerability, with the majority in the South and the Midwest.

But in plenty of disadvantaged places with low vaccination rates, hesitancy is not the full explanation.

In fact, among Americans who said they were willing to get the vaccine, the higher a person’s income, the more likely the person was to be vaccinated, according to Dr. Feldman’s analysis of the census data.

In that group, 93 percent of adults in households earning between $150,000 and $199,000 a year had been vaccinated as of April 30; while only 76 percent of those earning less than $25,000 a year had gotten at least one shot.

“It helps break this question down of attitude versus access,” Dr. Feldman said. “With people who have not been vaccinated, some are disinclined, but others are facing structural barriers.”

In the Cleveland suburb of Bedford Heights where Mr. Grayson and his fiancée, Renea Carnes, live, about 40 percent of adults have had at least one shot, according to [*an analysis of Ohio Department of Health data*](https://public.tableau.com/profile/chris.mundorf7294#!/vizhome/ClevelandFQHCChurchPartnerships/ChangesinRateofVaccineStarted). Nationally, [*about 60 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/covid-19-vaccine-doses.html) of adults have had one shot.

Neither Ms. Carnes’s mother nor adult daughter, who live with the couple, has been vaccinated. Like some other Black Americans, family members said they had concerns about the safety of the vaccines when they first came out. But Mr. Grayson said he had come to believe that vaccination was safe after observing enough people getting a shot without incident. And Ms. Carnes, a hospice nurse, had her second shot last week. The issue for many in their circle, she said, was not hesitancy but opportunity.

“If there was someone standing here right now who was saying, ‘I have the vaccine for Covid,’” Ms. Carnes said, “everyone in the house who doesn’t have it would be getting it right now.”

“What might help this situation,” added Mr. Grayson, “is if it was like Domino’s Pizza and you could call someone and say, ‘Can I get my shot?’ And they come give it to you.”

Vaccine haves and have-nots

If the nation’s public health system was ever to offer a pizza-delivery-style vaccine service, now might be that moment. On Tuesday, Mr. Biden said Uber and Lyft, two of the country’s largest ride-sharing services, [*would provide free rides to vaccination sites from May 24 until July 4*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/uber-lyft-free-ride-vaccine.html). Experts say that the collective risk posed by the highly infectious coronavirus has created a rare moment when public health resources are actually being aimed at communities that have long had higher rates of poor health.

A data analysis by researchers at the University of Texas at Austin, for instance, suggests that vaccinating more residents of the Austin ZIP codes hardest-hit by Covid-19 early on in the vaccine rollout would have prevented hospitalizations and deaths [*across the whole city*](https://www.scribd.com/document/502593358/COVID-Infections-and-Vaccinations-Austin-ZIP-Codes). In Austin, as in many other areas, there was a large degree of overlap between ZIP codes with the highest social-vulnerability ranking and the highest incidence of Covid-19.

“Putting more resources into protecting high-risk populations can be lifesaving and beneficial to us all,” said Lauren Ancel Meyers, the epidemic modeler who conducted the study.

The Biden administration has allocated $6 billion to health centers that serve low-income populations and offered a tax break to businesses that give employees paid time off to be vaccinated.

But because of public health’s frayed infrastructure, experts said, it may take time to hire health workers, commandeer mobile vaccination units and forge connections with community groups to do needed outreach.

If the country does not reach high levels of vaccination, experts say, the virus is likely to continue circulating in pockets. That may mean a concentration of cases, hospitalizations and deaths in low-income, disproportionately nonwhite populations.

“My concern is that as we get close to 70 percent vaccinated nationally, we are seeing significantly lower vaccination rates for historically disenfranchised communities that are at higher risk,” said Dr. Luis Daniel Muñoz, a community organizer in Providence, R.I.

The diffuse nature of America’s public health system has left some wondering who, if anyone, is accountable for ensuring equal protection from Covid-19.

“The president has said he wants this to happen, but who is the onus on to do it?” said Keisha Krumm, executive director of the Greater Cleveland Congregations, which has held vaccine clinics at its member churches.

New vaccination site: the parking lot

Vaccine historians say there is no playbook for vaccinating so many adults with a day job — or, as in the case of Yesenia Guzman, 43, of Mexico, Mo., those who work a night shift.

Ms. Guzman, who works from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. at the same pig farm where her husband works the day shift, said they remained unvaccinated because they could not afford to take time off work if they had side effects. They hope to schedule vaccines during the two days they usually get off after working two weeks straight, she said, but “we just haven’t figured out when.”

Health officials who serve low-income populations said they have been forced to turn vaccine-willing patients away because of packaging that requires them to vaccinate six to 10 people at a time or risk wasting a dose.

“I’m going to see patients this afternoon for diabetes and tell them, ‘Hey, do you mind coming back Saturday for this vaccine clinic we’re running?’ and they’re not going to come,” said Dr. Chad Garven, associate medical director of a community health center in Cleveland.

As public health departments close down mass vaccination clinics because of low turnout, they are seeking new ways to reach people. In Austin, a group of vaccinators that distributed fewer doses than expected at a school festival set up shop in a nearby El Rancho grocery parking lot to offer shots to shoppers. After the store manager learned what was happening, almost three dozen workers went out to be vaccinated.

“Everyone wanted to get vaccinated,” said Karim Nafal, the store’s owner, “but didn’t know how or where.”

And in Cleveland, the alliance between the church group, volunteer vaccinators and the city’s public health department led to Mr. Grayson getting a vaccine on a recent morning. Hired to do a paint job at the Lee Road church, he was told that vaccines were available down the hall if he wanted one.

“Come on,” Mr. Grayson urged two unvaccinated co-workers, who also offered up their arms. “It’s right here.”

About the data: County vaccination data is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Texas Department of State Health Services. Full county vaccination data was not available for Colorado, Georgia, Hawaii, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia, and some counties. These were excluded from the analysis.

High vulnerability is defined as a score above 0.5 on the C.D.C.’s Social Vulnerability Index.

The C.D.C.’s county-level hesitancy estimates are based on data from the Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey from March 3 to March 15, 2021. High hesitancy is defined as more than the national average of 16 percent of a county’s population saying they “probably won’t” or “definitely won’t” receive a vaccination. Non-hesitant is defined as those saying they “probably will” or “definitely will” receive a vaccination, or have already been vaccinated. The averages given for each group are a population-weighted median.

National vaccination estimates by household income are based on data from the latest Household Pulse Survey, which was conducted from April 14 to April 26.

Reporting was contributed by Danielle Ivory, Timmy Facciola, Tiffany Wong, Julia Carmel and Emily Schwing.

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PHOTO: According to a new U.S. census estimate, some 30 million American adults who are open to getting a coronavirus vaccine have not managed to actually do so. (PHOTOGRAPH BY James Estrin/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Minneapolis Integration Is a Two-Way Street***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6463-GKP1-DXY4-X339-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

MINNEAPOLIS -- When Mauri Friestleben learned that Minneapolis was rolling out a new school integration plan -- and that the school she led, a predominantly Black, low-income high school, would soon include white students from some of the wealthiest neighborhoods in town -- she looked around and proudly considered all that her school had to offer.

The hallways at North Community High are a tapestry of blue and white, the school colors, and the mascot, a polar bear, seems to roar around every corner. The curriculum had been updated to expand access to advanced placement courses: U.S. history, physics, art and design. The school had a new athletic field, and on the first floor, a radio studio.

But in some phone conversations with potential new families, Ms. Friestleben, the principal, sensed deep skepticism.

Parents peppered her with questions. Exactly how many A.P. courses did her school offer? Was Spanish the only language option? Would their children be safe walking from the bus? Some even wondered how she had gotten their number and asked her not to call again.

Ms. Friestleben, a mixed-race woman who identifies as Black, knew that her school had its challenges, including a history of struggling enrollment and low test scores. But she was working hard to serve the needs of her students and had little interest in adjusting her focus to woo white families.

''At times,'' she said, ''it was demeaning and humiliating.''

Minneapolis, among the most segregated school districts in the country, with one of the widest racial academic gaps, is in the midst of a sweeping plan to overhaul and integrate its schools. And unlike previous desegregation efforts, which typically required children of color to travel to white schools, Minneapolis officials are asking white families to help do the integrating -- a newer approach being embraced by a small group of urban districts across the country.

''Everyone wants equity as long as it doesn't inconvenience them,'' said Eric Moore, senior officer for accountability, research and equity for Minneapolis Public Schools, where about a third of students -- some 10,000 children of different races -- were assigned to new schools this year.

The changes included redrawing school zones, including for North. ''This plan is saying, everyone is going to be equally inconvenienced because we need to collectively address the underachievement of our students of color,'' Mr. Moore added.

Research shows that de facto school segregation is one major reason that America's education system is so unequal, and that racially and socioeconomically diverse schools can benefit all students.

But decades after Brown v. Board of Education, the dream of integration has remained just that -- a dream.

Today, two in five Black and Latino students in the United States attend schools where more than 90 percent of students are children of color, while one in five white students goes to a school where more than 90 percent of students look like them, according to the Century Foundation, a progressive think tank.

If there is anywhere white families might embrace an integration plan, a likely candidate would be Minneapolis, which became the epicenter of the nation's reckoning with racism after George Floyd's murder last year. The city is 60 percent white and a bastion of liberalism, with a voting population that supported President Biden by 80 percentage points or more in some areas. In majority white neighborhoods, where homes can sell for $500,000 to $1 million, lawn signs proclaim ''Black Lives Matter'' and ''All Are Welcome Here.''

But an up close look at one school, North High, and the cross section of families who traverse the new attendance zone, shows the complicated realities of school integration, even in a city with the political willpower to make it happen.

For students, parents and educators, the push to integrate was not just a policy decision, but a deeply personal challenge: What would white families do, when forced to wrestle with their own progressive values? Would the plan bring positive changes for Black families at North High, or as some feared, would they lose claim over the school that they loved?

What does the promise of school integration look like today?

For Many Black Families, 'Integration Never Comes Up'

Since arriving at North High in 2019, Ms. Friestleben had not thought much about integration.

Her philosophy was grounded in affirming the students who already walked her halls: children from mostly low-income and ***working-class*** backgrounds; about 90 percent Black and nearly 100 percent students of color.

''I make a commitment that every child that walks into any doors that I'm leading, that they will feel like royalty,'' said Ms. Friestleben, who personally greets students at the doors each morning. At 8:30 a.m., she delivers announcements, reminding students that they are brave, beautiful, strong and loved.

''As a society,'' she added, ''we have subconsciously rolled the red carpet out for white children for generations upon generations. So it's my challenge and my honor to do that for Black children, to give Black children the same experience of, 'you are the center of my world.'''

Research has shown that integration can deliver benefits for all children.

For example, Black children exposed to desegregation after Brown v. Board of Education experienced higher educational achievement, higher annual earnings as adults, a lower likelihood of incarceration and better health outcomes, according to longitudinal work by the economist Rucker Johnson of the University of California, Berkeley. The gains came at no cost to the educational achievement of white students.

Other research has documented how racially and economically diverse schools can benefit all students, including white children, by reducing biases and promoting skills like critical thinking.

Racially segregated schools, on the other hand, are associated with larger gaps in student performance, because they tend to concentrate students of color in high poverty environments, according to a recent paper analyzing all public school districts.

''There is not a single school district in the U.S. that is even moderately segregated that does not have a large achievement gap,'' said Sean Reardon, the lead author on the paper and the director of the Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University.

The situation is especially stark in Minneapolis, a deeply segregated city. The district of 30,500 students is diverse: about 41 percent white, 35 percent Black, 14 percent Hispanic, 5 percent Asian American and 4 percent Native American.

But white students test four to five grade levels ahead of Black, Hispanic and Native students, and two and a half grade levels ahead of Asian students, making the district's disparities one of the worst in the country, according to the Educational Opportunity Project. A large gap also exists between poor and nonpoor students.

North High is a reflection of those inequalities.

More than half of 10th graders who completed testing did not meet state standards in reading in 2019, and performance in math was worse, with more than 80 percent of 11th graders failing proficiency standards. About 65 percent of students graduate within four years, compared with 84 percent statewide.

Enrollment has also been a problem. Over the years, many families have disenrolled from Minneapolis Public Schools, including families of color on the north side.

Some chose charter schools. Others went to the suburbs, as part of an unusual option in Minnesota. Families do not need to live in the school district and can enroll elsewhere if they are accepted and provide their own transportation. Statewide, 10 percent of students use this policy.

Facing these cascading challenges, Minneapolis school officials decided on an overhaul. They assigned families to new school zones, redrawing boundaries to take socioeconomic diversity -- and as a consequence, racial diversity -- into account. North High, for instance, now dips farther south, encapsulating a swath of wealthier, whiter neighborhoods.

The plan also moved magnet schools from whiter neighborhoods to more diverse, centralized locations.

The changes were projected to minimize high poverty and highly segregated schools, while redistributing resources. For example, district officials say $11 million in transportation savings annually was reinvested to pay for elementary school literacy coaches, music for fifth graders and other services. At North High, the changes are intended to bring more students -- and more funding.

This, activists and researchers say, is perhaps the most powerful promise of integration: shared resources.

''I don't think a Black kid sitting next to a white kid means that all of a sudden a Black kid is going to have higher academic outcomes,'' said Khulia Pringle, a local education activist who is Black. She said she was initially skeptical of the plan but was persuaded, in part, because of what she saw as an investment in communities of color.

''It's the reality that wherever white people are comes with resources,'' she said.

At North High, though, integration was not something that most students and families had been asking for. By and large, they liked their school, which is known for serving multiple generations of north side families. At football games, fans wear sweatshirts that say ''Polar for Life.''

''North High is the pride of north side,'' said Lynne Crockett, a 1962 graduate and president of the alumni association, who keeps two polar bear stuffed animals on display in her living room. Ms. Crockett, who is Black, is among those who worry that the changes could threaten North High's identity.

That sentiment was echoed in research by the Black Education Research Collective at Teachers College, Columbia University, which surveyed hundreds of Black families and educators nationally this year.

''Integration never comes up,'' said the group's founding director, Sonya Douglass Horsford. Instead, she said, Black families often express other priorities: ''I want my child to be safe. I don't want them to be harassed. I don't want them to be discriminated against. I'd like the curriculum to reflect them.''

What families at North High have long wanted is more investment.

The school's sprawling, brick building is decades old. There have been reports of rodents and problems with the drinking water. Low enrollment led to cutbacks, and at one point, threatened closure.

But in recent years, there have been positive changes.

The school has a dynamic principal in Ms. Friestleben, who is working hard to boost enrollment. Now, the offerings include nine advanced placement courses and new sports, including soccer. There is even talk about a multimillion dollar renovation; architectural renderings show a trim quad and soaring windows.

Kelly Jackson wants all of this and more for the students.

The president of the parent-teacher association and a frequent presence at the school who is known as ''Mama Jackson,'' she has sent all three of her children to North, including her daughter, Ramiyah, 16, who is busy taking A.P. classes in English and U.S. history, acting as a football team manager and serving on the student council.

But Ms. Jackson couldn't help but ask: Why now?

To her, some changes, like the planned renovation, signaled gentrification. Even as North High opened up to white families, some Black families, like hers, were reassigned to a different school, though North's low enrollment meant that, for now, they could apply to stay.

''I feel like they want to start implementing these things because they are getting white students,'' Ms. Jackson said. ''A lot of white families, when they say it, they fight for it, they want it, and they get it. But why does it take us 15 years?''

To Attend or Not: White Families Face a Decision

For white and more affluent parents, the new school plan also landed with a thud.

In southern neighborhoods newly rezoned to North, real estate agents began to hear from families selling their homes. At one point, images circulated on social media of a sign outside a coveted elementary school, where the students, 60 percent white, would eventually be assigned to North.

The sign depicted a tombstone. ''R.I.P.,'' it read. ''This will destroy our community.''

One big challenge for the district was that families could still choose charter or suburban schools. In one part of the new zone, which includes some of the more affluent neighborhoods, just 15 percent of new families assigned to North decided to attend, according to district figures.

Parents evaluating the school at a glance would have seen some concerning statistics: High crime rates in the area, low test scores, a 1 out of 10 rating on GreatSchools.org.

At the same time, the view of places like North is complicated by research that indicates white, advantaged parents may use the number of other white, advantaged families attending as an indicator of school quality. And while test scores are one important measure, they are also closely tied to income and can be imperfect windows into a student's full experience.

''We aren't as bad as people make us seem,'' said Alexandria McNeill, a 17-year-old senior at North, who is Black. Through the rezoning, she said she hoped other families would come to view her community more like she did: a place of home and belonging, a launching pad for college, and what she hopes will be a career in communications.

But for some new families, attending North felt like a gamble.

Heather Wulfsberg, who is white, had intended to send her daughter, Isabella, 14, to Southwest High, a racially diverse but majority white public school that is a 10-minute bus ride from their home.

The school offers an international baccalaureate program, as well as Japanese, which Isabella studied in middle school. Isabella's older brother, 18, is a senior there, and Ms. Wulfsberg envisioned her children attending together, her son helping Isabella navigate freshman year.

So Ms. Wulfsberg appealed the reassignment to North, citing her son's attendance at Southwest, and her daughter's interest in Japanese. (North offers one language, Spanish.)

She was also concerned about transportation. There was no direct bus, and Isabella's commute could take up to 55 minutes. She would also have to walk from the bus stop to school through an area where frequent gun shots are a problem.

But Ms. Wulfsberg, who described herself as a lifelong Democrat, felt there was little room to explore her concerns without being misinterpreted or offending other families. Conversations on a Facebook page for parents turned tense.

One comment, in particular, stuck with her.

''They were like, 'Your cover is, you want academics for your kids, and underneath this all, you really are racist,''' she recalled. ''It's a very scary feeling to do a self-examination of yourself and think, 'Am I?'''

She paused, reflecting. ''But I don't believe I am. I really don't.''

The family decided to send Isabella to a suburban school with top academic ratings. Students are about 80 percent white and about 4 percent economically disadvantaged.

The school, 25 minutes away, has no bus route -- Ms. Wulfsberg drives her daughter -- and there is no Japanese program. But the school is international baccalaureate certified, offers 29 A.P. courses and has American sign language, which excited Isabella. And Isabella knew at least a few other students there.

Ultimately, Ms. Wulfsberg deemed her daughter's high school years too high stakes to experiment with. ''My motivation,'' she said, ''is to get the best education I can for my kid and have her launch into the world as successfully as she can.''

Christine Conner, another white mother who considers herself progressive, also wrestled with her choice. When she sent her daughter to a suburban school for similar reasons, she had trouble meeting the eye of a neighbor, who she knew supported sending students to North.

''It was like 25 percent trying to follow your own ideals as a citizen,'' she said, ''and 75 percent doing what was best for your kid.''

Signs of Change: A Few New Students, and Lacrosse

By the start of the school year, Minneapolis had moved closer to its ambitions: It decreased the number of racially isolated schools -- defined by the district as 86 percent or more students of color -- to 13 from 21.

But North High was not among them. Of 440 students, 30 are white.

Still, 13 of the white students -- nearly half -- are in the freshman class, the cohort affected by the new boundary. Overall, the school serves 93 percent students of color, down from 98 percent.

''I expected better,'' Mr. Moore, the district official, said. ''But I am also being pragmatic.'' The changes came during a pandemic, and he hopes to see more buy-in over time. The long-term projection for North is 70 percent students of color and 30 percent white.

The plan has no shortage of critics. Some have argued that the district did not really put the onus on white families, and that most students forced to change schools were children of color, disrupting their lives further amid a traumatic pandemic. (Officials said the burden was shared proportionally.)

Another criticism is that the district bungled communication, alienating families.

And, critics say, district officials created controversy while not doing enough to truly improve and integrate schools. While some schools grew more diverse, others, like Southwest, are expected to become less so.

''They are not heroes,'' said Myron Orfield, a civil rights professor at the University of Minnesota Law School, who criticized the district for doing too little, too late.

For years, the district has been a central figure in lawsuit that accuses the state of allowing school segregation, including in Minneapolis.

A tentative settlement, reached this year, could set the stage for broader change. The agreement would loop in suburban districts, which tend to be whiter and wealthier, and some of those districts would be required to work with districts like Minneapolis on a regional integration plan. Wealthier districts would accept disadvantaged students and vice versa, and the state would pay for transportation. The agreement would also create magnet schools to draw diverse students together.

The plan is designed to get at the crux of de facto segregation in metropolitan areas: the divide among school districts, including between cities and the suburbs.

''To really have a viable long-term plan, you need a metropolitan approach,'' said Mr. Orfield, who has served as a volunteer witness for the plaintiffs.

For now, Leah Harp is among the few new white parents at North. She decided to send her son after touring the school, where she noticed clean hallways, a culture of high expectations and students who seemed happy and relaxed.

''It's like a family,'' she said. ''That's the kind of environment that I want for my children.''

She thought her son, a freshman, and eventually, his younger brother, would benefit from being around children of other backgrounds. She did share concerns about crime in the neighborhood, but has been driving her son back and forth. While at school, he's quite safe, she believes.

The transition has not been flawless.

At P.T.A. meetings, where she was elected treasurer, Ms. Harp asks questions (Do parents typically do anything at the school for Halloween?) and makes suggestions (Should they hold a voter-registration drive?). She's wary of overstepping and tries to stay quiet more than is natural for her.

Still, she can't help but speak up sometimes, like after a shooting near the school this fall. She wondered why the district hadn't contacted parents directly.

The P.T.A. president, Ms. Jackson, explained: This is what we live with every day.

Almost three months into the school year, integration at North High remains a slow, tentative dance.

In south Minneapolis, Ms. Harp has a blue and white ''Polar'' lawn sign outside her Tudor-style home. It is the only one she knows of in her area.

To the north, some, like Ms. Crockett, of the alumni association, are on the lookout for signs of gentrification. She described the addition of lacrosse -- popular among affluent, white families -- as a red flag.

And Ms. Friestleben remains focused on what has been her goal all along: building a school that centers and uplifts children of color.

If white families want to be a part of that environment, they are welcome, she said. But if they cannot see all that she sees in her school -- teenagers laughing and fist bumping, advanced classes filled with students of color -- she is undeterred.

''We are not going to let anyone else be our validators or invalidators,'' she said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/27/us/minneapolis-school-integration.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/27/us/minneapolis-school-integration.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: North Community High in Minneapolis, predominantly Black, was rezoned to include whiter, wealthier neighborhoods.

Mauri Friestleben, the principal at North, greeting students at the doors. (A1)

KELLY JACKSON, president of the parent-teacher association at North Community High, with her daughter, Ramiyah, 16.

MAURI FRIESTLEBEN, North High's principal. (A24)

Left, Thomas Lachmeier presided over history class at North High, where the football team plays on a recently refurbished field. Above, a sign in Leah Harp's yard

she was among the few white parents to enroll their children at North, where only 30 of 440 students are white. (A24-A25)

HEATHER WULFSBERG, who was accused of racism when she appealed her daughter, Isabella's, enrollment. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA ELLEN REED FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A25)

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[***Running Thousands of Miles in Search of Yourself; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCT-ND11-JBG3-61BB-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1133 words

**Byline:** Danielle Jackson

**Highlight:** Noé Álvarez’s debut memoir, “Spirit Run,” chronicles the 6,000-mile marathon he undertook to connect with his Indigenous heritage — and his American present.

**Body**

SPIRIT RUN

A 6,000-Mile Marathon Through North America’s Stolen Land

By Noé Álvarez

In a 1979 address at Brown University, Ralph Ellison called cultural exchange an American inevitability, the logical outcome of the waves of movement and migration that formed the country. His parents, who had been born in South Carolina and Georgia, understood how the arbitrary borders of the Mason-Dixon line, the 49th parallel and the Mississippi River defined the limits on their freedom. By the early 1900s they had moved west, to Oklahoma, then a “relatively unformed frontier state.” Ellison said they understood the extent to which “geography has performed the role of fate.”

Some 140 miles southeast of Seattle sits Yakima, a fertile desert city of 94,000 known for its apples, wine and hops. First inhabited by the Yakama people, the town grew as waves of workers washed in over the centuries — white, Japanese and, eventually, Mexican, who began arriving in the 1940s with the advent of warehousing and corporatized farming. As the 20th century wore on, Central Americans arrived, too, urged along by economic collapse and political destabilization at home. The poet and short story writer Raymond Carver, son of a sawmill worker, grew up in Yakima and drew heavily on the town’s grittiness to enrich his stories of desolation. So did Noé Álvarez, whose lyrical if uneven debut book, “Spirit Run: A 6,000-Mile Marathon Through North America’s Stolen Land” — part travelogue, part traditional memoir — comes face to face with the many strands of his inheritance, revisiting Carver territory while treading a new path.

In Yakima, “a paradise on the surface,” white families live on the town’s west side while a growing Latino population concentrates on the east. Álvarez’s mother was born in the Mexican state of Michoacán. At 15, she fled to the United States and has worked for decades in fruit production and distribution centers. It’s thankless and grueling work. ICE agents lurk, shift leaders menace. Álvarez tallies the physical toll on his mother’s body — her knee deformities, her eroding posture, the disfigurement wrought by tendinitis in the joints of her fingers.

His father, “a spirit born of hunger” descended from Indigenous Purépecha, was born in unmapped Mexican territory and hunted birds and iguanas for food when he was young. He made the trek north at 16, working for a time in the hop fields in Washington, before being deported and returning stateside with the help of a coyote.

The story of the striving, first-generation kid made good is a familiar one; Álvarez makes his ache. He excels in honors classes and is aware from a young age of a yearning to free his mother from “the assault of the fruit industry.” To do so, he knows he must outrun his geography — a metaphor he comes to embrace literally when in high school he becomes a serious runner. “When the rhythms of ***working-class*** life cut inside me like broken beer glass, I run,” he writes. He wins a full scholarship to Whitman College in Walla Walla, but is thwarted by his own high expectations and shame about his upbringing. The dining hall presents a challenge, as does going to class and staying on top of assignments. Only while running does he feel solid in his skin.

At a conference, he learns about Peace and Dignity Journeys, a six-month-long quadrennial run through the whole of North America, in which “numerous and diverse Indigenous nations reunite and reclaim dignity for their families and communities.” Pacquiao, the calm young man in charge of the journey, speaks of running as “connective tissue,” “a form of prayer” that “renews our responsibility to community.”

Álvarez drops out of college to join the group, never more than a couple dozen runners, in one of its early stops in British Columbia, and the intricately threaded narrative about his family morphs into a journal of his travels — on foot, and also, at times, in the vans the runners use to transport themselves and their supplies in their relay-style race across the continent. As they go, they learn the different ways “the rain strikes, strums and plucks at our skins.” They run through mountainsides, forests, small towns and large urban blocks. When they are dropped off for a shift, they receive few instructions. “When in doubt, turn left,” is a motto. Food is scarce.

Sometimes Álvarez’s language seems vague and overly laden with the weight of his mission. (“People’s paths are unique, beautiful,” he notes to himself upon meeting a new recruit to the team.) At other times, it’s not clear how this epic run, with its attendant difficulties, relates to Álvarez’s desire to help his family. At one point, alone on the trail in Oregon, he meets a snarling mountain lion. At the last minute, recalling instructions from an older runner about surviving such encounters, he remembers to “thank the animal.” Moreover, some of the marathon’s leaders behave in ways that border on sadistic. The majority of the runners are recovering addicts or otherwise seeking redemption, and, like many of them, Álvarez believes in the transformative power of extreme sacrifice. “I run to follow as closely as I can the path of those who came before me,” he insists. “I run to find fragments of my own parents sprinkled over the earth.” When the group enters his home state of Washington after a month of running, he realizes he is “submerging myself in pain … so that I may control the turmoil within me.”

The runners practice a hodgepodge of Indigenous rituals along the way. At the conclusion of each shift, they gather in a circle for sacred reflection and to try to resolve conflicts among them. Álvarez experiences moments of true connection with fellow runners such as Zyanya Lonewolf, whose parents are survivors of residential schools for Native Americans. But it is when the group approaches the United States-Mexico border in Nogales, Ariz., that the disparate elements of the memoir cohere. “I too desired to retrace my origin story to a specific spot on this earth,” Álvarez writes, “a specific soil from which my people’s spirit first sprouted its first words.”

As he runs through Mexico’s states, through towns held by the Zapatistas and sites holy to the Aztecs, it becomes obvious that what Álvarez is attempting to recover on the marathon is his pride. “My father has come a long way,” he realizes, dipping his fingers into the Pacific Ocean on the coast of Oaxaca. By the run’s end, he is eager to go home, to see his parents, to rest and restart his life. The run, it seems, has absolved him of his need to flee.

Danielle Jackson is a writer and the managing editor at The Oxford American. SPIRIT RUN A 6,000-Mile Marathon Through North America’s Stolen Land By Noé Álvarez 218 pp. Catapult. $26.

PHOTO: Noé Álvarez (PHOTOGRAPH BY MIA CONCORDIA)

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[***In Minneapolis Schools, White Families Are Asked to Help Do the Integrating***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:645P-DD81-JBG3-62RN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 3569 words

**Byline:** Sarah Mervosh

**Highlight:** In a citywide overhaul, a beloved Black high school was rezoned to include white students from a richer neighborhood. It has been hard for everyone.

**Body**

MINNEAPOLIS — When Mauri Friestleben learned that Minneapolis was rolling out a new school integration plan — and that the school she led, a predominantly Black, low-income high school, would soon include white students from some of the wealthiest neighborhoods in town — she looked around and proudly considered all that her school had to offer.

The hallways at North Community High are a tapestry of blue and white, the school colors, and the mascot, a polar bear, seems to roar around every corner. The curriculum had been updated to expand access to advanced placement courses: U.S. history, physics, art and design. The school had a new athletic field, and on the first floor, a radio studio.

But in some phone conversations with potential new families, Ms. Friestleben, the principal, sensed deep skepticism.

Parents peppered her with questions. Exactly how many A.P. courses did her school offer? Was Spanish the only language option? Would their children be safe walking from the bus? Some even wondered how she had gotten their number and asked her not to call again.

Ms. Friestleben, a mixed-race woman who identifies as Black, knew that her school had its challenges, including a history of struggling enrollment and low test scores. But she was working hard to serve the needs of her students and had little interest in adjusting her focus to woo white families.

“At times,” she said, “it was demeaning and humiliating.”

Minneapolis, among the most segregated school districts in the country, with one of the widest racial academic gaps, is in the midst of a sweeping plan to overhaul and integrate its schools. And unlike previous desegregation efforts, which typically required children of color to travel to white schools, Minneapolis officials are asking white families to help do the integrating — a newer approach being embraced by a small group of urban districts across the country.

“Everyone wants equity as long as it doesn’t inconvenience them,” said Eric Moore, senior officer for accountability, research and equity for Minneapolis Public Schools, where about a third of students — some 10,000 children of different races — were assigned to new schools this year.

The changes included redrawing school zones, including for North. “This plan is saying, everyone is going to be equally inconvenienced because we need to collectively address the underachievement of our students of color,” Mr. Moore added.

Research shows that de facto school segregation is one major reason that America’s education system is so unequal, and that racially and socioeconomically diverse schools can benefit all students.

But decades after Brown v. Board of Education, the dream of integration has remained just that — a dream.

Today, two in five Black and Latino students in the United States attend schools where more than 90 percent of students are children of color, while one in five white students goes to a school where more than 90 percent of students look like them, according to [*the Century Foundation*](https://tcf.org/content/report/school-integration-america-looks-like-today/), a progressive think tank.

If there is anywhere white families might embrace an integration plan, a likely candidate would be Minneapolis, which became the epicenter of the nation’s reckoning with racism after George Floyd’s murder last year. The city is 60 percent white and a bastion of liberalism, with a voting population that supported President Biden by 80 percentage points or more in some areas. In majority white neighborhoods, where homes can sell for $500,000 to $1 million, lawn signs proclaim “Black Lives Matter” and “All Are Welcome Here.”

But an up close look at one school, North High, and the cross section of families who traverse the new attendance zone, shows the complicated realities of school integration, even in a city with the political willpower to make it happen.

For students, parents and educators, the push to integrate was not just a policy decision, but a deeply personal challenge: What would white families do, when forced to wrestle with their own progressive values? Would the plan bring positive changes for Black families at North High, or as some feared, would they lose claim over the school that they loved?

What does the promise of school integration look like today?

For Many Black Families, ‘Integration Never Comes Up’

Since arriving at North High in 2019, Ms. Friestleben had not thought much about integration.

Her philosophy was grounded in affirming the students who already walked her halls: children from mostly low-income and ***working-class*** backgrounds; about 90 percent Black and nearly 100 percent students of color.

“I make a commitment that every child that walks into any doors that I’m leading, that they will feel like royalty,” said Ms. Friestleben, who personally greets students at the doors each morning. At 8:30 a.m., she delivers announcements, reminding students that they are brave, beautiful, strong and loved.

“As a society,” she added, “we have subconsciously rolled the red carpet out for white children for generations upon generations. So it’s my challenge and my honor to do that for Black children, to give Black children the same experience of, ‘you are the center of my world.’”

Research has shown that integration can deliver benefits for all children.

For example, Black children exposed to desegregation after Brown v. Board of Education experienced higher educational achievement, higher annual earnings as adults, a lower likelihood of incarceration and better health outcomes, [*according to longitudinal work*](https://gspp.berkeley.edu/faculty-and-impact/publications/children-of-the-dream-why-school-integration-works) by the economist Rucker Johnson of the University of California, Berkeley. The gains came at no cost to the educational achievement of white students.

[*Other research*](https://tcf.org/content/facts/the-benefits-of-socioeconomically-and-racially-integrated-schools-and-classrooms/#easy-footnote-bottom-11) has documented how racially and economically diverse schools can benefit all students, including white children, by reducing biases and promoting skills like critical thinking.

Racially segregated schools, on the other hand, are associated with larger gaps in student performance, because they tend to concentrate students of color in high poverty environments, according to a [*recent paper*](https://cepa.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/wp19-06-v092021.pdf) analyzing all public school districts.

“There is not a single school district in the U.S. that is even moderately segregated that does not have a large achievement gap,” said Sean Reardon, the lead author on the paper and the director of the [*Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University.*](https://edopportunity.org/)

The situation is especially stark in Minneapolis, a [*deeply segregated city*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/01/us/minneapolis-racism-minnesota.html). The district of 30,500 students is diverse: about 41 percent white, 35 percent Black, 14 percent Hispanic, 5 percent Asian American and 4 percent Native American.

But white students test four to five grade levels ahead of Black, Hispanic and Native students, and two and a half grade levels ahead of Asian students, making the district’s disparities one of the worst in the country, according to the Educational Opportunity Project. A large gap also exists between poor and nonpoor students.

North High is a reflection of those inequalities.

More than half of 10th graders who completed testing [*did not meet state standards in reading in 2019*](https://rc.education.mn.gov/#mySchool/orgId--30001375000__p--3https://rc.education.mn.gov/#assessmentsParticipation/orgId--30001375000__test--allAccount__subject--R__accountabilityFlg--FOC_NONE__year--trend__grade--10__p--e3), and performance in math was worse, with more than 80 percent of 11th graders failing proficiency standards. About 65 percent of students graduate within four years, compared with 84 percent statewide.

Enrollment has also been a problem. Over the years, many families have disenrolled from Minneapolis Public Schools, including families of color on the north side.

Some chose charter schools. Others went to the suburbs, as part of an unusual option in Minnesota. Families do not need to live in the school district and can enroll elsewhere if they are accepted and provide their own transportation. Statewide, 10 percent of students use [*this policy*](https://education.mn.gov/mde/fam/open/).

Facing these cascading challenges, Minneapolis school officials decided on an overhaul. They assigned families to new school zones, redrawing boundaries to take socioeconomic diversity — and as a consequence, racial diversity — into account. North High, for instance, now dips farther south, encapsulating a swath of wealthier, whiter neighborhoods.

The plan also moved magnet schools from whiter neighborhoods to more diverse, centralized locations.

The changes were projected to minimize high poverty and highly segregated schools, while redistributing resources. For example, district officials say $11 million in transportation savings annually was reinvested to pay for elementary school literacy coaches, music for fifth graders and other services. At North High, the changes are intended to bring more students — and more funding.

This, activists and researchers say, is perhaps the most powerful promise of integration: shared resources.

“I don’t think a Black kid sitting next to a white kid means that all of a sudden a Black kid is going to have higher academic outcomes,” said Khulia Pringle, a local education activist who is Black. She said she was initially skeptical of the plan but was persuaded, in part, because of what she saw as an investment in communities of color.

“It’s the reality that wherever white people are comes with resources,” she said.

At North High, though, integration was not something that most students and families had been asking for. By and large, they liked their school, which is known for serving multiple generations of north side families. At football games, fans wear sweatshirts that say “Polar for Life.”

“North High is the pride of north side,” said Lynne Crockett, a 1962 graduate and president of the alumni association, who keeps two polar bear stuffed animals on display in her living room. Ms. Crockett, who is Black, is among those who worry that the changes could threaten North High’s identity.

That sentiment was echoed in research by the [*Black Education Research Collective at Teachers College, Columbia University*](https://www.tc.columbia.edu/black-education-research-collective/), which surveyed hundreds of Black families and educators nationally this year.

“Integration never comes up,” said the group’s founding director, Sonya Douglass Horsford. Instead, she said, Black families often express other priorities: “I want my child to be safe. I don’t want them to be harassed. I don’t want them to be discriminated against. I’d like the curriculum to reflect them.”

What families at North High have long wanted is more investment.

The school’s sprawling, brick building is decades old. There have been [*reports*](https://www.kare11.com/article/news/education/north-high-student-leaders-call-for-building-improvements/89-9eda2236-3a20-424b-beaa-102c3037710c) of rodents and problems with the drinking water. Low enrollment led to cutbacks, and at one point, threatened closure.

But in recent years, there have been positive changes.

The school has a dynamic principal in Ms. Friestleben, who is working hard to boost enrollment. Now, the offerings include nine advanced placement courses and new sports, including soccer. There is even talk about a multimillion dollar renovation; architectural renderings show a trim quad and soaring windows.

Kelly Jackson wants all of this and more for the students.

The president of the parent-teacher association and a frequent presence at the school who is known as “Mama Jackson,” she has sent all three of her children to North, including her daughter, Ramiyah, 16, who is busy taking A.P. classes in English and U.S. history, acting as a football team manager and serving on the student council.

But Ms. Jackson couldn’t help but ask: Why now?

To her, some changes, like the planned renovation, signaled gentrification. Even as North High opened up to white families, some Black families, like hers, were reassigned to a different school, though North’s low enrollment meant that, for now, they could apply to stay.

“I feel like they want to start implementing these things because they are getting white students,” Ms. Jackson said. “A lot of white families, when they say it, they fight for it, they want it, and they get it. But why does it take us 15 years?”

To Attend or Not: White Families Face a Decision

For white and more affluent parents, the new school plan also landed with a thud.

In southern neighborhoods newly rezoned to North, real estate agents began to hear from families selling their homes. At one point, images circulated on social media of a sign outside a coveted elementary school, where the students, 60 percent white, would eventually be assigned to North.

The sign depicted a tombstone. “R.I.P.,” it read. “This will destroy our community.”

One big challenge for the district was that families could still choose charter or suburban schools. In one part of the new zone, which includes some of the more affluent neighborhoods, just 15 percent of new families assigned to North decided to attend, according to district figures.

Parents evaluating the school at a glance would have seen some concerning statistics: High crime rates in the area, low test scores, [*a 1 out of 10 rating on GreatSchools.org*](https://www.greatschools.org/minnesota/minneapolis/5788-North-Academy-Arts-Communication/).

At the same time, the view of places like North is complicated by [*research that indicates*](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b7c56e255b02c683659fe43/t/5e30a6280107be3cf98d15e6/1580246577656/Do+Parents+Really+Want+School+Integration+2020+FINAL.pdf) white, advantaged parents may use the number of other white, advantaged families attending as an indicator of school quality. And while test scores are one important measure, they are also [*closely tied to income*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/04/29/upshot/money-race-and-success-how-your-school-district-compares.html) and can be imperfect windows into a student’s full experience.

“We aren’t as bad as people make us seem,” said Alexandria McNeill, a 17-year-old senior at North, who is Black. Through the rezoning, she said she hoped other families would come to view her community more like she did: a place of home and belonging, a launching pad for college, and what she hopes will be a career in communications.

But for some new families, attending North felt like a gamble.

Heather Wulfsberg, who is white, had intended to send her daughter, Isabella, 14, to Southwest High, a racially diverse but majority white public school that is a 10-minute bus ride from their home.

The school offers an international baccalaureate program, as well as Japanese, which Isabella studied in middle school. Isabella’s older brother, 18, is a senior there, and Ms. Wulfsberg envisioned her children attending together, her son helping Isabella navigate freshman year.

So Ms. Wulfsberg appealed the reassignment to North, citing her son’s attendance at Southwest, and her daughter’s interest in Japanese. (North offers one language, Spanish.)

She was also concerned about transportation. There was no direct bus, and Isabella’s commute could take up to 55 minutes. She would also have to walk from the bus stop to school through an area where frequent gun shots are a problem.

But Ms. Wulfsberg, who described herself as a lifelong Democrat, felt there was little room to explore her concerns without being misinterpreted or offending other families. Conversations on a Facebook page for parents turned tense.

One comment, in particular, stuck with her.

“They were like, ‘Your cover is, you want academics for your kids, and underneath this all, you really are racist,’” she recalled. “It’s a very scary feeling to do a self-examination of yourself and think, ‘Am I?’”

She paused, reflecting. “But I don’t believe I am. I really don’t.”

The family decided to send Isabella to a suburban school with top academic ratings. Students are about 80 percent white and about 4 percent economically disadvantaged.

The school, 25 minutes away, has no bus route — Ms. Wulfsberg drives her daughter — and there is no Japanese program. But the school is international baccalaureate certified, offers 29 A.P. courses and has American sign language, which excited Isabella. And Isabella knew at least a few other students there.

Ultimately, Ms. Wulfsberg deemed her daughter’s high school years too high stakes to experiment with. “My motivation,” she said, “is to get the best education I can for my kid and have her launch into the world as successfully as she can.”

Christine Conner, another white mother who considers herself progressive, also wrestled with her choice. When she sent her daughter to a suburban school for similar reasons, she had trouble meeting the eye of a neighbor, who she knew supported sending students to North.

“It was like 25 percent trying to follow your own ideals as a citizen,” she said, “and 75 percent doing what was best for your kid.”

Signs of Change: A Few New Students, and Lacrosse

By the start of the school year, Minneapolis had moved closer to its ambitions: It decreased the number of racially isolated schools — defined by the district as 86 percent or more students of color — to 13 from 21.

But North High was not among them. Of 440 students, 30 are white.

Still, 13 of the white students — nearly half — are in the freshman class, the cohort affected by the new boundary. Overall, the school serves 93 percent students of color, down from 98 percent.

“I expected better,” Mr. Moore, the district official, said. “But I am also being pragmatic.” The changes came during a pandemic, and he hopes to see more buy-in over time. The long-term projection for North is 70 percent students of color and 30 percent white.

The plan has no shortage of critics. Some have argued that the district did not really put the onus on white families, and that most students forced to change schools were children of color, disrupting their lives further amid a traumatic pandemic. (Officials said the burden was shared proportionally.)

Another criticism is that the district bungled communication, alienating families.

And, critics say, district officials created controversy while not doing enough to truly improve and integrate schools. While some schools grew more diverse, others, like Southwest, are expected to become less so.

“They are not heroes,” said Myron Orfield, a civil rights professor at the University of Minnesota Law School, who criticized the district for doing too little, too late.

For years, the district has been a central figure in [*lawsuit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/21/us/school-segregation-funding-lawsuits.html) that accuses the state of allowing school segregation, including in Minneapolis.

A [*tentative settlement*](https://edlawcenter.org/news/archives/other-states/tentative-settlement-reached-in-minnesota-school-segregation-case.html), reached this year, could set the stage for broader change. The agreement would loop in suburban districts, which tend to be whiter and wealthier, and some of those districts would be required to work with districts like Minneapolis on a regional integration plan. Wealthier districts would accept disadvantaged students and vice versa, and the state would pay for transportation. The agreement would also create magnet schools to draw diverse students together.

The plan is designed to get at the crux of de facto segregation in metropolitan areas: [*the divide among school districts, including between cities and the suburbs*](https://www.urban.org/research/publication/when-school-segregated-making-sense-segregation-65-years-after-brown-v-board-education/view/full_report).

“To really have a viable long-term plan, you need a metropolitan approach,” said Mr. Orfield, who has served as a volunteer witness for the plaintiffs.

For now, Leah Harp is among the few new white parents at North. She decided to send her son after touring the school, where she noticed clean hallways, a culture of high expectations and students who seemed happy and relaxed.

“It’s like a family,” she said. “That’s the kind of environment that I want for my children.”

She thought her son, a freshman, and eventually, his younger brother, would benefit from being around children of other backgrounds. She did share concerns about crime in the neighborhood, but has been driving her son back and forth. While at school, he’s quite safe, she believes.

The transition has not been flawless.

At P.T.A. meetings, where she was elected treasurer, Ms. Harp asks questions (Do parents typically do anything at the school for Halloween?) and makes suggestions (Should they hold a voter-registration drive?). She’s wary of overstepping and tries to stay quiet more than is natural for her.

Still, she can’t help but speak up sometimes, like after a shooting near the school this fall. She wondered why the district hadn’t contacted parents directly.

The P.T.A. president, Ms. Jackson, explained: This is what we live with every day.

Almost three months into the school year, integration at North High remains a slow, tentative dance.

In south Minneapolis, Ms. Harp has a blue and white “Polar” lawn sign outside her Tudor-style home. It is the only one she knows of in her area.

To the north, some, like Ms. Crockett, of the alumni association, are on the lookout for signs of gentrification. She described the addition of lacrosse — popular among affluent, white families — as a red flag.

And Ms. Friestleben remains focused on what has been her goal all along: building a school that centers and uplifts children of color.

If white families want to be a part of that environment, they are welcome, she said. But if they cannot see all that she sees in her school — teenagers laughing and fist bumping, advanced classes filled with students of color — she is undeterred.

“We are not going to let anyone else be our validators or invalidators,” she said.

PHOTOS: North Community High in Minneapolis, predominantly Black, was rezoned to include whiter, wealthier neighborhoods.; Mauri Friestleben, the principal at North, greeting students at the doors. (A1); KELLY JACKSON, president of the parent-teacher association at North Community High, with her daughter, Ramiyah, 16.; MAURI FRIESTLEBEN, North High’s principal. (A24); Left, Thomas Lachmeier presided over history class at North High, where the football team plays on a recently refurbished field. Above, a sign in Leah Harp’s yard; she was among the few white parents to enroll their children at North, where only 30 of 440 students are white. (A24-A25); HEATHER WULFSBERG, who was accused of racism when she appealed her daughter, Isabella’s, enrollment. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA ELLEN REED FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A25)

**Load-Date:** December 1, 2021

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[***Why Can’t America Make Enough Masks or Ventilators?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YNF-H1N1-JBG3-654V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 14, 2020 Tuesday 15:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1226 words

**Byline:** Scott Paul

**Highlight:** The president has promoted himself as a champion of American manufacturing, but now he avoids addressing its shortcomings.

**Body**

The president has promoted himself as a champion of American manufacturing, but now he avoids addressing its shortcomings.

Hundreds of companies across the United States are reinventing themselves to make equipment that is desperately needed to treat the coronavirus. That so many American manufacturers are rising to meet this pandemic with little coordination from the federal government reveals a deep altruism in our national character.

It also reveals something else: Our country is unable to meet an immediate need for critical medical supplies and personal protective equipment in the face of a crisis. The absence of adequate domestic production capacity for things like face shields and respirators, coupled with the frailty of on-demand global supply chains and our utter reliance on them — for everything from the ingredients in our medications to parts of breathing machines — has left us dangerously exposed during an international health emergency.

[*Mohawk Fine Papers*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms) and its United Steelworkers employees are shifting to medical gown and mask production. [*American Giant*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms) and other garment manufacturers are scaling up the production of medical-grade masks. Companies from [*Budweiser*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms) to [*Ford*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms) are churning out hand sanitizer and ventilators. These instances of private sector action are inspiring, but they won’t be enough.

Our policymaking is still behind the curve. President Trump is starting to selectively use the Defense Production Act, a law from the Korean War era that allows the president not only to order businesses to prioritize the manufacture of items deemed crucial to national security but also to subsidize them. This is something he should have done many weeks ago, and even still he’s mostly invoking it haphazardly with companies that draw his ire.

White House officials [*have floated*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms) for a few months an executive order meant to encourage domestic production of pharmaceuticals. But the hint of such an order generated a lobbying blitz from drug makers, including one spokesperson who [*told CNBC*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms) that “in times of crisis, a diverse supply chain is more important than ever.”

This is a blasé way of saying they’d rather protect their yawning profit margins than contribute to the country’s medicinal security. But many of our national political leaders aren’t ready to talk about this, either. The president has promoted himself as a champion of American manufacturing, but now he avoids addressing its shortcomings.

The Democratic challenger, Joe Biden, only recently began [*speaking*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms) about these supply issues, and mainly in response to Mr. Trump’s scattered use of the Defense Production Act. Congress had a huge opportunity to encourage the domestic manufacture of critical supplies and avoided it; it attached no strings to force manufacturing repatriation to the $500 billion it made available to big businesses about to be damaged by the economy’s collapse.

The bipartisan tendency of our politicians to salute workers and visit factories during campaign season, and then do little of substance to help factories expand and increase hiring, must end. This pandemic has most Americans rightfully concerned about their personal well-being — everything from their health, their job security and their ability to pay the rent or a mortgage is on the line.

But Americans are also now concerned with our national well-being. And one of the questions they are asking is this: How did it come to pass that we can’t make enough respirator masks or ventilators when we need them most?

The answer isn’t a blunt call for autarky. No serious person wants the economy to revert to closed borders and walls around our nation. But while globalizing supply chains may make sense in textbooks, the outsourcing we’ve encouraged by decades of this trade policy and corporate profit-seeking clearly has its limitations. And manufacturing critical supplies domestically will require significant policy shifts.

Whenever Congress and the administration decide on next steps for our national well-being, they must move beyond bromides for the ***working class*** and put into place a sensible industrial policy, one that combines the power of American ingenuity with the capabilities of public investment.

Such a policy should incentivize re-industrialization via the tax code. It should encourage it with its traditional power of the purse — which means expanding Buy America provisions that prioritize domestic manufacturers in federal contracting bids to virtually all spending.

Companies that dip into the huge fund Congress almost unanimously made available to the Treasury Department in the recent $2 trillion stimulus package should be expected, when applicable, to bring more of their manufacturing operations back into the country and to devote far more resources to skills training to prepare for their work force needs.

Trade enforcement should be more stringent. While critics are right to question the specifics behind some of President Trump’s tariffs, these tariffs shouldn’t be removed until we see quantifiable and reciprocal change on the part of China and other international competitors, many of which banned exports of medical supplies at a critical time.

And lastly, a national effort should be made to identify and then prioritize the industries where a lack of a domestic manufacturing ecosystem leaves the country extremely vulnerable. We’ve known about an overdependence on imports in supply chains for pharmaceuticals and medical equipment for years, though it was easier to ignore when our nation wasn’t in crisis.

The Defense Production Act is being invoked to call out and force [*individual companies*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms) to make these supplies. That may be a successful short-term bludgeon, but expanding the act’s use to organize a national manufacturing strategy to meet this moment would be much better than the current piecemeal approach to producing the millions of items health care workers need to handle a surge of sick Americans.

The next national emergency could be an attack on our power grid or water supply or a natural disaster that brings global supply chains to a screeching halt. Do we have the battery production capacity to turn the lights back on immediately? Can we produce turbines to keep our dams operating? In a crisis, could we make a smartphone in the United States to ensure Americans can continue to communicate?

The United States is going to have to weather the coronavirus crisis with a manufacturing sector that isn’t constructed to meet it. We must address that shortcoming before the next crisis arrives, and we should start now. It’s time for a 21st century Arsenal of Democracy: One that will both see us through future crises and revitalize an economy that desperately needs rejuvenation.

Scott Paul ([*@ScottPaulAAM*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms)) is president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://cbs6albany.com/news/coronavirus/cohoes-company-offering-ready-to-use-field-hospital-rooms).

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PHOTO: SugarHouse Industries, a Utah company that usually manufactures boat tops and covers, has reconfigured its operation amid the spread of the coronavirus to produce face shields and masks. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rick Bowmer/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***Scott Walker’s Wisconsin Paved the Way for Donald Trump’s America; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6332-7TT1-DXY4-X049-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 6, 2021 Tuesday 17:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2564 words

**Byline:** Dan Kaufman

**Highlight:** If Democrats want to create an enduring coalition to prevent the unraveling of democracy, they must return to their labor roots.

**Body**

Ten years ago, after overcoming a monthslong protest movement and legal battle, a law called Act 10 took effect in Wisconsin. The nondescript name cloaked the most significant attack on labor rights since President Ronald Reagan broke the air traffic controllers union in 1981.

Ostensibly meant to address a shortfall in the state’s budget, Act 10 steeply cut the state’s contribution to workers’ pensions and health care premiums, but its defining feature was to effectively eliminate collective bargaining rights for public employees. Most important, it sparked a nationwide attack on labor that fueled the rise of right-wing populism and helped elect Donald Trump.

Since the Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, many historians and political observers — not to mention Democratic politicians — have grown increasingly concerned about the future of American democracy. Those fears have only intensified with the passage of new laws restricting voting rights in Georgia, Florida, Arizona and 14 other states. Yet the Democratic establishment has continued to minimize the importance of labor rights, failing to draw a connection between attacks on organized labor, exemplified by laws like Act 10, and the unraveling of democracy.

That connection is clear from the bitter legacy of Act 10. Introduced by Gov. Scott Walker, a Republican, the law mandated that public sector unions hold recertification elections annually — and, unlike in typical democratic elections, unions would need to win a majority of all eligible voters, not just a majority of votes. It outlawed collective bargaining for workplace safety — a crucial issue for workers like corrections officers — and for any issue except base wages; even the raises that workers could negotiate were capped by the rate of inflation. Most revealing was a provision that made it illegal for employers to collect union dues from paychecks, even with a worker’s written consent, though it permitted such deductions for charitable organizations like the United Way.

That provision, coupled with $13 billion in tax cuts passed during Mr. Walker’s tenure (most of which benefited corporations and the state’s wealthiest citizens) and Mr. Walker’s exemption of firefighters and nearly all police unions (many of which endorsed him) from the law, showed how the bill was primarily a political attack against a crucial pillar of financial and organizational support for the state’s Democratic Party.

Mr. Walker underscored the law’s political nature when he privately told a billionaire donor in January 2011, a few weeks before he announced his attack on public employee unions, that it would be part of a “divide and conquer” strategy to pit public and private sector unions against each other to weaken labor’s power overall.

By that measure, Act 10 has been remarkably effective; Wisconsin’s public sector unions have lost about 70 percent of their members on average over the past decade. The diminishment of public employee unions helped pave the way for Mr. Walker to sign a so-called right-to-work law in 2015, breaking his earlier pledge not to do so. Right-to-work laws prohibit unions from requiring workers in a unionized workplace to pay dues, which erodes the union’s finances and bargaining power. Along with Act 10, Wisconsin’s right-to-work law has contributed to a 40 percent decline in the state’s union membership rate since 2011. Now barely 8 percent of Wisconsin’s work force are members of a union, roughly the same percentage as in Alabama, a state with a long and violent [*anti-labor history*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html).

But Act 10’s impact over the past decade goes far beyond a decline in union membership. The law has damaged the state’s public infrastructure and services, including K-12 public education. According to a survey by the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the number of incoming college freshmen at the state’s four-year universities who intended to become teachers dropped by a third between 2012 and 2018. The loss of collective bargaining rights made teaching less attractive. It has also made teachers’ wages and benefits more uneven across the state. Wealthier school districts can entice sought-after teachers while poorer districts, many of them in rural areas, face persistent teacher shortages and high turnover rates. Wisconsin is also experiencing stagnant wages, regressive tax policies that disproportionately burden working- and middle-class families, and its highest level of income inequality in nearly 100 years.

Wisconsin’s history as a pioneer in the expansion of labor rights — it was the first state to enact a workers’ compensation law and an unemployment insurance program, and to recognize collective bargaining rights for public employees — made it a particularly attractive target for national conservatives. In the wake of Act 10, more than 100 bills curtailing collective bargaining rights were introduced in states across the country. In 2018, the attack on public employee unions was successfully nationalized with the Supreme Court’s decision in Janus v. AFSCME, which essentially instituted a right-to-work law for the country’s public sector unions.

Private sector unions have been targeted, too. The right-to-work movement — which had been founded by an avowed white supremacist named Vance Muse in the 1940s before being taken over by conservative industrialists like Fred Koch — appeared to have petered out by 2010. But over the next decade, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana and Michigan, the birthplace of the United Auto Workers, joined Wisconsin in becoming right-to-work states. Now 27 states have right-to-work laws.

Such laws have contributed to a seemingly bottomless drop-off in union membership. Today, roughly 10 percent of American workers belong to a union, half the percentage that did so in 1983. The declines in Michigan and Wisconsin were particularly important, because of Mr. Trump’s exceedingly small margin of victories in each state. “Trump’s unexpected victory in 2016 did not lay the groundwork for Republican political dominance,” the anti-tax activist Grover Norquist wrote in 2017. “But the March 2011 signing of Act 10, a dramatic reform of public sector labor laws, by Wisconsin’s Scott Walker certainly did. To understate it: If Act 10 is enacted in a dozen more states, the modern Democratic Party will cease to be a competitive power in American politics. It’s that big a deal.”

While Joe Biden narrowly won back Wisconsin and Michigan last year, the states are increasingly polarized, a trend that has been exacerbated by labor’s demise. As the Economic Policy Institute has[*shown*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html), the decline in union membership correlates with a rise in income inequality. It is also a central culprit in America’s political dysfunction and in the atomization of the electorate; studies have shown that union members are [*more active in civil society, more likely to vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html) and [*less prone to racial resentment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html).

While the 2010 midterm elections, which gave Republicans control of state government in 20 states, including Wisconsin, are recognized as a political turning point, the movement that arose against Act 10 is an underappreciated spark for the current progressive revival. The protests in Madison against the bill, which at times drew 100,000 participants, formed the first significant resistance to the Tea Party, while also exposing the powerful right-wing network, spearheaded by the American Legislative Exchange Council, that has been propagating attacks on labor, voting rights and public education in statehouses across the country for decades.

But the Democratic Party establishment distanced itself from the Wisconsin uprising. Notably, President Barack Obama did not go to Wisconsin during the Act 10 protests, betraying a campaign promise to “put on a comfortable pair of walking shoes myself” and “march on that picket line with you” if collective bargaining rights were ever under attack. (Vice President Biden did not go to Wisconsin either.) Outrage over Act 10 prompted an effort to recall Mr. Walker that garnered nearly a million signatures and forced him to face a new election in 2012. But Mr. Obama deliberately avoided campaigning with Tom Barrett, the governor’s Democratic opponent. “This is a gubernatorial race with a guy who was recalled and a challenger trying to get him out of office,” Stephanie Cutter, Mr. Obama’s deputy campaign spokeswoman, told NBC News. “It has nothing to do with President Obama.”

The fallout from the financial crisis, and Mr. Obama’s tepid economic response to it, helped enable the Tea Party backlash, allowing the movement’s funders to realize long-held ambitions of weakening the labor movement and the public sector under the guise of austerity. That effort was made easier by the Democrats’ embrace of their framing. A few months before Mr. Walker announced Act 10, his predecessor, Gov. Jim Doyle, a Democrat, bragged that he made steeper cuts to the size of the state employee work force than any governor in Wisconsin’s history. Mr. Obama, too, championed public austerity, imposing a two-year wage freeze for federal workers just after the 2010 election.

These actions reflected a decades-long shift in the Democratic Party away from ***working-class*** voters. In a 1978 speech, President Jimmy Carter announced a plan to cut 20,000 federal workers and cap pay increases for government employees. The following year, Mr. Carter appointed Paul Volcker as the chairman of the Federal Reserve. To reduce inflation, Mr. Volcker, a former vice president of Chase Manhattan Bank, raised the prime interest rate to 20 percent, which sparked a recession, a 10 percent unemployment rate and a wave of deindustrialization that accelerated the transformation of the industrial Midwest into the Rust Belt.

Bill Clinton signed the North American Free Trade Agreement and negotiated the agreement to grant permanent most-favored-nation status to China, decisions that have cost more than four million jobs, a disproportionate number of them well-paying unionized manufacturing jobs. In 2009, Mr. Obama, who had a filibuster-proof Democratic majority, quickly abandoned a promise to require employers to recognize a union when a majority of workers signed cards indicating they wanted one. “Obama and Clinton both surrounded themselves with a lot of Wall Street people who had no clue,” Richard Trumka, the president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., [*told The Los Angeles Times last month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html). “We were an annoyance to be dealt with.”

During the presidential campaign, Mr. Biden promised to be the “most pro-union president you’ve ever seen.” And on his first day in office, he fired Peter Robb, the powerful general counsel of the National Labor Relations Board. For decades, Mr. Robb had been a management-side labor lawyer and, in fact, had been Mr. Reagan’s lead attorney when Mr. Reagan fired more than 11,000 striking air traffic controllers, effectively breaking their union. (In a particularly wrenching but revealing irony, the union had endorsed Mr. Reagan.)

Mr. Biden also spoke out in favor of the unionization drive at an Amazon warehouse in Alabama and has professed support for the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, the most ambitious effort to strengthen labor rights in decades, which passed in the House in March. The bill would, among other things, weaken right-to-work laws, give the N.L.R.B. the power to fine companies that retaliate against organizing workers, and allow many gig workers to be reclassified as employees, making it easier for them to unionize. Mr. Biden replaced a portrait of Andrew Jackson in the Oval Office — installed by Mr. Trump — with one of Franklin Roosevelt, labor’s greatest ally in the White House.

But Mr. Biden also quickly abandoned an effort to include a $15 minimum wage in the $1.9 trillion reconciliation stimulus package, one of labor’s top priorities, and the PRO Act stands virtually no chance of passage without the elimination of the Senate filibuster, which Mr. Biden has equivocated about.

Meanwhile, labor’s fall continues. Last month, the Supreme Court overruled a California regulation that made it easier for farmworkers to organize. And while this year’s budget proposal by Mr. Walker’s successor, Tony Evers, a moderate Democrat, called for repealing the right-to-work law and much of Act 10, the proposal stands almost no immediate chance of success — the State Legislature has been firmly in Republican control since heavily gerrymandered redistricting maps were passed in [*2011*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html). Other Democratic governors have been downright hostile to labor. Gov. Ralph Northam of Virginia, a Democrat, opposes an effort to repeal Virginia’s right-to-work law, despite his party’s control of all three branches of state government there.

If Mr. Biden’s portrait exchange is to be anything more than symbolism, he and other Democratic leaders will need to fight harder to expand labor rights. Labor unrest and growing hostility from the business community helped push Mr. Roosevelt to sign the Wagner Act, a 1935 law that guaranteed private sector workers the right to form unions and to strike. Mr. Roosevelt understood that labor rights were essential, not peripheral, to the New Deal; by empowering workers with a collective voice, they become more active participants in democracy and create a counterweight to the political and economic power of capital. Mr. Roosevelt also understood that labor rights are good politics; Mr. Biden would do well to remember that Democrats’ period of greatest dominance in the country, starting with the New Deal and running through the Great Society, was a time when union membership was at its peak. Labor’s capacity to foster social cohesion is essential to tackling seemingly intractable problems like economic inequality, racism and climate change.

After the Jan. 6 riot, Mr. Walker tweeted out a specious comparison between the violent mob at the Capitol and the peaceful protests against Act 10. As Charles Tubbs, the chief of the Wisconsin State Capitol Police during the weekslong protests in Madison, told me recently, “They were as different as daylight from dark.” Out of an estimated 1.5 million people who participated in the protests at the Capitol, Mr. Tubbs said, only 16 were arrested by the police, nearly all of them for acts of civil disobedience.

But Mr. Walker’s comparison reminded me of a different analogy, one that appeared on a few of the signs held by Act 10 protesters. They warned that one of the Nazis’ first actions after taking power was to ban independent trade unions. That warning underscored labor’s crucial role as a bulwark for democracy, and while it seemed hyperbolic at the time, and maybe still does, it looks more ominous in the aftermath of Jan. 6.

Mr. Biden and other Democratic leaders would do well to remember it.

Dan Kaufman ([*@dankaufman70*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html)) is the author of “[*The Fall of Wisconsin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html).”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.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/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/opinion/amazon-union-south-us.html).

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PHOTO: A protest at the Wisconsin state Capitol in 2011 against former Gov. Scott Walker’s legislation that ended collective bargaining rights for the state’s public employees. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Darren Hauck/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***When Gangster Movies Evolved***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60WC-F1C1-DXY4-X0BC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 9; CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

**Length:** 1453 words

**Byline:** By Jason Bailey

**Body**

That autumn, ''The Godfather Part III'' was hotly anticipated. Instead, the Scorsese movie and other crime tales raised the stakes for filmmakers to come.

''As far back as I can remember, I always wanted to be a gangster,'' Henry Hill (Ray Liotta) muses near the start of ''Goodfellas,'' and in the fall of 1990, when that film was released, it seemed that every filmmaker of note wanted to make a gangster movie. Martin Scorsese's ''Goodfellas'' led the way that September, with Phil Joanou's ''State of Grace'' and Abel Ferrara's ''King of New York'' opening later that month. The Coen brothers' ''Miller's Crossing'' followed in October. And in December came what was expected to be the biggest title of them all: ''The Godfather Part III,'' the long-awaited follow-up to the Francis Ford Coppola films that most audiences considered the gold standard of gangster pictures.

Such a wave of similarly minded movies hadn't been seen since the glut of rip-offs that followed the release of the original ''Godfather.'' The torturous time and effort required of any major production made their rollouts more coincidental than coordinated, though it seems safe to surmise that studios were hoping to ride the wave of interest in ''Godfather III.'' Yet that film, the most hotly anticipated and (initially) the most financially successful, was the least enthusiastically received -- and left the smallest cultural footprint.

Instead, the other gangster movies of that fateful fall 30 years ago would prove far more influential: they combined to draw a map of the routes the crime movie, and movies in general, would take in the coming decade.

None made their mark more than ''Goodfellas,'' drawn from Nicholas Pileggi's book ''Wiseguy'' and based on the real-life exploits of the New York mob underling-turned-informant Henry Hill. Scorsese was 47 when it was released, but he infused the picture with the furious energy and stylistic razzle-dazzle of a film school kid: elaborate camera movements, snazzy freeze frames, hard-boiled voice-over, non-chronological storytelling and tighter needle drops than a downtown DJ set.

The filmmaking is intoxicating because it makes Hill's life of crime seem so seductive; it draws us into his world. So Scorsese crafts a subjective experience, often literally: in the shot introducing the various gangsters and hangers-on, all of whom speak directly into the camera (''I'm gonna go get the papers, get the papers''), or the notorious ''May 11, 1980'' sequence, which uses jagged cutting, jittery camerawork and battling music cues to put us directly into the head of the film's coked-out, paranoid protagonist. Compared with the respectful distance of earlier gangster stories (even ''The Godfather'' movies), the immediacy of ''Goodfellas'' feels like an earthquake.

It left unmistakable fingerprints on some of the most important films and television shows to follow. '''Boogie Nights' is very much 'Goodfellas,''' said Glenn Kenny, author of the new book ''Made Men: The Story of 'Goodfellas,''' who has also written for The New York Times. He also sees a clear connection to Quentin Tarantino's ''Pulp Fiction'' and ''Reservoir Dogs'' -- particularly the recurring motif of gangsters who hang out, talk trash and do their jobs like, well, jobs. Most gangster movies focus on the big bosses and godfathers; ''Goodfellas'' and its descendants are about the grinders, the middlemen, the ***working-class*** thugs.

Kenny also pinpoints the notion of ''mobsters having other aspects of their lives,'' everyday marital and familial woes, a key ingredient in David Chase's subsequent groundbreaking series, ''The Sopranos.'' Chase has called the film ''his Quran, so to speak,'' drawing not only from the film's tone and perspective for ''The Sopranos,'' but also from its cast, which features several future ''Sopranos'' co-stars.

The hoods in ''State of Grace'' are, if anything, even smaller-time, expending their energies on nowhere hustles, petty theft and extortion. Foot soldiers for the Irish mob in Hell's Kitchen, they're scrappy street guys, and the relationship at the film's center is a direct descendant of Scorsese's 1974 film ''Mean Streets''; both pair a sensible, centered earner (Sean Penn here, Harvey Keitel in ''Mean Streets'') with a dangerous, trigger-happy yet charismatic hothead (Gary Oldman, standing in for Robert De Niro). That dynamic would reappear in many an indie '90s crime movie (most notably Nick Gomez's ''Laws of Gravity''), while the ethnic and geographic sensibility of ''State of Grace'' is a clear influence on ''Little Odessa'' and ''The Yards,'' the early crime films of the director James Gray.

''State of Grace'' is also noteworthy for its acknowledgment of the separation (and tension) between the Irish and Italian mob, expanding the insular Italian perspective typical of gangster narratives. Abel Ferrara would go even further in ''King of New York,'' which is in many ways a direct throwback to the traditional gangster movies of the 1930s, featuring a charismatic lead (Christopher Walken), a colorful cast of supporting players and a heady serving of social issues.

But ''King'' broke radically from norms in its racial makeup (its cast included the future '90s breakout stars Wesley Snipes, Laurence Fishburne and Giancarlo Esposito). Walken's underworld boss Frank White is, in fact, white, but his crew is mostly Black. Post-''Godfather'' ''blaxploitation'' movies like Larry Cohen's ''Black Caesar'' were as strictly segregated as their mainstream counterparts, but here, Ferrara not only integrates the milieu, but casts the film's old world ''Godfather''-style Italian gangsters as outright relics, barriers for his forward-glancing criminals to remove quickly and efficiently.

A video store favorite, ''King of New York'' would have a profound influence on '90s hip-hop culture (the Notorious B.I.G. frequently referred to himself as ''the Black Frank White''); it would also serve as the template for several Black-led gangster movies of the '90s, including ''New Jack City'' and ''Sugar Hill'' (both fronted by ''King'' co-star Snipes).

Like ''The Godfather,'' Joel and Ethan Coen's ''Miller's Crossing'' begins with a portly, mustachioed man asking a mob boss for a favor. But ''Miller's'' is a beast of its own, filtering the conventions of the gangster picture through the Coens' distinctive sensibility, and it's full of their trademarks: ornate, flourish-filled dialogue delivered at a mile a minute; complex, often dizzying plotting; exhilarating camerawork; bellowing overweight men; John Turturro.

''The tentative title for 'Miller's Crossing' was 'The Big Head,''' Adam Nayman, author of ''The Coen Brothers: This Book Really Ties the Films Together,'' explained by email. ''Other crime films have higher body counts, but I'd wager there aren't many with as much discussion about the intricacies of introducing a bullet into the brain.''

The framing, staging and setting of a warehouse rough-up sequence are obvious prototypes for the notorious torture sequence in ''Reservoir Dogs,'' while a bloody shootout to the strains of ''Danny Boy'' lays the groundwork for the continuing convention of violence paired with incongruent musical accompaniment. ''Amidst all the stylized dialogue, contrapuntal music cues and deadpan-character-actor-casting,'' Nayman noted, ''Quentin Tarantino (and his imitators) were taking scrupulous notes.''

By the time ''The Godfather Part III'' finally arrived on Christmas Day, critics and audiences may well have simply burned out on gangster movies. ''At the time, it was a massive, massive, massive disappointment,'' Kenny recalled, and it's easy to see why (without even revisiting Coppola's decision to cast his daughter Sofia, an acting novice, in a key role). It's a decidedly old-fashioned movie, steeped in the classical style of its predecessors, laying out its story of gang wars, political wrangling, Vatican intrigue and personal redemption in studiously paced (sometimes pokey, even), exposition-heavy dialogue scenes.

To its credit, ''Godfather III'' is also quiet, introspective and emotional in a way that its flashy brethren aren't. (Michael's weeping confession of ordering Fredo's death is one of the most wrenching scenes in the entire trilogy.) But by the time the picture landed at the end of that pivotal year, it seemed downright quaint. Coppola's film was true to itself, and the artful approach to a disreputable genre that had made the series seem, 18 years earlier, so revolutionary. But by ''Part III,'' the ''Godfather'' series had served its purpose; the gangster movie had evolved yet again, into something even more grimy, eccentric and alive.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/16/movies/goodfellas-godfather.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/16/movies/goodfellas-godfather.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From top: Ray Liotta, left, Joe Pesci and Robert De Niro in ''Goodfellas''

David Caruso, left, and Wesley Snipes in ''King of New York''

Mike Starr, left, Gabriel Byrne and Al Mancini in ''Miller's Crossing''

and Al Pacino, center, in ''The Godfather Part III,'' which did not live up to its high expectations in fall 1990. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WARNER BROS.

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[***What High Schoolers Think***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62MM-PKM1-DXY4-X0XC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 2091 words

**Body**

The winners of our student letter-writing competition offer opinions about anti-Asian bias, police brutality, financial literacy, meatless meat and more.

To the Editor:

Re ''Senate Votes to Combat Anti-Asian Hate Crimes'' (news article, April 23):

As an Asian-American, I applaud the Senate's swift, bipartisan passage of the Covid-19 Hate Crimes Act. The measure, however, constitutes a mere first step in the fight against anti-Asian violence. To further combat such bigotry, we must also promote Asian-American representation in education curriculums.

Teaching the Asian-American experience is imperative because U.S. history chroniclers often neglect it. In most textbooks, we're invisible, relegated to a few short paragraphs, even footnotes. That erases our stories from the record, perpetuating ignorance and contributing to our mischaracterization as a monolithic ''model minority'' or foreign threat, thus allowing xenophobia and discrimination to take root.

How, then, might we remedy this harmful narrative absence? Mandate comprehensive Asian-American studies. States could incorporate Asian-American history lessons into curriculum plans, placing emphasis on both overlooked milestones and figures in fields like politics. Just by increasing awareness, we'd help dismantle dangerous Asian-American stereotypes.

The momentum for this initiative is there, too. Illinois's Legislature is poised to approve a bill requiring public schools statewide to include a class unit on Asian-American history. The entire nation should follow Illinois's example.

Henry HsiaoPrinceton, N.J.West Windsor-Plainsboro High School North, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re ''The Emotional Toll at One School,'' by Annie Brown (Inside The Times, April 30):

Life right now feels a lot like a game of Jenga. Junior year in high school presents the constant need to build higher and higher, with each block leading closer and closer to a breaking point. When that breaking point comes, you are left to do nothing but watch in slow motion as everything crumbles.

I've been crumbling a lot lately; I think a lot of us have. Ms. Brown aptly says we are in a mental health crisis, and it seems the pandemic has really brought a light to it. I've been seeing an increase in the slogan ''Mental Health Matters!'' But does it? If it did, wouldn't more adults be pushing for funding in-school therapists? Advocating for the abolition of standardized testing? Actually listening and doing something about it?

So does my mental health matter? Does any of ours really matter? A lot of us are feeling like Joanna Lopez, the high school senior whom Ms. Brown writes about. We've lost hope, motivation and normal sleep schedules, as our mental health has gone down the drain. So I think it's about time our mental health actually starts to matter, because I'm really tired of this game.

Sophia MutellSimi Valley, Calif.Chaminade College Preparatory, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re ''Why is Perimenopause Still Such a Mystery?,'' by Jessica Grose (Well, April 29):

Angie McKaig is one of many who have been affected by the stigma surrounding menstruation. In recent months, hundreds of people who menstruate have reported abnormal changes in their menstrual cycle after being tear-gassed during protests last summer. Others have brought up changes in their periods after receiving the Covid-19 vaccine. And, of course, countless others suffer from diseases like endometriosis that are directly linked to menstruation.

When I founded my high school's chapter of a menstrual equity and advocacy club last fall, I knew there was a stigma surrounding menstruation, but I've only recently come to realize just how devastating its effects can be. While some of these impacts are temporary, they collectively expose a major gap in medical treatment and biological research.

Ms. McKaig's efforts to normalize perimenopause, within the medical community and the broader public (including those who menstruate and those who don't), will work toward destroying the stigma surrounding menstruation. When this stigma is gone, it is my hope that adequate research will finally be able to be conducted, which will make modern medicine more equitable and ultimately provide better health outcomes for people who menstruate.

Josie WestNew YorkHunter College High School, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re ''Race and the Coming Liberal Jolt,'' by Bret Stephens (column, April 27):

It is important to recognize that not every exchange between a Black person and a police officer that ends violently is a case of police brutality. Automatically labeling cases as such is counterproductive. That said, police brutality is still a real issue.

Mr. Stephens says we should ''recognize that young Black men commit violent crimes at a terribly disproportionate rate.'' We should recognize that there are systems in place that contribute to this, such as the school-to-prison pipeline, modern-day segregation and the African-American family structure resulting from slavery.

Mr. Stephens goes on to say that ''white privilege'' is a strange concept to ***working-class*** whites. Having white privilege does not mean you don't suffer, but it does mean that you don't suffer because of racial discrimination.

Police brutality is real. Instead of arguing, liberals and conservatives should focus on saving Black lives. People are dying.

Nivriti AgaramMonroe Township, N.J.Monroe Township High School, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re ''Pandemic Spurs Interest in Teaching Financial Literacy'' (Business, April 3):

A financial literacy course should be mandated in all schools. From covering topics like Roth I.R.A.s and credit cards to different investment opportunities such as real estate and the stock market, a financial literacy course will allow students to gain a wide array of knowledge useful to their future.

More people are on the brink of poverty than ever before, and learning about financial literacy could help young adults steer clear of going into tens of thousands of dollars of debt that takes years to pay off. I believe that personal finance should be made a mandatory class. A solid financial literacy course should not only be slides, lessons and tests; students should also have the chance to run stock market simulators and have their own investment portfolio, in which they can choose where to spend their money and see it grow.

It is more important than ever to be financially literate since the pandemic has affected countless individuals and left them financially stranded. People who are financially literate often are better able to remain on their feet.

Kaiwen ZhangSunnyvale, Calif.Archbishop Mitty High School, 9th grade

To the Editor:

Re ''Again, Top City Schools Take Very Few Students Who Are Black or Latino'' (news article, April 30):

I am one of the few Black students at Bronx High School of Science. I am exhausted from reading the dismal statistics every year. When admissions to the specialized high schools rely solely on tests that some students view as ''the way out'' because the schools nearby are underfunded and not rigorous enough, there is a problem.

The test should be eliminated; instead we should focus on creating great ''specialized'' schools in every corner of the city. There is no need for the hypercompetitive test prep that affluent families can easily afford or impoverished families have to sacrifice for. Elite colleges and universities do not depend on a single test for their admissions, but no one denies their merit.

The test, and the conditions surrounding the test, cannot be impartial to race when only 9 percent of offers to specialized high schools go to Black and Latino students, who make up the majority of the New York City public school system.

Dorothea DwomohBronxBronx High School of Science, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re ''Let's Launch a Moonshot for Meatless Meat,'' by Ezra Klein (column, May 3):

As someone who has followed a carnivorous diet for most of my life and just recently made the transition into vegetarianism, I agree with many of the points made in this article. There is little chance that the modern American diet in every household will become completely plant-based, but there is so much research to support not only the benefits of reducing meat consumption, but the feasibility as well.

People are, of course, entitled to consume whatever animal products they want to, but there has to be more government intervention in regard to the treatment of these animals and the drastic effects that this mistreatment has not only on us as humans, but on the planet as well. By encouraging farmers to make the transition into plant agriculture, the United States has the opportunity to lead the way in the fight against harmful animal agriculture practices.

There must be more legislation introduced to spread awareness of these issues. We should not merely strive to reduce our harm to the planet, but we should also do our best to undo the damage that has already been done.

Caitlyn TyrrellStamford, Conn.Westhill High School, 12th grade

To the Editor:

Re ''When Can We Declare the Pandemic Over?,'' by Aaron E. Carroll (Opinion guest essay, nytimes.com, April 27):

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Maggie ClarkePennington, N.J.The Pennington School, 10th grade

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''Drunk guy in the park doesn't equal a capital sentence,'' Julia Sherwin, a lawyer for the Gonzalez family, stated after Mario Arenales Gonzalez was pinned down and killed by three police officers in California. Day after day we hear about more and more brutal killings due to police brutality. George Floyd, Adam Toledo, Breonna Taylor, now Mario Arenales Gonzalez, and the list could go on and on.

The scary thing is, I begin to think: Who's next? I know the tragedy I read or hear about will not be the last one. This seems to be never-ending. Police brutality has been going on for so many years. What -- if anything -- can make it stop? That heavy weight seems to fall on the shoulders of our generation. We are the ''generation of change'' -- at least that is what all the adults say.

It is up to us to stop the police from giving ''capital sentences,'' seemingly without a second thought, to those who do not deserve it. We carry this heavy weight now. What will we do with it? Only time will tell.

Addy GortonNew YorkEthical Culture Fieldston School, 9th grade

To the Editor:

Re ''Your Home Is Asking: 'Why Are You Still Here?''' by Pamela Paul (Sunday Review, May 2):

For me, it feels as if my house isn't suddenly protesting my parasitic relationship with it but rather that it's always had these rough edges. Before the pandemic I'd been too busy going from school to home to computer to sleep to notice that creaking door or that tumbleweed of dog fur. Or maybe I'd always known about these things, but in the echoing cave of my cabin fever every odd squeak and groan amplifies into a complaint.

I didn't get out much before the pandemic, but now that I can't escape my house and it's creaking, I want nothing more than to get outside. I always measure my keenness to leave the house by looking at my dogs. If they're pitiful captives then I'm dying to get outside, but if they're enviably responsibility-free then I know I really want to be back in bed. Lately they've been seeming more dejected than carefree, but they do seem happier to have me around the house more, so that's nice.

Alex SkilesPortland, Ore.Northwest Academy, 12th grade

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/08/opinion/letters/high-school-letter-contest.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/08/opinion/letters/high-school-letter-contest.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rafal Milach/Magnum Photos FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 9, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Let’s Hear What High Schoolers Think; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62MF-55C1-JBG3-602N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 8, 2021 Saturday 11:00 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 2076 words

**Highlight:** The winners of our student letter-writing competition offer opinions about anti-Asian bias, police brutality, financial literacy, meatless meat and more.

**Body**

The winners of our student letter-writing competition offer opinions about anti-Asian bias, police brutality, financial literacy, meatless meat and more.

To the Editor:

Re “[*Senate Votes to Combat Anti-Asian Hate Crimes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/us/politics/senate-anti-asian-hate-crimes.html)” (news article, April 23):

As an Asian-American, I applaud the Senate’s swift, bipartisan passage of the Covid-19 Hate Crimes Act. The measure, however, constitutes a mere first step in the fight against anti-Asian violence. To further combat such bigotry, we must also promote Asian-American representation in education curriculums.

Teaching the Asian-American experience is imperative because U.S. history chroniclers often neglect it. In most textbooks, we’re invisible, relegated to a few short paragraphs, even footnotes. That erases our stories from the record, perpetuating ignorance and contributing to our mischaracterization as a monolithic “model minority” or foreign threat, thus allowing xenophobia and discrimination to take root.

How, then, might we remedy this harmful narrative absence? Mandate comprehensive Asian-American studies. States could incorporate Asian-American history lessons into curriculum plans, placing emphasis on both overlooked milestones and figures in fields like politics. Just by increasing awareness, we’d help dismantle dangerous Asian-American stereotypes.

The momentum for this initiative is there, too. Illinois’s Legislature is [*poised to approve a bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/us/politics/senate-anti-asian-hate-crimes.html)requiring public schools statewide to include a class unit on Asian-American history. The entire nation should follow Illinois’s example.

Henry Hsiao

Princeton, N.J.

West Windsor-Plainsboro High School North, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re “[*The Emotional Toll at One School*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/us/politics/senate-anti-asian-hate-crimes.html),” by Annie Brown (Inside The Times, April 30):

Life right now feels a lot like a game of Jenga. Junior year in high school presents the constant need to build higher and higher, with each block leading closer and closer to a breaking point. When that breaking point comes, you are left to do nothing but watch in slow motion as everything crumbles.

I’ve been crumbling a lot lately; I think a lot of us have. Ms. Brown aptly says we are in a mental health crisis, and it seems the pandemic has really brought a light to it. I’ve been seeing an increase in the slogan “Mental Health Matters!” But does it? If it did, wouldn’t more adults be pushing for funding in-school therapists? Advocating for the abolition of standardized testing? Actually listening and doing something about it?

So does my mental health matter? Does any of ours really matter? A lot of us are feeling like Joanna Lopez, the high school senior whom Ms. Brown writes about. We’ve lost hope, motivation and normal sleep schedules, as our mental health has gone down the drain. So I think it’s about time our mental health actually starts to matter, because I’m really tired of this game.

Sophia Mutell

Simi Valley, Calif.

Chaminade College Preparatory, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re “[*Why is Perimenopause Still Such a Mystery?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/us/politics/senate-anti-asian-hate-crimes.html),” by Jessica Grose (Well, April 29):

Angie McKaig is one of many who have been affected by the stigma surrounding menstruation. In recent months, hundreds of people who menstruate have [*reported abnormal changes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/us/politics/senate-anti-asian-hate-crimes.html) in their menstrual cycle after being tear-gassed during protests last summer. Others have brought up changes in their periods after receiving the Covid-19 vaccine. And, of course, countless others suffer from diseases like endometriosis that are directly linked to menstruation.

When I founded my high school’s chapter of a menstrual equity and advocacy club last fall, I knew there was a stigma surrounding menstruation, but I’ve only recently come to realize just how devastating its effects can be. While some of these impacts are temporary, they collectively expose a major gap in medical treatment and biological research.

Ms. McKaig’s efforts to normalize perimenopause, within the medical community and the broader public (including those who menstruate and those who don’t), will work toward destroying the stigma surrounding menstruation. When this stigma is gone, it is my hope that adequate research will finally be able to be conducted, which will make modern medicine more equitable and ultimately provide better health outcomes for people who menstruate.

Josie West

New York

Hunter College High School, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re [*“Race and the Coming Liberal Jolt,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/us/politics/senate-anti-asian-hate-crimes.html) by Bret Stephens (column, April 27):

It is important to recognize that not every exchange between a Black person and a police officer that ends violently is a case of police brutality. Automatically labeling cases as such is counterproductive. That said, police brutality is still a real issue.

Mr. Stephens says we should “recognize that young Black men commit violent crimes at a terribly disproportionate rate.” We should recognize that there are systems in place that contribute to this, such as the school-to-prison pipeline, modern-day segregation and the African-American family structure resulting from slavery.

Mr. Stephens goes on to say that “white privilege” is a strange concept to ***working-class*** whites. Having white privilege does not mean you don’t suffer, but it does mean that you don’t suffer because of racial discrimination.

Police brutality is real. Instead of arguing, liberals and conservatives should focus on saving Black lives. People are dying.

Nivriti Agaram

Monroe Township, N.J.

Monroe Township High School, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re “[*Pandemic Spurs Interest in Teaching Financial Literacy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/us/politics/senate-anti-asian-hate-crimes.html)” (Business, April 3):

A financial literacy course should be mandated in all schools. From covering topics like Roth I.R.A.s and credit cards to different investment opportunities such as real estate and the stock market, a financial literacy course will allow students to gain a wide array of knowledge useful to their future.

More people are on the brink of poverty than ever before, and learning about financial literacy could help young adults steer clear of going into tens of thousands of dollars of debt that takes years to pay off. I believe that personal finance should be made a mandatory class. A solid financial literacy course should not only be slides, lessons and tests; students should also have the chance to run stock market simulators and have their own investment portfolio, in which they can choose where to spend their money and see it grow.

It is more important than ever to be financially literate since the pandemic has affected countless individuals and left them financially stranded. People who are financially literate often are better able to remain on their feet.

Kaiwen Zhang

Sunnyvale, Calif.

Archbishop Mitty High School, 9th grade

To the Editor:

Re “[*Again, Top City Schools Take Very Few Students Who Are Black or Latino*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/us/politics/senate-anti-asian-hate-crimes.html)” (news article, April 30):

I am one of the few Black students at Bronx High School of Science. I am exhausted from reading the dismal statistics every year. When admissions to the specialized high schools rely solely on tests that some students view as “the way out” because the schools nearby are underfunded and not rigorous enough, there is a problem.

The test should be eliminated; instead we should focus on creating great “specialized” schools in every corner of the city. There is no need for the hypercompetitive test prep that affluent families can easily afford or impoverished families have to sacrifice for. Elite colleges and universities do not depend on a single test for their admissions, but no one denies their merit.

The test, and the conditions surrounding the test, cannot be impartial to race when only 9 percent of offers to specialized high schools go to Black and Latino students, who make up the majority of the New York City public school system.

Dorothea Dwomoh

Bronx

Bronx High School of Science, 11th grade

To the Editor:

Re [*“Let’s Launch a Moonshot for Meatless Meat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/us/politics/senate-anti-asian-hate-crimes.html),” by Ezra Klein (column, May 3):

As someone who has followed a carnivorous diet for most of my life and just recently made the transition into vegetarianism, I agree with many of the points made in this article. There is little chance that the modern American diet in every household will become completely plant-based, but there is so much research to support not only the benefits of reducing meat consumption, but the feasibility as well.

People are, of course, entitled to consume whatever animal products they want to, but there has to be more government intervention in regard to the treatment of these animals and the drastic effects that this mistreatment has not only on us as humans, but on the planet as well. By encouraging farmers to make the transition into plant agriculture, the United States has the opportunity to lead the way in the fight against harmful animal agriculture practices.

There must be more legislation introduced to spread awareness of these issues. We should not merely strive to reduce our harm to the planet, but we should also do our best to undo the damage that has already been done.

Caitlyn Tyrrell

Stamford, Conn.

Westhill High School, 12th grade

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The Pennington School, 10th grade

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It is up to us to stop the police from giving “capital sentences,” seemingly without a second thought, to those who do not deserve it. We carry this heavy weight now. What will we do with it? Only time will tell.

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New York

Ethical Culture Fieldston School, 9th grade

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Alex Skiles

Portland, Ore.

Northwest Academy, 12th grade

PHOTO:    (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rafal Milach/Magnum Photos FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 8, 2021

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[***Trump, Covid-19, U.K.: Your Monday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61RD-R2K1-JBG3-63CJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 10, 2021 Sunday 01:12 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1682 words

**Byline:** Natasha Frost

**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 the push to impeach President Trump for a second time, new variants of the coronavirus and a road map to fix the web.

Growing calls for a second impeachment

Momentum to impeach President Trump yet again continues to mount — even though it would have almost no effect on how long he remains in office. His term expires 11 days from now, and [*the most rapid conceivable Senate trial*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) would cover much of that time.

But the impeachment debate is still highly consequential. The Senate has the power both to remove Trump from office and to prevent him from holding any future office, potentially altering the future of American politics. [*Here’s what we know about the process*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

The House may vote as soon as Tuesday on [*an article of impeachment*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) charging Mr. Trump with inciting a violent mob that attacked the Capitol — but then delay sending it to the Senate for trial, to avoid hamstringing the first days of the Biden presidency.

(There’s more on the Capitol siege in our Back Story below.)

Opinion: Timothy Snyder, a historian of fascism and political atrocity, on [*Mr. Trump, the mob and what comes next*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Related:

* Apple, Google and Amazon have [*removed Parler*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), a social media app popular with Trump supporters, from their platforms, saying the company failed to moderate posts encouraging violence and crime.

1. Senator Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania became [*the second Republican senator*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) to call for Mr. Trump to resign. But Mr. Toomey questioned whether the Senate could convict him after he left office.
2. Dozens of people were [*arrested and charged*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) after the riot at the Capitol last week.
3. Stripped of Twitter, Mr. Trump [*now faces a new challenge*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing): how to thrust himself into the conversation on his own terms.

Around the world, new mutations of the coronavirus

Scientists continue to discover [*worrisome new variants of the virus*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), dousing some of the enthusiasm that arrived with the vaccines.

The [*new variant pummeling Britain*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) has already been found in about [*45 countries*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), from Singapore to Oman to Jamaica, but many countries are effectively flying blind, with little sense of how bad the problem may be.

The coronavirus has evolved as it made its way across the world, as any virus is expected to do. But experts have been startled by the pace at which significant new variants have emerged, adding urgency to the race between the world’s best defenses — vaccinations, lockdowns and social distancing — and an aggressive, ever-changing foe.

Here are the [*latest updates*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) and [*maps*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) of the pandemic.

In other developments:

* The infectious disease expert Dr. Anthony Fauci said he believed that [*theaters and other venues in America could reopen*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing)“some time in the fall of 2021,” depending on the success of the country’s vaccination rollout.

1. Not one person has been found to have contracted the coronavirus at any of [*Singapore’s three major universities*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), thanks to technology for enforcing social distancing, tough penalties and students willing to comply.
2. [*Pope Francis’s personal physician*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), who had been hospitalized for cancer treatment, died on Saturday as a result of the coronavirus.
3. Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip, [*received Covid-19 vaccines on Saturday*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).
4. Putting aside his misgivings, our correspondent in Russia opted to take the Sputnik V vaccine. [*Here’s why.*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing)

The art of the political lie

Donald Trump, Viktor Orban, Boris Johnson: Throughout the world, a readiness to [*deceive and be deceived on a sometimes colossal scale*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) has in recent years become a driving force in global politics.

Lying in politics is nothing new, of course. But these reality-redefining falsehoods put democracy at risk and may place people in danger.

Even Britain, regarded as a bastion of democracy, has fallen prey to the scourge, voting in 2016 to leave the European Union after untrue [*claims by the pro-Brexit camp*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) that an exit would mean that hundreds of millions of pounds paid every week to the E.U. could instead be spent on the country’s health service.

And in Hungary, the populist leader Mr. Orban has cast the Jewish financier and philanthropist George Soros as [*the shadowy mastermind*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) of a sinister plot to undermine the country’s sovereignty, replace native Hungarians with immigrants and destroy traditional values.

Retelling history: A year after the world’s first coronavirus lockdown, in Wuhan, China, a new exhibition there tells [*a stirring — but selective — story*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) of how the city’s sacrifices led to triumph over the coronavirus and, ultimately, rebirth.

If you have 6 minutes, this is worth it

The creator of the web wants to fix it.

Tim Berners-Lee, above, who helped create the World Wide Web three decades ago, believes the online world has gone astray: Too much power and too much personal data reside with tech giants like Google and Facebook, which have in turn become surveillance platforms and gatekeepers of innovation, he says.

But we still have the chance to remake our digital world. [*And Mr. Berners-Lee believes he knows how*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Here’s what else is happening

Indonesia crash: Divers have recovered wreckage and human remains [*from Sriwijaya Air Flight 182*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), which crashed into the ocean off Indonesia on Saturday with 62 people on board. The cause of the crash is not yet known.

Brexit: As Britain adjusts to its new life outside of the European Union, [*businesses are contending with delays, service cancellations and piles of paperwork*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Kyrgyzstan election: A populist politician and convicted kidnapper [*won a landslide victory on Sunday*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) in a snap presidential election triggered by a popular uprising against the previous government.

Lives lived: The Times reporter Neil Sheehan, who obtained the Pentagon Papers and helped reveal the secret history of U.S. decision-making on Vietnam, died on Thursday at 84. The story about [*how he pulled off the blockbuster scoop*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) can now be told.

Snapshot: In Paris, [*fishers congregate along the banks of the Seine*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), above. Once the playground of older, ***working-class*** men who whiled away their retirement days at the river, these days a younger and more diverse generation is disrupting the scene.

‘I Hate Men’: The debut from the French writer Pauline Harmange, one of a handful of titles from France that suggest a more frank approach to sexism and gender violence, has been [*met with success and backlash alike*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Have sperm, will travel: Some sperm banks are running low on their supplies during the pandemic. Enter [*the sperm kings of America*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

What we’re watching: [*This surprisingly personal video by Arnold Schwarzenegger*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), about his experiences as a child in postwar Austria, in light of the Capitol riot. “We need to heal, together, from the drama of what has just happened,” he said. “We need to heal, not as Republicans or as Democrats, but as Americans.”

Now, a break from the news

Cook: This [*spicy white bean soup*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) is a poem in a pot, filled with winter greens and rounded out with only a little ground turkey. It’s piquant, cozy and hearty — but surprisingly quick to make.

Watch: Did “Wonder Woman 1984” disappoint? Here are [*six great superhero movies*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) available to stream that should more than make up for it.

Do: Meet your goals for the new year by asking yourself: [*How can I make this easier?*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing)

Whether you’re here for recipes or recreation, [*At Home has our full collection of ideas*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) on what to read, cook, watch, and do while staying safe at home.

And now for the Back Story on …

Covering the U.S. Capitol siege

Many of the reporters who covered the storming of the seat of Congress last week did their jobs a few feet from drawn weapons. Others were faced with Trump supporters angry with the news media. We interviewed 11 journalists from a variety of outlets who covered the events. Here are excerpts from [*what they said*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Donie O’Sullivan, 29, CNN: We got to the barrier at the base of the Capitol as they broke through. It was a dramatic moment, but also surprisingly undramatic in that, you know, there were obviously not sufficient numbers of police or barricades.

Kadia Goba, Axios: Capitol Police came on the speaker to say there had been a breach. You go in this marble building, it seems sacred to the people that work there. You just don’t think of intruders gaining access to that portion of the building.

Marcus DiPaola, freelance: This guy grabs me by the shoulder and he’s like, “Who do you work for?” I’m like, “I’m a freelance photographer.” He’s like, “Have you ever worked for CNN?” And then he pulled me out of the way, and he charges in.

Zoeann Murphy, Washington Post: At around 10, I went back to my hotel, walking through these mobs of Trump supporters drunk in the lobby. I get back to my room, and that’s when I started to process the enormity of what had happened.

Robert Moore, Britain’s ITV: I went to sleep around 3 or 4 a.m. and was up a couple of hours later. What has surprised me is the level of interest in Europe, and in Britain, in particular, with the events here. This is seen as a seminal story, one that shatters the myth about the stability of American democracy.

That’s it for this briefing. See you on Tuesday.

— Natasha

Thank you

To Theodore Kim and Jahaan Singh 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 about the online planning and on-the-ground failures that contributed to Trump supporters’ attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Here’s our [*Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), and a clue: Where you might read “Idk, tbh” (four letters). [*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Matt Mason, the state poet of Nebraska, [*wrote “The Start”*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) in response to last week’s violent melee at the Capitol.

Matt Thompson, the editor in chief at Reveal from the Center for Investigative Reporting, is [*joining The Times as editor of Headway*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), our new journalism initiative to investigate a range of economic, social, health, infrastructural and environmental challenges.

PHOTO: A protester on Sunday near the U.S. Capitol carried a sign calling for Congress to impeach President Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Andrew Caballero-Reynolds/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 11, 2021

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[***Here to Help; Five TV Shows on Netflix You Might Have Overlooked***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60T7-FM91-DXY4-X2VV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 10, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 6648 words

**Byline:** By Noel Murray

**Body**

New shows come to the streaming giant all the time -- too many to ever watch them all. We're here to help.

Sign up for our Watching Newsletter to get recommendations on the best films and TV shows to stream and watch, delivered to your inbox.

Netflix adds original programming at such a steady clip that it can be hard to keep up with which of its dramas, comedies and reality shows are must-sees. And that's not including all the TV series Netflix picks up from broadcast and cable networks. Below is our regularly updated guide to the 50 best shows on Netflix in the United States. Each recommendation comes with a secondary pick, too, for 100 suggestions in all. (Note: Netflix sometimes removes titles without notice.)

We also have lists of the best movies on Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, along with the best TV and movies on Hulu and Disney+.

'Cobra Kai' (2018-present)

The first two seasons of the martial arts melodrama ''Cobra Kai'' originated on YouTube; but now both are making the move to Netflix before season three debuts next year. A revival of the ''Karate Kid'' franchise, this fan-friendly series -- which packs ''a surprising emotional punch,'' according to Bruce Fretts -- brings back the original's hero and villain, still played by Ralph Macchio and William Zabka. The show has enormous nostalgic appeal but is more complicated than the usual ''underdogs versus bullies'' arc. Instead, ''Cobra Kai'' gets into the family histories and the socioeconomic circumstances that made these characters who they are. (For more retro '80s vibes, watch the docu-series ''High Score,'' about the evolution of video games.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'Seven Seconds' (2018)

The writer and producer Veena Sud -- best known for the crime drama ''The Killing'' -- adapted a Russian film into ''Seven Seconds,'' a mini-series about the accidental killing of a Black teen by a white cop in New Jersey. While the movie was about police corruption in Russia, for the TV series Sud uses that premise as the starting point for a finely textured study of institutional racism. In a mixed review, our critic wrote, ''There's a purity of dark vision driving the series, if you're willing to take it without sweetener.'' (The procedural ''Criminal'' -- which dramatizes police interrogations in different countries -- is another intense show about arguably dubious law enforcement tactics.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'When They See Us' (2019)

As a producer and director, Ava DuVernay has tackled the Civil Rights Movement, in her Oscar-nominated film ''Selma,'' and racial bias in the American criminal justice system, in her Emmy-winning documentary ''13TH.'' In her four-part mini-series ''When They See Us,'' she dramatizes the story of the Central Park Five, who were convicted of raping and almost killing a jogger in New York City in 1989, then exonerated in 2002. Salamishah Tillet wrote that the Five ''emerge as the heroes of their own story -- and if we pay heed to the series's urgent message about criminal justice reform, ours too.'' (For another politically pointed true-crime drama stream ''Unbelievable,'' which examines gender bias in policing)

Watch it on Netflix.

'Crazy Ex-Girlfriend' (2015-19)

The musical-theater loving comic actress Rachel Bloom was a creator of and stars in this colorful dramedy, playing Rebecca Bunch, a depressed lawyer who gives up a promising career to move to the hometown of a man she briefly dated as a teenager. With its catchy songs (many of which were written or co-written by the Fountains of Wayne singer-songwriter Adam Schlesinger, who died in April) and its frank conversations about mental health, ''Crazy Ex-Girlfriend'' has an expressive, openhearted style, rooted in the creators' compassion for flawed people. Our critic wrote, ''The series is committed to the idea that every character can carry a story line, any person can be more than they appear.'' (For a more dramatic take on the TV musical, stream ''The Eddy,'' about a Parisian jazz club.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'Lucifer' (2016-present)

In this offbeat procedural, Tom Ellis plays the literal Lord of Hell, who abandons his dark kingdom to move to Los Angeles, where he leads a libertine lifestyle while occasionally helping a police detective solve crimes. The show's more conventional mystery stories are often complicated by the antihero's persistent struggles with his demonic responsibilities. Our critic panned the early episodes, calling them ''an incoherent mess.'' But the ''Lucifer'' creative team quickly found a unique voice and a devoted audience, who followed this clever and addictingly twisty series to Netflix when the service saved it from cancellation. (For another offbeat supernatural adventure, stream ''The Haunting of Hill House.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Peaky Blinders' (2013-present)

Through its first five seasons, the stylish and hard-hitting British crime series ''Peaky Blinders'' has told the story of Britain in the 1920s from the perspective of the organized gangs that consolidated power in the years after World War I. Cillian Murphy leads a knockout cast filled with familiar faces, in an immensely entertaining drama that covers the ways sweeping social changes created an environment where outlaws could become political insiders. Our critic compared it to HBO's ''Boardwalk Empire'' but said it ''has a more theatrical, artificial affect, somewhere between music hall and music video.'' (If you prefer more respectable British dynasties, try ''The Crown,'' which has a similar decades-spanning narrative.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'The Dragon Prince' (2018-present)

Though aimed at children, the animated adventure ''The Dragon Prince'' features one of the most fully realized fantasy universes of any recent television series. (And that's saying something lately.) Set in a magic-filled world where humans, elves and dragons warily coexist, the story follows three younger heroes who are working to bring peace to their land despite dangerous political machinations and the stirrings of war. There's a lot of action and plot packed into the first three seasons -- and apparently a lot more to come since the show has been renewed for four more. (Also highly recommended for youngsters who like animation and fantasy: ''She-Ra and the Princesses of Power.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'The Last Dance' (2020)

The Michael Jordan-era Chicago Bulls weren't just the most dominant NBA team of the 1990s; they were also a constant source of off-the-court drama, famed for their glamorous lifestyles and bitter interpersonal conflicts. The addicting 10-part docu-series ''The Last Dance'' arrived at just the right time in the summer of 2020, giving sports fans and TV fans something to look forward to each week with its detailed look back at the Bulls and Jordan's decade of glory and excess. Our critic Wesley Morris said: ''You could call these 10 hours a walk down memory lane. But that'd be like calling Mardi Gras a parade.'' (Another of 2020's most talked-about docu-series is the soapy, strange-but-true crime story ''Tiger King: Murder, Mayhem and Madness.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Last Chance U' (2016-20)

This documentary series follows college football hopefuls who are teetering on the edge of oblivion, trying to bounce back from the academic, discipline and injury problems that derailed their dreams. The first two seasons were shot at East Mississippi Community College, the third and fourth at Independence Community College, in Kansas, and the fifth at Laney College in Oakland, Calif. Each balances stories about the players with a look at their tutors and coaches, showing how they all must adjust their hopes and expectations. Our critic Margaret Lyons wrote, ''Alongside the show's ability to engender simmering loathing for broken systems is its love for its subjects.'' (For another engaging series about struggling athletes, from the same creative team, try ''Cheer.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Hannibal' (2013-15)

Although this dark and bloody crime series takes its name from its villain, Hannibal Lecter (Mads Mikkelsen) -- the brilliant psychiatrist and incorrigible cannibal introduced in the novels of Thomas Harris -- the show is just as much about Will Graham (Hugh Dancy), the F.B.I. profiler whose investigations lead him into Lecter's orbit. Over the course of three increasingly intense and operatic seasons, these two men circle each other in grim plots that incorporate elements of gothic horror and abstract art. Our critic was unimpressed with the early episodes of Season 1 but still praised its ''superior production values'' and ''stylishness,'' which become only more grandiose later on. (For another smart and artful take on the serial killer genre, stream ''Mindhunter.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'The Baby-Sitters Club' (2020-present)

Too often, when a new creative team revives an old favorite from pop culture's past, it tries to update the material by making it more edgy. That's not the case with the latest TV adaptation of Ann M. Martin's ''The Baby-Sitters Club'' book series, which retains the easygoing charm and engaging plotting of the novels. The show's creator, Rachel Shukert, doesn't shy away from the unique modern pressures on teenage girls and the younger kids they look after; but the episodic stories here are bright and breezy, first and foremost. Our critic called the show ''sweet but not cloying, smart but not cynical, full-hearted and funny enough to please both grown readers of the original books and the young target audience of the new series.'' (For another sensitive and fresh adaptation of classic young adult fiction, watch ''Anne With an E,'' based on ''Anne of Green Gables.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Supermarket Sweep' (1990-95)

There are only 15 episodes from the 1990s version of the game show ''Supermarket Sweep'' currently available on Netflix, but they're all a must-see for anyone who still has fond memories from childhood of watching ordinary consumers race through the aisles of a fake grocery store, hunting for the top-dollar items. From the fashions to the host David Ruprecht's questions -- all of which are very much of their time -- this series has an appealing time-capsule quality: It's both a fun game show and an inadvertently nostalgic look back at the brand-name products from the past. (For a more highbrow game, turn to ''Jeopardy!,'' which is also available on Netflix in episode ''collections'' that rotate regularly.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'She's Gotta Have It' (2017-19)

With his 1986 feature, ''She's Gotta Have It,'' the writer-director Spike Lee established his reputation as an ambitious and imaginative artist, equally adept at raunchy comedy, romantic melodrama, social commentary and lyrical interludes. The TV adaptation of the movie is just as generously eclectic. Lee and his writers use the original's story of a sexually liberated woman and her many suitors as a foundation for a freewheeling exploration of how Black bohemian life in today's Brooklyn differs from life there in the '80s. Our critic said, ''More expansive than interior, more defiant than dreamy, it's a vibrant if uneven work in heated conversation with itself.'' (For another exciting and creative take on contemporary Black culture, watch ''Dear White People.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Dark' (2017-20)

A bold hybrid of science-fiction, criminal procedural and domestic melodrama, the German-language series ''Dark'' stretches across multiple timelines -- from the 1920s to the 2050s -- to tell the story of how four small-town families are connected to a wave of missing-children cases. The plot is full of stunning twists, though ''Dark'' is more quietly contemplative than thrilling. Our critic wrote that the show ''seems to have been constructed with the aid of spreadsheets, but there's no denying its ingenuity.'' (The lush, romantic adventure series ''Outlander'' features a similar mix of earnest drama and time-travel.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'Star Trek: Deep Space Nine' (1993-99)

Of all the older ''Star Trek'' series, ''Deep Space Nine'' today feels the most ahead of its time. Set near a wormhole connecting distant quadrants of the galaxy, the show deals frankly with the tricky politics of a remote outpost where different species warily interact. It's a complex kind of space western: like ''Gunsmoke'' with phasers. And while mostly episodic, ''Deep Space'' does feature longer story arcs and subplots, more akin to 21st century television. Our critic called the whole ''Star Trek'' franchise ''part of our national mythology, a continuing megastory whose characters come to represent our abstract ideals.'' (Some of the concepts and characters on ''Deep Space Nine'' were introduced on ''Star Trek: The Next Generation,'' which is also on Netflix.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'New Girl' (2011-18)

''New Girl'' was initially promoted as a fish-out-of-water sitcom about a quirky young Los Angeles elementary school teacher named Jess (Zooey Deschanel) who is forced by circumstances to move into a cheap loft apartment with three bickering bros. But the show evolved into something sweeter and funnier as Jess became a more mature character, trying to coax her arrested adolescent roommates into adulthood. Our critic noted that after a shaky first season, the show became ''one of the most reliable and reliably affecting sitcoms on television.'' The seven-year run features a wealth of inspired comic moments and heartbreaking on-again-off-again relationships on a level with ''Friends.'' (For another high-energy sitcom about modern life in Los Angeles, try ''I'm Sorry.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Pose' (2018-present)

Set amid the New York City ''drag ball'' scene of the late '80s and early '90s, the exuberant drama ''Pose'' is groundbreaking for the way it employs a large cast of transgender women playing transgender women. The series deals with serious issues -- including the devastation of AIDS and the way the city's economic boom of the '80s bypassed the marginalized -- but it is surprisingly optimistic, emphasizing the community fostered by these underground fashion and dance competitions (hosted by the acid-tongued Pray Tell, played by Billy Porter). Our critic wrote that ''Pose'' ''stands, bold and plumed, and demands attention.'' (For a perspective on the mainstreaming of L.G.B.T.Q. culture since the 1990s, watch the makeover show ''Queer Eye.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'F Is for Family' (2015-present)

The stand-up comedian Bill Burr revives the frank, rowdy humor of Norman Lear's sitcoms with this adults-only cartoon, which for four seasons now has framed American life in the mid-1970s through the eyes of one ***working-class*** suburbanite family. Burr voices the main character, Frank Murphy, a foul-mouthed and opinionated Irish Catholic struggling with painful memories and a seemingly neverending string of disappointments. Though more funny than grim, ''F Is for Family'' does offer real insight into its characters' personalities and problems. Our critic said, ''The show's smarts creep up on you.'' (Also hilariously crude and surprisingly sensitive: the animated junior high sex comedy ''Big Mouth.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Kipo and the Age of Wonderbeasts' (2020-present)

An unusually bright and cheery post-apocalyptic adventure, this kid-friendly cartoon follows a teenage girl named Kipo (voiced by Karen Fukuhara), who leaves her society's underground hideaway to journey through a ruined landscape, populated by intelligent, superpowered mutant animals. There's peril aplenty, but the show's tone hardly ever turns too dark. The plucky heroine, her strange companions and the whimsical creature designs may remind animation fans of Hayao Miyazaki's imaginative take on young adult fantasy. Our critic said, ''It has a visual sophistication that separates it from the other shows.'' (For another beautifully illustrated and emotionally satisfying animated fantasy series, stream ''Avatar: The Last Airbender.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Waco' (2018)

The tragic 1993 standoff between the United States government and the Branch Davidian religious sect sparked a bitter debate many Americans are still having about the rights of the state to curtail individual freedom. The absorbing six-part mini-series ''Waco'' gives the issues a fair hearing, presenting different perspectives largely through the viewpoint of an F.B.I. crisis negotiator played by Michael Shannon. As he tries to keep his impatient bosses from using brute force, the hero calmly reasons with the passionate evangelist David Koresh (Taylor Kitsch) in long and refreshingly nuanced conversations. Our critic praised Kitsch's performance, saying he ''radiates sincerity and has an overflowing charisma.'' (For another excellent and enlightening dramatization of recent American history, watch ''Manhunt: Unabomber.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'The OA' (2016-2019)

Co-created by the indie filmmakers Brit Marling and Zal Batmanglij -- best-known for the arty science-fiction movies ''Sound of My Voice'' and ''The East'' -- ''The OA'' is a supernatural mystery saga, in which Marling plays a woman who returns from a seven-year disappearance, claiming to be a trans-dimensional traveler on a mission of salvation. The series has been divisive. Our critic called the first season, ''a beautifully painted eggshell'' with ''a hollow center.'' But there's a reason its fiercely devoted fanbase was angered when Netflix canceled ''The OA'' after two seasons (out of a planned five). Few shows are as effective at getting viewers to look deeper at their own reality. (For a more mainstream science-fiction series, try ''Lost in Space.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Money Heist' (2017-present)

In this hyper-kinetic Spanish action-adventure, an eclectic team of skilled crooks helps a mysterious genius known as ''the Professor'' steal over 2 billion Euros, in a caper that inevitably necessitates other crimes. The unpredictability and outsized characters of ''Money Heist'' have made it one of the rare foreign television series to find a big and appreciative audience in the United States. Our critic called it one of the best international TV shows of the 2010s, writing, ''This puzzle-box of a series employs time trickery, unreliable narration, flashy graphics and every other trick it can think of to keep you locked into its overheated plot.'' (For another widely popular adventure series -- with a much younger cast -- stream ''Outer Banks.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'The Midnight Gospel' (2020-present)

The animator Pendleton Ward follows up his cult favorite kids' series ''Adventure Time'' with something very different: a cartoon that combines surrealism and docu-realism, pitched to broad-minded grown-ups. The comedian Duncan Trussell provides the voice of the hero, Clancy Gilroy, a podcaster who travels across dimensions and through the universe, interviewing strange creatures in dangerous places. The illustrations are trippy, influenced by pulp science-fiction; but the dialogue is mostly casual and earnestly philosophical. The result is a show that on the surface looks like a mature animated fantasy but is actually a sweet and strange inquiry into what it means to be alive. Our critic called it ''expansive and full-hearted and cathartic.'' (For more TV-MA animation, try the eye-popping anthology series ''Love, Death & Robots''.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt' (2015-20)

Easily the most upbeat sitcom ever made about a woman who escaped from an oppressively patriarchal religious cult, ''Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt'' stars Ellie Kemper as Kimmy, who somehow keeps her youthful enthusiasm when she arrives in New York City after 15 years imprisoned in a bunker. A stellar supporting cast -- including Tituss Burgess as Kimmy's perpetually jobless roommate, Carol Kane as her activist landlord and Jane Krakowski as her overprivileged boss -- brings range to this show's unusually sunny, zingy vision of 2010s New York. Our critic wrote, ''The series leavens wacky absurdity with acid wit and is very funny.'' Don't miss the series's epilogue either: an experimental interactive movie called ''Kimmy vs. the Reverend.'' (The ''Kimmy'' creators, Tina Fey and Robert Carlock, also produced the equally hilarious but under-seen sitcom ''Great News.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Nailed It!' (2018-present)

At once a sly parody and a genuinely exciting example of a TV cooking competition, ''Nailed It!'' features unskilled amateur bakers trying to make eye-catching gourmet desserts. The pacing is brisk and the challenges are often ludicrous, but what makes this show so funny is that the drama and fanfare concerns some of the ghastliest culinary creations imaginable. Our critic wrote, ''As host, the comedian Nicole Byer strikes the perfect balance between encouragement and ridicule, and the competitors' self-aware humor ensures that the show never feels as if it's taking cheap shots.'' (If you would rather see skilled home cooks whip up beautiful-looking sweets, watch the internationally beloved competition ''The Great British Baking Show.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Community' (2009-15)

When this fast-paced campus comedy debuted, it seemed on-track to be a smarter-than-average mainstream sitcom, featuring a talented young ensemble -- including the future stars Donald Glover and Alison Brie -- alongside the TV veterans Chevy Chase and Joel McHale. (At the time, our critic called it ''Bracingly funny.'') Before long, the show's creator, Dan Harmon, started playing around with the structure and style of ''Community'' episodes, making the show at once aggressively postmodern and unusually personal. By the end of its six-season run, this series developed into something more like a provocative and hilarious video essay, meant to ponder whether television formulas still matter. (For another self-referential sitcom, watch ''Arrested Development.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Never Have I Ever' (2020-present)

For ''Never Have I Ever,'' the creator of ''The Mindy Project,'' Mindy Kaling, draws on her own teenage experiences as a first-generation Indian-American who very much wanted to be part of the popular crowd. This clever and heartfelt sitcom is set in the modern day, but it should still be relatable to anyone who can remember the family pressures, personal traumas and unrealistic expectations that keep some kids from ever feeling ''cool.'' Our critic said this show ''moves like a teen comedy and has a sort of 'Mean Girls' gloss on high school in terms of its anthropology of teendom and its school aesthetic.'' (For a different tale of teen life -- about misfits who reinvent themselves as high school sex therapists -- stream ''Sex Education.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Fauda' (2015-present)

This intense thriller was co-created by its lead actor, Lior Raz, who plays an IDF agent drawn out of retirement by the prospect of taking down a terrorist he thought he'd already killed. That one mission leads to unexpected complications and further side operations, some of them involving the hero's going undercover with his adversaries. The matter-of-fact scenarios in ''Fauda'' are an attempt to reflect the tricky politics and daily sacrifices of crimefighting in Israel. Our critic wrote that its story ''spirals out in increasingly messy strands of betrayal and violence.'' (For another crime drama about cultures in conflict, try ''Giri/Haji.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'The Repair Shop' (2017-present)

In the British reality series ''The Repair Shop,'' a team of skilled tinkerers, carpenters and restorers offer their services to people whose family heirlooms are broken. A concentrated half-hour of happiness, each episode features fine details about how to fix old gadgets and furniture, with an emotional payoff when the customers see their parents and grandparents' old treasures, looking as good as new. In a Times article about the comfort of low-intensity BBC programming during times of trouble, Amie Tsang called this show ''gentle escapism.'' (For more fascinating scenes of craftsmen at work, watch ''Blown Away,'' a reality competition for glass-blowers.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'The Twilight Zone' (1959-64)

The Emmy-winning television writer and producer Rod Serling said he created this creepy science-fiction anthology series in part because he was tired of having TV executives nix the social commentary in his scripts. With ''The Twilight Zone,'' Serling and a handful of top fantasy writers riffed on paranoia, prejudice, greed and alienation in twisty stories about inexplicable supernatural phenomena. Some of the best episodes have stuck with viewers for decades, coloring the way they see the world. In a Times appreciation, the writer Brian Tallerico called the show, ''an indelible part of the cultural lexicon.'' (For a 21st century spin on ''The Twilight Zone,'' watch ''Black Mirror.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Unorthodox' (2020)

Based on the Deborah Feldman memoir about life in a strict Hasidic Jewish community, this nerve-racking mini-series has Shira Haas playing Esty, a teenage bride who flees her husband in Brooklyn to move to Berlin, where she studies music. The plot in ''Unorthodox'' is split between the furor back home over Esty's departure and her tentative steps abroad toward living freely and thinking for herself. As the two narrative strands come together, the story becomes increasingly tense. Our critic called the show, ''a thrilling and probing story of one woman's personal defection.'' (For another well-written show about a person trying to renter mainstream society, stream ''Rectify,'' about an ex-convict who comes home after having spent most of his youth behind bars.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'Gentefied' (2020-present)

Set in the rapidly gentrifying Los Angeles neighborhood of Boyle Heights, this lively dramedy follows the dreams and disagreements of three very different cousins, all of whom have their own ideas about how to keep their grandfather's taco restaurant afloat. Savvy and often funny, ''Gentefied'' offers a snapshot of a Mexican-American culture in transition, in which deeply rooted traditions are threatened by economic and social change. Our critic wrote: ''The show's likability carries it through its rougher patches. This series puts a lot on its plate, and somehow, it all comes together.'' (For another addicting show about Angelenos' aspirations, watch the teen melodrama ''On My Block.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Better Call Saul' (2015-present)

The ''Breaking Bad'' prequel series, ''Better Call Saul,'' covers the early days of the can-do lawyer Jimmy McGill (Bob Odenkirk) as he evolves into the ethically challenged criminal attorney ''Saul Goodman.'' Throughout the show, Jimmy crosses paths with another ''Breaking Bad'' regular, the ex-cop Mike Ehrmantraut (Jonathan Banks), during Mike's first forays into the Albuquerque drug-trafficking business. In this frequently surprising and incredibly entertaining crime saga, these two very different men discover the rewards and the perils of skirting the law. Our critic wrote, ''Cutting against the desperation and violence that frame it, 'Saul,' in its dark, straight-faced way, is one of the funniest dramas on television.'' (Also a must-see? ''Breaking Bad,'' of course.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'Night on Earth' (2020)

Special low-light cameras give this six-part nature documentary a look and feel unlike that of any other show of its kind. ''Night on Earth'' features footage from around the world, shot under the cover of darkness, during times of day when some animals mate and hunt. The series's muted music and its soft Samira Wiley narration -- paired with the ghostly images of creatures moving stealthily through the night -- give it a uniquely otherworldly affect. The unusual style makes the wilderness seem all the more magical and precious. (For another perspective on the natural world, watch the docu-series ''Our Planet,'' which emphasizes the effects of human progress and climate change on the animal kingdom.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'The Circle' (2020-present)

In this fascinating and often surprising competition series, contestants are encouraged to be deceitful, even beyond the usual lies and exaggerations of reality television. Participants interact with one another using a social media app, on which they're allowed to create entirely fictional personas in order to make themselves seem more likable and sympathetic, and hence to win more power in the game. In an article about ''The Circle'' for The Times, Etan Smallman wrote, ''Amid the naked gamesmanship engendered by 'The Circle,' beautiful human stories emerge and generate the tears, most of them happy.'' (For another inventive and emotionally involving reality series, try ''Terrace House.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Grace and Frankie' (2015-present)

One of Netflix's longest-running series, ''Grace and Frankie'' features two show-business veterans, Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin, playing a couple of very different California women who move in together after their husbands (played by Sam Waterston and Martin Sheen) reveal they've been gay lovers for decades. The show is both mainstream and risqué -- like an adult version of the sitcoms the co-creator Marta Kauffman worked on in the 1990s when she helped bring ''Friends'' to the screen. Our critic praised the lead performances, saying that Fonda and Tomlin ''pull this comedy about 70-somethings back from the brink of ridicule.'' (For another lively sitcom about underdog women, watch ''GLOW.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'The Office' (2005-13)

The American version of Ricky Gervais and Stephen Merchant's satirical mockumentary series ''The Office'' softens some of the original's bite, but is still a funny and at-times harrowing look at the everyday miseries of white-collar work. When it debuted, our critic called it ''the kind of seditious, unconventional comedy that viewers say they want and that television executives insist could never draw a broad enough audience to be a network success.'' Viewers proved those execs wrong, though; the American remake ran for nine seasons. (Netflix doesn't currently carry the British ''Office,'' but it does have Gervais's and Merchant's very funny follow-up, ''Extras.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Derry Girls' (2018-present)

The Northern Irish playwright Lisa McGee pulls some bawdy coming-of-age comedy out of her own experience of growing up in Londonderry in the early '90s, during a time of intense sectarian violence between Catholics and Protestants. A cast of very funny young women bring zany energy to McGee's rapid-fire dialogue and fast-paced stories, which are more about typical teenage high jinks than about bombings and riots. Our critic said the show ''revels in the humor of specificity, the kind of exacting precision that somehow winds up feeling universal.'' (For another lively take on unconventional women, stream the medical melodrama ''Call the Midwife,'' set in '50s and '60s London.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'Stranger Things' (2016-present)

The first season of the retro science-fiction series ''Stranger Things'' arrived with little hype and quickly became a word-of-mouth sensation: Viewers were enchanted by its pastiche of John Carpenter, Steven Spielberg, Stephen King and John Hughes -- all scored to '80s pop. This story of geeky Indiana teenagers fighting off an invasion of extra-dimensional creatures from ''the Upside-Down'' has the look and feel of a big summer blockbuster from 30 years ago -- ''a tasty trip back to that decade and the art of eeriness,'' our critic noted, but ''without excess.'' (If you prefer '90s teen nostalgia, try ''Everything Sucks.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'I Think You Should Leave With Tim Robinson' (2019-present)

The former ''Saturday Night Live'' and ''Detroiters'' writer and performer Tim Robinson created (with Zach Kanin) this fast-paced and funny sketch series, which is steeped in the comedy of obnoxiousness. Nearly every segment is about how people react when someone in their immediate vicinity behaves rudely or strangely -- an astute depiction of how social mores sometimes fail us. More than anything, though, this show is just hilarious: ''Netflix's first great sketch comedy,'' Jason Zinoman wrote for The Times. (For more twisted humor from a comedian with a strong personality, watch ''Lady Dynamite.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'American Crime Story' (2016-present)

Ryan Murphy and Brad Falchuk, who created ''Glee'' and ''American Horror Story,'' bring dramatic verve to real-life celebrity murder stories in this anthology crime series, working with a team of talented collaborators. Season 1, ''The People v. O.J. Simpson,'' and Season 2, ''The Assassination of Gianni Versace,'' both feature unconventional narrative structures and star-studded casts; and offer fresh insight into well-known crimes. About ''The People v. O.J. Simpson,'' our critic wrote, ''Its triumph is to take a case that divided the nation into teams and treat everyone, vulture or victim, with curiosity and empathy.'' (For a more down-to-earth take on American crime, watch the equally superb ''American Crime.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Russian Doll' (2019-present)

The most obvious point of comparison for this oddball science-fiction dramedy is the movie ''Groundhog Day,'' since ''Russian Doll'' is also about a character who must relive the same day, over and over. Here, the trapped person is a sad-sack software engineer named Nadia (played by Natasha Lyonne, who also created the show with Leslye Headland and Amy Poehler); on the night of her 36th birthday, Nadia keeps dying and rebooting -- like a video game character. Our critic wrote, ''This is a show with a big heart, but a nicotine-stained heart that's been dropped in the gutter and kicked around a few times.'' (For more mind-bending TV, Netflix is also streaming the first two seasons of ''Twin Peaks.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'BoJack Horseman' (2014-20)

It's hard to explain ''BoJack Horseman'' to the uninitiated. It's a showbiz satire about a self-absorbed former TV star trying to mount a comeback. It's an existential melodrama about the fear of fading relevancy. Oh, and it's a cartoon in which that former star is an alcoholic horse. Our critic wrote, ''The absurdist comedy and hallucinatory visuals match the series's take on Hollywood as a reality-distortion field. But the series never takes an attitude of easy superiority to its showbiz characters.'' (One of the ''BoJack'' production designers, the cartoonist Lisa Hanawalt, also created the wonderful Netflix animated series ''Tuca & Bertie.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Monty Python's Flying Circus' (1969-74)

The British sketch comedy troupe Monty Python combined the cheekiness of old English music hall comics with the surrealism and self-awareness of the psychedelic era. Their series, ''Monty Python's Flying Circus,'' ran for four seasons from 1969-74 and was syndicated around the world, popularizing an absurdist approach to humor -- and to life -- that has inspired countless sketch comedians. Although the original show is 50 years old now, it ''hasn't aged a bit.'' (The ''Mr. Show'' creators, Bob Odenkirk and David Cross, were clearly inspired by Monty Python, as evidenced by their Netflix series ''w/Bob & David.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'The Good Place' (2016-20)

It's difficult to describe this fantastical metaphysical sitcom without spoiling its surprises. It's ostensibly about a selfish young woman named Eleanor (Kristen Bell), who with a handful of other iffy humans lands in a cockeyed version of the afterlife, managed by the cheerful kook Michael (Ted Danson) and his humanoid supercomputer Janet (D'Arcy Carden). The creator Michael Schur keeps viewers guessing; but even without the crazy plot-twists, the show provides food for thought. Our critic wrote, ''Schur seems to have found a deeper idea behind the show's premise: Is acting good the same as being good?'' (Schur is also one of the creators of the feel-good sitcom ''Parks and Recreation.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Halt and Catch Fire' (2014-17)

This thoughtful drama depicts the early years of the digital age, starting in the mid-80s, when personal computers and the internet became an integral part of our everyday lives. ''Halt and Catch Fire'' empathizes more than glamorizes, following the punishing step-by-step of four visionary engineers and programmers -- sometimes partners, sometimes rivals -- as they try (and often fail) to get their projects funded and shipped: ''Failure,'' our critic wrote, ''from this show's perspective, is not the end; it's how people level up.'' (For a different take on techies, stream the British sitcom ''The IT Crowd.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'Orange Is the New Black' (2013-19)

Based on Piper Kerman's memoir about serving time in a minimum security women's prison, ''Orange Is the New Black'' showcases an eclectic cast, representing a wide spectrum of social classes and sexual orientations in alternately comic and poignant stories about crime, passion and privilege. The show was created by Jenji Kohan, who, as our critic wrote, ''plays with our expectations by taking milieus usually associated with violence and heavy drama -- drug dealing, prison life -- and making them the subjects of lightly satirical dramedy.'' (Kohan previously did the same with her series ''Weeds.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'One Day at a Time' (2017-present)

This reimagining of the producer Norman Lear's long-running 1970s and '80s sitcom is true to the spirit of Lear's socially conscious kind of television. The new series's ***working-class*** Cuban-American family has feisty -- and funny -- discussions around their Los Angeles apartment about ethnicity, politics, religion, work-life balance and gender. The live-audience sitcom format allows the actors to carry on conversations at length, like in live theater. The show ''radiates delight,'' our critic wrote. Netflix canceled the show in 2019, but Pop revived it and will present a new season in March 2020. (For a different but very funny take on the struggles of ***working-class*** life, watch another Pop series, ''Schitt's Creek,'' which tracks a rich Canadian family that loses their fortune.)

Watch it on Netflix.

'Jane the Virgin' (2014-19)

This spoof of the Latin American soap operas known as telenovelas also wholeheartedly embraces their shtick. ''Jane the Virgin'' starts out as the story of an aspiring writer, accidentally impregnated through an artificial insemination mix-up. The show then gets wilder, with at least one crazy plot twist per episode -- all described with breathless excitement by an omnipresent, self-aware narrator. Our critic called it ''delicious and dizzyingly arch.'' (For another colorful, conceptually daring look at ***working class*** folks with artistic aspirations, stream ''The Get Down.'')

Watch it on Netflix.

'The West Wing' (1999-2006)

In the final years of the Clinton Administration and the early years of George W. Bush's, the writer-producer Aaron Sorkin offered a vision of presidential politics that appealed to viewers on the left and the right. ''The West Wing'' is driven less by divisive issues than by the personalities of an idealistic president (played by Martin Sheen) and his hard-working staffers, who collectively try to figure out the best ways to manage Washington bureaucracy and media hype. In 1999, our critic complained that the pilot episode was ''sometimes smart, sometimes stupid, eventually gooey and, despite its sharp cast, not often entertaining.'' And then ''The West Wing'' went on to win 26 Emmys. (For more Emmy-winning drama, watch the Netflix original ''Ozark,'' about white collar money-laundering in Missouri.)

Watch it on Netflix.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/article/best-tv-shows-netflix.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/best-tv-shows-netflix.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MACALL POLAY/FX)

**Load-Date:** September 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Amy Cooper’s 911 Call, and What’s Happened Since; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:609K-2WC1-JBG3-638X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 8, 2020 Wednesday 10:16 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1297 words

**Byline:** Troy Closson

**Highlight:** The white woman who called police on a Black bird-watcher in Central Park is facing charges. But not everyone agrees that&#39;s the right course of action.

**Body**

[Want to get New York Today by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

It’s Wednesday.

Weather: Have an umbrella handy for afternoon showers and thunderstorms. High in the mid-80s.

Alternate-side parking: Suspended through Sunday. [*Read about the new amended regulations here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

A Black man asked a white woman to leash her dog in Central Park, as rules required. She refused. Then she called the police to say she was being threatened.

A [*video of the Memorial Day episode*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) has amassed nearly 50 million views on Twitter. The timing, one day before protests erupted nationwide over the killing of George Floyd, only furthered its role in reigniting discussions about white people making [*false accusations to the police about Black people*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

Within 24 hours, [*Amy Cooper*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), the woman in the video, had publicly apologized and had been fired from her job.

Now, the Manhattan district attorney has [*brought criminal charges against her*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday). The man in the video, however, has not cooperated with the prosecution’s investigation.

[[*The case against Amy Cooper lacks a key element: The victim’s cooperation*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

Here’s what has happened since the video went viral.

The call

After the episode, the man in the video, Christian Cooper, an avid bird-watcher, [*gave an interview*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) to my colleague Sarah Maslin Nir. He told Ms. Nir that he was in the Ramble, a semi-wild section of Central Park, when he heard Ms. Cooper, who is unrelated to him, loudly calling after her dog.

After he asked her to leash the cocker spaniel, the two exchanged words. While he filmed on his phone, Ms. Cooper called the police.

“There is a man, African-American, he has a bicycle helmet and he is recording me and threatening me and my dog,” the clip shows Ms. Cooper saying to the 911 operator.

The reaction

Within hours of the video becoming public, countless celebrities, activists and city and state officials had weighed in. Mayor Bill de Blasio called the episode “racism, plain and simple.”

Last month, state lawmakers [*approved legislation that allows*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) people “a private right of action” if they believe someone called the police on them because of their race, gender, nationality or other protected class.

The charges

Ms. Cooper was charged on Monday with filing a false report, a misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in jail. She is scheduled to be arraigned on Oct. 14. If convicted, she could receive a conditional discharge or be sentenced to community service or counseling rather than jail time.

My colleague Jan Ransom wrote that the pending charge appears to be among the first that a white person in the United States has faced for wrongfully calling the authorities to make a complaint about a Black person.

But not everyone agrees that the charge is the right course of action.

“Some social justice advocates said that Ms. Cooper’s case should serve as a warning to others who might seek to wrongfully use the police in a racially charged encounter,” Ms. Ransom wrote. “But some argued that charging her criminally reinforces the idea that the only just consequence for wrongdoing should be incarceration.”

In a statement on Tuesday, Mr. Cooper said Ms. Cooper had “already paid a steep price. Bringing her more misery just seems like piling on.” He added, however, that he understood there was a greater principle at stake and that this should be defended. “So if the DA feels the need to pursue charges, he should pursue charges. But he can do that without me.”

From The Times

[*The Inside Story of Why Mary Trump Wrote a Tell-All Memoir*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Who Tore Down This Frederick Douglass Statue?*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*A Kennedy Wins N.J. Primary to Take on Trump Loyalist*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*The Cafe Has Black Lives Matter Signs. The Owner Voted for Trump.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

Want more news? [*Check out our full coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

The Mini Crossword: Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

What we’re reading

New York City is expanding internet access for low-income residents. [[*CBS New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

An upstate police officer was recorded kneeling on a man’s neck. The incident was under investigation. [[*Daily Gazette*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

There is no official count of New York children who have lost a parent or caregiver to Covid-19. But those who have are facing hardships beyond grief. [[*The City*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

And finally: An artist’s work uplifts Black women

The Times’s Sandra E. Garcia writes:

The faces of the women in her portraits are often partly covered by a mask tied behind their heads, tugging at braids, low buns or tufts of curls. They are dressed in uniforms that show their essential jobs, but their style and charisma shine through their everyday armor.

They are Black women who work in jobs that the coronavirus pandemic quickly revealed as essential to the functioning of New York City. And the images were all drawn by Aya Brown, 24, a Brooklyn artist. The drawings comprise Ms. Brown’s intimate [*Essential Workers series*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday). It’s not just the women’s jobs that are depicted through the lines and colors, but also their panache.

“My goal is to uplift Black women who look like me and inspire me — to give them a space to be seen and to bring awareness to them,” Ms. Brown said.

[[*Read more about Aya Brown*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

Women have been the heroes of the pandemic: One in three of the jobs held by women is essential, according to a [*Times analysis*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday). And most of the women who have essential jobs are women of color.

Ms. Brown started her series in April after a trip to the emergency room. She watched as her nurse, a Black, West Indian woman, took care of her while her doctor stopped by intermittently, and she began to think more about the other Black women going unnoticed “on the front lines.”

Some subjects of the portraits said they had never considered themselves essential workers before, a mind-set Ms. Brown aims to change by putting Black women at the center of her artwork. Even the materials she uses are intentional: She draws on brown paper, she said, because “Black bodies do not need to start from white.”

Chaédria LaBouvier, who curated a show at the Guggenheim Museum, said the series was not about being left out of the white, heterosexual, patriarchal art world, but about the Black ***working class*** saying, “I am already the center, and there is a lot of beauty here.”

It’s Wednesday — recognize your beauty.

Metropolitan Diary: The old place

Dear Diary:

As I walked across 11th Street to visit friends in the Village, the Larchmont Hotel caught my eye. An S.R.O. 50 years ago, it had been refurbished as a boutique hotel.

I had rented a room there while I was in graduate school. Living just opposite the elevator, I heard clanks at all hours. Feet shuffled. High heels clacked. Doors closed.

Two toilets and one shower served seven occupants on each floor. Five rooms opened off the corridor, with a more spacious room at each end. I coveted the larger room with tall windows overlooking the street.

In my room, a twin bed took up one wall; a sink hung on another. Most nights I cooked a little meal on a two-burner hot plate.

Days come clearest now. Grilled cheese sandwiches at the Joe Jr. Diner, occasional tea with a classmate. Each morning I walked to the New School library, where a flow of students returned to the same seats.

Fifty years later, my home now feels huge. Maybe it’s expanded since my husband, Jerry, died. Through the window, I glimpse the Taconic Range. Geese traverse the sky. Yet the hotel resides within me: radio, hot plate, stacked textbooks.

Morning stillness links my ranch house and the Larchmont, a silence heightened by refrigerator rumblings, furnace clicks, a snowplow passing.

I’ve been alone before.

— Cecele Kraus

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We’re experimenting with the format of New York Today. What would you like to see more (or less) of? Post a comment or email us: [*nytoday@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Christian Cooper FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Why a Proud Record, 0 for 31, Is Under Threat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61R2-2F31-JBG3-60RF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Sports Desk; Pg. 11; ON SOCCER

**Length:** 1622 words

**Byline:** By Rory Smith

**Body**

Schalke can match the Bundesliga record for futility this weekend, to the dismay of the team that has held the mark for generations. But the club's darkest days lie ahead.

By his own admission, Almir Numic is quite enjoying the media circus. Over the last couple of months, television crews have beaten an increasingly frequent path to Neukölln, the district of Berlin that is home to Tasmania, the soccer team he runs. Sky Sports was there early in December. Germany's Sport1 has been down twice.

There have been countless requests for interviews -- Suddeutsche Zeitung, Kicker, Der Spiegel and Deutsche Welle, and then ESPN and El País (and The New York Times) -- and prime-time radio spots, too. His quotes have reached parts of the world most fifth-division amateur teams do not reach: picked up in China and Australia, cited by the BBC and France24.

All of them have asked to hear Numic's view on the curiously cheering story that has Tasmania at its heart. For more than half a century, the club's claim to fame has been that it is the worst team ever to have competed in the Bundesliga. In its only campaign in Germany's top division, in 1965 and 1966, it failed to win for 31 games in a row. No team before or since has ever performed quite so badly.

Now, though, its record is under threat. Schalke -- a club of a vastly different order of magnitude to Tasmania -- has not won a Bundesliga game since January 17 last year, and with ominous inexorability it has been ticking toward Tasmania's high (or low) watermark ever since.

Conceding a late equalizer at Augsburg on Dec. 13 made it 27 matches without a win for Schalke. Nos. 28 and 29 came before Christmas, with home defeats to Arminia Bielefeld and S.C. Freiburg. In Berlin last Saturday, under its fourth manager of the season, Schalke lost to Hertha B.S.C., 3-0. Failure to beat Hoffenheim at home on Saturday means one of Germany's proudest clubs will equal Tasmania's dismal record.

What has made Numic -- and Tasmania -- such a draw for the news media, though, is that rather than welcoming this as a chance to shed its unwanted place in history, the club is instead desperate to keep it. ''We are so proud of our record,'' Numic said. ''Of course, for the players at the time it would not have been a happy experience, but now we can step back and laugh about it. It is part of our identity.''

There is, Numic said, a degree of irony in the club's celebration of its ignominy, as the T-shirts for sale on its Facebook page indicate: They carry Tasmania's crest, accompanied by the phrase ''Rekordmeister'' on the front and a list of the ''achievements'' from the 1965-66 season on the back.

The club has, though, found that many of its fans take sincere pride in Tasmania's record. Before the Bundesliga game at Hertha last week, a group of them even traveled to Berlin's Olympic Stadium to offer Schalke their support. ''The fans feel that the negative record provides the club a certain cult status,'' Numic said. ''We do speak with them about it, and it would be a shame to lose it.''

It is hard to imagine that, even as time softens the pain, their peers at Schalke would ever take the same attitude. Unlike Tasmania -- which was only admitted to the Bundesliga for that one fateful season after Hertha failed to meet the league's financial requirements, and the German authorities decided that having a team in Berlin would be good public relations -- Schalke is one of the country's grandees, a club owned by some 160,000 members, the proprietor of a stadium that holds 62,000 people, a team that considers itself a peer of Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund.

It is less than a decade since Schalke, its team then featuring the Spanish forward Raúl González and the young goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, appeared in the semifinals of the Champions League. It is not quite three since the club, under its bright young coach Domenico Tedesco, finished as runner-up to Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga. It still regularly ranks as one of the world's wealthiest clubs: According to the financial analysts Deloitte, it had the 15th-highest revenues in soccer in 2019.

The speed and scale of its decline, from that perspective, is shocking. Only 18 months or so separated its last appearance in the Champions League's lucrative knockout rounds in March 2019 and the day in November when the forward Mark Uth described the team's performances as ''helpless'' and admitted that he ''felt like going into the locker room and crying.''

From another perspective, though, it feels as if Schalke's demise has been brewing for some time. Its collapse is a financial failure -- the club's debts stood, even before the pandemic, at around $240 million, a consequence of years of living beyond its means -- but it is perhaps most easily understood as a sporting one.

At the start of last season, Schalke promoted its young goalkeeper Alexander Nübel to the club's captaincy. He was the latest in a long line of youth products in which the club took immense pride -- it has a particular ability to nurture goalkeepers, and has a reputation as the ''Harvard'' of that particular art -- and, at 23, he was seen as Schalke's future.

Six months later, with his contract set to run out, Nübel signed an agreement with Bayern Munich. Six months after that, he left the club that had developed him, and it did not receive so much as a cent in compensation. If that had been a one-time affair, an exception to the rule, then it might have been understandable: All clubs, after all, sometimes lose out in negotiations, or find themselves backed into a corner.

But it was not. Not long before the Nübel standoff, Schalke was described as ''the club that refuses to play Moneyball'' in an article in The Ringer that asked if the team's apparent willingness to let stars run down their contracts was a deliberate and potentially beneficial policy. Schalke had done it, after all, with Joel Matip and Leon Goretzka and Sead Kolasinac and Max Meyer and, most notably of all, with the man Nübel is now being groomed to replace at Bayern: Neuer.

In hindsight, such an interpretation of Schalke's approach goes beyond kind and looks, instead, close to delusional. The failure to tether the club's best players to contracts, or at least to sell them while they retained some market value, was proof not of planning but of rampant dysfunction. According to a number of people familiar with the workings of the club, the departures highlight a chronic and yearslong dearth of foresight, knowledge, connections and leadership in Schalke's hierarchy.

The consequences are plain to see. Even a conservative estimate of those players' values would top $100 million; instead, Schalke received nothing. Deprived of that income, the quality of player the club was able to attract steadily declined until the first team was staffed entirely by overpromoted hopefuls and underpowered journeymen.

This summer, facing more than a year without matchday income and a mountain of debt, the club was unable to reinvest any of the money it received for the loan of Weston McKennie to Juventus. Despite losing one of his best players on the eve of the new season, Schalke's coach at the time, David Wagner, was not permitted to pay for a single permanent signing to reinforce his squad.

At least one loan deal collapsed because Schalke, the 15th-richest club in the world, could not pay the player's relatively reasonable salary. Wagner was forced to start the season relying on a host of players who had previously been sent out on loan, their time at Schalke apparently at an end. He was fired after two games.

That was no surprise, either. Since its appearance in the Champions League semifinal, Schalke has cycled through 12 managers, few of them given more than a season to fix a broken team. It has turned back to Huub Stevens no fewer than three times.

At the same time, the club has found relations with its fans increasingly strained, as an institution revered for its ***working-class*** values and its traditionalism signed a sponsorship deal with the Russian energy giant Gazprom and several of its executives encouraged the permitting private investment into the team.

Its longstanding chairman, Clemens Tönnies -- one of Germany's richest but least popular men, and for years the apparent guarantor for Schalke's spending habit -- was forced to step down, first temporarily after making a series of racially-charged remarks and then permanently, after a coronavirus outbreak at one of his meat-processing plants. To some, Tonnies' return is the only way out of Schalke's financial mess. To others, he is the one ultimately responsible for overseeing the decline. It is possible that he is both.

Whatever happens this weekend and next -- whether Schalke equals and then surpasses Tasmania's record, or avoids it at the last hurdle -- is, for Schalke, something of a sideshow. This is not the nadir: That may not even come with relegation, which now seems inevitable, but with the attempt to manage the club's debts, and find a way back, when it is deprived of the income it is guaranteed just by being in the Bundesliga. The record, in reality, is only one milestone on a long and perilous journey.

For Numic and Tasmania, by contrast, their role in the story is drawing to a close. Perhaps Schalke will take their record. Perhaps it will not. Either way, the media circus will depart. Numic is sanguine about that. It will be of little solace to Schalke, but at Tasmania, there is a confidence that, on some level, it will always be the worst at something.

''We have other negative records that we hold,'' Numic said, cheerily. ''So there are other occasions when people speak about us.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/08/sports/soccer/schalke-tasmania-record.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/08/sports/soccer/schalke-tasmania-record.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Schalke, which in 2019 ranked 15th in the world in revenue, can equal Tasmania's mark of 31 straight winless games on Saturday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHIAS SCHRADER/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 9, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How ‘Goodfellas’ and the Gangster Class of 1990 Changed Hollywood; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60VH-TGS1-JBG3-60W6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1495 words

**Byline:** Jason Bailey

**Highlight:** That autumn, “The Godfather Part III” was hotly anticipated. Instead, the Scorsese movie and other crime tales raised the stakes for filmmakers to come.

**Body**

That autumn, “The Godfather Part III” was hotly anticipated. Instead, the Scorsese movie and other crime tales raised the stakes for filmmakers to come.

“As far back as I can remember, I always wanted to be a gangster,” Henry Hill (Ray Liotta) muses near the start of “Goodfellas,” and in the fall of 1990, when that film was released, it seemed that every filmmaker of note wanted to make a gangster movie. Martin Scorsese’s “Goodfellas” led the way that September, with Phil Joanou’s “State of Grace” and Abel Ferrara’s “King of New York” opening later that month. The Coen brothers’ “Miller’s Crossing” followed in October. And in December came what was expected to be the biggest title of them all: “The Godfather Part III,” the long-awaited follow-up to the Francis Ford Coppola films that most audiences considered the gold standard of gangster pictures.

Such a wave of similarly minded movies hadn’t been seen since the glut of rip-offs that followed the release of the original “Godfather.” The torturous time and effort required of any major production made their rollouts more coincidental than coordinated, though it seems safe to surmise that studios were hoping to ride the wave of interest in “Godfather III.” Yet that film, the most hotly anticipated and (initially) the most financially successful, was the least enthusiastically received — and left the smallest cultural footprint.

Instead, the other gangster movies of that fateful fall 30 years ago would prove far more influential: they combined to draw a map of the routes the crime movie, and movies in general, would take in the coming decade.

None made their mark more than [*“Goodfellas,”*](http://nytimes.com/1990/09/19/movies/review-film-a-cold-eyed-look-at-the-mob-s-inner-workings.html) drawn from Nicholas Pileggi’s book “Wiseguy” and based on the real-life exploits of the New York mob underling-turned-informant Henry Hill. Scorsese was 47 when it was released, but he infused the picture with the furious energy and stylistic razzle-dazzle of a film school kid: elaborate camera movements, snazzy freeze frames, hard-boiled voice-over, non-chronological storytelling and tighter needle drops than a downtown DJ set.

The filmmaking is intoxicating because it makes Hill’s life of crime seem so seductive; it draws us into his world. So Scorsese crafts a subjective experience, often literally: in the [*shot introducing the various gangsters*](http://nytimes.com/1990/09/19/movies/review-film-a-cold-eyed-look-at-the-mob-s-inner-workings.html) and hangers-on, all of whom speak directly into the camera (“I’m gonna go get the papers, get the papers”), or the notorious [*“May 11, 1980” sequence*](http://nytimes.com/1990/09/19/movies/review-film-a-cold-eyed-look-at-the-mob-s-inner-workings.html), which uses jagged cutting, jittery camerawork and battling music cues to put us directly into the head of the film’s coked-out, paranoid protagonist. Compared with the respectful distance of earlier gangster stories (even “The Godfather” movies), the immediacy of “Goodfellas” feels like an earthquake.

It left unmistakable fingerprints on some of the most important films and television shows to follow. “‘Boogie Nights’ is very much ‘Goodfellas,’” said Glenn Kenny, author of the new book “Made Men: The Story of ‘Goodfellas,’” who has also written for The New York Times. He also sees a clear connection to Quentin Tarantino’s “Pulp Fiction” and “Reservoir Dogs” — particularly the recurring motif of gangsters who hang out, talk trash and do their jobs like, well, jobs. Most gangster movies focus on the big bosses and godfathers; “Goodfellas” and its descendants are about the grinders, the middlemen, the ***working-class*** thugs.

Kenny also pinpoints the notion of “mobsters having other aspects of their lives,” everyday marital and familial woes, a key ingredient in David Chase’s subsequent groundbreaking series, “The Sopranos.” Chase has called the film “his Quran, so to speak,” drawing not only from the film’s tone and perspective for “The Sopranos,” but also from its cast, which features several future “Sopranos” co-stars.

The hoods in [*“State of Grace”*](http://nytimes.com/1990/09/19/movies/review-film-a-cold-eyed-look-at-the-mob-s-inner-workings.html) are, if anything, even smaller-time, expending their energies on nowhere hustles, petty theft and extortion. Foot soldiers for the Irish mob in Hell’s Kitchen, they’re scrappy street guys, and the relationship at the film’s center is a direct descendant of Scorsese’s 1974 film “Mean Streets”; both pair a sensible, centered earner (Sean Penn here, Harvey Keitel in “Mean Streets”) with a dangerous, trigger-happy yet charismatic hothead (Gary Oldman, standing in for Robert De Niro). That dynamic would reappear in many an indie ’90s crime movie (most notably Nick Gomez’s [*“Laws of Gravity”*](http://nytimes.com/1990/09/19/movies/review-film-a-cold-eyed-look-at-the-mob-s-inner-workings.html)), while the ethnic and geographic sensibility of “State of Grace” is a clear influence on “Little Odessa” and “The Yards,” the early crime films of the director James Gray.

“State of Grace” is also noteworthy for its acknowledgment of the separation (and tension) between the Irish and Italian mob, expanding the insular Italian perspective typical of gangster narratives. Abel Ferrara would go even further in “King of New York,” which is in many ways a direct throwback to the traditional gangster movies of the 1930s, featuring a charismatic lead (Christopher Walken), a colorful cast of supporting players and a heady serving of social issues.

But “King” broke radically from norms in its racial makeup (its cast included the future ’90s breakout stars Wesley Snipes, Laurence Fishburne and Giancarlo Esposito). Walken’s underworld boss Frank White is, in fact, white, but his crew is mostly Black. Post-“Godfather” “blaxploitation” movies like Larry Cohen’s “Black Caesar” were as strictly segregated as their mainstream counterparts, but here, Ferrara not only integrates the milieu, but casts the film’s old world “Godfather”-style Italian gangsters as outright relics, barriers for his forward-glancing criminals to remove quickly and efficiently.

A video store favorite, “King of New York” would have a profound influence on ’90s hip-hop culture (the Notorious B.I.G. frequently referred to himself as “the Black Frank White”); it would also serve as the template for several Black-led gangster movies of the ’90s, including “New Jack City” and “Sugar Hill” (both fronted by “King” co-star Snipes).

Like “The Godfather,” Joel and Ethan Coen’s “Miller’s Crossing” begins with a portly, mustachioed man asking a mob boss for a favor. But “Miller’s” is a beast of its own, filtering the conventions of the gangster picture through the Coens’ distinctive sensibility, and it’s full of their trademarks: ornate, flourish-filled dialogue delivered at a mile a minute; complex, often dizzying plotting; exhilarating camerawork; bellowing overweight men; John Turturro.

“The tentative title for ‘Miller’s Crossing’ was ‘The Big Head,’” Adam Nayman, author of “The Coen Brothers: This Book Really Ties the Films Together,” explained by email. “Other crime films have higher body counts, but I’d wager there aren’t many with as much discussion about the intricacies of introducing a bullet into the brain.”

The framing, staging and setting of a warehouse rough-up sequence are obvious prototypes for the notorious torture sequence in “Reservoir Dogs,” while a bloody shootout to the strains of “Danny Boy” lays the groundwork for the continuing convention of violence paired with incongruent musical accompaniment. “Amidst all the stylized dialogue, contrapuntal music cues and deadpan-character-actor-casting,” Nayman noted, “Quentin Tarantino (and his imitators) were taking scrupulous notes.”

By the time [*“The Godfather Part III”*](http://nytimes.com/1990/09/19/movies/review-film-a-cold-eyed-look-at-the-mob-s-inner-workings.html) finally arrived on Christmas Day, critics and audiences may well have simply burned out on gangster movies. “At the time, it was a massive, massive, massive disappointment,” Kenny recalled, and it’s easy to see why (without even revisiting Coppola’s decision to cast his daughter Sofia, an acting novice, in a key role). It’s a decidedly old-fashioned movie, steeped in the classical style of its predecessors, laying out its story of gang wars, political wrangling, Vatican intrigue and personal redemption in studiously paced (sometimes pokey, even), exposition-heavy dialogue scenes.

To its credit, “Godfather III” is also quiet, introspective and emotional in a way that its flashy brethren aren’t. (Michael’s weeping confession of ordering Fredo’s death is one of the most wrenching scenes in the entire trilogy.) But by the time the picture landed at the end of that pivotal year, it seemed downright quaint. Coppola’s film was true to itself, and the artful approach to a disreputable genre that had made the series seem, 18 years earlier, so revolutionary. But by “Part III,” the “Godfather” series had served its purpose; the gangster movie had evolved yet again, into something even more grimy, eccentric and alive.

PHOTOS: From top: Ray Liotta, left, Joe Pesci and Robert De Niro in “Goodfellas”; David Caruso, left, and Wesley Snipes in “King of New York”; Mike Starr, left, Gabriel Byrne and Al Mancini in “Miller’s Crossing”; and Al Pacino, center, in “The Godfather Part III,” which did not live up to its high expectations in fall 1990. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WARNER BROS.; RETEITALIA; 20TH CENTURY FOX; PARAMOUNT PICTURES)

**Load-Date:** September 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A Year Without a Win Is About to Get Worse; On Soccer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61PV-Y161-DXY4-X48H-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Rory Smith

**Highlight:** Schalke can match the Bundesliga record for futility this weekend, to the dismay of the team that has held the mark for generations. But the club’s darkest days lie ahead.

**Body**

Schalke can match the Bundesliga record for futility this weekend, to the dismay of the team that has held the mark for generations. But the club’s darkest days lie ahead.

By his own admission, Almir Numic is quite enjoying the media circus. Over the last couple of months, television crews have beaten an increasingly frequent path to Neukölln, the district of Berlin that is home to Tasmania, the soccer team he runs. Sky Sports was there early in December. Germany’s Sport1 has been down twice.

There have been countless requests for interviews — Suddeutsche Zeitung, Kicker, Der Spiegel and Deutsche Welle, and then ESPN and El País (and The New York Times) — and prime-time radio spots, too. His quotes have reached parts of the world most fifth-division amateur teams do not reach: picked up in China and Australia, cited by the BBC and France24.

All of them have asked to hear Numic’s view on the curiously cheering story that has Tasmania at its heart. For more than half a century, the club’s claim to fame has been that it is the worst team ever to have competed in the Bundesliga. In its only campaign in Germany’s top division, in 1965 and 1966, it failed to win for 31 games in a row. No team before or since has ever performed quite so badly.

Now, though, its record is under threat. Schalke — a club of a vastly different order of magnitude to Tasmania — has not won a Bundesliga game since January 17 last year, and with ominous inexorability it has been ticking toward Tasmania’s high (or low) watermark ever since.

Conceding a late equalizer at Augsburg on Dec. 13 made it 27 matches without a win for Schalke. Nos. 28 and 29 came before Christmas, with home defeats to Arminia Bielefeld and S.C. Freiburg. In Berlin last Saturday, under its fourth manager of the season, Schalke lost to Hertha B.S.C., 3-0. Failure to beat Hoffenheim at home on Saturday means one of Germany’s proudest clubs will equal Tasmania’s dismal record.

What has made Numic — and Tasmania — such a draw for the news media, though, is that rather than welcoming this as a chance to shed its unwanted place in history, the club is instead [*desperate to keep it*](https://twitter.com/dw_sports/status/1347138873692971009?s=20). “We are so proud of our record,” Numic said. “Of course, for the players at the time it would not have been a happy experience, but now we can step back and laugh about it. It is part of our identity.”

There is, Numic said, a degree of irony in the club’s celebration of its ignominy, as the [*T-shirts*](https://twitter.com/dw_sports/status/1347138873692971009?s=20) for sale on its Facebook page indicate: They carry Tasmania’s crest, accompanied by the phrase “Rekordmeister” on the front and a list of the “achievements” from the 1965-66 season on the back.

The club has, though, found that many of its fans take sincere pride in Tasmania’s record. Before the Bundesliga game at Hertha last week, a group of them even traveled to Berlin’s Olympic Stadium to offer Schalke their support. “The fans feel that the negative record provides the club a certain cult status,” Numic said. “We do speak with them about it, and it would be a shame to lose it.”

It is hard to imagine that, even as time softens the pain, their peers at Schalke would ever take the same attitude. Unlike Tasmania — which was only admitted to the Bundesliga for that one fateful season after Hertha failed to meet the league’s financial requirements, and the German authorities decided that having a team in Berlin would be good public relations — Schalke is one of the country’s grandees, a club owned by some 160,000 members, the proprietor of a stadium that holds 62,000 people, a team that considers itself a peer of Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund.

It is less than a decade since Schalke, its team then featuring the Spanish forward Raúl González and the young goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, appeared in the semifinals of the Champions League. It is not quite three since the club, under its bright young coach Domenico Tedesco, finished as runner-up to Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga. It still regularly ranks as one of the world’s wealthiest clubs: According to the financial analysts [*Deloitte*](https://twitter.com/dw_sports/status/1347138873692971009?s=20), it had the 15th-highest revenues in soccer in 2019.

The speed and scale of its decline, from that perspective, is shocking. Only 18 months or so separated its last appearance in the Champions League’s lucrative knockout rounds in March 2019 and the day in November when the forward Mark Uth described the team’s performances as “helpless” and admitted that he “felt like going into the locker room and crying.”

From another perspective, though, it feels as if Schalke’s demise has been brewing for some time. Its collapse is a financial failure — the club’s debts stood, even before the pandemic, at around $240 million, a consequence of years of living beyond its means — but it is perhaps most easily understood as a sporting one.

At the start of last season, Schalke promoted its young goalkeeper Alexander Nübel to the club’s captaincy. He was the latest in a long line of youth products in which the club took immense pride — it has a particular ability to nurture goalkeepers, and has a reputation as the “Harvard” of that particular art — and, at 23, he was seen as Schalke’s future.

Six months later, with his contract set to run out, Nübel signed an agreement with Bayern Munich. Six months after that, he left the club that had developed him, and it did not receive so much as a cent in compensation. If that had been a one-time affair, an exception to the rule, then it might have been understandable: All clubs, after all, sometimes lose out in negotiations, or find themselves backed into a corner.

But it was not. Not long before the Nübel standoff, Schalke was described as “[*the club that refuses to play Moneyball*](https://twitter.com/dw_sports/status/1347138873692971009?s=20)” in an article in The Ringer that asked if the team’s apparent willingness to let stars run down their contracts was a deliberate and potentially beneficial policy. Schalke had done it, after all, with Joel Matip and Leon Goretzka and Sead Kolasinac and Max Meyer and, most notably of all, with the man Nübel is now being groomed to replace at Bayern: Neuer.

In hindsight, such an interpretation of Schalke’s approach goes beyond kind and looks, instead, close to delusional. The failure to tether the club’s best players to contracts, or at least to sell them while they retained some market value, was proof not of planning but of rampant dysfunction. According to a number of people familiar with the workings of the club, the departures highlight a chronic and yearslong dearth of foresight, knowledge, connections and leadership in Schalke’s hierarchy.

The consequences are plain to see. Even a conservative estimate of those players’ values would top $100 million; instead, Schalke received nothing. Deprived of that income, the quality of player the club was able to attract steadily declined until the first team was staffed entirely by overpromoted hopefuls and underpowered journeymen.

This summer, facing more than a year without matchday income and a mountain of debt, the club was unable to reinvest any of the money it received for the loan of Weston McKennie to Juventus. Despite losing one of his best players on the eve of the new season, Schalke’s coach at the time, David Wagner, was not permitted to pay for a single permanent signing to reinforce his squad.

At least one loan deal collapsed because Schalke, the 15th-richest club in the world, could not pay the player’s relatively reasonable salary. Wagner was forced to start the season relying on a host of players who had previously been sent out on loan, their time at Schalke apparently at an end. He was fired after two games.

That was no surprise, either. Since its appearance in the Champions League semifinal, Schalke has cycled through 12 managers, few of them given more than a season to fix a broken team. It has turned back to Huub Stevens no fewer than three times.

At the same time, the club has found relations with its fans increasingly strained, as an institution revered for its ***working-class*** values and its traditionalism signed a sponsorship deal with the Russian energy giant Gazprom and several of its executives encouraged the permitting private investment into the team.

Its longstanding chairman, Clemens Tönnies — one of Germany’s richest but least popular men, and for years the apparent guarantor for Schalke’s spending habit — was forced to step down, first temporarily after making a series of racially-charged remarks and then permanently, after [*a coronavirus outbreak at one of his meat-processing plants*](https://twitter.com/dw_sports/status/1347138873692971009?s=20). To some, Tonnies’ return is the only way out of Schalke’s financial mess. To others, he is the one ultimately responsible for overseeing the decline. It is possible that he is both.

Whatever happens this weekend and next — whether Schalke equals and then surpasses Tasmania’s record, or avoids it at the last hurdle — is, for Schalke, something of a sideshow. This is not the nadir: That may not even come with relegation, which now seems inevitable, but with the attempt to manage the club’s debts, and find a way back, when it is deprived of the income it is guaranteed just by being in the Bundesliga. The record, in reality, is only one milestone on a long and perilous journey.

For Numic and Tasmania, by contrast, their role in the story is drawing to a close. Perhaps Schalke will take their record. Perhaps it will not. Either way, the media circus will depart. Numic is sanguine about that. It will be of little solace to Schalke, but at Tasmania, there is a confidence that, on some level, it will always be the worst at something.

“We have other negative records that we hold,” Numic said, cheerily. “So there are other occasions when people speak about us.”

PHOTO: Schalke, which in 2019 ranked 15th in the world in revenue, can equal Tasmania’s mark of 31 straight winless games on Saturday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHIAS SCHRADER/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 9, 2021

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[***What Students Are Saying About the Role of Religion in Their Lives, Similarities With Parents and Comeback Stories; current events conversation***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655N-W291-JBG3-61KJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** The Learning Network

**Highlight:** Teenage comments in response to our recent writing prompts, and an invitation to join the ongoing conversation.

**Body**

Teenage comments in response to our recent writing prompts, and an invitation to join the ongoing conversation.

This week on The Learning Network, we [*asked teenagers*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/learning-writing-prompts) about the role that religion plays in their lives. We also wanted to hear about the traits or quirks they inherited from their parents, and, inspired by athletes like Tom Brady who have “un-retired,” we asked them their thoughts on comeback stories.

Thank you to all those who joined the conversation this week, including teenagers from Ames, Iowa; Baldwinsville, N.Y. and Tennessee.

Please note: Student comments have been lightly edited for length, but otherwise appear as they were originally submitted.

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What Role Does Religion Play in Your Life?

Religion is a rich part of many students’ lives, and, as the seasons of Easter, Ramadan and Passover began, we [*asked*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html) them about the role religion played in their childhoods — and how much it is a part of their lives now.

Some teenagers told us about an unwavering belief in the benefits of faith. Others had a more a complicated relationship with religion. Some examined the role of religion in providing social capital, while others pointed out that religion has sometimes been “weaponized” as a tool of hatred and oppression. Here are the themes that came up over and over:

Religion is central to my life.

My family is religious and I did grow up with being involved in the church. My mom went to church every Sunday so now so does my family at the same church she went to in the village. For a while it seemed that we were just going through the actions of attending mass and weren’t getting much out of it. Since I have started going to a different church for youth group I feel like I have been learning a lot. I believe that God already has our lives planned out for us and we are just following the path that he has created for us. Our faith greatly affects who we are, the values we hold, and the morals we find valuable.

— [*Grace, Baldwinsville*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117682676)

Religion has played a huge role in my life due to the fact we had to go to church every Sunday, but no matter what religion is a major part of my life because whenever you feel down or want to give up on life you always know there is someone who is always there for you. Not only that but I consider religion a part of me because every day I wake up and religion is always with me and part of me

— [*Christoper, Julia.R. Masterman in Philadelphia, PA*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117591407)

Religion is probably the most important thing in my life. I go to a PCA church, which is a conservative, reformed denomination. I have gone to church regularly since I was born and during the pandemic, we watched a live stream our church set up during COVID. I enjoy talking about theology with my dad and plan to keep going to church when I am an adult, even though I’m not a fan of getting up early.

Whenever I have had problems or struggled I was able to get through them because I knew that I have a God who loves me and that my life is in His control. My religion helps me when I am scared, sad, or confused. It is who I am. I don’t agree with all the identity stuff going on right now and I don’t think emotion or personality is the real determiner of who I am. Every day before school when my dad drops me off he tells me, “remember whose you are.” Who’s I am is who I am, and I am the child of a loving Father, God Himself. That is all I need to know.

— [*Bea, Tennessee*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117595287)

It’s complicated.

Religion, formative as it is, has also instilled deep guilt and shame in me. The church, in my experience, is a community of people that are called to live by the same code and principles, to become very involved in each other’s lives, and to admonish and urge each other to follow in the way of God, all the while called to never judge each other. This combination often makes for a culture that tolerates subtle manipulation and control of individuals through the power of guilt and shame, as long as it advances the interests of the church.

My position on my religious upbringing is complicated and clouded by the validation I still seek from the leaders in my church. I think that with time more shortcomings of my religion will become clear, but I know that the foundational principles of Christianity will always stick with me, if only in the back of my mind.

— [*Olivia, Reed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117714751)

I see religion as a good thing because it’s nice to have hope in something or feel like you always have someone who cares and wants to be with you. But I also see very bad things in it. I am not very religious and I don’t believe in some of the stuff that people who are religious believe in. They say that being LGBTQ+ is wrong and that if a woman shows off her body even a little she is a whore and a temptress. And other sexist, homophobic things. But I believe that every person deserves to be able to believe in what they want without judgment … And I am not saying that every person who is religious, believes these things or acts this way, but I see most people blaming their hate on their religion. I know many very kind and non judgmental Christians and Catholics, so I am very aware that not every person who is religious is like this.

— [*Ava, Backer High School*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117639785)

Is religion beneficial? This is a question I’ve been pondering for what feels like my whole life, but the only answer I found for myself is: maybe. I grew up in a Jewish family, and that has been an experience full of highs and lows. I love my family’s culture; every prayer, holiday, and food can do something for someone, whether it’s joy, comfort, or closure. However, hate is ingrained in our society, and with every generation there are more hate crimes and cases of persecution. This is the case for so many, if not every religion. It can be a source of comfort and a way to connect to yourself or your family, but many use it as a weapon against others, which is when it loses its worth.

— [*Anna, J.R. Masterman Philadelphia, PA*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117591426)

Religion is not beneficial.

I can’t say that I’ve ever felt benefited by Christianity- most of the actual interactions I’ve had with church members have been being thrown pocket bibles on the walk to school, or getting into internet fights with people who tell me I’m going to hell. I’m aware these people don’t constitute the entire Christian population of the US, but I can’t say I’m impressed with the effect Christianity has on my life.

— [*Meghan, Glenbard West High School*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117716296)

I do not think religion is beneficial for most people if you can’t recognize yourself out of it, and you have no morals without it. Most people, like myself, grew up with a religious upbringing where most of our fundamentals in life come from a thousand year book, where they condemn us if we don’t follow every rule. However, for the most part I was raised with fluidity where I had the option to defer from my religion, or just chose to not heavily associate myself with it. But I’ve learned that a lot of people in my religious community have absolutely no morals, regard, or respect for people/things that are not incorporated with their religion or unless it’s in their religion too. An example is a lot of people in the religion I grew up with, have very homophobic and hateful ideologies, even though those in the LGBTQ+ community don’t bother them, and it’s simply not their business what they do, a lot of religious people go out of their way to make that concern them, simply because their thousand year old religion told them to. And that’s where I feel like it’s not beneficial, nothing should ever make you go out of your way and shun a group of people or spew hate just because they aren’t ordinary to you and your traditions. If a religion or old book written by people who claimed their God was “speaking” to them is making you act like that, not only are you contradicting your religion, but your religion isn’t benefiting you in terms of you being a good person.

— [*Lariah, Maury High School*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117724276)

Religion can provide support in the classroom.

I was raised and still am in a Mormon home that has shaped who I am as a human being and who I am at school. Mormonism places a huge emphasis on education and in this I find myself trying harder in my classes. I agree with the majority of this article because my grades have gotten better after my testimony grew, I found myself caring about my education and realizing that what I know is all up to me. I have found comfort in being able to know I have my religious background to draw strength from or to fall back on. I have seen that effect on my life and in the ways I have studied, lived, and carried myself. I have not only felt better about my grades but coming to school. Ever since it dawned on me that school is a gift I have been more excited and haven’t complained as much about school.

— [*MaRynne, Loveland, CO*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117616571)

Religion offers social capital.

My religion has provided me with a sense of community, especially when I go to church. Going to church provides me with a sense of community because I see a large group of people who come together to pray and worship the same thing. It makes me feel like I have a community to fall back on. I also have a lot of adult role models at my church. All of the doctors, lawyers, volunteers, and ushers are role models to me. Seeing a whole bunch of people that have different jobs shows me all the options I can choose from. Even though they are all different people with different jobs and different incomes they are all happy and treat each other the same. My religion is also the reason why I do many sports or have connections to different groups. Through my religion, I have been able to have new experiences that I have never had before.

— [*Victoria, J.R. Masterman in Philadelphia, PA*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117612225)

Fortunately, although I do not follow a select religion, I still have a web of support. These people include my family (immediate and extended, for the most part), all of my close friends, a few neighbors, a few teachers, and sports coaches and teammates that I have known for years. These are the people who support me daily and who make me want to succeed in life. These people support me by helping me when I’m stuck on a particularly tricky assignment, when I desperately need some good advice, and by just simply being there. I am completely happy with my social capital/web of support — it could not be better.

Having my own web of support makes me understand Dr. Horwitz’s findings much better. Religion gives you a sense of community — you have a wide network of people to help you if times get hard.

— [*Charlotte, J.R. Masterman in Philadelphia, PA*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117597375)

Religions’ ability to tap into much needed “social capital” when it comes to the ***working class*** is not hard to understand, given the disparity in access to such capital from other means in Dr. Horwitz’s analysis. In the absence of secular support such as that of the state, religion appears as an accessible, conventional, and unstigmatized force to restore hope and offer guidance. This reflects the lack of state support in these people’s lives and questions whether the state is really serving the tenet of equality it claims.

— [*Narya, Oakville*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117679980)

We should have understanding for the nonreligious.

The role religion plays in my life at first glance is one of absence. My mother left a Communist country that officially disdained religion, and my father grew up in an era when Jewish families like his strove to assimilate and soften the edges of their differences from the ‘mainstream.’ Our family believes in kindness, and in humanism, but not in a particular religious faith. In some ways, though, the absence of religion is itself a presence in my life. I find it jarring that people are assumed to have religious beliefs, as if that’s the only way to have a creed. Surveys often show that people are more against their children marrying an atheist than someone from an ‘unpopular’ religion like Islam. Every politician takes great pains to display his or her faith, and many have claimed that the Bible is their favorite book, even while the number of Americans who do not affiliate themselves with a particular religion is increasing. Being biased against those who have no religion should be just as unacceptable as being biased against those who don’t share your particular faith.

— [*Aria, The Athenian School*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/learning/what-role-does-religion-play-in-your-life.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117622015)

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How Similar Are You to the Adults Who Raised You?

We asked students to read the Opinion essay “[*The Challenge of Raising a Kid Who’s Just Like You*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/23/opinion/parents-children.html),” written by a mother who sees her daughter struggle with many of the things she has struggled with herself. That prompted us to [*ask students*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html) what they feel they have inherited or learned from the adults who raised them, and how they feel about those traits.

Our similarities go beyond physical resemblances.

I think that it’s really funny that this is this week’s writing prompt, because not a day goes by where my mom doesn’t tell me how much I’m like my dad. She hasn’t always talked about it, but lately I think we’re all realizing how many of his traits I have. I’ve always thought my dad was a cool guy and when I was younger I always wanted to spend time with him. He’s been my best friend my whole life from dancing in the kitchen, teaching me to cook, talking about boys (he’s my #1 person to share drama with), and teaching me about the world around me. He’s always let me have my own opinions and styles even if they conflicted with his which looking back on it, I really appreciate. That being said, I can totally see his influence in my everyday actions like the styles of music I like, advice I give to my friends, even down to how I don’t take my shoes off when I get home and just wear them until I go to bed. Going back to what I was saying about my mom though, every little witty remark I make or stupid joke I let off makes her laugh and say “I swear you’re Dad’s twin.” It makes me feel good that I’m growing into the person I’ve always wanted to be like.

— [*Eliza, Baldwinsville*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117720340)

Oval-faced, lanky and long-waisted, blue-green mixed eyes, and exceptionally dry hands. My mother and I are nearly identical, our biggest separating factor being that of age. Although one look at an old photograph of her as a child is self-explanatory, my older relatives relish in telling me “you look exactly like your mom when she was your age,” at any given family function. It’s not just appearance, as I get older I feel myself falling into her habits as well. Whether it’s from her raising me right or simply the human nature of adopting the habits of those you surround yourself with, I’m totally turning into my Mom. Similarly, my older sister is exactly like my Dad, sarcastic, lacking in energy, and extremely nihilistic when it comes to the world and society. Interestingly with both of us, I find we have inherited certain traits that could be deemed as negative rather than a majority of positive traits. Maybe their unhealthy coping mechanisms influenced us to develop our own strange habits or maybe toxicity can be passed down through generations. Whatever the case, we are products of our parents, for better or worse.

— [*Caroline, New Jers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117707597) [*ey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117707597)

I’m slowly becoming my parent.

When I was young, I despised order and routine. When my dad tried to make plans or establish rules I would find it very annoying and unnecessary. My brother and I would tease him for his constant use of the word “efficiency.” However, as I have grown older, I’ve come to the terrifying realization that I have inherited these traits. I write a daily to-do list, I go to bed and wake up early, and I find myself doing things my younger self would see as uptight. I am not as go-with-the-flow as I used to be, and yet, I am completely content with my newfound organization. As boring as it may seem, giving myself these parameters has helped me make the most of my days. Despite all of my past teasing, my dad has turned out to be a huge influence on my character, whether I like it or not.

— [*Ava, Glenbard West Highschool*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117686970)

The other day I was sitting on my computer doing homework like I am doing now, and suddenly I spaced off into the mirror in front of where I am sitting. At that moment looking at myself I realize that I have the same concentration face my father has when I see him sitting behind the screen doing conference calls. A very weird facial expression and quite funny too. After those moments, I start to question whether I have had these traits for a long time, but had not noticed?

— [*Gerardo, Miami Country Day School*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117641189)

I see common traits that I don’t necessarily want to have.

I have become increasingly aware in the past few years just how similar my mother and I are, from our outside appearance to our inner personalities. Both of us are perceived as scholarly and transparent people, which are true. We are also unconventional, we enjoy trying new things, and we share an amazing sense of humor. Mostly, I am proud of the parallels in our personalities; they show that we have a lot in common while maintaining our individuality. Although — unlike the author Ms. Grose’s distress — I don’t feel extreme negative feelings about our similarities, sometimes I am frustrated by how much certain traits of mine mirror my mother’s. In the midst of giving directions to my younger sibling I’ve caught myself using the same commanding tone as my mother, for instance. We are also both impatient, which causes us to butt heads. Even so, I don’t think my mother is a parent who would “catastrophize about [their] children’s experiences and assume that what [their child] experiences will be as bad as what [they] have felt in [their] own lives” based on our shared traits, as those traits are not self-destructive. After all, as my mother says, “try to take the good from people, not the bad.”

— [*Nathalia, Kenwood Academy - Chicago, IL*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117658952)

I look back at when I was younger and I find myself remembering the harshness of the raised-by-immigrants lifestyle. The pressure to meet expectations and do better in school. There were many things that I had to learn due to my surroundings that affected my parents. Since they were separated, it was even harder for me being so young. I notice sometimes that I have my dad’s anger issues and I lash out to the people I love even though I don’t mean to and five minutes later, I feel better or over the smallest things I get upset. I feel terrible and never want to be like my parents, but that’s the environment I grew up in. Now I find myself trying to leave the house as much as I can because of the things my mom doesn’t hide from me. Terrible partners and still trying to act twenty. That’s why I think I’ve picked the wrong people as well but that’s why many people don’t deserve kids but all kids deserve a parent.

— [*Kimberly, New castle D*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117695210)

I am considerably different from my parents.

In terms of what I have in common with my parents I feel that I do have a bit of similarities from each of them but not as much as people think. I think that a lot of our similarities are very much surface level like the same music taste, how we are very open and silly around the people we love but can also be shy around people we don’t know. This is to say that I think there are a lot of differences between us fundamentals like the different perspectives on how we see the world, religion, or even things like the value of family.

— [*Melinda, Polytechnic high school*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117692574)

When I was younger, my mom was the person who I strived to be: strong and beautiful, kind with a warm smile. She’s who I knew I’d grow up to be. Who I wanted to be. As I’ve gotten older, it’s changed. Not a lot, but enough. I don’t want to be her, I want to be like her. Have her good qualities and a caring heart. When people meet my mom and me for the first time, or it’s their first time seeing us together, they’ll say things like “Oh my gosh, you look so much like your mom!” or “You and your mom look like sisters.” Even though I don’t see it at all, it makes me feel weird. Do I just look like my mom, or do I act similarly as well. If I’m aiming to be her clone, I’m not giving myself space to grow and be my own person. So I guess I’m saying that as I grow up, I want to keep the amazing characteristics I got from my mother while still letting myself be who I am without feeling like I have to be exactly like her.

— [*Minya, J.R. Masterman School*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117689355)

Personally, I don’t have much in common with the adults that raised me. I may share aspects of their lingo and maybe physical characteristics, despite those aspects and characteristics, I am very different from my parents. My mother and I often have conversations about how much we differ and it’s strange because we share interests; however, we can’t talk about those interests because we have differing opinions and opposing stances even on the interests we share … Although I didn’t inherit much from my mother, I did inherit my anxieties from her and so did all my siblings … My mother and father both love being around people and so do I. My mother likes to perform and that’s something we have bonded over but we clash heads there sometimes too because we like it for different reasons. To many we seem very similar but we both think we are very different.

— [*Kaileigh, Maury High School- Norfolk V*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117640866)

I can trace aspects of my personality to the people who raised me.

I am and always have been an extremely outspoken individual prone to calling out a person’s bluff and any discrepancies in instructions or arguments. This I attribute to sitting down at 5:30 every night for years to watch the evening news with my grandma. We would yell at politicians on the TV when we saw an injustice or a law we didn’t agree with. My grandma taught me how to collect my thoughts, often encouraging me to write to legislators as an exercise in expressing my thoughts. Now, I argue with almost everyone. Maybe it’s not through yelling like I do at home, but asking the same question enough times until you finally get an answer is a pretty effective way to upset a science teacher and pointing out systematic failures and only partially thought through plans is a good way to direct the narrative at robotics meetings.

— [*Claudia, Ames High School, Iowa*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117686247)

As someone who is adopted I’ve never been able to visibly share traits with my parents. All this said, I’ve noticed similarities in my personality. By no means are my parents perfect but I think they did a good job raising two children despite their circumstances. I’ve noticed I am fast to anger; just like my father. I also have my father’s same sense of humor so we always have a good laugh. I also share traits with my mother. Both my listening skills and my organization skills take after my mother. Finally, I would say everyone in my family cares deeply for humanity’s personal morals, which is a shared trait that makes me grateful to have parents that have made me care so much about what’s around me.

— [*Ella, Glenbard West, High School*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/learning/how-similar-are-you-to-the-adults-who-raised-you.html#commentsContainer&amp;permid=117702479)

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Do You Like a Comeback Story?

In “[*They Just Can’t Quit: Athletes Who Un-Retire*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/03/15/sports/athlete-unretirements.html),” Remy Tumin profiles players who have chosen to return to their sports careers. [*We asked students*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/25/learning/do-you-like-a-comeback-story.html) for their thoughts on comeback stories — both in and outside the world of sports.

Students shared their favorite comeback stories, and speculated on why a top athlete might struggle to make a definitive break from a sport. Here’s what they had to say:

“I love comeback stories.”

I love comeback stories. My favorite was when Simone Biles took herself out of the 2021 Olympics and then she came back a few days later for the beam event finals. Shes always been one of my favorite gymnasts, so seeing her come back and fight for a title and overcome her struggles, inspired me to come back to the things I love and showed me that you can always come back to something when you’re ready to and you don&#39;t have to stay away from something forever.

— [*Brianna, Baldwinsville*](https://nyti.ms/37kDUEM#permid=117612750)

Yes, I love comeback stories whether it be someone coming from the bottom to the top or a sports team coming back from a lead that seemed impossible to overtake. Although I will say something that these stories do sometimes get repetitive especially in the film making industry, usually when it comes to superhero movies. The superhero always wins no matter the circumstances, these movies are often a little predictable as you know the character will never lose. But when it comes to sports, man is it thrilling, I get excited over seeing it on the TV but in person the roar of the crowd has to be unreal, almost euphoric.

— [*Mauricio, Hoggard High School*](https://nyti.ms/3jgSNuk#permid=117676030)

I love comebacks because thanks to them sports are more entertaining, given that there are so many kinds of comebacks like someone getting back of a retirement or when it seems impossible to come back [in] a difficult match. My favourite comeback is Barcelona vs PSG when they traced a 4-0, the emotions that I felt were amazing. I think it’s so difficult to say goodbye to the sport that helped you when you were going through difficult moments and the effort you made to reach your goals is the most difficult thing and decision you can make in your life. That’s the reason I think that Tom Brady, Johan Cruyff and most of the athletes that come back since they regret to retire.

— [*Oscar, Catalonia, Spain*](https://nyti.ms/3DJNI7o#permid=117681859)

I love a comeback story. The thrill and excitement of a player coming back from a scary injury, retirement, or maybe even from suspension or a mental break, is fun to watch. It is fun to see them come back regardless, It makes everyone excited and the energy levels go off the roof of the stadium and even better the best part of the comeback is seeing how well the player has improved. For example: We have the comeback story of NFL’s Former Chiefs Safety Eric Berry. In 2014 Eric Berry was diagnosed with Hodgkin Lymphoma and was hospitalized … When I heard about Eric Berry’s cancer situation, I never thought he would play football again. When his remission was announced, was completely blown away and happy for his return … He performed phenomenally in his comeback season: 14 Interceptions, 374 Yards, 5 Touchdowns. During his comeback season he managed to win the NFL’s “Comeback Player of The Year’‘ award. His story motivates me, a true symbol of strength. I believe because of that comeback, people if they work hard enough they can make that what seems impossible, possible.

— [*Nicholas, W.T. Clarke HS, Westbury NY*](https://nyti.ms/3DK750c#permid=117566664)

“The comeback story that intrigued me the most was …”

The most interesting comeback story was the one about Michael Jordan because it was surprising to learn he played baseball. I think many professional players struggle to say goodbye to their respective sports because of their fans and teammates. I like comeback stories, I enjoy when people return, especially when the player used to be more popular or highly ranked and proceeds to return even better. One of these instances was recently when Do-hyeon “Pine” Kim made his return to Overwatch League. I have found it hard to say goodbye of many things, such as habits and people. These stories of athletes that return teach us that it’s hard to give up the things we love.

— [*Michael, North High School*](https://nyti.ms/3DNYYzJ#permid=117639509)

Kim Clijsters’ comeback story stood out to me most simply due to her reasoning for coming back to her sport. In her interview she stated, “I want to test myself again.” and I think that was the perfect response/reasoning that most athletes can abide by. To the public eye, athletes come back for the money because it was nice in the short run, but I believe they truly come back for the personal gains and reconstruction of themselves. It’s hard to say goodbye to something you love, just like saying goodbye to cousins that live in a different state than you, or saying goodbye to a sport that has had you in love since you were young. Ties to the heart cannot be broken easily and the feeling of that return is beyond refreshing. Seeing yourself get back into that mindset you were in, and just getting that feeling of adrenaline that kept you yearning for it. Once you find something you love and want to dedicate yourself to, there is no chance that you can leave without going back because it has become a piece of your heart forever.

— [*Anthony, Chicago, Illinois*](https://nyti.ms/3x5Tf72#permid=117536736)

I think a comeback is a testament to one’s true passion for whatever it is they may be doing. Truthfully, it does take some of one’s pride to be able to say, “my decision was premature; I’m not ready to leave/retire.” As seen in the case with Tom Brady, I do not think he had realized the implications of retiring from something he had been a part of for twenty two years. I definitely do not consider myself a Tom Brady “fan,” but I can respect his acknowledgment that he was just not ready. He was not ready to leave the sport that was able to grant him untouchable athletic status, the title of “GOAT,” and perhaps a sense of fulfillment that he discovered he could not find elsewhere.

— [*Ava, Los Angeles*](https://nyti.ms/3uW53Gl#permid=117541384)

“Athletes can’t say goodbye to their sport because …”

I think that comebacks are great for people such as Tom Brady. I think that athletes retire from their career but then soon realize that they miss what they did for so long and were good at. They then make a comeback and that draws their fans to them and it’s almost like they never retired.

— [*Gavin, Baldwinsville*](https://nyti.ms/3jcKEqU#permid=117664994)

I feel that athletes overall are extremely competitive people in every aspect of their life. I know that professional athletes spend hundreds, even thousands, of hours per year perfecting their craft. It starts to become the only thing in their life that’s truly been there for them through it all. Athletes can’t say goodbye to their sport because they want to be better, no matter how good they already are … It becomes a sort of addictive feeling for athletes. Putting up personal best times, winning another title, another match, another game, another race. Winning goes from something fun to something necessary for a lot of athletes. They know that they can keep winning, they know that if they really, truly test themselves, and push their limits again, they could make a comeback. Truly, athletes are most competitive with their own minds. Their body, age, or even other people say, “You can’t do it anymore.” Athletes’ minds are trained to say, “Watch this.” Defying odds, competing, and winning, are 3 things that athletes can’t say no to.

— [*Meghan, Ames, Iowa*](https://nyti.ms/3KgR8kF#permid=117709907)

A reason why so many athletes come out of retirement could be they just don’t know what else to do. A lot of these professional athletes train their whole lives to get into the big leagues and put their all into staying there. I could imagine for many of these athletes … they don’t know what else to do. So they just come back because they likely feel at home doing what they know.

— [*Mycah, Metro Heights Academy*](https://nyti.ms/3KlEoZW#permid=117686382)

I think so many athletes such as Tom Brady can’t say goodbye to their sports because it’s no longer a game to them, it’s a lifestyle. Getting into a major league sport requires skill, dedication and perseverance; why throw that journey away if you´re not content with what you´ve done? That’s probably how many athletes feel when giving away a sport they’ve put time into, no matter the level of mastery they’re at. The phrase ‟eat, sleep and breathe” a sport is actually reality for many of these players. They adjust their diet, exercise and possibly even social life to conform to their sport. Putting your entire self into a task is one of the most honorable things a person can do, and sports players that come out of their retirement are simply not ready to give their dream up.

— [*Destiny, Valley Stream North High School*](https://nyti.ms/3ueeWjm#permid=117561510)

Learn more about Current Events Conversation [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/14/learning/introduction-to-current-events-conversations.html) and find all of our posts in this [*column*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/current-events-conversation).

PHOTO: Bharati Kemraj ,l, and her mother Chandra Sukul Kemraj offering prayers (Puja) at the altar in their home in the Bronx. Related Student Opinion | Related article (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***South of the Border, Now Center Stage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6199-YYT1-JBG3-64N8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 12

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**Byline:** By Hilarie M. Sheets

**Body**

From the perspective of the artist Amalia Mesa-Bains, whose parents emigrated to the United States from Mexico, Chicano art -- the affirming political expression of Mexican-Americans' experiences -- is ''often overlooked,'' she said, despite its tenure in America's West and Southwest for more than a century.

''There haven't been a lot of people in the museum world that have taken on a commitment to this vastly underrated area of art history, '' she said.

Ms. Mesa-Bains's own site-specific installations, which pay tribute to Mexican home altars, or ofrendas, did not easily find collectors, and as a result many never survived. But on Nov. 21, when the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, unveils its new building for modern and contemporary art, visitors will discover her mirrored altar, ''Transparent Migrations.'' It reflects the experience of ***working-class*** immigrants, particularly women invisible to society -- one of 250 acquisitions of Latin American and Latino artists, many of whom are rarely shown in this country.

In a city where Hispanics now approach 45 percent of the population, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, has spent more than $60 million over the last two decades to build from scratch a collection and research center reflecting the city's position as a gateway between north and south. ''It allows us as Latino or Latinx artists to be seen within the broader understanding of world art,'' Ms. Mesa-Bains said, using the gender-neutral alternative to Latino.

The museum's efforts were led by its curator of Latin American art, Mari Carmen Ramírez, and they are writ large across the inaugural installation of the new Nancy and Rich Kinder Building -- the final piece of a multiyear campus expansion designed by the architect Steven Holl.

Latin American and Latino work represent 24 percent of the art on display there, shown in lively exchange with European and American art, photography, prints and drawings, design and craft.

Visitors will encounter a futuristic city by the Argentine Gyula Kosice, his constellation of floating light-boxes in conversation with immersive installations by James Turrell and Yayoi Kusama. Pioneering wire constructions by the Venezuelan artist Gego anchor a thematic display called ''Line into Space'' that includes a calligraphic painting by Brice Marden and a kinetic sculpture by the midcentury Swiss artist Jean Tinguely.

''There's a seamless transition from the gallery of European and American modern abstraction to Brazilian Concrete art, from Mondrian to Mira Schendel,'' Gary Tinterow, the museum's director, said, noting that many leading artists in Latin America in the mid-20th century came from Europe or went to school in Paris or at the Bauhaus in Germany. Here, in the only permanent collection galleries in North America devoted to Brazilian, Argentinean, Uruguayan and Venezuelan modernism, ''Mari Carmen has created a canon,'' he said.

Since arriving at the museum in 2001, when she established the International Center for the Arts of the Americas, the first research center devoted to Latin American and Latino art, Ms. Ramírez has tracked down significant works, sometimes in closets or under beds, from some 20 countries south of the border and by artists of Latin American descent in the United States.

''We have bet on artists who were not that well known in the U.S. or who had absolutely no market presence but we knew how important they were for art history because we had the research component,'' said Ms. Ramírez, who directs the center and its digital archive, which has some 38,000 registered users worldwide. The museum was an early champion of Gego (Gertrud Goldschmidt), Lygia Clark, Hélio Oiticica and Joaquín Torres-García, now widely recognized by collectors and other institutions.

From the standpoint of scholarship and museum presentation, Edward Sullivan, deputy director of the Institute of Fine Arts, said the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, has ''created the premier institution internationally for the exhibition and promotion of interest in Latin American art.''

The field has grown vastly. Its strong players include the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin (where Ms. Ramírez got her start), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Tate Modern in London and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which reopened last year showcasing the gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros.

Only a few institutions have collected Latino work, notably El Museo del Barrio (since 1969). In 2017, the Whitney Museum of American Art hired Marcela Guerrero, who trained under Ms. Ramírez, as its first curator to develop a program of Latino art. But no other institution has consistently collected as many Latino works as M.F.A.H., as it is known, numbering about 400 by 71 artists, alongside more than 825 Latin American artworks by 211 artists.

On the eve of the opening of the new building, here are six artists and works selected by Ms. Ramírez that may come as a discovery to visitors.

Fanny Sanín

Born in 1938 in Bogotá, Colombia, educated in London and based in New York since 1971, Fanny Sanín uses hard-edge geometric forms in paintings that synthesize the Colombian abstract movement led by Carlos Rojas and color field canvases by Ellsworth Kelly, Kenneth Noland and Frank Stella. ''She's a very interesting hinge figure who has never really entered the mainstream,'' said Ms. Ramírez, who found the large-scale painting ''Acrylic No. 5'' (1973) hanging on the bedroom wall of Ms. Sanín's small Manhattan apartment and is now exhibiting her work for the first time. Exploring color, rhythm and movement through vertical bands of varying hues, the painting hangs in the thematic gallery ''Color into Light,'' which includes works by Kelly, Josef Albers, Hans Hofmann and the Venezuelan Carlos Cruz-Diez.

Elsa Gramcko

Virtually unknown outside Venezuela, where she spent her life (1925-94), Elsa Gramcko was largely self-taught and a pioneer of incorporating industrial refuse as an art material. ''She had an international career and was shown at the Venice Biennale but history relegated her to just the understanding of a few people,'' said Ms. Ramírez, who is showing several of the artist's constructions on wood with automobile parts. In ''The Sun Has Set'' (1966), a car headlight takes on the anthropomorphic quality of a giant eye. It is integrated with Constructive sculptures by the Brazilian Lygia Clark and works by members of Joaquin Torres-Garcia's atelier, a Uruguayan version of the Bauhaus.

Amalia Mesa-Bains

Born in 1943 in Santa Clara, Calif., to parents who fled the Mexican revolution, Ms. Mesa-Bains emerged in the 1970s as a feminist leader of the Chicano art movement. Though many of her works are ephemeral, Ms. Ramírez was happy to learn the artist had kept intact ''Transparent Migrations'' (2001), originally commissioned for an exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The mirrored armoire, containing a small gauze dress and the artist's lace wedding mantilla, is flanked by blown-glass cactuses as a symbol of immigrants' resilience. It anchors the ''Border'' thematic grouping, including a painted lithograph by Ramiro Gomez and photographic installation by David Taylor.

Teresa Margolles

Based in Mexico, where she was born in 1963 and trained as a forensic pathologist, Teresa Margolles tackles difficult subject matter related to violence from drug-trafficking, mostly against women. Her piece ''Lote Bravo'' (2005) is composed of 400 artisanal bricks made from soil collected from Ciudad Juárez, where the corpses of sexually abused women were found. ''It is a cemetery for these women and a memorial to their lives,'' said Ms. Ramírez, who has not exhibited the fragile work in more than a decade. The bricks are installed as a wall in the gallery ''Collectivity,'' with photographs by Carrie Mae Weems and a monumental painting by Mark Bradford.

Carlos Garaicoa

Now living in Madrid, Carlos Garaicoa was born in Havana in 1967 and is part of a generation of artists that emerged in the 1990s engaged in biting criticism of the Cuban revolution. His installations evoke architecture, memory and political history. A 2007 work, ''Ciudad doblada (roja)-- ''Bent City (Red)'' -- shown in China but never before in the U.S. -- comprises four low tables inlaid with 102 hand-cut and folded cardboard pieces referencing the Chinese and Japanese traditions of origami, and summoning a lexicon of architectural motifs. ''He takes China's history and exponential growth as a starting point and allows viewers to enter this imagined city,'' said Ms. Ramírez, who pointed out how the artist drew on the Latin American tradition of geometric abstraction. In a gallery titled ''Mapping,'' the piece is grouped with a painting by Julie Mehretu and Guillermo Kuitca's installation of 54 mattresses painted with maps.

Camilo Ontiveros

Born in Mexico in 1978, Camilo Ontiveros received his M.F.A. in Los Angeles, where he is based, and makes work exploring the instability of the migrant experience. In ''Temporary Storage: The Belongings of Juan Manuel Montes'' (2009/2017) the artist recalls the first known Dreamer to be deported by the Trump administration, despite protections provided under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA. Mr. Ontiveros gained access to possessions Mr. Montes left behind, including his bed, TV, clothing and books. The artist bound them with rope -- just as immigrants transport belongings across the border -- and secured the vertiginous mass atop metal sawhorses. ''The precarious structure embodies the vulnerable status of these migrants,'' said Ms. Ramírez, who shows the acquisition in a dialogue with Ms. Mesa-Bains's ''Transparent Migrations.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/13/arts/design/latino-artists-museum-of-fine-arts-houston.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/13/arts/design/latino-artists-museum-of-fine-arts-houston.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRANDON THIBODEAUX FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ESTATE OF ELSA GRAMCKO AND MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON

CAMILO ONTIVEROS AND MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON

AMALIA MESA-BAINS AND MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON

TERESA MARGOLLES AND MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON

CARLOS GARAICOA AND GALLERIA CONTINUA)

**Load-Date:** November 15, 2020

**End of Document**



[***How Can Executives Reach the Mayor? Try a Strong Letter; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60V9-3M71-JBG3-630B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1387 words

**Byline:** Daniel E. Slotnik

**Highlight:** Business leaders wrote Bill de Blasio asking for help bringing their employees back to the office. He asked for their help in return.

**Body**

[Want to get New York Today by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

It’s Tuesday.

Weather: Cooler, with hazy sun. Morning starts in the 50s, rising to about 70 later.

Alternate-side parking: In effect until Saturday (Rosh Hashana). [*Read about the amended regulations here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

Last week, Mayor Bill de Blasio [*received a letter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) that no city official would hope to find in the mailbox.

[*The open letter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), signed by more than 170 leaders of big businesses in the city, called on Mr. de Blasio to restore essential services, and to combat crime and other livability problems that the writers said had engulfed the city.

“There is widespread anxiety over public safety, cleanliness and other quality-of-life issues that are contributing to deteriorating conditions in commercial districts and neighborhoods across the five boroughs,” the letter said. “We need to send a strong, consistent message that our employees, customers, clients and visitors will be coming back to a safe and healthy work environment.”

[[*More on the clash between powerful business leaders and the mayor*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

Here’s what you need to know, and what’s happened since the letter published:

Who signed, and why

Goldman Sachs. JetBlue. Warby Parker. Morgan Stanley.

Chief executives at those companies were among the striking array of businesses leaders who signed the letter. The leaders say they need Mr. de Blasio to help convince workers that it is safe to return to their offices. They also asked the mayor to address the quality-of-life problems, like crime and garbage-strewn streets and [*parks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), that may have worsened since the start of the pandemic.

At about the same time the letter arrived, a consortium of local chambers of commerce and business groups around the city brought forth their own message of discontent, meaning that the mayor faced a vote of no confidence from the city’s business community writ large.

The mayor and big business

Mr. de Blasio, a progressive Democrat who has called for [*increasing taxes*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) on the city’s [*high earners*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) and prides himself on supporting the poor and ***working class***, might seem an unlikely ally for some of the city’s most powerful business figures. But he responded to the letter by finding common cause with his critics instead of launching a salvo against an out-of-touch moneyed class.

“We need these leaders to join the fight to move the city forward,” Mr. de Blasio [*said on Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

New York City faces potentially [*catastrophic budget shortfalls*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) that could wreak havoc on services and transportation, so the mayor might be more amenable to business interests than usual, as my colleague Emma G. Fitzsimmons, the City Hall bureau chief, said on Monday.

“Instead of ranting about millionaires escaping to the Hamptons, the mayor took a conciliatory approach to the letter last week,” Ms. Fitzsimmons said, adding that “he realizes he does need their help as part of the recovery.”

It can’t be all that bad

Many residents see the city as at a nadir of sorts, at least if the [*litany*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) of [*stories*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) about people decamping [*for other locales*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) are to be believed.

The coronavirus pandemic has killed [*23,750 New Yorkers*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), and the city has experienced a [*spike in shootings*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), problems with trash collection and [*a backlash*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) from some neighborhoods after people were moved from [*homeless shelters into hotels*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

But life in the city is not entirely swathed in despair, and the sentiments in the letter from the executives may reflect perceptions, more than the reality, of disorder. Some business leaders privately said that they worried the letter could prove counterproductive because it made the city seem bleaker than it was.

“I think the letter hit a nerve with a lot of New Yorkers because some people are concerned about crime, homelessness and trash bins overflowing,” Ms. Fitzsimmons said. “But the city is also coming back to life in many ways, from outdoor dining to schools reopening.”

What happened next

On Monday, the Partnership for New York City, the group that sent last week’s letter to Mr. de Blasio, [*released another letter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), this time addressed to President Trump. The letter called for Mr. Trump to approve essential funding for the city and state, especially for public transportation.

“New York’s downstate regional economy drives the entire state and, in many ways, it is the most important economic region in the country,” the letter said. “As private sector businesses have lost revenue and tens of thousands of jobs while struggling to keep their doors open, we need you to lead the federal effort in helping our state, and all 50 states, give these businesses an opportunity to once again thrive.”

Mr. de Blasio called the new letter “very helpful.”

From The Times

[*Rochester Mayor Abruptly Fires Police Chief Over Daniel Prude’s Death*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Steven Cohen Agrees to Buy the Mets, Again*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*These Unsung Heroes of Public School Kitchens Have Fed Millions*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Why a Progressive N.Y. Party Is Fighting for Its Survival*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

Want more news? [*Check out our full coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

The Mini Crossword: Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

What we’re reading

Fifty-five New York City school staff members have tested positive for the coronavirus, one week before schools were set to reopen. [[*ABC7*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

This year’s Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade will be more of a stationary balloon exhibition in Herald Square. [[*Daily News*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

A $50 fine for not wearing a mask on the subway or bus went into effect on Monday. [[*Gothamist*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

And finally: Condo buyers prefer the boroughs

Condo sales are down across New York, but that does not necessarily mean that would-be homeowners have forsaken the city.

Last week my colleague Stefanos Chen reported in the Real Estate section that more buyers were [*choosing condos in Brooklyn or Queens*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) than in Manhattan, usually the more desirable — and expensive — place to buy. The buyers also tended to be younger, less wealthy and planned to use the condos as their primary residences.

“Those who have stayed, lured by near-record-low mortgage rates and an abundance of choices, are betting on the city’s long-term revival while they still have some leverage,” Mr. Chen wrote.

The change in purchasing habits may presage a shift in priorities among developers, from building luxury condos for the extravagantly rich to focusing on lower-priced buildings with more outdoor space and fewer amenities. The trend could be a sign of hope for first-time buyers who want to stick it out in the city.

So buying a home in New York City, while never easy, might be a little easier. For now.

It’s Tuesday — hold fast.

Metropolitan Diary: Surprising offer

Dear Diary:

My uncle worked in a dry-cleaning plant. The work was hard and dangerous, and it didn’t pay well.

To make extra money, he rented a small truck and collected clothes to clean. One day, I went with him. He stopped in a Brooklyn neighborhood, locked the truck and told me to come with him. There was a man he wanted me to meet.

We entered a house. Seated in the center of the living room was an older man who was surrounded and attended to by the women of the family.

My uncle introduced me.

The man looked at me.

“Sonny,” he said, smiling slowly, “would you like some wine?”

I was 9, and the question surprised but pleased me. Thinking of the only wine I had ever had, heavy, sweet Manischewitz, and then only at services and on holidays and only in small amounts, I happily said yes.

One of the women left the room and returned with a bottle wrapped in what looked like straw. She poured the wine into a brightly colored aluminum tumbler, circa the 1950s, and handed it to me.

I sipped. Wow! This was not Manischewitz. It was something else. I thought about stopping, but I had the feeling that would have been rude. I forced myself to finish. It was bitter — a Chianti, I suspect — and, truth to tell, it tasted better with each sip.

Finally, I put the empty tumbler down.

“How was it?” asked the man, smiling broadly now.

“It was good,” I said. “Thank you.”

A few minutes later, my uncle and I left the house. I walked beside him, at a slant.

— Jeffrey Eisenmesser

New York Today is published weekdays around 6 a.m. [*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) to get it by email. You can also find it at [*nytoday.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

We’re experimenting with the format of New York Today. What would you like to see more (or less) of? Post a comment or email us: [*nytoday@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY John Minchillo/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 15, 2020

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[***Pied Piper of Brooklyn Plays Sax***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:608Y-P0D1-JBG3-64YD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 5, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1265 words

**Byline:** By Michael Powell

**Body**

For 82 days straight, a diverse group of musicians found their way to a stoop in Flatbush, and everybody followed the sax player. (It was his house.)

He was our heard-out-the-window Pied Piper, this saxophonist who signaled the arrival of evening by playing that haunting hymn ''Amazing Grace.''

He began playing in the depths of plague and loss in Brooklyn, those early April days when the wail of ambulance sirens was our city's night song. It took several days of listening out our window in Flatbush for my wife, Evelyn, and me to slip on our masks and wander around the corner to Marlborough Road.

We found our neighbor, the wiry jazzman Roy Nathanson, 69, with a gray-flecked goatee and a Groucho Marx smile, blowing up a storm on his sax on his second-floor balcony, while in the yard below the jazz teacher Lloyd Miller thumped expertly on his stand-up bass.

Mr. Nathanson's band grew by the day. Albert Marquès, a Barcelona-born Latin jazz musician and public-school teacher, began piping away on his melodica as his children, ages 3 and 6, danced and twirled on the sidewalk. The Haitian jazz guitarist Eddy Bourjolly came in from Canarsie, while Eric Alabaster, a retired teacher and drummer, and Mo Saleem, a Pakistani musician marooned by the virus, kept rhythm on drums and the dholak, a two-headed hand drum.

In rain and chill and welcome shafts of sunlight, the audience grew, young and not so young, African-Americans and whites and Pakistanis and Mexicans, masked and occupying spaces between cars and trucks and on lawns and in driveways. It was like this the world round, Italians and Argentines, French and Greeks and New Yorkers, singing and playing in rebellion against the darkness.

Mr. Nathanson and his band played each evening from April 2 until Father's Day, 82 days total. In that time, they started a website, raised donations for local food pantries and penniless musicians, and lit up a neighborhood.

What, I asked Mr. Nathanson, led to this journey?

''Everything had stopped. I had no more gigs,'' he replied. ''I had seen the Italians singing off their balconies, and I thought, yeah, yeah. I want that secular-religious healing thing to happen here.''

As he played, as musicians migrated to the sidewalk outside his house, the repertoire expanded to songs by Bill Withers and Al Green, John Coltrane and the Beatles. This was not the usual fare for these accomplished musicians. Mr. Nathanson is an old East Village guy, a veteran of the Lounge Lizards and Jazz Passengers, a buddy of Elvis Costello and Debbie Harry, an out-there jazzman. Mr. Marquès is about Afro-Latin jazz and played with Arturo O'Farrill. Mr. Bourjolly and his trio, Mozayik, dig Herbie Hancock and Creole-infused rhythms.

But Mr. Nathanson was their maestro, and they shared his intent to explore the American Songbook. ''You play the melody so that people can hear it in their brains, so that it speaks inside,'' Mr. Nathanson said. So they riffed off ''Tennessee Waltz'' and ''Ain't No Sunshine,'' ''Imagine'' and ''My Favorite Things.''

Late one afternoon, four Central American men raking out a garden paused and wandered up and listen and clapped approval. Another afternoon, a Mister Softee truck nosed onto the block and the sight of the crowd brought the driver to a halt. He shut off the ignition and tapped his hands to the music on the wheel until the musicians took bows. Pakistani women sat on porches and clapped, as did an older white couple on a nearby stoop every single day.

This was Flatbush as Mr. Nathanson had known it as a boy and as he wishes to recreate it, dowager Victorians and prewar buildings and Little Pakistan and West Indian communities overlapping with Black and white homeowners, streets running beneath canopies of sycamores and oaks. He grew up here a ***working-class*** kid in a chaotic family until he rode the subway into the city and settled in the East Village. He returned to recite the Kaddish when his brother committed suicide.

Years later, a gentrified co-op board in the now gentrified East Village voted to toss Mr. Nathanson out, a jazzman found guilty of practicing his saxophone. He came home to Flatbush, he and his wife buying a house on Marlborough Road with a white dogwood in the front yard and a backyard patio that borders the B and Q tracks. Our conversation took a Morse Code quality as subways rumbled by.

He smiled. ''Growing up here, man, it was Shangri-La,'' he said. ''The architecture of this neighborhood is like the architecture of my life.''

His virus band came together by happenstance, musicians sniffing out a chance to play. His son, Gabe, a student at the University of Vermont and a butter-smooth trumpet player, came south and joined his father on the balcony. Aidan Scrimgeour (who plays in the jazz-folk band Pumpkin Bread) also lives on Marlborough with a half-dozen bandmates, all packed into half an old Victorian house. He heard the music trickle through his window, grabbed his melodica and jogged over.

Mr. Marquès shook his head. Since the age of 3 in Barcelona he has sung in choirs and played in bands. The virus fell like a dark curtain, snuffing his sound. He tried to keep going on Zoom, but, please.

''To teach, to play, you must feel the music'' -- he tapped his chest and stomach -- ''in here.''

''It takes 45 minutes to dress my kids and 20 minutes for us to get here on our scooters and we play five minutes,'' he said. ''And it's the damned highlight of my day. It's kept me sane.''

Mr. Bourjolly, who wears a wool cap and a bandito bandanna as he plays, is no different. He drove in from Canarsie, so eager he often was first to arrive. As the months passed and dogwood and blue hydrangea bloomed and rose bushes popped scarlet red, he could barely see Roy and Gabe and Lloyd Miller on that bass.

They were playing as if by Braille.

''It's beautiful; I love it; we are communicating with a musical language,'' he said. ''It's social distancing intuition.''

For Mr. Alabaster too the 5 o'clock gig took on an outsized importance. A retired public school music teacher, a former composition student of the legendary saxophonist Jimmy Heath, he long ago turned a room in his house into a meeting place for the Pakistani musicians who flocked to this neighborhood. They called it Erik Ki Baithak -- Eric's gathering place. The grandson of Jewish immigrants, he felt a kinship with these wanderers and they taught him to play the beautiful and mysterious tabla. He has traveled five times to Pakistan to visit friends and play with teachers.

Pakistan is at times a troubled land. Do you have problems, I asked.

''I've been in some uncomfortable situations.'' At this he paused, shrugged and added: ''But, you know, who hasn't?''

In late May on Eid al-Fitr, the holiday that punctuates the end of Ramadan, Mr. Nathanson and Mr. Alabaster had a talk. Saleem had felt despair as the plague kept him from playing and earning enough money to send to his family in Pakistan. So they asked him to break out his tabla, the twin drums of the subcontinent, and set it alongside Eric's drums. With a yell, Mr. Nathanson and the band took off on a rollicking whirling version of ''Lal Shahbaz Qalandar.''

Mr. Nathanson jumped and bounced on his balcony like a dervish, he and his son Gabe, playing call and response with Salaam, who smiled and beat a treble- and bass-toned fury on his tabla. It was a jazz Eid.

Not for the first time in 90 days of impromptu jazz on Marlborough, the eyes of those listening and watching grew red and souls jumped and we howled against the darkness.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/nyregion/coronavirus-musicians-nyc-streets.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/nyregion/coronavirus-musicians-nyc-streets.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Roy Nathanson on the sax, and on his porch, with his trumpet-playing son, Gabe, in late May. (MB1)

Clockwise from top left: a Marlborough Road jam session that included Eric Alabaster on drums

many neighbors and jazz fans gathered

and musicians played in. PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB4)

**Load-Date:** July 5, 2020

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[***A Tough School Year Risks Becoming a Lost One***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62KS-D9C1-DXY4-X55S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 5, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 2012 words

**Byline:** By Rukmini Callimachi and Tamir Kalifa

**Body**

CLARKSDALE, Miss. -- By the time Precious Coleman returned home from her overnight shift at a casino, it was past 9 in the morning. It had been another night of dealing with belligerent patrons who refused to wear their face masks and drunks who needed to be escorted to the curb. Her eyes stung.

More than anything, she wanted to fall into bed. But her 11-year-old son, Jordyn, was waiting for her.

Or, more specifically, for her cellphone: Because their Mississippi apartment has no internet, Jordyn uses her phone to log into his virtual classroom two days a week.

By the time Jordyn signed in, he had already missed two periods of class. And he would miss more. By the sixth period, he had fallen asleep, cheek smushed into his palm. His mother, who tries as hard as she can to stay awake so that she can supervise him, was also sound asleep in the next room.

And so neither of them heard Jordyn's math teacher announce an upcoming test, one that was particularly critical for Jordyn, who was failing the class. ''If you don't make at least a C,'' the teacher said, in a tone both playful and serious, ''we're going to fight.''

Jordyn is at risk of becoming one of the lost students of the coronavirus pandemic in the most disrupted American school year since World War II. By one estimate, three million students nationwide, roughly the school-age population of Florida, stopped going to classes, virtual or in person, after the pandemic began.

A disproportionate number of those disengaged students are lower-income Black, Latino and Native American children who have struggled to keep up in classrooms that are partly or fully remote, for reasons ranging from poor internet service to needing to support their families by working or caring for siblings. Many are homeless or English language learners. Others whose parents work outside the home have struggled in the absence of adult supervision.

''We do have students who have kind of disappeared,'' said Barbara E. Cage, the principal of Oakhurst Intermediate Academy, the school Jordyn attends in Clarksdale, Miss. The district says the number of students with five or more absences since the fall has increased 20 percent over the previous year. ''We're not able to reach them.''

Studies of how much learning American students have lost in the past year are underway, but the preliminary reports are mostly grim. Even one of the more optimistic surveys found significant losses in math, with a doubling of the proportion of students described as ''sliders,'' because they had moved down in their rankings compared with a typical year.

Another national study, from the assessment company Curriculum Associates, found a decline of up to 16 percent in the number of elementary school students performing at grade level in math, and up to 10 percent in the number of students performing at grade level in reading.

Jordyn is in many ways better off than some of the truly lost students of the pandemic. The school knows where he lives and he is attending at least some of his classes.

But by his school's accounting, he is in trouble, having missed three weeks of instruction since September, either because he did not log in or missed most of the day. His school has visited the family's apartment and sent his mother text messages warning that Jordyn was in danger of repeating fifth grade. But his attendance has continued to suffer, and so have his grades.

Remote learning -- which these days Jordyn does for half the week -- is clearly part of his struggle. His mother says she cannot afford Wi-Fi on her $12-an-hour salary as a security guard -- a situation shared by many families in Mississippi, where about half of students do not have reliable broadband at home, the highest percentage of any state, according to a study by Common Sense Media.

But Jordyn's story, which The New York Times documented over the course of a week in Clarksdale, is about much more than inadequate technology. It is also about the added disruption the pandemic has brought to one ***working-class*** family that was already struggling to make ends meet. And it underscores the limits of hybrid learning to reach those disengaged students.

''I used to like school,'' he said softly. ''Now I don't even like it anymore because it's too hard.''

The Best Score

Until the pandemic, Jordyn and his mother lived in Battle Creek, Mich., where he was known among his teachers as a bright but easily distracted student, one who was capable of soaring when he was engaged.

Shermell Hooper, his second-grade teacher, recalled having to stand over his desk before he would write his name at the top of the page. If she assigned a reading passage, she had to sit next to him to get him to read.

On the day of a nationwide standardized test, she said, Jordyn sat in front of his computer, humming to himself and spinning around in his chair. She thought he was goofing off -- until the results came in.

When his mother came to pick him up, a school administrator was waiting for her, and she worried Jordyn had gotten into trouble. ''That's when they told me that he had gotten not just the best score in his class but the best score in the entire grade,'' she said.

At a schoolwide assembly, Jordyn's name was called, his classmates cheered and he received a new bike.

His mother invited some 20 family members for a celebratory lunch at Applebee's, where she worked as a server. His grandmother framed the certificate and placed it on the wall.

''That's when I liked school,'' Jordyn recalled.

Kelsey Oliver, Jordyn's fourth-grade teacher at Verona Elementary School in Battle Creek, remembered how the 10-year-old whose mind seemed to wander in class would later stop her in the hallway and ask a penetrating question.

''He's like, 'Can you tell me more about ...?''' she said. ''So, you know he's kind of been sitting with it and ruminating with it all day.''

But as the arrival of Covid-19 ended indoor dining, his mother's paycheck dwindled to $200 every two weeks, according to Ms. Coleman. When she could not afford to fix a car axle, she reached a breaking point. She, Jordyn and another son, 15-year-old Jayciyon, had been living in her mother's apartment, sleeping on the floor. Tempers often flared, she said.

After a cousin in Clarksdale offered to let her and the boys move in, she sold her car to a scrapyard and used the money to buy three train tickets to Mississippi.

It was a familiar place for Ms. Coleman, 34, who spent much of her childhood shuttling between family members. Her mother disappeared when she was a toddler. An aunt cared for her in Clarksdale when she was 7. Then they moved to live in a suburb of Chicago when she was 12.

''This is where I was as a kid,'' Ms. Coleman said of Clarksdale. ''It's more homey. Peaceful. Quiet.''

No Fridge, No Car

Clarksdale is a town of about 15,000 people situated in the flat and expansive floodplain known as the Delta. Described as the birthplace of the blues, it is also one of the poorest corners of America.

After a month of hunting for work, Ms. Coleman found the security guard job at a casino in Tunica, about 40 miles away, choosing the night shift so she could supervise her sons for at least part of their school day. By fall, she had saved enough to sign a $400-a-month lease for a two-bedroom apartment with no stove and no refrigerator.

For dinner, Ms. Coleman fries chicken wings on a hot plate or prepares macaroni and cheese in an electric pot. She and Jordyn share a bed. She is saving what she can to buy a car.

''My priorities are a stove, a fridge, a car,'' she said. ''Then maybe we can talk about internet.''

One recent morning, Ms. Coleman busied herself after work, washing the dishes and sweeping the floor while trying to keep an eye on Jordyn. The boy sat on the couch in his Pikachu pajamas, using her cellphone to watch a video about the Boston Tea Party.

He was supposed to be writing a report, but when she came to check on him, the sheet of paper in his lap was blank. ''So what did you learn?'' she asked him.

Jordyn said the Tea Party had something to do with a misunderstanding, but he did not know how to spell that word.

''How do you spell 'under'?'' she asked, standing over him as he wrote. ''How do you spell 'stand'?'' she added. ''See, you don't need my help, you spelled the whole word.''

That afternoon, she got three hours of sleep before rising at 8 p.m. to catch the bus for the 70-minute ride to the casino.

A Crucial Test

When Jordyn moved to Mississippi over the summer, his mother did not have his birth certificate, delaying his registration until weeks after the start of the school year, Ms. Coleman said.

By May, Jordyn was failing in more than one class and was marked absent for 15 days, either because he had not logged in at all or had missed most of those days. If he hits 20 absences, he will be required to repeat the grade.

His situation is not unique. In the Clarksdale Municipal School District, where all of the 2,368 students qualify for free meals, a key indicator of poverty, the number of students with failing grades has increased fivefold this school year, data provided by the district shows.

Math has proved particularly difficult for Jordyn, compounded by the fact that his teacher introduced key concepts on days he missed.

When his math teacher recently showed pictures of boxes of different sizes on the video screen and asked the class to calculate their volume by using the formula she had taught them, Jordyn was stumped.

He wiggled on the couch. He bopped his shoulders to an imaginary tune. When the screen froze, he pushed a button and then pushed it again. He logged out and logged back in. He got distracted by the news alert that popped up on his mother's phone, then by the text message she received.

''Jordyn, are you following?'' his teacher asked through the screen. When he did not answer, she asked, ''Jordyn, what you got?''

He unmuted himself long enough to whisper, ''I don't got anything.''

The morning of the districtwide math test in February, students streamed into the aging middle school on the banks of a muddy river, past a station where their temperatures were checked and another where they picked up the plastic shields they are required to wear over their face masks. It was chilly outside, yet the classroom windows were cracked open to increase ventilation.

The children were still wearing their jackets when the proctor began the clock. They began working furiously -- but Jordyn, who is driven to school by a relative, was not there.

He arrived 40 minutes late, tiptoeing into the classroom. ''My ride came,'' he said, ''it just came late.''

In his bulky jacket, he struggled to log into his Chromebook. His password had expired. More time passed before the teacher returned with his new login on a Post-it note.

The teacher had placed a yellow sheet of paper on every desk, and his classmates were using it to do the long division required on the test. Jordyn's remained untouched, tucked under the banana he received as part of his free lunch.

A week later, the results came in: Jordyn had failed his math test, as well as the tests in social studies and science, according to school officials.

Unless he gets As and Bs for the rest of the year, his teachers say he may need to repeat the grade.

For nearly a week after the test, Jordyn stopped logging into his math class altogether, his instructor said.

School district officials said that they have offered to let Jordyn come into the building four days a week for added in-person instruction, but that his mother has yet to commit to the plan.

Ms. Coleman said she was uncomfortable having him board a bus early in the morning before she has returned from her shift. But she is considering using her tax return to pay for a car service to take him to school.

In the meantime, Jordyn's name has been entered into a binder of ''at-risk'' students whose absences have become chronic. One-fifth of all students at Oakhurst Intermediate Academy are now listed.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/05/us/remote-learning-education-pandemic.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/05/us/remote-learning-education-pandemic.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Precious Coleman helping her 11-year-old son, Jordyn, with his schoolwork in Clarksdale, Miss. (A1)

Jordyn Coleman, above, attending math class on his mother's phone, was flourishing before the pandemic. But he has struggled since his family moved to Clarksdale, Miss. Below left, a math test went poorly after he arrived late. Below right, Jordyn's mother explaining to a teacher by text why he did not complete an assignment.

Barbara Cage of Oakhurst Intermediate Academy said the number of students with five or more absences was up 20 percent.

In Clarksdale, where 100 percent of students qualify for free meals, the number who have failing grades has risen fivefold.

A mural in Clarksdale, a town of fewer than 15,000 people in the Mississippi Delta, one of the poorest parts of the country. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A20)

**Load-Date:** May 5, 2021

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[***Blaming New York for the Coronavirus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YKR-D4H1-DXY4-X1F5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 6, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1135 words

**Byline:** By Kim Phillips-Fein

**Body**

Blaming the city for coronavirus is a way of letting the federal government off the hook.

The anxious notes have been arriving in my inbox from people all over the country: ''Watching reports and wanted to check in.''

I know why they are concerned. New York City has emerged as the epicenter of the coronavirus pandemic in the United States. For those of us in the city -- even if we are staying in our apartments almost all day, pressing elevator buttons with our elbows or gloved hands when returning from a once-a-week journey to the grocery store -- we are well aware that we are living at the heart of the storm.

Almost as alarming as the health data, though, is the suggestion circulating in some political corners that New York and New Yorkers are to blame for spreading for the coronavirus, as though the city helped to create a health threat now endangering the good people of the South and Midwest. Once it was the ''Chinese virus''; now it also belongs to New York.

As President Trump put it in his short-lived bid to ''QUARANTINE'' New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, ''Some people would like to see New York quarantined because it's a hot spot'' -- the implication being that if New Yorkers could only be kept where they are, with checkpoints and guards if need be, Covid-19 could be stopped from spreading elsewhere in the country.

Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida set up checkpoints to stop cars with New York or Louisiana license plates, so that state troopers can warn drivers to self-quarantine or face 60 days in jail -- even as he hesitated to put any social distancing in place or close the beaches for spring break. Instead of admitting the danger of community spread in Florida, the governor framed the problem as one of outsiders bringing germs in. Governors in Maryland and other states warned anyone arriving from the New York City area to isolate themselves.

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There's a long history of scapegoating New York City for problems that have their roots far beyond the Hudson. In the 1970s, the Ford administration blamed New York's liberal politics, generous social safety net and strong public sector unions for the fiscal crisis that almost brought the city to bankruptcy -- even though that crisis arose when the country as a whole was mired in recession, at a moment when federal policies encouraged suburban flight and the departure of factories from cities like New York.

Despite the national context for the city's difficulties, President Gerald Ford warned that there could be no federal aid for the country's largest metropolis because it had brought its problems on itself. As his press secretary Ron Nessen put it: ''This is not a natural disaster or an act of God. It is a self-inflicted act by the people who have been running New York for a long time.''

Underlying Ford's punitive attitude was a deeper conservative critique of the city. Its history of leftist politics, its tuition-free city university and its network of public hospitals (several of which were closed in the fiscal crisis) all made New York suspect, as did its reputation as a center for the gay rights movement and feminism.

The vision of New York as morally suspect, a city of sexual promiscuity and libertine mores, also helped shape the federal response to the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s. The Reagan administration failed so dismally in addressing the health crisis, not even mentioning it publicly for years after it had emerged, as it raged in part because AIDS was viewed as a disease of the cities, especially of gay men and IV drug users, not as a problem of the heartland.

But while some aspects of New York's situation in the 1970s and beyond were unique, the larger problems the city faced were those confronting the entire country. And the AIDS epidemic, too, spread throughout the nation. Blaming New York was a way to let the federal government off the hook.

Today, the scapegoating of the city could have consequences even more profound than during the 1970s. It could mean the city not getting the federal money it needs or a sufficient supply of ventilators and masks and enough support for health care workers.

What is more, the suggestion that New York is uniquely susceptible can support the dangerous illusion that allowed the coronavirus to gain traction here in the first place: that we are able to cordon ourselves off from one another, that one region of the country -- or the world -- can be separated from the rest. Acting on this fantasy would be the real danger to states like Florida, Vermont and Tennessee.

At the same time, painting a picture of the entire city as equally at risk may make it harder to address the likelihood that the coronavirus will probably have the most devastating impact on ***working-class*** and poor people -- who are less likely to have good access to health care, whose underlying health may be worse to begin with and for whom the economic penalties of social distancing are more profound.

The dense urban spaces of New York City are empty now -- the libraries and public schools closed, the playgrounds and streets notably quiet. But the social solidarity that they nurture still has the capacity to offer lessons that might help the rest of the country.

I've seen this even in my own apartment building, where people have mobilized in support of the most at-risk residents -- all from a distance of six feet. High school students are offering virtual tutoring to homebound elementary school kids, younger tenants are picking up groceries for elderly people for whom a trip to the store might be more dangerous, the most organized among us are keeping phone lists so that tenants can call one another if any of us get sick and need help.

And as is happening in places around the world, every night at 7 people come to the windows and the balconies of my apartment complex to cheer for the heroism and dedication of the city's health care workers -- the E.M.T.s, ambulance drivers, physician assistants, janitors, cooks, orderlies, doctors and nurses. As we chant and clap, we can see one another from the windows and across the courtyard, and even in this moment of devastation, the collective life of our city offers sustenance and hope.

May that mutual support be felt across our country -- and beyond.

Kim Phillips-Fein, a historian at New York University, is the author, most recently, of ''Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/05/opinion/nyc-coronavirus.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/05/opinion/nyc-coronavirus.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY ASHLEY GILBERTSON/VII PHOTO)

**Load-Date:** April 6, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Scapegoating New York Means Ignoring Its Desperate Need***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YKM-2NN1-JBG3-645J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 6, 2020 Monday 12:08 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1133 words

**Byline:** Kim Phillips-Fein

**Highlight:** Blaming the city for coronavirus is a way of letting the federal government off the hook.

**Body**

Blaming the city for coronavirus is a way of letting the federal government off the hook.

The anxious notes have been arriving in my inbox from people all over the country: “Watching reports and wanted to check in.”

I know why they are concerned. New York City has emerged as the epicenter of the coronavirus pandemic in the United States. For those of us in the city — even if we are staying in our apartments almost all day, pressing elevator buttons with our elbows or gloved hands when returning from a once-a-week journey to the grocery store — we are well aware that we are living at the heart of the storm.

Almost as alarming as the health data, though, is the suggestion circulating in some political corners that New York and New Yorkers are to blame for spreading for the coronavirus, as though the city helped to create a health threat now endangering the good people of the South and Midwest. Once it was the “Chinese virus”; now it also belongs to New York.

As President Trump [*put it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/28/nyregion/coronavirus-new-york-update.html) in his short-lived bid to “QUARANTINE” New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, “Some people would like to see New York quarantined because it’s a hot spot” — the implication being that if New Yorkers could only be kept where they are, with checkpoints and guards if need be, Covid-19 could be stopped from spreading elsewhere in the country.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY ASHLEY GILBERTSON/VII PHOTO)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***They Lift Their Voices In Protest***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60V3-CM21-JBG3-60N9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 14, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1454 words

**Byline:** By Robert M. Marovich

**Body**

The Voices of East Harlem went from community stages to the Isle of Wight Festival, blending the soul-cleansing power of Christian songs with R&B, funk and rock on ''Right On Be Free.''

The graphic video montage of violence against people of color that accompanies Isaac Cates & Ordained's sobering neo-spiritual ''Hold On'' brought the hosts of the 2020 online music festival Vox Virtual nearly to tears. Lydia Salett Dudley commissioned a clip with similarly vivid imagery for ''Whatcha Gonna Say?,'' a funky song released this summer that commands listeners to speak out about inequality or face the consequences of inaction today and in the afterlife.

These recent developments in gospel music are striking: Although singing spirituals and hymns has energized generations of protesters to stand up against oppression, few of the genre's songs recorded over the past 30 years have explicitly condemned injustice. This gap is due in part to a trend toward praise and worship songs that celebrate God and give thanks for personal blessings. And like the anonymous composers of the spirituals, Black gospel singers learned early that survival sometimes meant veiling their anger in biblical imagery that only those in the know could decode.

However, the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery and the protests they sparked have prompted gospel singers to begin lifting the veil and making their outrage more public. The roots for this moment can be traced back to an album celebrating its 50th anniversary -- ''Right On Be Free,'' the debut by an African-American youth choir called the Voices of East Harlem. Released by Elektra in late 1970, the record tied protest messages to an appealingly groovy soundtrack that mixed the soul-cleansing power of gospel with R&B, funk and rock. It was as if Sly and the Family Stone and gospel's Edwin Hawkins Singers had linked arms in solidarity.

The Voices of East Harlem came out of the East Harlem Federation Youth Association (E.H.F.Y.A.), a nonprofit community center founded in 1968 by the activist Chuck Griffin to give youth -- his own children included -- a sanctuary from the neighborhood's heroin-infested streets. Griffin's wife, Anna Griffin, and her friend Bernice Cole were veteran gospel singers and recording artists.

''When the Voices of East Harlem first started, there were like 32 of us, because it was basically an all-souls call,'' said Gerri Griffin Watlington, one of the couple's two daughters, who replaced Ronnie Dyson on Broadway in ''Hair'' in 1969. ''Anybody interested in singing in a choir, come.''

The choir sang only gospel songs and spirituals at first, and while its initial appearances were at churches, at some point Chuck Griffin began transporting the troupe to perform for local colleges, where he would preach the social value of integration to the mostly white audience. It was the late '60s and ''a time when people were becoming socially aware of color,'' said Kevin Griffin, another of Chuck Griffin's children.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The Voices' big break occurred at a youth association fund-raiser at Electric Circus, a New York club owned by the music entrepreneur Jerry Brandt. Moved by the Voices of East Harlem's unbridled spirit, ''he approached my parents and Bernice and basically pitched them,'' Gerri Watlington recalled. ''He said, 'I see something here and I'd like to manage these kids.'''

Brandt loved the group's sound but hated the preppy orange blazers, and directed the kids to come to rehearsal in street clothes. They returned wearing what became their signature ''freedom suits,'' what the screenwriter Denis Watlington, a youth association participant, later described as ''***working-class*** jeans and dungaree jackets with red, black and green fists'' painted on their backs.

The Voices of East Harlem also modified their repertory, adding protest music and songs of social significance, including Nina Simone's ''To Be Young, Gifted, and Black'' and Bobby Darin's antiwar ode ''Simple Song of Freedom.''

''That was the time we were in,'' Gerri Watlington said. ''It was about folk songs, protest songs.''

The group's performances featured dancing -- sometimes choreographed but more often free-form -- that evoked freedom and Black Pride, and Brandt worked to secure it a national platform where audiences could take in the whole package. The Voices appeared on Dick Cavett and Ed Sullivan's shows. They opened for the Kinks at the Fillmore East. Their performance at the January 1970 Winter Festival for Peace, alongside Richie Havens and Blood, Sweat & Tears, moved a Billboard journalist to gush, ''The least known group on the bill earned the first, most unanimous, and most immediate standing ovation of the evening.''

With positive reviews pouring in, Brandt felt it was time to take the Voices into the studio. Produced by Brandt, ''Right On Be Free'' was among the first albums recorded at Electric Lady Studios in Manhattan's West Village. Eddie Kramer was the recording engineer, and session veterans including the bassist Chuck Rainey and the guitarist Cornell Dupree joined the Voices' musicians.

''In those days, if you didn't have Rainey and Dupree on your album, you didn't have an album,'' the Voices member Monica Burruss Pege, the lead soloist on the group's 1973 hit ''Giving Love,'' said in a phone interview.

''Right On Be Free'' spotlights fiery turns by female vocalists, reinforcing the traditional role of African-American women as community spokespeople. Gerri Watlington leads the Buffalo Springfield protest anthem ''For What It's Worth,'' and Cynthia Sessions Vaughn sings ''Simple Song of Freedom.'' In a nod to earlier generations, Anna Griffin and Cole render gospel songs. The album ends with a six-minute psychedelic cover of Richie Havens's ''Run, Shaker Life'' built on the relentless vocal power of Kevin Griffin, one of two featured male leads. The critic Robert Christgau compared his effusive energy to Michael Jackson.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Gospel didn't often crack through to the mainstream, though the Edwin Hawkins Singers had a crossover smash with ''Oh Happy Day'' in 1968. Elektra, already in discussions with Brandt about another of his artists -- Carly Simon -- picked up ''Right On Be Free'' and released it as summer turned to fall in 1970.

By October, it had charted on the Billboard 200, after the Voices carried their freedom message to the Isle of Wight Festival in England, where they received several standing ovations. Returning to the States, the choir dazzled audiences at the Apollo and appeared alongside Harry Belafonte at the Westbury Music Fair. The Voices rang in the New Year by opening for Jimi Hendrix at the Fillmore East.

On March 6, 1971, the Voices joined Santana, Ike and Tina Turner, Wilson Pickett, the Staple Singers and the pianist Wayne Shorter at the Soul to Soul festival in Accra, Ghana, which was filmed for a documentary by Denis Sanders. As captured on film, they are a kaleidoscope of sound and motion. What the Voices were singing was significant but supplemental to how they were singing it. The music of the African Diaspora had come full circle.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The group went on to record two singles in 1972 for Elektra produced by Donny Hathaway, and made two more albums for the indie label Just Sunshine, which were reissued in 2017 by the United Kingdom-based Soul Brother Records. After the 1974 album ''Can You Feel It,'' Just Sunshine and the Voices of East Harlem parted ways. ''I don't think the record company knew what to do with us,'' Kevin Griffin said. ''We represented a very balanced message of unsettling times and they didn't know how to market it.''

Besides a baffled music business, an acrimonious separation between Chuck and Anna Griffin and the fact that group members were facing the realities of adulthood contributed to the Voices' demise in 1975. ''It wasn't like an official ending,'' Pege said. ''We just weren't getting gigs anymore, and we were having to find other things to do that paid.''

Pege became part of Lady Flash, Barry Manilow's backup trio. Gerri Watlington attended college while appearing on Broadway and singing in local clubs. Vaughn became a community mental health psychotherapist. Kevin Griffin entered the religious ministry.

Looking back, Vaughn and Kevin Griffin still believe the group was not only ahead of its time, but a necessary voice then and now. ''The E.H.F.Y.A. and the Voices were the crown jewels of East Harlem,'' Kevin Griffin said. ''We became the voice of the entire social movement.''

Vaughn added: ''It's really sad that we are experiencing the very same things this many years later.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/13/arts/music/voices-of-east-harlem-gospel-protest.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/13/arts/music/voices-of-east-harlem-gospel-protest.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The Voices of East Harlem, above, started out at a nonprofit community center in Manhattan. Their 1970 album ''Right On Be Free'' was a landmark release for gospel music. Left, the group performing for a television show in London that year. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GAB ARCHIVE/REDFERNS, VIA GETTY IMAGES

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES) (C5)

**Load-Date:** September 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***'Bridgerton' Dips a Toe In Deep Waters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61PD-4451-JBG3-64NW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 6, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1; CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

**Length:** 1586 words

**Byline:** By Salamishah Tillet

**Body**

The Netflix hit departs from the homogeneous casting of most period drama, imagining a 19th-century Britain with Black royalty and aristocrats.

''We were two separate societies divided by color until a king fell in love with one of us,'' the quick-witted Lady Danbury (Adjoa Andoh) tells her protégé, the Duke of Hastings. ''Look at everything it is doing for us, allowing us to become.'' She insists, ''Love, Your Grace, conquers all.''

Appearing in the fourth episode of ''Bridgerton,'' the first series produced by Shonda Rhimes as part of her powerhouse Netflix deal, this conversation between the show's main Black characters is the first explicit mention of race in a story that revolves around the duke, a Black man named Simon Basset (Regé-Jean Page), and his passionate courtship of Daphne (Phoebe Dynevor), the eldest daughter in the wealthy, white and titled Bridgerton family.

The show's casting diversity is its most immediately striking quality, not just in Black aristocratic characters like the duke and Lady Danbury, but also in the entrepreneurial Madame Genevieve Delacroix (Kathryn Drysdale) and the ***working-class*** couple Will and Alice Mondrich (Martins Imhangbe and Emma Naomi). All of them are central to the complicated social caste system that make up the show's version of early 1800s London.

''Bridgerton'' is not Rhimes's first dalliance with a multiracial cast in a British period drama. In 2017, she produced ''Still Star-Crossed'' on ABC, a story that began after the deaths of Romeo and Juliet and focused on their cousins Benvolio Montague and Rosaline Capulet, who were forced to marry in order to heal the family rift. Though Benvolio and Rosaline are intentionally cast as a interracial couple, race was neither a point of contention nor grist for social commentary. Instead, viewers were asked to suspend our contemporary racial perceptions in order to accept the colorblind Verona of the past. (This strategy, among others, was largely unsuccessful -- ''Still Star-Crossed'' was canceled after only one season.)

In contrast, the characters of ''Bridgerton'' never seem to forget their blackness but instead understand it as one of the many facets of their identity, while still thriving in Regency society. The show's success proves that people of color do not have to be erased or exist solely as victims of racism in order for a British costume drama to flourish.

Chris Van Dusen, the ''Bridgerton'' showrunner, was a writer on Rhimes's ''Grey's Anatomy'' before going on to be a co-executive producer on ''Scandal,'' a show that both recognized but did not entirely revolve around the interracial tensions of Olivia Pope's romantic relationships. Applying that same approach to his adaptations of Julia Quinn's Bridgerton novels, Van Dusen places us in an early 19th century Britain ruled by a Black woman, Queen Charlotte (Golda Rosheuvel).

''It made me wonder what that could have looked like,'' Van Dusen told The New York Times in a recent feature about the show. ''Could she have used her power to elevate other people of color in society? Could she have given them titles and lands and dukedoms?''

Such a move pushes back against the racial homogeneity of hit period dramas like ''Downton Abbey,'' which that show's executive producer, Gareth Neame insisted was necessary for historical accuracy. ''It's not a multicultural time,'' he said in a 2014 interview with Vulture. ''We can't suddenly start populating the show with people from all sorts of ethnicities. It wouldn't be correct.''

''Bridgerton'' provides a blueprint for British period shows in which Black characters can thrive within the melodramatic story lines, extravagant costumes and bucolic beauty that make such series so appealing, without having to be servants or enslaved. This could in turn create openings for gifted performers who have avoided them in the past.

''I can't do 'Downton Abbey,' can't be in 'Victoria,' can't be in 'Call the Midwife,''' the actress Thandie Newton told the Sunday Times of London in 2017. ''Well, I could, but I don't want to play someone who's being racially abused.'' She went on, ''There just seems to be a desire for stuff about the royal family, stuff from the past, which is understandable, but it just makes it slim pickings for people of color.''

For all its innovations, ''Bridgerton'' has its own blind spots. I found it strange that it is only the Black characters who speak about race, a creative decision that risks reinforcing the very white privilege it seeks to undercut by enabling its white characters to be free of racial identity.

When Lady Danbury expresses her optimistic belief in the power of love, the duke is more circumspect, countering that Black progress is fragile and dependent on the whims of whichever white king is in charge. But to actually see narrative evidence of this precariousness, you have to turn to other recent British period dramas that featured integral Black characters, like ''The Spanish Princess'' and ''Sanditon.''

Taking place in Tudor England, ''The Spanish Princess'' on Starz features Stephanie Levi-John as a Black woman named Lina who came to England as Catherine of Aragon's lady-in-waiting. Based on an actual historical figure, the show thoughtfully fictionalized her struggle between her loyalty to Catherine and her love for her Moorish husband, Oviedo, and their twin boys as xenophobia rises throughout the kingdom, and Catherine's marriage to King Henry VIII unravels.

The series is set in the 16th century during a historical epoch in which slavery and race were not inextricably linked to each other. Here, Lina's brown skin merely indicates her foreignness rather than marks her oppression, giving us insight into how such differences were interpreted and experienced before anti-Black racism was codified in Europe (and the Americas) as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

By the time we reach the early 19th-century world of PBS's ''Sanditon,'' however, the long arm of the slave trade has reached the British seaside resort of the title. Adapted by Andrew Davies from an unfinished novel by Jane Austen, ''Sanditon'' expands the story of Miss Georgiana Lambe, Austen's first Black character. Described briefly (and offensively) in the manuscript as a ''mulatto'' born to a white slaveholding father and enslaved Black mother in the British colony of Antigua, Georgiana in the series is an heiress, played by Crystal Clarke, whose wealth and exotic beauty make her the most sought after young woman in England's south coast. Ultimately, I found Georgiana's rarefied status to be the show's biggest representational challenge: As I reveled in her splendor, I also found myself forgetting the enslaved labor that created it.

But racial trauma remains. Despite the attention that she receives, Georgiana is ultimately alienated in England because of her race, an experience that I found more realistic than Marina Thompson's (Ruby Barker), another biracial debutante who also finds herself alone at court in ''Bridgerton.''

Other complex portrayals of Britain's participation in the slave trade can be found in Amma Asante's standout 2013 movie ''Belle,'' or in Pippa Bennett-Warner's character on Hulu's ''Harlots,'' who lives as a free but formerly enslaved Black woman in London in the 1780s.

I'm also looking forward to the mini-series ''The Long Song,'' debuting later this month on PBS. Based on Andrea Levy's novel of the same name, it unfolds at the dawn of emancipation in Jamaica in the 1830s. It is another story of England and the central role its Black subjects played in building its wealth and grandeur under King George and Queen Charlotte's rule, though we'll probably see far fewer corsets and society balls.

By avoiding both slavery and the fervent British abolition movement that flourished in London in the early 19th century, ''Bridgerton'' ultimately opts for ''Downton'' escapism over a nuanced exploration of real-time racial dynamics, mostly relegating such aspects to the story's past. In flashbacks we learn that the first Duke of Hastings was ruinously consumed by his newfound status, demanding, to the point of verbal abuse, absolute perfection from his wife, who dies in childbirth, and his son, who stutters as a child. (Shades of Papa Pope of ''Scandal,'' who once admonished his daughter, ''You have to be twice as good as them to get half of what they have.'')

With more seasons presumably to come, given the show's popularity, I'm curious how far ''Bridgerton'' is willing to depart from Quinn's novels in order to fill in the worlds of its other Black characters, especially Black women like Lady Danbury, Queen Charlotte and Madame Delacroix. They are the show's most intriguing characters and they remain mostly unexplored -- will they eventually be afforded as much complexity as the duke? As Daphne's entire family?

In a society in which gender and sexual mores dominate the actions and attitudes of all its characters, I want to see how these women learned to navigate those same structures differently shaped than everyone else. Because despite Lady Danbury's beliefs that love conquers everything, I could not help but think that history ends up validating the duke's skepticism and his sense that Black progress is always a fragile thing.

But who knows? Maybe if I knew how Lady Danbury or Queen Charlotte came to be, I'd be so convinced that I'd finally be able to revel in a past that I haven't quite seen myself in before.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/05/arts/television/bridgerton-race-netflix.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/05/arts/television/bridgerton-race-netflix.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Adjoa Andoh, left, and Regé-Jean Page star in the Netflix series ''Bridgerton,'' which is set in 19th-century Britain. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LIAM DANIEL/NETFLIX) (C1)

Major characters in historical dramas with multiracial casts include, clockwise from top: Golda Rosheuvel as Queen Charlotte in ''Bridgerton''

Crystal Clarke as Georgiana Lambe in ''Sanditon''

and Stephanie Levi-John as Lina in ''The Spanish Princess.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LIAM DANIEL/NETFLIX

SIMON RIDGWAY/PBS

NICK BRIGGS/STARZ) (C6)

**Load-Date:** January 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Inspiration From South of the Border Moves Center Stage in Houston***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:618X-8P41-DXY4-X1PR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 13, 2020 Friday 13:46 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1656 words

**Byline:** Hilarie M. Sheets

**Highlight:** A new building at the Museum of Fine Arts showcases works by Latin American and Latino artists, many of whom are rarely shown in the United States.

**Body**

From the perspective of the artist [*Amalia Mesa-Bains*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), whose parents emigrated to the United States from Mexico, Chicano art — the affirming political expression of Mexican-Americans’ experiences — is “often overlooked,” she said, despite its tenure in America’s West and Southwest for more than a century.

“There haven’t been a lot of people in the museum world that have taken on a commitment to this vastly underrated area of art history, ” she said.

Ms. Mesa-Bains’s own site-specific installations, which pay tribute to Mexican home altars, or ofrendas, did not easily find collectors, and as a result many never survived. But on Nov. 21, when the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, unveils its new building for modern and contemporary art, visitors will discover her mirrored altar, “Transparent Migrations.” It reflects the experience of ***working-class*** immigrants, particularly women invisible to society — one of 250 acquisitions of Latin American and Latino artists, many of whom are rarely shown in this country.

In a city where Hispanics now approach 45 percent of the population, the [*Museum of Fine Arts*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), Houston, has spent more than $60 million over the last two decades to build from scratch a collection and research center reflecting the city’s position as a gateway between north and south. “It allows us as Latino or Latinx artists to be seen within the broader understanding of world art,” Ms. Mesa-Bains said, using the gender-neutral alternative to Latino.

The museum’s efforts were led by its curator of Latin American art, [*Mari Carmen Ramírez,*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) and they are writ large across the inaugural installation of the new Nancy and Rich Kinder Building — the final piece of a multiyear [*campus expansion designed by the architect Steven Holl*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/).

Latin American and Latino work represent 24 percent of the art on display there, shown in lively exchange with European and American art, photography, prints and drawings, design and craft.

Visitors will encounter a [*futuristic city by the Argentine Gyula Kosice*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), his constellation of floating light-boxes in conversation with immersive installations by [*James Turrell*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) and [*Yayoi Kusama*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/). Pioneering wire constructions by the [*Venezuelan artist Gego*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) anchor a thematic display called “Line into Space” that includes a calligraphic painting by [*Brice Marden*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) and a kinetic sculpture by the midcentury Swiss artist [*Jean Tinguely*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/).

“There’s a seamless transition from the gallery of European and American modern abstraction to Brazilian [*Concrete art*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), from [*Mondrian*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) to [*Mira Schendel*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/),” [*Gary Tinterow*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), the museum’s director, said, noting that many leading artists in Latin America in the mid-20th century came from Europe or went to school in Paris or at the Bauhaus in Germany. Here, in the only permanent collection galleries in North America devoted to Brazilian, Argentinean, Uruguayan and Venezuelan modernism, “Mari Carmen has created a canon,” he said.

Since arriving at the museum in 2001, when she established the [*International Center for the Arts of the Americas*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), the first research center devoted to Latin American and Latino art, Ms. Ramírez has tracked down significant works, sometimes in closets or under beds, from some 20 countries south of the border and by artists of Latin American descent in the United States.

“We have bet on artists who were not that well known in the U.S. or who had absolutely no market presence but we knew how important they were for art history because we had the research component,” said Ms. Ramírez, who directs the center and its digital archive, which has some 38,000 registered users worldwide. The museum was an early champion of Gego [*(Gertrud Goldschmidt)*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), [*Lygia Clark*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), [*Hélio Oiticica*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) and [*Joaquín Torres-García*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), now widely recognized by collectors and other institutions.

From the standpoint of scholarship and museum presentation, Edward Sullivan, deputy director of the [*Institute of Fine Arts*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), said the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, has “created the premier institution internationally for the exhibition and promotion of interest in Latin American art.”

The field has grown vastly. Its strong players include the [*Blanton Museum of Art*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) in Austin (where Ms. Ramírez got her start), the [*Los Angeles County Museum of Art*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), [*Tate Modern*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) in London and the [*Museum of Modern Art*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) in New York, which reopened last year showcasing the [*gift of Patricia Phelps de Cisneros*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/).

Only a few institutions have collected Latino work, notably El Museo del Barrio (since 1969). In 2017, the [*Whitney Museum of American Art hired Marcela Guerrero*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), who trained under Ms. Ramírez, as its first curator to develop a program of Latino art. But no other institution has consistently collected as many Latino works as M.F.A.H., as it is known, numbering about 400 by 71 artists, alongside more than 825 Latin American artworks by 211 artists.

On the eve of the opening of the new building, here are six artists and works selected by Ms. Ramírez that may come as a discovery to visitors.

Fanny Sanín

Born in 1938 in Bogotá, Colombia, educated in London and based in New York since 1971, [*Fanny Sanín*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) uses hard-edge geometric forms in paintings that synthesize the Colombian abstract movement led by [*Carlos Rojas*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/)and color field canvases by [*Ellsworth Kelly*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), [*Kenneth Noland*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) and [*Frank Stella*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/). “She’s a very interesting hinge figure who has never really entered the mainstream,” said Ms. Ramírez, who found the large-scale painting “Acrylic No. 5” (1973) hanging on the bedroom wall of Ms. Sanín’s small Manhattan apartment and is now exhibiting her work for the first time. Exploring color, rhythm and movement through vertical bands of varying hues, the painting hangs in the thematic gallery “Color into Light,” which includes works by Kelly, [*Josef Albers*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/), [*Hans Hofmann*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) and the Venezuelan [*Carlos Cruz-Diez*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/).

Elsa Gramcko

Virtually unknown outside Venezuela, where she spent her life (1925-94), [*Elsa Gramcko*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) was largely self-taught and a pioneer of incorporating industrial refuse as an art material. “She had an international career and was shown at the Venice Biennale but history relegated her to just the understanding of a few people,” said Ms. Ramírez, who is showing several of the artist’s constructions on wood with automobile parts. In “The Sun Has Set” (1966), a car headlight takes on the anthropomorphic quality of a giant eye. It is integrated with Constructive sculptures by the Brazilian Lygia Clark and works by members of Joaquin Torres-Garcia’s atelier, a Uruguayan version of the Bauhaus.

Amalia Mesa-Bains

Born in 1943 in Santa Clara, Calif., to parents who fled the Mexican revolution, Ms. Mesa-Bains emerged in the 1970s as a feminist leader of the Chicano art movement. Though many of her works are ephemeral, Ms. Ramírez was happy to learn the artist had kept intact “Transparent Migrations” (2001), originally commissioned for an exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The mirrored armoire, containing a small gauze dress and the artist’s lace wedding mantilla, is flanked by blown-glass cactuses as a symbol of immigrants’ resilience. It anchors the “Border” thematic grouping, including a painted lithograph by [*Ramiro Gomez*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) and photographic installation by [*David Taylor*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/).

Teresa Margolles

Based in Mexico, where she was born in 1963 and trained as a forensic pathologist, [*Teresa Margolles*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) tackles difficult subject matter related to violence from drug-trafficking, mostly against women. Her piece “Lote Bravo” (2005) is composed of 400 artisanal bricks made from soil collected from Ciudad Juárez, where the corpses of sexually abused women were found. “It is a cemetery for these women and a memorial to their lives,” said Ms. Ramírez, who has not exhibited the fragile work in more than a decade. The bricks are installed as a wall in the gallery “Collectivity,” with photographs by [*Carrie Mae Weems*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) and a monumental painting by [*Mark Bradford*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/).

Carlos Garaicoa

Now living in Madrid, [*Carlos Garaicoa*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) was born in Havana in 1967 and is part of a generation of artists that emerged in the 1990s engaged in biting criticism of the Cuban revolution. His installations evoke architecture, memory and political history. A 2007 work, “Ciudad doblada (roja)— “Bent City (Red)” — shown in China but never before in the U.S. — comprises four low tables inlaid with 102 hand-cut and folded cardboard pieces referencing the Chinese and Japanese traditions of origami, and summoning a lexicon of architectural motifs. “He takes China’s history and exponential growth as a starting point and allows viewers to enter this imagined city,” said Ms. Ramírez, who pointed out how the artist drew on the Latin American tradition of geometric abstraction. In a gallery titled “Mapping,” the piece is grouped with a painting by [*Julie Mehretu*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/)and [*Guillermo Kuitca*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/)’s installation of 54 mattresses painted with maps.

Camilo Ontiveros

Born in Mexico in 1978, [*Camilo Ontiveros*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/) received his M.F.A. in Los Angeles, where he is based, and makes work exploring the instability of the migrant experience. In “Temporary Storage: The Belongings of Juan Manuel Montes” (2009/2017) the artist recalls the first known Dreamer to be [*deported*](https://www.artnews.com/artnews/news/icons-amalia-mesa-bains-9988/)by the Trump administration, despite protections provided under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA. Mr. Ontiveros gained access to possessions Mr. Montes left behind, including his bed, TV, clothing and books. The artist bound them with rope — just as immigrants transport belongings across the border — and secured the vertiginous mass atop metal sawhorses. “The precarious structure embodies the vulnerable status of these migrants,” said Ms. Ramírez, who shows the acquisition in a dialogue with Ms. Mesa-Bains’s “Transparent Migrations.”

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRANDON THIBODEAUX FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ESTATE OF ELSA GRAMCKO AND MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON; CAMILO ONTIVEROS AND MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON; AMALIA MESA-BAINS AND MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON; TERESA MARGOLLES AND MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON; CARLOS GARAICOA AND GALLERIA CONTINUA)

**Load-Date:** November 16, 2020

**End of Document**



[***In ‘Coal Country,’ Memories From a Mining Tragedy Live On***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y7K-64C1-JBG3-617V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 2, 2020 Thursday 10:16 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1240 words

**Byline:** Julia Jacobs

**Highlight:** A new documentary play at the Public Theater weaves together interviews from people whose lives were forever changed by the 2010 mining disaster in West Virginia.

**Body**

Six years after the explosion that killed 29 coal miners in West Virginia, family members and co-workers of the dead weren’t answering phone calls from the New York playwright.

That writer, Jessica Blank, wanted to know if they would be interested in sharing their stories for the play she was creating with her husband and frequent collaborator, Erik Jensen. The couple are best known for [*“The Exonerated,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html) based on interviews with former death-row prisoners who were wrongfully convicted.

For their latest documentary project, [*the Public Theater*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html) commissioned them to write about the mining tragedy that sent [*reporters flooding*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html) into the tiny rural community of Montcoal, W.Va., on April 5, 2010. A decade later, [*the play would tell*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html) the stories of the miners and their loved ones after the rest of the country stopped listening.

But no one was calling back.

“Then I realized,” said Blank, who is also the play’s director. “This is a place where you have to show your face.”

In April 2016, she took a trip down to Charleston, W.Va., where the mining company’s former chief executive, Donald L. Blankenship, was [*being sentenced*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html) to prison after he was convicted of conspiring to violate federal safety standards at the nonunion Upper Big Branch mine. There, she introduced herself to the family members of the dead [*miners*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html). Later on, they introduced her to others.

The resulting play, [*“Coal Country,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html) which is now in previews and opens on March 3, is an artfully edited patchwork of memories from the days before and after the explosion ripped through the mine and tore families apart. Among the voices are a miner who lost three family members in the blast; a union loyalist troubled to observe workers intimidated into silence by their new bosses; and a wife who had vainly begged her husband to put his safety first.

Blank and Jensen want Manhattan theatergoers to sit and listen to these stories of people who live deep in Trump country, where coal mining is inextricably linked with daily life and the national press tends to only visit when there’s a disaster.

It’s a well-known refrain that theater is a way to facilitate empathy, and these playwrights noticed a specific lack of it between their subjects and their audience.

“Theater has tremendous untapped power in a country where we’re so divided,” Blank said, “where, I believe, most of our problems can be traced back to a lack of empathy.”

Interspersed in the monologue-driven show is a score of haunting folk music, by the singer-songwriter Steve Earle, that combines work songs, love songs and odes to the dead.

Starting out on the project, Earle, who is from Texas, was more familiar with West Virginia than Blank, who describes herself as growing up among the “East Coast intelligentsia,” or Jensen, a product of ***working class*** Minnesota. Earle often stops in West Virginia while on tour with his band, but even he felt disconnected from that part of the country.

“I was getting concerned that people like me that think they’re ‘down with the working guy’ have completely lost touch with the people they’re supposedly championing,” he said.

Earle plans to release an album in May called “Ghosts of West Virginia,” comprised mostly of songs he wrote for “Coal Country.” His challenge: “How do I make a record that speaks to people who didn’t vote the same way that I did?”

In May 2016, days before West Virginia voted overwhelmingly for Donald J. Trump in the Republican primary, the two playwrights and the folk musician were staying at a Holiday Inn in Beckley, W.Va., about an hour’s drive from the homes where they would interview surviving miners and the family members of the deceased.

Each interview took about four hours, and they could be overwhelmingly emotional. In one conversation, a miner described the dark, claustrophobic trip far underground, where the best coal was found. In others, the men and women recalled exactly where they were when they first got news of something bad happening down in the mine.

Stories like these became the building blocks for the script (some liberties were taken with the exact language). The play is suffused with testimony about union rights and corporate greed, but it often gets down to small everyday moments like a husband and wife in bed sharing their most pressing worries.

Making art about recent real-life tragedies can be sensitive, and often questions are asked about who should be given the power to tell those stories.

Through their interviews with the former death row inmates and then Iraqi refugees, which they made into another documentary play, [*“Aftermath,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html) Blank and Jensen have learned how to earn the trust of people who have gone through harrowing tragedy. They have a rule against pursuing interviews with people who are wary of telling their stories. And they know that it helps to share bits of their own trauma to even the emotional playing field.

“You have to show up,” Jensen said of the process, “and you have to, in your heart, know that this is not about you.”

On one wall of the play’s East Village rehearsal space is a large timeline of the day of the tragedy, the worst U.S. mining disaster in 40 years. Below it is a timeline of the aftermath, with important events written with a marker or pen.

Blankenship [*was indicted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html) in 2014 after several investigations determined that the owner of the mine, Massey Energy Company, routinely ignored safety violations. In 2016, he was sentenced to one year in prison for the conspiracy conviction. (The former energy executive has continued to challenge his conviction amid attempts to [*launch*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html) [*a political career*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/theater/reviews/the-exonerated-revived-at-the-culture-project.html).)

Ezra Knight, the actor playing a mine employee named Roosevelt Lynch Jr., who lost his father in the explosion, said workshopping the play doubled as a master class in understanding Appalachia. The actors learned terms like “longwall” (where the high-quality coal is found) and studied how coal is mined from it (sheared off, the script says, like a cheese slicer “cutting through hot butter”).

They all found themselves imagining what it was like to spend several hours a day in tight quarters underground in temperatures that shifted between blistering heat and freezing cold.

“I get uptight just going through the Holland Tunnel,” Jensen said. “I wouldn’t make it.”

The four men and three women depicted in the play will be invited to see the show, but the playwrights made sure they knew that their presence wasn’t expected. After all, Blank said, they are the people who know the story best; the people that she and her husband most want the play to reach are those who know little about it.

Members of the cast are split on whether they want to be told that the people they are playing show up in the audience, Knight said. “I want to know,” he added. “I want to meet him before the show and talk to him afterward.”

The mining families who can’t make it to New York for the play may have another chance. The playwrights hope that, one day, they can bring “Coal Country” to West Virginia.

PHOTOS: Jessica Blank, left, and her husband, Erik Jensen, top left, created “Coal Country” with the singer-songwriter Steve Earle, top right. Ezra Knight, far left, and Thomas Kopache, of the cast. Above, shifting benches at a rehearsal. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEVIN YALKIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); A sign at a home near the Upper Big Branch coal mine in Montcoal, W.Va., after the explosion that killed 29 miners in 2010. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SAUL LOEB/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***How a ’00s College Debate Team Predicted Today’s Culture Wars; Jay Caspian Kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63CS-KRH1-DXY4-X447-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 16, 2021 Monday 06:07 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2644 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** The rise in reactionary politics has led to a limiting of public debate.

**Body**

This is a preview of the Jay Caspian Kang newsletter, which is reserved for Times subscribers. [*Sign up to get it in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters?newsletter_signup=true&amp;product_code=JCK) twice a week.

By their very nature, formal competitive debates are absurd and embarrassing for everyone involved. Nothing really gets resolved, except that one debater sounds more clever or passionate than the other. Outside of their utility in elections, in which they function more as pageants of ideas than actual litigations, the modern history of high-profile, memorable debate consists of one data point: About half a century ago, Gore Vidal sneered at William F. Buckley Jr., who [*called him a slur in return*](https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/buckley-vidal-and-the-queer-question). And yet debate persists as an ideal in the American discourse — the one space where ideas might be freed from the endless context and inconvenient baggage of the real world and judged on their pure merits. This, of course, is nonsense.

When I was asked to write this newsletter, my first thoughts went to a debate I judged about a decade ago in California that pitted a white and Asian American team from Orange County against a Black squad from Long Beach. The latter was running a new type of argument called “narratives” — an identity-based form of debating, which a couple of excited friends had called “revolutionary.” They were right, not so much in terms of the impact of “narratives” within the debate community — though it was transformative — but in how its compelling back story predicted and laid out so many of today’s urgent, thorny questions about race, education and who has the right to speak on what.

I will be covering a wide variety of topics in this space — everything from education and housing policy to politics and gambling. But I wanted to start this newsletter with this excavation of a seemingly irrelevant bit of history — both because I think the episode itself is prescient about the moment we’re all living through and also because I think it will help give readers a sense of how I view the world.

In the summer of 1987, Ede Warner graduated from Augustana College, where he had spent most of his time on the policy debate circuit, in which he was one of the few Black competitors. He returned to his parents’ funeral home in Gary, Ind., with plans to take over the business. One day, about five years into his career, Warner was embalming the body of a Black teenager in the basement. This was nothing new, but this time something snapped. He went upstairs and told his mother that he was done. Wayne State in Detroit offered him a position as a graduate assistant coach on its debate team. He accepted, with the ambition of recruiting more Black debaters into the field.

Warner’s work began slowly. He helped his students, most of whom were white, write their arguments. Normal competitive debate operates in an abstract, theoretical space: The affirmative team proposes a plan that affirms that year’s resolution, which usually involves some policy decision by the U.S. government. In response to an affirmative arguing in favor of, say, abolishing the death penalty, the negative side might argue that a federal ban on the death penalty would be catastrophic for Democrats in the midterms, which would lead to the Republicans retaking the House and the Senate; once in power, those Republicans would rattle more sabers at China, and before you know it: nuclear war.

Warner’s first efforts centered these arguments on what he called “Black issues,” like reparations, the criminal justice system and Black social justice movements, but for the most part, he stayed within the standard parameters of debate.

In 1993, Warner got his big break. He accepted a tenure track position at the University of Louisville to teach Pan-African studies and coach debate. Over the next decade, Warner and his Louisville team [*fundamentally transformed debating*](https://ir.library.louisville.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3166&amp;context=etd) at the college and high school levels.

Louisville debaters used hip-hop and poetry in their speeches. They deployed “narratives” — personal stories about encountering discrimination, whether inside the world of debate or outside it. They refused to debate the topic at hand and asked the opposition to debate a different topic entirely: The United States Federal Government Should Substantially Increase Black Participation in N.D.T./C.E.D.A. debate. (The N.D.T. and the C.E.D.A. are the two major college debate organizations.)

In 2004, for example, when the topic was NATO, Louisville opened a match against Harvard by arguing that the debate community was similar to NATO as an oppressive institution. While researching NATO and the effect of racism on foreign policy, the Louisville debaters argued, they came to the realization that they, as Black people in America, had experiences that the so-called experts they were reading did not.

Warner’s great innovation was to shift the stakes of each round from the theoretical to the personal. His debaters argued that the judge’s ballot could do more than just decide which fake plan was better: By voting for Louisville, the judge could affirm the validity of Black students in debate and, by extension, create a more diverse, inclusive community. By voting against Louisville, he would be implicitly saying that everything was fine.

The debate community gave Warner’s formal experiments a name: The Louisville Project. Warner called it something else: The Malcolm X Debate Society.

Malcolm X debaters, according to Tiffany Dillard-Knox, the current director of debate at Louisville, drew from Black oral traditions. High-level debaters talk at an absurd pace as a way to fit as many arguments as possible into their allotted time. Speed turned debate into a highly technical activity in which hundreds of arguments must be charted and refuted. Louisville debaters, by contrast, talked at a normal pace.

Back in the 1940s, when debate was still a persuasive exercise geared toward producing orators, students from historically Black colleges and universities would routinely beat white Ivy Leaguers; speed debate, with all its ornate absurdities, Malcolm X debaters argued, had been devised as a way to exclude Black people who did not have the resources to participate.

Warner also told his debaters to use what he called “identity advantages,” which he defined as the lived authority to speak on issues pertaining to oppression and racism. This forced their opponents to enter the debate at a deficit. If the other team refused to debate on those terms, or as in several instances, if they responded in ways that might have been deemed discriminatory, Louisville debaters would shut down the round and refuse to continue.

There’s little to dispute about the Malcolm X Debate Society’s central claim: Debate at the high school and collegiate levels had been dominated for decades by elite institutions. The [*winners*](https://ci.uky.edu/UKDebate/results-history) of the Tournament of Champions, the most prestigious event in high school debate, came either from the most exclusive private schools in the country — St. Mark’s in Dallas or Westminster in Atlanta — or from high-performing public schools, like Stuyvesant in New York City. Most of those schools could afford to hire a fleet of coaches to write complex, often impenetrable arguments about Foucault, Judith Butler or, ironically enough, critical race theory that hardly anyone in the room could understand, including the students doing the arguing. By drawing the source material for their arguments from what they called organic intellectuals — whether they were rappers, painters or, in many cases, the debaters themselves — Louisville disrupted this credentialism.

Warner presided over only part of the evolution of debate that took place over the next two decades. He resigned as part of a settlement in 2011, after being accused of sexual harassment. (He has challenged the settlement in the Kentucky court system.) These allegations came two years after he was charged with arson and assault in connection with a domestic dispute; he pleaded guilty to some of the charges.

But his project continued without him. As alternative debate, as Louisville’s debate style was eventually called, slowly filtered out into the wider community, it evolved to encapsulate other ideas and identities. Some teams began to recruit Black debaters as a way to counter Louisville’s identity advantages, which meant Warner, whose original goal was to diversify debate, made the progress he wanted. By 2013, when a gay, Black squad from Emporia State University [*became the first team to win*](https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab/articles/debatable) both the C.E.D.A. and N.D.T. titles in the same season by focusing on the intersection between Black and queer identity, alternative debate had become firmly established at the highest levels of the activity.

The debate I judged was between inexperienced debaters. The team from Orange County spent most of the round with confused, anxious looks on their faces. They tried to express that something was unfair about all this but quickly demurred and more or less agreed that debate needed more people like those on the team from Long Beach. At the end of the round, as the two teams went through perfunctory handshakes, the white and Asian team laughed with relief and said they had learned a lot. I agreed and voted for the team from Long Beach. Something was happening, and I wanted to put myself on the right side.

I have thought and rethought that decision for the past decade. The country certainly faces larger problems than diversity in debate, but as state legislatures pass laws banning critical race theory in schools and the discussion of politics devolves into a Pyrrhic culture war, Warner’s intervention certainly deserves a second look as a precursor for what was to come.

Many of Louisville’s innovations, for example, came from Warner’s reading of actual critical legal studies and critical race theory scholars like Mari Matsuda, Derrick Bell and Kimberlé Crenshaw, especially his team’s contention that the best way to learn about oppression was to hear the narratives of the people who have been oppressed. By routing every debate topic, from NATO expansion to climate change, toward American racism, Warner created a literal hierarchy of who should be heard and what should be discussed.

There was also a whiff of racial essentialism in Louisville’s core arguments: Was there really a Black way to debate? Was there no real value in reading the opinions of experts on the effects of racist foreign policy, even if its harms fell on other people? And was race really the correct way to view the problem of elitism and exclusivity in the community?

A healthy portion of the winners of the Tournament of Champions have been so-called people of color (mostly Asian Americans), but there have been precious few women or poor people of any racial background. By focusing only on race and, more specifically, the alienation and discomfort felt by the individual debaters in the round, the scope of the debate narrowed from the theoretical world down to the actual power dynamics within the room, namely a debate team at Louisville, one of the finest public universities in the country, versus another debate team, often representing another fine university.

Meanwhile, the vast majority of debaters are middle- and ***working-class*** kids in mediocre or failing high schools. They put on blazers and pantsuits on Saturdays, drive to a nearby tournament, speak persuasively to an audience of parent chaperones and never see the Tournament of Champions, much less an elite college debate.

If I were asked to describe — in the broadest terms possible — my general thoughts on things, I would say that most things are uncomplicated, some things are complicated, but almost everything worth writing about is both uncomplicated and complicated. In the abstract world of debate, I disagree with many of Warner’s arguments for the reasons stated above. Simple enough. But in the messier world, I acknowledge that he correctly assessed that the very real problems of inequality in debate could be addressed only when actual wins and losses were on the line. No amount of diversity training, conferences or “dialogue” would have done as much as one powerful team taking a loss. I admire his ability to see a problem, apply a method he believed in and change the face of debate.

The Louisville Project worked. And although I am skeptical of the type of identity politics that Warner practiced, which downplays the effects of class and can, when applied sloppily, preclude solidarity by placing one narrative above all others, it should be pointed out that it wasn’t a Black team from Northwestern, Dartmouth or Emory that ultimately won the National Debate Tournament in 2013 but rather Emporia State, a school that accepts over 80 percent of its applicants and has an in-state tuition under $7,000 a year. An identity-first approach, in other words, took the most prestigious title in debate away from the rich, powerful schools.

Still, I believe Warner’s project presaged a profound change in the way that race and inequality are now discussed, not so much in ideology but rather in methodology. The range of possible solutions to problems of inequality have drifted together and consolidated themselves. What has resulted is a false consensus.

This, at first, might seem counterintuitive — there is, for example, a wider scope of electoral choices on both ends of the political spectrum than there was a decade ago. There are more pathways into politics that go beyond the electoral: Last summer, millions of people went out to protest in the streets at a scale and intensity that had not been seen before in my lifetime.

But this broadening has also been accompanied by a type of forced acquiescence to whatever proposal gets the most traction. Too often, this requires us to bury any criticisms we may have of it. The University of California, for example, [*recently ended the use of the SAT and the ACT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/21/us/university-california-sat-act.html) in its admissions process. This policy, which is being phased in, was meant to address the lack of diversity at the system’s 10 campuses — even though we are far from having a consensus on the effect that standardized tests have on diversity, much less what forms of “diversity” count at these schools with massive Asian populations. Still, the move — in some corners, at least — was cast in stark terms: If you want diversity, you must agree with eliminating the SAT and the ACT. If you criticize the decision, you must oppose diversity.

I call this process binary consensus building. When judges voting in a Louisville Project debate were presented with the problem of exclusion in debate, they were given two choices for resolving it: Vote Team A or Team B. Similarly, a recent rise in reactionary politics has meant that the range of possible solutions to policy issues has been drastically reduced, forcing people into a type of acquiescence to whatever solution gets placed in front of them. Do you want to stop inequality or not? Are you a racist or an anti-racist? Do you care about race or class? Are you on Team A or Team B?

I recently [*read a conversation between*](https://www.latimes.com/lifestyle/image/story/2021-03-17/image-magazine-source-la-fashion-style-art) the historian Robin D.G. Kelley and the writer Vinson Cunningham in Image, The Los Angeles Times’s style magazine. Kelley talks about his career in the academy and activism, which started with the Black student union at Cal State Long Beach and went through study groups, various antiwar efforts, the anti-apartheid movement, the Communist Workers’ Party and Jesse Jackson’s Rainbow Coalition. His political life felt almost unfathomably broad — here was someone who, over the course of 30 years, had tried different things to solve the same trenchant problems with intellectual generosity and unorthodox inquiry.

In that spirit, I hope this newsletter will present a maximalist approach that broadens the range of possibilities.

Have feedback? Send me a note at [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[***‘Bridgerton’ Takes On Race. But Its Core Is Escapism.; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61P6-7N41-DXY4-X3WC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 5, 2021 Tuesday 13:50 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1649 words

**Byline:** Salamishah Tillet

**Highlight:** The Netflix hit departs from the homogeneous casting of most period drama, imagining a 19th-century Britain with Black royalty and aristocrats.

**Body**

The Netflix hit departs from the homogeneous casting of most period drama, imagining a 19th-century Britain with Black royalty and aristocrats.

“We were two separate societies divided by color until a king fell in love with one of us,” the quick-witted Lady Danbury (Adjoa Andoh) tells her protégé, the Duke of Hastings. “Look at everything it is doing for us, allowing us to become.” She insists, “Love, Your Grace, conquers all.”

Appearing in the fourth episode of “[*Bridgerton*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html),” the first series produced by Shonda Rhimes as part of her powerhouse [*Netflix*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html) deal, this conversation between the show’s main Black characters is the first explicit mention of race in a story that revolves around the duke, a Black man named Simon Basset (Regé-Jean Page), and his passionate courtship of Daphne (Phoebe Dynevor), the eldest daughter in the wealthy, white and titled Bridgerton family.

The show’s casting diversity is its most immediately striking quality, not just in Black aristocratic characters like the duke and Lady Danbury, but also in the entrepreneurial Madame Genevieve Delacroix (Kathryn Drysdale) and the ***working-class*** couple Will and Alice Mondrich (Martins Imhangbe and Emma Naomi). All of them are central to the complicated social caste system that make up the show’s version of early 1800s London.

“Bridgerton” is not Rhimes’s first dalliance with a multiracial cast in a British period drama. In 2017, she produced “Still Star-Crossed” on ABC, a story that began after the deaths of Romeo and Juliet and focused on their cousins Benvolio Montague and Rosaline Capulet, who were forced to marry in order to heal the family rift. Though Benvolio and Rosaline are intentionally cast as a interracial couple, race was neither a point of contention nor grist for social commentary. Instead, viewers were asked to suspend our contemporary racial perceptions in order to accept the colorblind Verona of the past. (This strategy, among others, was largely unsuccessful — “Still Star-Crossed” was canceled after only one season.)

In contrast, the characters of “Bridgerton” never seem to forget their blackness but instead understand it as one of the many facets of their identity, while still thriving in Regency society. The show’s success proves that people of color do not have to be erased or exist solely as victims of racism in order for a British [*costume*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html)drama to flourish.

Chris Van Dusen, the “Bridgerton” showrunner, was a writer on Rhimes’s “Grey’s Anatomy” before going on to be a co-executive producer on “Scandal,” a show that both recognized but did not entirely revolve around the interracial tensions of Olivia Pope’s romantic relationships. Applying that same approach to his adaptations of Julia Quinn’s Bridgerton novels, Van Dusen places us in an early 19th century Britain ruled by a Black woman, Queen Charlotte (Golda Rosheuvel).

“It made me wonder what that could have looked like,” [*Van Dusen told The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html) in a recent feature about the show. “Could she have used her power to elevate other people of color in society? Could she have given them titles and lands and dukedoms?”

Such a move pushes back against the racial homogeneity of hit period dramas like “[*Downton Abbey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html),” which that show’s executive producer, Gareth Neame insisted was necessary for historical accuracy. “It’s not a multicultural time,” he said in [*a 2014 interview*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html) with Vulture. “We can’t suddenly start populating the show with people from all sorts of ethnicities. It wouldn’t be correct.”

“Bridgerton” provides a blueprint for British period shows in which Black characters can thrive within the melodramatic story lines, extravagant costumes and bucolic beauty that make such series so appealing, without having to be servants or enslaved. This could in turn create openings for gifted performers who have avoided them in the past.

“I can’t do ‘Downton Abbey,’ can’t be in ‘Victoria,’ can’t be in ‘Call the Midwife,’” the actress Thandie Newton [*told*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html) the Sunday Times of London in 2017. “Well, I could, but I don’t want to play someone who’s being racially abused.” She went on, “There just seems to be a desire for stuff about the royal family, stuff from the past, which is understandable, but it just makes it slim pickings for people of color.”

For all its innovations, “Bridgerton” has its own blind spots. I found it strange that it is only the Black characters who speak about race, a creative decision that risks reinforcing the very white privilege it seeks to undercut by enabling its white characters to be free of racial identity.

When Lady Danbury expresses her optimistic belief in the power of love, the duke is more circumspect, countering that Black progress is fragile and dependent on the whims of whichever white king is in charge. But to actually see narrative evidence of this precariousness, you have to turn to other recent British period dramas that featured integral Black characters, like “The Spanish Princess” and “Sanditon.”

Taking place in Tudor England, “[*The Spanish Princess*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html)” on Starz features Stephanie Levi-John as a Black woman named Lina who came to England as Catherine of Aragon’s lady-in-waiting. Based on an actual historical figure, the show thoughtfully fictionalized her struggle between her loyalty to Catherine and [*her love for her Moorish husband, Oviedo,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html) and their twin boys as xenophobia rises throughout the kingdom, and Catherine’s marriage to King Henry VIII unravels.

The series is set in the 16th century during a historical epoch in which slavery and race were not inextricably linked to each other. Here, Lina’s brown skin merely indicates her foreignness rather than marks her oppression, giving us insight into how such differences were interpreted and experienced before anti-Black racism was codified in Europe (and the Americas) as a result of the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

By the time we reach the early 19th-century world of PBS’s “Sanditon,” however, the long arm of the slave trade has reached the British seaside resort of the title. Adapted by Andrew Davies from an unfinished novel by Jane Austen, “Sanditon” expands the story of Miss Georgiana Lambe, Austen’s first Black character. Described briefly (and offensively) in the manuscript as a “[*mulatto*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html)” born to a white slaveholding father and enslaved Black mother in the British colony of Antigua, Georgiana in the series is an heiress, played by Crystal Clarke, whose wealth and exotic beauty make her the most sought after young woman in England’s south coast. Ultimately, I found Georgiana’s rarefied status to be the show’s biggest representational challenge: As I reveled in her splendor, I also found myself forgetting the enslaved labor that created it.

But racial trauma remains. Despite the attention that she receives, Georgiana is ultimately alienated in England because of her race, an experience that I found more realistic than Marina Thompson’s (Ruby Barker), another biracial debutante who also finds herself alone at court in “Bridgerton.”

Other complex portrayals of Britain’s participation in the slave trade can be found in Amma Asante’s standout 2013 movie “Belle,” or in Pippa Bennett-Warner’s character on Hulu’s “Harlots,” who lives as a free but formerly enslaved Black woman in London in the 1780s.

I’m also looking forward to the mini-series “The Long Song,” debuting later this month on PBS. Based on Andrea Levy’s novel of the same name, it unfolds at the dawn of emancipation in Jamaica in the 1830s. It is another story of England and the central role its Black subjects played in building its wealth and grandeur under King George and Queen Charlotte’s rule, though we’ll probably see far fewer corsets and society balls.

By avoiding both slavery and the fervent British abolition movement that flourished in London in the early 19th century, “Bridgerton” ultimately opts for “Downton” escapism over a nuanced exploration of real-time racial dynamics, mostly relegating such aspects to the story’s past. In flashbacks we learn that the first Duke of Hastings was ruinously consumed by his newfound status, demanding, to the point of verbal abuse, absolute perfection from his wife, who dies in childbirth, and his son, who stutters as a child. (Shades of Papa Pope of “Scandal,” who once [*admonished*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/arts/television/bridgerton-netflix-rege-jean-page.html) his daughter, “You have to be twice as good as them to get half of what they have.”)

With more seasons presumably to come, given the show’s popularity, I’m curious how far “Bridgerton” is willing to depart from Quinn’s novels in order to fill in the worlds of its other Black characters, especially Black women like Lady Danbury, Queen Charlotte and Madame Delacroix. They are the show’s most intriguing characters and they remain mostly unexplored — will they eventually be afforded as much complexity as the duke? As Daphne’s entire family?

In a society in which gender and sexual mores dominate the actions and attitudes of all its characters, I want to see how these women learned to navigate those same structures differently shaped than everyone else. Because despite Lady Danbury’s beliefs that love conquers everything, I could not help but think that history ends up validating the duke’s skepticism and his sense that Black progress is always a fragile thing.

But who knows? Maybe if I knew how Lady Danbury or Queen Charlotte came to be, I’d be so convinced that I’d finally be able to revel in a past that I haven’t quite seen myself in before.

PHOTOS: Adjoa Andoh, left, and Regé-Jean Page star in the Netflix series “Bridgerton,” which is set in 19th-century Britain. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LIAM DANIEL/NETFLIX) (C1); Major characters in historical dramas with multiracial casts include, clockwise from top: Golda Rosheuvel as Queen Charlotte in “Bridgerton”; Crystal Clarke as Georgiana Lambe in “Sanditon”; and Stephanie Levi-John as Lina in “The Spanish Princess.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LIAM DANIEL/NETFLIX; SIMON RIDGWAY/PBS; NICK BRIGGS/STARZ) (C6)

**Load-Date:** May 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How N.Y.C. Plans to Crack Down on Illegal Fireworks; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:606K-G6X1-DXY4-X4TC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 30, 2020 Tuesday 09:46 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1247 words

**Byline:** Amanda Rosa

**Highlight:** A task force will target the suppliers of the illegal fireworks that have been booming across the city for weeks, Mayor Bill de Blasio said.

**Body**

[Want to get New York Today by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

It’s Wednesday.

Weather: A high in the upper 80s with a chance of thunderstorms, turning into mostly clear skies tonight.

Alternate-side parking: Suspended through Sunday.

Many New Yorkers have been struggling to sleep for weeks. Now, the mayor is promising a solution.

The city’s residents, already on edge from the coronavirus pandemic, are hearing [*illegal fireworks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) booming late into the night. Thousands of complaints have flooded the city’s help and emergency lines, but to no avail.

“These are not your normal kids playing with fireworks,” Michael Ford, a piano teacher in Inwood, [*told my colleagues*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday). “These are real explosives, like Macy’s-style fireworks.”

Here’s what the mayor is proposing

On Monday, fed-up residents honked car horns outside Gracie Mansion in an effort to push Mayor Bill de Blasio to take action. The next morning, he announced that a fireworks task force would be created to disrupt the use and supply of illegal fireworks.

The task force will include 10 police officers, 12 fire marshals and 20 investigators from the city sheriff’s office. Sting operations, he said, will “go and get these illegal fireworks at the base.”

“We’re going to go at it hard now,” the mayor added.

[[*New York City announced a crackdown on illegal fireworks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).]

Some people on Twitter, however, [*voiced concerns*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) about having the Police Department address the fireworks at a time when many New Yorkers are calling for less policing.

Mr. de Blasio insisted that the task force would target the “big fish” supplying the fireworks, not the “kid on the corner.” Investigators will focus on the sale of fireworks inside the city and in surrounding states.

“In a lot of cases, you can’t intervene if someone shoots off a firework and they’re gone,” he said. “It’s not a good use of police time and energy.”

The context

It’s still a mystery as to why the amateur fireworks are happening. Other cities, including [*Oakland, Calif.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), and [*Baltimore*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday), have also reported an increase in fireworks, and many people are documenting the explosions on social media.

In one case, it appeared that even [*firefighters in Brooklyn*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) were lighting fireworks.

Although fireworks are illegal to buy, sell or ignite in New York City, they’re generally sold from duffel bags or car trunks in ***working-class*** neighborhoods and set off days before July 4.

City Councilman Chaim Deutsch, who represents parts of Brooklyn and participated in the protest outside Gracie Mansion, has [*circulated a petition*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) urging Mr. de Blasio to do more.

“We need to send a message that we need to end these chaotic fireworks,” Mr. Deutsch said in [*a video posted to Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) on Tuesday. “If we can’t sleep, you can’t sleep.”

What happened in New York’s primary election

Jesse McKinley writes:

Early results from Tuesday’s Democratic primary indicated likely wins for a pair of prominent Congress members — Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Representative Jerrold Nadler.

But there are tens of thousands of absentee ballots still to be counted, and several closely watched and hard-fought races were in limbo, including the fate of Representative Eliot L. Engel, the veteran congressman from the Bronx. Mr. Engel is fighting for his political life against Jamaal Bowman, [*an insurgent candidate*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday) backed by many of the Democrats’ most outspoken progressives.

Read more of our coverage:

[*New York State Primary Election Results 2020*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Primary Voters in New York City Face Scattered Problems*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Vote-by-Mail Ballot Requests Overwhelm New York City Elections Agency*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Insurgent Wave Upends House Primaries in N.Y. as Engel Falls Behind*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Republicans Retain House Seat in Special Election in Western N.Y.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

From The Times

[*Gun Violence Spikes in N.Y.C., Intensifying Debate Over Policing*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*N.Y. Planned Parenthood’s C.E.O. Is Ousted After Staff Complaints*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*He Spent 25 Years in Prison for Murder, but Was Innocent All Along*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Her Virus Test Came Back Positive. 3 Hours Later, She Had a Baby.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

[*Father Whose Infant Twins Died in Hot Car Avoids Prison*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

Want more news? [*Check out our full coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

The Mini Crossword: Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

What we’re reading

The man who tried but failed to escape Rikers Island twice in four days had hoped to leave “intolerable” conditions meant to combat the coronavirus, a fellow inmate said. [[*Gothamist*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

New York’s takeout cocktail law is expiring soon, worrying restaurants and bars. [[*Eater New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

City schools are donating over 1,000 cases of frozen food to anti-hunger organizations to curb food insecurity and waste. [[*Chalkbeat New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)]

And finally: The pets left behind by Covid-19

[*Sarah Maslin Nir writes:*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

As a trained disaster responder, Dr. Robin Brennen was well versed in proper safety procedures when she entered a coronavirus patient’s apartment on the Upper West Side in March. She pulled on protective plastic bootees, a face mask and an eye shield.

Then, with a gloved hand, she picked up the rest of her equipment: a five-pound bag of cat kibble and a litter box.

Dr. Brennen, a veterinarian at Animal Care Centers of NYC, is part of a team of specialists who help the pets of those who become seriously ill.

Across the city, animal specialists in full-body personal protective gear enter homes to feed, at no charge, famished pets whose owners are hospitalized with the virus, or to take custody of pets belonging to patients who do not return home.

Pet owners who have died of the virus have left behind dogs, guinea pigs and cats, at least one of which starved to death before anyone had checked the owner’s apartment, according to Animal Care Centers of NYC.

On the Upper West Side that day in March, residents of the co-op building had alerted Dr. Brennen’s organization that a woman who lived there was in intensive care battling the virus. Her two beloved cats had been left behind. Dr. Brennen fed the cats twice a week.

“I knew how much she wanted those cats and loved them,” she said. “And I wanted them to be there for her when she got home.”

Ultimately, the cats’ owner died; a neighbor later adopted them.

In late April, New York City’s emergency management and animal welfare offices introduced a hotline for people who were struggling to care for their pets because of the virus.

As of June 17, roughly 145 pets had been turned over via the hotline, though the hotline’s main goal is to connect people with free resources to help them keep their animals.

Animals surrendered by people who have contracted the virus must be quarantined for 14 days. After that, they can be adopted.

“It is so important, especially at this time, that this human-animal bond is taken care of,” said Christine Kim, the city animal welfare office’s senior community liaison. “This is the time when people need that the most.”

It’s Wednesday — check on your neighbors.

Metropolitan Diary: Page turner

Dear Diary:

A young woman steps off the train. As she does, she drops a paperback book.

“Miss,” passengers yell. “Miss! Miss!”

The book tumbles to the floor of the car as the door closes behind her.

“Oh, well,” one guy says.

The book lands in front of a woman. She bends down, picks it up, opens it to the bookmarked page and starts reading intently.

— Drew Watson

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We’re experimenting with the format of New York Today. What would you like to see more (or less) of? Post a comment or email us: [*nytoday@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Amr Alfiky/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***150 Big Businesses Warn Mayor of ‘Widespread Anxiety’ Over N.Y.C.’s Future***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60T9-94H1-DXY4-X47V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 10, 2020 Thursday 10:31 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1400 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Dana Rubinstein

**Highlight:** Leaders of companies like Goldman Sachs and JetBlue implored Mayor Bill de Blasio to take more decisive action to halt the city’s decline.

**Body**

Leaders of companies like Goldman Sachs and JetBlue implored Mayor Bill de Blasio to take more decisive action to halt the city’s decline.

More than 150 business leaders in New York City joined together on Thursday to warn Mayor Bill de Blasio that he needed to take more decisive action to address crime and other quality-of-life issues that they said were jeopardizing the city’s economic recovery.

Chief executives of companies like Goldman Sachs, Vornado Realty Trust and JetBlue [*sent a letter to the mayor*](https://pfnyc.org/news/letter-to-mayor-bill-de-blasio-from-nyc-business-leaders/) portraying a bleak assessment of life in New York City during the pandemic, and suggesting a vote of no confidence in the mayor’s ability to correct it.

The letter asserted that there was “widespread anxiety over public safety, cleanliness and other quality of life issues that are contributing to deteriorating conditions in commercial districts and neighborhoods across the five boroughs.”

And if the mayor did not address those issues, the business leaders warned that people who have left the city would be slow to return because of legitimate concerns over “security and the livability of our communities.”

The letter, which was sent nearly six months after the outbreak forced New York City into a lockdown, represented something of a watershed moment in the fraught relationship between the business community and Mr. de Blasio, a progressive Democrat elected in 2013 who has long portrayed himself as a champion of the city’s poor and ***working class***.

Business leaders had largely refrained from criticizing the mayor and his administration as they fought the coronavirus outbreak. But schools are about to reopen, and companies are following suit: JPMorgan Chase wants some of its senior officials [*to return*](https://pfnyc.org/news/letter-to-mayor-bill-de-blasio-from-nyc-business-leaders/) to the office starting Sept. 21.

And as that transition continued, the executives grew anxious about what they saw as the city’s deterioration.

They acknowledged the city’s success in containing the coronavirus, but highlighted that “unprecedented numbers of New Yorkers are unemployed, facing homelessness, or otherwise at risk.” They offered to help and advise the mayor on restoring essential services.

The letter might roil the debate over President Trump’s repeated claims that Democratic-run cities have been allowed to “deteriorate into lawless zones” following the George Floyd protests, and is likely to be cited in Republican messaging leading up to the November election.

The letter’s political repercussions may also stretch to the 2021 mayoral race in New York; business leaders have yet to coalesce behind any of the current candidates.

Mr. de Blasio responded in a conciliatory tone, urging business leaders to work with him and arguing that the city needed federal funding and new borrowing capacity.

“We need these leaders to join the fight to move the city forward,” the mayor said on Twitter.

The letter reflected a divide in how people perceive the effects of the outbreak, which has killed more than 20,000 city residents and left hundreds of thousands unemployed. While some New Yorkers have departed for the suburbs or to vacation homes, many who have remained have taken issue with the portrayals of a city abandoned and overrun by disorder.

Indeed, signs of normalcy have returned, from outdoor dining to socially distanced gatherings at parks. By the end of the month, in-person education at public schools and indoor dining will return. The main reason the city has been able to start reopening is that the infection rate has remained low, with only about 1 percent of virus tests coming back positive.

“We’re grateful for the business community’s input, and we’ll continue partnering with them to rebuild a fairer, better city,” Bill Neidhardt, a spokesman for Mr. de Blasio, said in a statement. “Let’s be clear: We want to restore these services and save jobs, and the most direct way to do that is with long-term borrowing and a federal stimulus. We ask these leaders to join in this fight because the stakes couldn’t be higher.”

The de Blasio administration has had to make cuts to city services in an effort to close a two-year, $9 billion budget gap. In the letter, the business leaders offered no specific solutions for how he might balance the budget.

Kathryn Wylde, the president of the Partnership for New York City, said in an interview that the letter had been in the works for about a month, as many of the executives’ companies were preparing to have some workers return to the office.

“All these employers are committed to the city, they want to see economic recovery, but they’re getting pushback from their employees about, will the city be safe, will the city be clean,” Ms. Wylde said.

One leader who signed the letter, Scott Rechler, chief executive of RXR Realty, placed the blame squarely on Mr. de Blasio, who is in his second and final term.

“The problem right now is leadership,” Mr. Rechler said in an interview. “We need a strong leader to address these problems, to encourage people to feel comfortable coming back to the city.”

Another signatory to the letter, Douglas Durst, chairman of the Durst Organization, a major city landlord, said the city must close its budget deficit while maintaining city services.

“It’s hard to bridge that gap, but I think that’s why it would be helpful to bring in the private sector to figure out what’s the best way to do it,” Mr. Durst said in an interview.

Michael Gianaris, a Democratic state senator from Queens, said it was hypocritical for business leaders to call for better city services without helping to pay for them through higher taxes on the wealthy.

“Where do they think this money comes from?” he said. “If these business leaders are calling for better sanitation, they must know that comes from money we don’t have.”

Mr. de Blasio has often had a strained relationship with the business community and has repeatedly called for higher taxes on millionaires. Asked over the summer why he did not work more closely with business leaders, Mr. de Blasio quoted Karl Marx and disparaged the annual Davos gathering of global elites.

“We will work with the business community, but the city government represents the people — represents working people — and mayors should not be too cozy with the business community,” Mr. de Blasio said in a radio interview on WNYC.

Another leader who signed the letter, Barry M. Gosin, the chief executive of Newmark Knight Frank, a commercial real estate firm, said Mr. de Blasio needed to work with business leaders.

“The business community is not an enemy of the people,” he said. “We are people. We are part of it.”

The letter came two days after Mr. de Blasio, heeding concerns from Upper West Side residents, [*announced*](https://pfnyc.org/news/letter-to-mayor-bill-de-blasio-from-nyc-business-leaders/) he would move hundreds of homeless people from a hotel in the upscale neighborhood.

That same day, his own sanitation commissioner, Kathryn Garcia[*,*](https://pfnyc.org/news/letter-to-mayor-bill-de-blasio-from-nyc-business-leaders/) called his cuts to the department’s budget “[*unconscionable*](https://pfnyc.org/news/letter-to-mayor-bill-de-blasio-from-nyc-business-leaders/)” as she resigned. According to Ms. Garcia, the department has lost some 400 positions through attrition.

In recent weeks, real estate executives and corporate leaders have expressed frustration at what they view as rising levels of dirt and disorder in city streets, particularly in Midtown Manhattan, where the absence of both tourists and office workers has left the streets eerily empty.

While state and city guidelines permit offices to be filled to half-capacity, most buildings are below 10 percent occupancy. Companies have for the most part not required workers to return, and few have.

But City Hall has not been receptive to the concerns, according to a person with direct knowledge of the discussions, because the de Blasio administration has been focused on reopening schools.

The economic crisis spawned by the pandemic has drawn comparisons to the New York City fiscal crisis of the 1970s and other difficult chapters in the city’s history.

In response to the executives’ letter, William J. Bratton, a police commissioner under Mr. de Blasio, [*compared his former boss*](https://pfnyc.org/news/letter-to-mayor-bill-de-blasio-from-nyc-business-leaders/) to David Dinkins, another mayor who he said had failed to address crime and quality-of-life issues in the 1990s.

“Déjà vu, all over again,” Mr. Bratton said.

J. David Goodman and Jeffery C. Mays contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Mayor Bill de Blasio urged the city’s business leaders to help in the effort to get more relief funds from Washington and new borrowing capacity from the state. (PHOTOGRAPH BY John Minchillo/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 11, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Biden’s Win Means a Demotion for Netanyahu and Less Focus on Israel; NEWS ANALYSIS***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6181-K151-DXY4-X4DN-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Benjamin Netanyahu has made his closeness to President Trump, who gave him much of what he wanted, central to his political appeal. Things will be different in a Biden administration.

**Body**

Benjamin Netanyahu has made his closeness to President Trump, who gave him much of what he wanted, central to his political appeal. Things will be different in a Biden administration.

JERUSALEM — President Trump’s defeat has left [*Israel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/biden-israel-palestinians.html) and its longtime [*prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/biden-israel-palestinians.html), on the receiving end of an abrupt demotion.

Overnight, [*President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s victory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/biden-israel-palestinians.html) effectively downgraded Israel’s ranking on the list of United States foreign-policy priorities, diminished Mr. Netanyahu’s stature on the global stage and undercut his argument to restive Israeli voters that he remains their indispensable leader.

After four years of doting treatment by Mr. Trump, who lavished Israel with diplomatic prizes and indulged Mr. Netanyahu with geopolitical backing, the credits are rolling on the buddy movie he promoted endlessly to Israeli audiences.

“He’s gone from Trump’s wingman to the guy who polishes the canopy of the F-16,” said Anshel Pfeffer, a Netanyahu biographer.

The stark comedown threatens to weaken Mr. Netanyahu further as he endures abysmal approval ratings, struggles to avoid a third wave of the coronavirus and put Israelis back to work, prepares for trial early next year on felony corruption charges, and contends with an emboldened opposition and embittered allies who have openly talked of joining forces to oust him.

Mr. Netanyahu seemed unusually flummoxed by Mr. Biden’s win: It took him 12 hours after the race was called to offer perfunctory [*congratulations on Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/biden-israel-palestinians.html), without naming the office Mr. Biden had won, followed quickly by an effusive expression of [*gratitude to Mr. Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/biden-israel-palestinians.html). There was speculation across the Israeli political spectrum that Mr. Netanyahu feared retribution from Mr. Trump if he complimented Mr. Biden more wholeheartedly.

Shimrit Meir, an Israeli analyst who is well sourced in Mr. Netanyahu’s circle, said the prime minister and his allies were in “deep denial.”

“The psychological and mental leap that people will have to take is huge,” she said. “And they didn’t prepare themselves. Two weeks ago I wrote an op-ed about how cabinet members were describing in detail all the ways in which Trump was going to win and why Nate Silver was an idiot.”

Most immediately, analysts and officials said, Israel will feel the transition to a Biden administration as a shift of focus away from the conflict with the [*Palestinians*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/biden-israel-palestinians.html). With a pandemic, a battered economy and deep societal fissures demanding his attention, Mr. Biden, to the extent he looks abroad, is expected to place greater emphasis on tensions with China and Russia, climate change and repairing the frayed trans-Atlantic alliance.

Looming large, however, are questions about Iran. Mr. Biden has spoken of showing Tehran a “path back to diplomacy,” offering to re-enter the Obama administration’s nuclear deal if Iran returns to strict compliance. Mr. Netanyahu crusaded against the agreement and cheered Mr. Trump’s withdrawal from it.

In contrast to Mr. Trump’s favoritism toward Israel, Mr. Biden has promised a return to a more balanced approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

That could mean, analysts and former officials suggested, that if Arab states like Morocco, Oman or Saudi Arabia express willingness to normalize ties with Israel, a Biden administration might encourage them to insist on Israeli concessions to the Palestinians in return.

Still, Mr. Biden is under few illusions, his advisers say, that a settlement is achievable with Mr. Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas, the longtime Palestinian president, still in their jobs.

Instead, the new administration is expected to exert a calming influence. That could mean reopening the American consulate in Jerusalem, which Mr. Trump disbanded, as a quasi-embassy to the Palestinians; reopening a Palestinian diplomatic mission in Washington, and restoring U.S. funding for East Jerusalem hospitals, aid projects on the West Bank and Palestinian refugees.

Israeli officials say they also expect Mr. Biden to work to preserve the viability of a future Palestinian state, which is at odds with Mr. Netanyahu’s moves to expand Jewish settlements on the West Bank or even annex them.

None of those steps is uncomplicated, however, and any of them could create friction with Mr. Netanyahu’s right-wing government and its allies in Congress.

While Palestinians cheered the defeat of Mr. Trump, whom they see as a singular nemesis, they expressed more relief than joy.

Hanan Ashrawi, a senior Palestine Liberation Organization official, said she still expected United States policy to tilt heavily in Israel’s favor. “I don’t think we’re so naïve as to see Biden as our savior,” she said.

Left-leaning Israelis said they expected the Biden administration to seek Palestinian concessions for rolling back Mr. Trump’s punitive diplomatic moves, like changing the practice of compensating Palestinians who serve time in Israeli prisons, including for violent attacks — financial benefits that Israel assails as “pay to slay.”

A Democratic presidency will be a familiar challenge for Mr. Netanyahu, who was prime minister during Bill Clinton’s and Barack Obama’s administrations. But his own standing is much weaker now. And after assuring Israelis he was in “a different league” because of his ties to Mr. Trump, mere diffidence from Mr. Biden could be deeply wounding to Mr. Netanyahu now, analysts said.

Mr. Pfeffer imagined a Biden White House inviting Mr. Netanyahu’s rivals, Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi, to Washington for high-profile meetings while snubbing the prime minister.

“Washington is now holding all the cards,” Mr. Pfeffer said. “They don’t have to pick a fight on settlements or Iran. They can do a lot of damage just by ignoring Bibi. The real question is, do Biden and his team have any interest in making Bibi’s life hell?”

There is certainly ample motive: Mr. Netanyahu made enemies of much of the Democratic establishment during the Obama administration, most famously by addressing a joint session of Congress to attack Mr. Obama’s nuclear deal — a speech that Mr. Biden, then vice president, [*did not attend*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/biden-israel-palestinians.html).

Martin Indyk, a former U.S. ambassador to Israel, [*wrote acidly on Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/us/politics/biden-israel-palestinians.html) that while Mr. Netanyahu had indeed known Mr. Biden for nearly 40 years, “it’s also true that @JoeBiden has known @netanyahu for nearly forty years.”

Through allies in right-wing Israeli media, Mr. Netanyahu has portrayed Mr. Biden as beholden to left-wing Democrats who want to punish Israel for its West Bank occupation. But even right-wing Israeli lawmakers say that Mr. Biden cannot be demonized as readily as Mr. Obama, who had little track record in the region and confronted Mr. Netanyahu early on.

Mr. Biden enjoys a decades-old reputation as pro-Israel, and his tales of meeting Golda Meir in the 1970s, and being told by his father that one need not be a Jew to be a Zionist, were long ago committed to memory by Israeli officials.

At the height of tensions with the Obama administration, said Michael Oren, then the Israeli ambassador to Washington, Mr. Biden was Israel’s point of contact in the White House. “He was the good cop, but his good-copness was genuine,” Mr. Oren said.

Nimrod Novik, who was a senior adviser to Shimon Peres, the former Israeli prime minister, and is now a senior fellow of the Israel Policy Forum, said he hoped that Mr. Biden would quietly move to reset relations with Mr. Netanyahu in a productive way.

A discreet emissary, Mr. Novik suggested, could give the Israeli leader a stern message: “The party’s over. I don’t want to fight with you, but I intend to stabilize the situation, and you’re going to help me. Forget about annexation. No surprises. No unilateral anything. And I need something constructive from you as well: Make it easier to shore up the Palestinian Authority before it collapses, and Gaza before it explodes. And I promise you I’ll bring you into the room when I’m discussing Iran.”

The Trump-Netanyahu relationship has been an extraordinary duet between nationalist leaders whose similarities — divisive political tactics, denunciations of “fake news” and playing to ***working-class*** voters’ resentments, among other things — have drawn countless comparisons.

But without Mr. Trump performing under the big top, Mr. Netanyahu’s Trumpian behavior could begin to stick out.

On Saturday night, as blue-state Americans danced in the streets, the street outside Mr. Netanyahu’s Jerusalem residence was mobbed, as usual, with protesters demanding his resignation.

Ayala Colle, 53, a farmer from the Negev Desert, said she hoped that “less legitimacy for the craziness in the United States means there’s less legitimacy for the craziness here.”

And Uri Yaakov, 59, said he was tired of Mr. Netanyahu’s pointing to Mr. Trump “to claim that the United States is in his pocket.” He added: “That illusion is over.”

Adam Rasgon contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Mr. Netanyahu in 2015 attacked President Barack Obama’s nuclear deal with Iran, which Joseph R. Biden Jr. has vowed to re-enter. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 11, 2021

**End of Document**



[***He Seeks What Lives Underneath***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y1C-9R41-DXY4-X0Y7-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

With powerfully contemporary stagings of ''Betrayal'' and ''Cyrano,'' Jamie Lloyd has had an attention-grabbing year. That's not what makes him hard to miss.

LONDON -- The director Jamie Lloyd was giving me a tour of his tattoos. Not the Pegasus on his chest or the skeleton astronaut floating on his back, though he gamely described those, but the onyx-inked adornments that cover his arms and hands, that wreathe his neck, that wrap around his shaved head.

When I asked about the dragon at his throat, he told me it had been ''one of the ones that hurt the least,'' then pointed to the flame-licked skulls on either side of his neck: his ''covert way,'' he said, of representing drama's traditional emblems for comedy and tragedy.

''I thought maybe it'd be a little bit tacky to have theater masks on my neck,'' he added, a laugh bubbling up, and it's true: His dragon would have eaten them for lunch.

It was early December, and we were in a lounge beneath the Playhouse Theater, where Lloyd's West End production of ''Cyrano de Bergerac,'' starring James McAvoy in a skintight puffer jacket and his own regular-size nose, would soon open to packed houses and critical praise.

Running through Feb. 29, and arriving on cinema screens Feb. 20 in a National Theater Live broadcast, ''Cyrano'' -- newly adapted by Martin Crimp, and positing its hero as a scrappy spoken-word wonder -- capped a year that saw Lloyd celebrated on both sides of the Atlantic.

In London last summer, his outdoor hit ''Evita'' traded conventional glamour for sexy grit, while his radical reinterpretation of Harold Pinter's ''Betrayal,'' starring Tom Hiddleston, was hailed first in the West End, then on Broadway. Ben Brantley, reviewing ''Betrayal'' in The New York Times, called it ''one of those rare shows I seem destined to think about forever.''

When Time Out London ranked the best theater of 2019, it gave the top spot jointly to all three Lloyd productions, saying that he ''has had a year that some of his peers might trade their entire careers for.''

Lloyd, who is 39, did not spring from the same mold as many of those peers. There was for him, he says, no youthful aha moment of watching Derek Jacobi onstage and divining that directing was his path. Epiphanies like that belonged to other kids, the ones who could afford the tickets.

If there is a standard background for a London theater director -- and Lloyd would argue that certainly there used to be -- that isn't where he came from, growing up ***working class*** on the south coast of England, in Margaret Thatcher's Britain.

The first time I laid eyes on him, chatting in the Playhouse lobby after a preview of ''Cyrano,'' he was the picture of ***working-class*** flair -- the gold pirate hoops, the pink and black T-shirt, the belt cinching high-waisted pants.

He looks nothing like your typical West End director. Which of course is precisely the point.

What's underneath

''It's quite often said of him,'' McAvoy observed by phone, once the reviews were in, ''that he strips things away or he tries to take classical works and turn them on their head. I think he's always just trying to tell the story in the clearest and most exhilarating way possible.''

The ''X-Men'' star, who put the number of times he's worked with Lloyd in the past decade at a ''gazillion,'' calls theirs ''probably one of the most defining relationships that I've had in my career.''

Yet Lloyd himself is on board with the notion that his assertively contemporary stagings pare back stifling layers of performance history to lay bare what's underneath.

Like the tiger and dragons that he had emblazoned on his head just last May, though, the unembellished nature of his shows -- as minimalist in their way as his tattoos are the opposite -- is a relatively recent development.

Lloyd's first ''Cyrano de Bergerac,'' starring Douglas Hodge in 2012, was also his Broadway debut. It was, he said, ''absolutely the 'Cyrano' that you would expect,'' with the fake nose, the hat, the plume, the sword-fighting.

There is, granted, sword-fighting in the new one -- but the audience has to imagine the swords.

Lloyd's productions, including a lauded revival of Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's ''Passion'' in 2010, long marked him as a hot young director on the rise. But he sees in some of his previous work a noisy tendency toward idea overload.

The pivot point came in 2018, with a season that the Jamie Lloyd Company -- which he formed seven years ago with the commercial producing powerhouse Ambassador Theater Group -- devoted to the short works of Harold Pinter. The playwright's distillation of language forced Lloyd to match it with his staging.

That immersion led to what the director Michael Grandage -- one of Lloyd's early champions, who tapped him at 27 to be his associate director at the Donmar Warehouse -- called Lloyd's ''absolute masterpiece.''

''I had quite a lot of ambition to do a production of 'Betrayal' in my life,'' Grandage said. ''And then when I saw Jamie's, I thought, 'Right, that's it. I don't ever, ever want to direct this play.' Because that's, for me, the perfect production.''

Playing dress-up

Charm is a ready currency in the theater, but Lloyd's is disarming; he seems simply to be being himself, without veneer. Like when I fact-checked something I'd read by asking whether he was a vegan.

''Lapsed vegan,'' he confessed immediately, with a tinge of guilt about eating eggs again.

Pay no attention to any tough-guy vibe in photos of him; do not be alarmed by the sharp-toothed cat on the back of his head. In conversation, Lloyd comes across as thoughtful and unassuming, with an animated humor that makes him fun company. If he speaks at the speed of someone with no time to waste, he balances that with focused attentiveness.

His father, Ray, was a truck driver. His mother, Joy (whose name is tattooed on his right forearm, near the elbow), cleaned houses, took in ironing and ran a costume-rental shop, where young Jamie would sneak in to dress up as the children's cartoon character Rainbow Brite.

''It's very embarrassing,'' he said, squelching a laugh.

Seeing professional theater wasn't an option then for Lloyd, whose grown-up passion for expanding audience access -- one of the things he has made himself known for in the West End -- grew out of that exclusion. His company has set aside 15,000 free and 15,000 £15 tickets for its current, characteristically starry three-show season, which will also include Emilia Clarke in ''The Seagull'' and Jessica Chastain in ''A Doll's House.'' At the 786-seat Playhouse, that adds up to just over 38 full houses.

Lloyd, who was studying acting at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts when he decided he wanted to direct, found his way to theater as a child by acting in school shows and local amateur productions. Twice he was cast as a monkey; in ''The Wizard of Oz,'' thrillingly, he got to fly.

The details of his early days have always been colorful -- like having a clown as his first stepfather, who performed at children's parties under the stage name Uncle Funny. But Lloyd is quick to acknowledge the darkness lurking there.

''It sounds a little bit like some dodgy film, because he was actually a really violent man,'' he said. ''And there were times where he was very physically abusive to my mum. There was a sort of atmosphere of violence in that house that was really uneasy. And yet masked with this literal makeup, but also this sense of trying to entertain people whilst enacting terrible brutality behind the scenes.''

This is where he locates his own connection to Pinter's work.

''A lot of that is that the violence is beneath the surface,'' he said. ''And on the top there is this sort of, what I call a kind of topspin, a layer of cover-up.''

Long relationships

Lloyd was still at drama school when he staged a production of Lapine and William Finn's ''Falsettoland'' that won a prize: assistant directing a show at the Bush Theater in London. Based on that, Trevor Nunn hired him, at 22, to be his assistant director on ''Anything Goes'' in the West End -- a job he did so well that Grandage got word of it and hired him to assist on ''Guys and Dolls.'' While Lloyd was doing that, he also began directing in his own right.

The costume and set designer Soutra Gilmour, who has been a constant with Lloyd since he cold-called her for his first professional production, Pinter's ''The Caretaker,'' said theirs is an easy relationship, with a ''symbiotic transference of ideas.'' Even their creative aesthetics have evolved in sync.

''We've actually never fallen out in 13 years,'' she said over mint tea on a trip to New York last month, just before ''Betrayal'' closed. ''Never! I don't even know how we would fall out.''

Of course, the one time she tried to decline a Lloyd project five years ago, because its tech rehearsals coincided with the due date for her son's birth, he told her there was no one else he wanted to work with. So she did the show, warning that at some point she would have to leave. Now, she says, he understands that she won't sit through endless evening previews, because she needs to go home to her child.

Lloyd and his wife, the actress Suzie Toase (whose name is tattooed on one of his arms), home-school their own three boys (whose names are tattooed on the other). Their eldest, 13-year-old Lewin, is an actor who recently played one of the principal characters, the heroine's irresistible best friend, on the HBO and BBC One series ''His Dark Materials,'' whose cast boasts McAvoy as well.

Enter the child

Lloyd's interpretation of ''Betrayal,'' a 1978 play that recounts a seven-year affair, imbued it with a distinctly non-'70s awareness of the fragility of family -- the notion that children are the bystanders harmed when a marriage is tossed away.

Its gasp-inducing moment came with the entrance of a character Pinter wrote to be mentioned but not seen: the small daughter of the couple whose relationship is imperiled. In putting her onstage, Lloyd didn't touch the text; it was a simple, wordless role. With it, he altered the resonance of the play.

To me, it seemed logical that Lloyd's production would have been informed by his experience as a husband and father -- and maybe also as a child in a splintering family. How old had he been, anyway, when his parents split up?

''Five,'' Lloyd said. ''The same age as the character would be.'' He paused. ''Oh God, yeah, fascinating. I'd not thought about that. Exactly the same age.''

If that fact was of more than intellectual interest to him, he didn't let on. He volunteered a memory, though -- of being a little one ''amongst these kind of big giants, and I guess what we can now see as the mess of their lives.''

Blazer-free

Doing ''Betrayal'' in New York, Lloyd was struck by how eager Americans were to chat about his tattoos. Still, he told me after I texted him a follow-up question about them, he hadn't expected his appearance to be such a talking point in this story.

It's not just idle curiosity. It's about what the tattoos signify in a field where, in Britain as in the United States, the top directors tend to have grown up very comfortably. It's about who is welcome in a particular space, and who gets to be themselves there.

For a long time after Lloyd started working in the theater, he wore a blazer every day: a conscious attempt to conform in an industry where he felt a nagging sense of difference.

''Every other director at the time was from an Oxbridge background,'' he said, ''and looked and sounded a particular way. I spent a long time pretending to be like them.''

It was a performance of sorts, with a costume he donned for the role.

It was only about seven or eight years ago -- around the time he left the Donmar and started putting together his own company -- that he stopped worrying about what people might think if he looked the way he wanted.

''My dad had tattoos'' was the first thing he said when I asked him about his own.

''I guess it's partly getting older,'' he mused, ''but it's just sort of going, 'You can't pretend to be someone. You've got to be who you really are, in every way.'''

The tattoos that have gradually transformed him are from a different aesthetic universe than his recent work onstage. Yet the impulse, somehow, is the same.

In shedding the blazer, in inking his skin, Lloyd has peeled back layers of imposed convention to show who's underneath.

And should you spot him at the theater, where he is hard to miss, you'll notice that he looks just like himself.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/09/theater/jamie-lloyd-director-cyrano.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/09/theater/jamie-lloyd-director-cyrano.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, the director Jamie Lloyd inside the Bernard B. Jacobs Theater. Below, James McAvoy in Lloyd's current, contemporary staging of ''Cyrano de Bergerac.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GIONCARLO VALENTINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

MARC BRENNER) (AR8)

From left: Tom Hiddleston, Charlie Cox and Zawe Ashton in the play ''Betrayal. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (AR10)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Early Voting Numbers In Georgia Senate Races Put Republicans on Edge***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61N4-8HW1-DXY4-X06J-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

While polls suggest that the state's crucial runoff elections are up for grabs, Republicans have grown worried about strong turnout in Democratic areas and mixed messages from President Trump.

MACON, Ga. -- Senator Kelly Loeffler issued a now-familiar warning during a campaign event on Wednesday in Bibb County: If Democrats win the Georgia Senate runoff elections, there will be little left to stem a rising tide of extremist socialism in America.

But Dale Washburn, a Republican state legislator who introduced Ms. Loeffler at the event, had another warning. This one was based not on ideology, but on numbers that suggest Democrats are outpacing Republicans in early voting turnout -- which means that Republicans may need a tremendous election-day performance on Jan. 5 if they are to win the state's two high-stakes runoff races and maintain control of the Senate.

''We're fully aware of the energy on the other side, and think we've been reminded about that,'' Mr. Washburn said. ''We know demographics have changed in recent years. And if our side hasn't been aware of that, they're rapidly becoming aware of that. The Biden victory had a big part.''

Less than a week before election day, the last-minute challenges, messages and strategies for the two parties in Georgia's runoffs are coming into focus, even as polls indicate that the elections are too close to call. Those messages will be hammered home on the day before the elections by President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr., who plans to campaign on Monday in Atlanta, and by President Trump, who will hold a rally on the same day in Dalton, a city in northwest Georgia.

However, some Republicans are increasingly worried that Mr. Trump, who continues to make the baseless claim that he lost Georgia because of a rigged voting system, is sending confusing signals to his followers that may serve to keep them home on election day. On Wednesday, Mr. Trump on Twitter pushed for the resignation of Gov. Brian Kemp, a staunch conservative and Trump supporter who has declined to take steps to overturn the state's election results.

The president argued that Mr. Kemp was an ''obstructionist who refuses to admit that we won Georgia.''

As Mr. Trump continues to foment a backward-looking drama, Ms. Loeffler and her fellow Republican candidate, Senator David Perdue, have crisscrossed the state, warning of an ominous future if their Democratic opponents, the Rev. Raphael G. Warnock and Jon Ossoff, prevail. Speaking on Fox News on Tuesday, Mr. Perdue said the Republicans were a ''last line of defense'' against centralized government, comparing his struggle to military conflicts like World War II.

On ''Fox & Friends'' on Wednesday morning, he added: ''We're winning this race right now. Kelly and I are all over this state. We're running against two of the most liberal candidates that the Democrats have ever put up.''

Democrats, for their part, have been crafting messages that they hope will resonate with African-Americans, a constituency crucial to Mr. Biden's narrow victory in Georgia in November. One TV ad released on Wednesday for Mr. Ossoff featured former President Barack Obama, who says that Mr. Ossoff will pass a new voting rights act if elected, while the musician John Legend plays a rendition of ''Georgia on My Mind.''

But it is the numbers from early in-person and absentee voting that are particularly troubling for many Republican operatives in the state. Since the start of early voting on Dec. 14, more than 2.5 million Georgians have cast their votes, and the breakdown appears to be mostly good news for Democrats. (The early voting period runs through the end of Jan. 1, but Georgia counties may choose to close polling sites in observance of holidays on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.)

The breakdown of votes so far shows that vote-rich Democratic strongholds, including Fulton and DeKalb Counties in metropolitan Atlanta, are posting high numbers, while African-Americans statewide are ''voting their weight and then some,'' said Charles S. Bullock III, a political scientist at the University of Georgia.

At the same time, Dr. Bullock noted, turnout has been weak in the northwestern part of the state, which is home to many ***working-class*** white Trump supporters. In Walker County, which Mr. Trump won with 79 percent of the vote, the turnout, as of Wednesday, was only 47 percent of the general election total, according to the website georgiavotes.com.

That may explain Mr. Trump's decision to hold his rally on Monday in Dalton, a city known for its flooring and carpet manufacturing. It is also in the heart of the congressional district recently won by Representative-elect Marjorie Taylor Greene, the Republican best known for espousing elements of the QAnon conspiracy theory.

Mr. Trump announced the rally on Dec. 19. Democrats countered on Wednesday with their announcement that Mr. Biden would campaign on the same day in Atlanta. On Sunday, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris also plans to hold an event in Savannah.

Ms. Harris's visit will most likely serve as a force multiplier for Democrats in Savannah, with a leading Black Democrat visiting a predominantly Black city to stump for Mr. Warnock, who is also Black and is a Savannah native. The move demonstrates how Democrats have embraced a strategy espoused by Stacey Abrams, the party's former candidate for governor, that emphasizes paying attention to, and spending money turning out, the state's minority voters.

While that strategy appears to have given Democrats an early edge, it remains to be seen if it will be enough to counter a surge of Republican voters who are probably waiting until election day to turn up at the polls, as has traditionally been the case.

''Democrats have shown up for the early vote, and the overt emphasis on Black voters has seemingly paid off,'' Brian Robinson, a Republican strategist based in Georgia, said in a text message on Wednesday. ''Republicans, though, still have a lot of votes out there they can get, particularly in northwest Georgia, where Trump is going Monday. The G.O.P. candidates will win handily among election day voters, so the bigger the turnout on Tuesday, the better the Republican chances.''

But Republicans had similar hopes for Mr. Trump in the general election, in which he fell short by about 12,000 votes in Georgia. And it is unclear whether Mr. Trump, in his visit to Dalton, will end up motivating his followers or causing more headaches for Republicans.

Mr. Trump's tweet calling for Mr. Kemp to resign was already commanding some of the political spotlight on Wednesday. At a hastily convened news conference, Mr. Kemp did not address Mr. Trump's comments directly, saying he would not be ''distracted'' from his goal of electing Mr. Perdue and Ms. Loeffler. The governor also said he was too focused on responding to the coronavirus pandemic to become involved in political infighting.

''That horse has left the barn in Georgia,'' Mr. Kemp said of Mr. Biden's victory in Georgia -- dismissing Mr. Trump's false claims that the state's election was tainted by fraud.

How the jockeying plays out will not only affect the balance of power in Washington but also offer the first hints at how both parties navigate the post-Trump political future. Mr. Trump has proved to be a unique motivator of the Republican base, and the party is yet to find a figure who is equally adept at maximizing turnout among white conservatives.

Democrats are eager to prove that Mr. Biden's success in November was not a fluke, and that voters want a robust liberal agenda rather than the Republican-led obstructionism that defined Mr. Obama's administration.

Mr. Ossoff, who is facing off against Mr. Perdue, has sought in particular to make the election a referendum on Republican inaction on the pandemic. The latest issue at hand this week was whether the Republican senators would support a Senate vote on giving Americans stimulus checks of $2,000 rather than $600, a prospect that Senator Mitch McConnell, the majority leader, appeared to dash on Wednesday.

''People are in dire straits,'' Mr. Ossoff said. ''And if Senators Perdue and Loeffler -- who are in the majority, and, let's be clear, it's the majority that controls floor action -- and if they are serious about $2,000 relief checks for the people, then they should put maximum pressure on Mitch McConnell to move that legislation immediately.''

In a gaggle at her event in Macon, Ms. Loeffler avoided the question. Though she has said she supports the increased stimulus checks, she avoided placing pressure on Senate Republican leaders to bring forth the issue on the floor without caveats. Ms. Loeffler also avoided another hot-button Republican issue: whether to object to the presidential results on Jan. 6, when the Senate must ratify the Electoral College outcome.

''Leader McConnell and I have spoken about bringing another relief package,'' Ms. Loeffler said. ''But we're in this situation because Democrats have blocked relief throughout this summer.''

Her carefully chosen words highlighted her current political pickle. In both Georgia and Washington, siding with Mr. Trump can also mean being in direct opposition to Republicans like Mr. McConnell or Mr. Kemp.

Mr. Washburn, the state representative, said the infighting among Republicans had made operating in the state more difficult.

He said he worried that the discord, and the Republicans who have questioned whether their votes will count in the runoffs, were hampering turnout for the party.

''Obviously we would prefer to have complete unity, but the situation is what it is,'' Mr. Washburn said. ''And we have to tap down any conversation that your vote doesn't matter. Because it does matter.''

He added, ''It's definitely a big concern.''

Astead W. Herndon reported from Macon, Ga., and Richard Fausset from Atlanta. Stephanie Saul contributed reporting from New York.Astead W. Herndon reported from Macon, Ga., and Richard Fausset from Atlanta. Stephanie Saul contributed reporting from New York.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/us/politics/georgia-senate-early-voting.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/us/politics/georgia-senate-early-voting.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Senator Kelly Loeffler has recently had to navigate clashing messages in Washington while fending off her challenger, the Rev. Raphael G. Warnock, far bottom left. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SEAN RAYFORD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***New York’s Reopening Is ‘Wild,’ ‘Hopeful,’ ‘Exciting,’ and ‘Bad’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6291-FDN1-JBG3-634V-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The early joys and potential perils of the city coming alive economically and culturally this spring, as Covid-19 lingers.

**Body**

The early joys and potential perils of the city coming alive economically and culturally this spring, as Covid-19 lingers.

On a recent Saturday, a group of Black and brown Muslim men gathered in rows along a broad sidewalk to kneel in afternoon prayer at Masjid At-Taqwa, a mosque in Bedford-Stuyvesant, one of the areas in New York City hardest hit by the virus.

A tall, round, middle-aged man, who introduced himself as Salahuddin, told me how for most of the frigid, surprisingly icy pandemic winter, this ritual couldn’t happen. But temperatures were now mercifully tilting above 60 degrees again. “It’s beautiful,” he said, looking down the block.

A mile and a half from the mosque, in Fort Greene, the scene could be described as guiltily giddy. At Tacombi, a Mexican taqueria with several chic locations around the city, a set of youngish patrons wearing light sweaters tucked along the parking-space-turned-patio-area, sipped margaritas and laughed with friends it seemed they hadn’t seen in a while. All of the diners going out of their way to ingratiate themselves with the wait staff, surely hypersensitive to the ongoing discourse about the subpar treatment of essential work.

“This is the light at the end of the tunnel for us,” Eddy Fontana, Tacombi’s general manager, told me. Then he hedged, “For those of us who’ve made it.”

Last year, New Yorkers were deprived of their annual vibrant emergence from winter hibernation as thousands [*died*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) from Covid. Even after the relaxation of stay-at-home orders and the start of summer, when cases in the city plummeted, an uneasy feeling of purgatory loomed over many outdoor hangouts.

With a mass vaccination campaign well underway, many New Yorkers I spoke to in neighborhoods across the city were buoyant — a mood that’s felt foreign lately — even as others struggle to come to terms with all they’ve lost, and how that loss was so unevenly shared. Now comes a delicate balancing act: guarding against a diminished but not defeated virus while addressing the economic, cultural and collective mental need to open ourselves up again.

Since last March, [*thousands of New York City’s restaurants*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) have permanently closed. Lower-wage workers, concentrated in the high-contact service industries that have struggled most, made up the largest share of the city’s 13 percent unemployed at the end of January — three times the rate a year earlier. About [*one-third of local small businesses*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) might not make it to the other side of the pandemic.

In an attempt to stave off more economic suffering, last week New York State allowed indoor dining capacity to increase to 50 percent, from 35 percent — even though Covid-19 cases in New York City have [*remained stubbornly high*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) after a dip in hospitalizations and deaths in February. The relaxed rules are a big relief for the city’s countless hole-in-the-wall joints, which tend to have limited capacity for outdoor seating.

In October, Nick Padilla, a restaurateur in Greenpoint, had to close Alameda, a small cocktail bar and restaurant, after a dispute over rent. But he hasn’t given up: Improving business conditions persuaded him to stick with his plans to open a new place.

“If you’ve made it to the other side,” he said of the spots still standing, “I’m pretty positive that everybody’s going to have a pretty great summer.”

The markets, which are currently high on sectors that could benefit from reopening, would seem to agree. Despite concerns about coronavirus variants upending plans for resuming in-person commerce, most experts are bullish about the American economy. Goldman Sachs analysts predict the U.S. economy will reach [*8 percent*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) growth by the end of the year.

For New Yorkers like Mr. Padilla hoping to start ventures, the spike in office and storefront vacancies has led to bargains on retail space. According to [*the Real Estate Board of New York*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader), rents on retail space in the city have dropped by as much as 25 percent from their 2019 peaks.

With the return of the city’s tourist economy still far off, the mayor’s office has rolled out an Open Culture [*program*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) that will offer entertainment and culture venues permits to host socially distanced performances at over 100 street locations. Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that sports stadiums can have limited crowds in the stands starting April 1, just in time for baseball’s opening day.

Brunch is back, too, with pent-up revelry. At the height of the pandemic, TriBeCa and SoHo [*emptied out as the New York elite fled*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader). But the coifed, comfortable crowd at Odeon and other staples up and down West Broadway has returned for its Bloody Marys and mimosas.

Across the East River in North Williamsburg, lines of people waited outside several popular boutiques like Catbird still limiting their indoor capacity. Nearby, Ubers deposited Brooklynites for their days about town, darting among the restaurants’ new alfresco setups and lumbering, honking buses.

Tika Girung, an Uber driver from Jackson Heights in Queens, told me he knew a dozen or so people killed by the virus. So he’s relieved to have received his first shot of the Moderna vaccine. Driving through the Bronx, Mr. Girung expressed excitement for the spring. “It will bring some easiness to everybody,” he said. “People want to come out.” More riders mean more take-home pay.

With packed subways still likely to be a turnoff for many this summer, executives at ride-sharing platforms anticipate sky-high demand that could create a serious shortage of drivers. Uber’s chief executive, Dara Khosrowshahi, [*recently*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) called it “the one thing” that he’s “worried about” for the second half of the year.

Mr. Khosrowshahi won’t have to worry about the company’s [*80,000 or so*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) drivers in New York City, [*some of whom slept in their cars during the pandemic*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader), receiving a higher wage floor or getting employee benefits. The company did quickly get them qualified as essential workers, though, making them eligible for vaccines — a move that will help stabilize revenue.

Currently, [*80 percent of adults in New York State are eligible for vaccines*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader). But as the percentage of the immunized slowly climbs, individuals will be asked, again, to navigate a maze of risk assessments that’s already proving more complex than the last.

At a packed, boisterous Washington Square Park, I met Sam de Oliveira and Audrey Golden, both 24. They were frustrated by what they see as contradictory guidance from the city. While they said they identified as liberals, believed in the virus’s dangers and always wore masks in public indoor spaces, they said younger, low-risk New Yorkers hanging out indoors again should be allowed.

“People are already doing it anyway,” Ms. Golden said. Ms. de Oliveira added that she felt it was unfair for indoor dining to remain “sort of stigmatized.”

It’s not only the food and drink sector that feels tugged in two directions. Mr. Cuomo, for instance, has allowed [*indoor group fitness classes to*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) begin again, with some precautions. But a few reopening decisions by the state, especially on gyms, have irked Mayor Bill de Blasio and made some city health experts queasy. “The State of New York continues to make decisions without consulting the City of New York or our health experts or any locality, and this is why we need local control,” the mayor said last week.

Throughout the five boroughs, the air of a burden lifting is palpable. Bikers, runners and stoop hangouts among friends, dogs and families now dot the side streets and avenues. But what exactly good behavior looks like, more broadly — beyond the obvious no-no of something like a raging house party — is confusing business.

From Flatbush to Long Island City and across the river to Harlem, pickup soccer and basketball is back — but, naturally, no one playing is wearing masks. Anyone who has recently ridden a packed subway or bus deep in a borough — where ride hailing isn’t an affordable option for many — knows the continued increase in Metropolitan Transportation Authority ridership is incompatible with social distancing. And do local health officials really expect vaccinated people at large to congregate with only one other household, as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends?

“Summer is going to be wild,” a friend of mine told me last week. “And bad. Well, hopefully not.”

“We get it. Everyone is tired of the virus and eager to get back to some semblance of normal. But we have a chance to be in the homestretch of this marathon,” the New York City health commissioner, Dr. Dave A. Chokshi, told me. “It requires continued discipline and vigilance, including by younger people and those who may not feel they are at risk.”

For some in the city, the warm weather is more than a recreational delight; it’s a chance to boost turnout for protest. At the top of the hill in Sunset Park on a Sunday with temperatures in the 50s, a multiracial crop of about five dozen demonstrators gathered for a march to protest a rezoning plan that would expand luxury development in the gentrifying area.

Brian Garita, 24, a graduate student at Baruch College whose family was displaced from Sunset Park, helped lead the march. “Many of the folks we know can’t afford apartments in this neighborhood anymore,” he told the people in the crowd, who nodded and offered a mix of Spanish and English affirmations. “This community development isn’t for this community.”

“People think we’re going to go back to normal, and a lot of people can’t go back to normal,” Mr. Garita told me later. “Because now they’re more in debt than they were before.”

As the Covid-19 crisis laid bare New York’s inequality, it became common for its privileged “Zoom class” residents to pledge to fight for justice. But it’s hard to deny the creeping feeling that as times feel ordinary again, the well-off will grow complacent about the continued suffering of others. All the struggles that [*disproportionately afflicted*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) the ***working class***, unhoused and structurally disadvantaged before and during this crisis will persist. And wage earners won’t be the ones pocketing most of the gains from the Great Reopening.

Still, Mr. Garita thinks the city’s mayoral election this year will keep a spotlight on inequality. And he said he’s “really hopeful” that protests in the summer “will continue to disrupt the economy and people just so they can wake up a little bit and see what’s going on.”

His optimism made me feel better about briefly forgetting systemic problems as I sauntered through Downtown Manhattan, absorbing some sights of New York being New York again: Every seventh person you see walking around as if he or she were the protagonist in some unwritten novel, the winding mélange of accents, skin colors, vibes and outfits.

I stopped in at the pop-up patio of Swift, one of my Before Times haunts. When my favorite bartender, a middle-aged Irish guy, greeted me, I felt overjoyed — far more emotional than expected. Maybe because each of us knows that not everyone or everything will be how it was when we left it last March.

As he placed a perfectly poured pint of Guinness before me, I sheepishly admitted to him that, somehow, over the past year I’d forgotten his name.

He gave me an impish grin: “Same. It’s Rob. Yours?”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/live-blog/2020-04-07-coronavirus-news-n1178111/ncrd1178746#blogHeader).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Photo illustrations by Zach Gross for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***An 'American Dream,' Now a Trap as the Floods Keep Coming***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6291-RPD1-JBG3-6382-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

HOUSTON -- In her kitchen, Juanita Hall routinely found opossums staring back at her from the cage trap she kept under the table. In one room, the flooring had simply washed away. The door to the back bedroom -- her mother's, and still filled with her possessions -- stayed closed. Those walls, like many others in the house, were streaked with mold.

And that was all before a winter storm last month left Ms. Hall shivering over a heater and caused pipes to leak. The culprit behind so much of the damage to her home had been Hurricane Harvey. The storm hit Houston in 2017, and for many, the trauma endured as a haunting memory. But for Ms. Hall, almost four years later, the devastation remained a grinding reality.

''I think about it every day, all day long,'' Ms. Hall, 59, said as she walked through the house she had lived in since childhood.

The modest house on Eugene Street, clad in white siding and shaded by a magnolia tree, was the embodiment of her father's aspirations for his family. It was the inheritance he left for Ms. Hall and the generations to come: a place to return to when relationships faltered or jobs were lost. No matter what, the house would be there, and it would be theirs.

Owning a home has long been part of Houston's promise for many ***working-class*** families, offering security and a foothold for upward mobility. But disasters -- flood after flood -- have kept coming. A changing climate threatens more. In Houston's poorest neighborhoods, the houses are no longer the safety net they were intended to be.

A few months before Harvey, Ms. Hall ran into her mother's bedroom and found her collapsed on the floor. Now, she cannot forget the request her mother made soon before she died: Don't y'all lose my house.

After all this time, and all this frustration, her patience had worn thin. ''I'm tired of the unknown,'' Ms. Hall conceded. Still, she wanted so badly to keep her word.

On top of everything else, disaster

A storm, as it cuts its path, may not recognize race or class, but the pace of recovery very often does. It is an imbalance that becomes more pronounced with each storm: There are the neighborhoods that bounce back. And there are the others -- with lower incomes and largely nonwhite residents -- where every event arrives as another setback on an interminable slog.

The winter storm that enveloped Texas last month brought conditions that felt alien. Residents were stuck in dark, unheated homes in single-digit temperatures, fingers tingling and words slurring from the intense cold.

Yet it also plunged them into a familiar agony: no electricity, waterlogged homes (this time from burst pipes) and certainty that they faced more of a frustration they knew all too well from wrangling with bureaucracies for help that was rarely enough, if it ever came at all.

As temperatures and sea levels rise, as wildfire seasons grow more intense, and as hurricanes have become slower and stronger, more and more communities are grappling with friction powered by climate change -- between practicality and the comfort of the status quo, the pull of home and the fatigue from pushing against the momentum of nature to stay there.

In a section of the northeastern part of Houston hemmed by intersecting freeways -- in neighborhoods like the Fifth Ward, Kashmere Gardens and Trinity Gardens -- many residents see the unevenness of their recovery fitting into a pattern of neglect. They drive down main thoroughfares where storefronts aren't just vacant, but long abandoned. They have to leave their neighborhoods to find supermarkets and pharmacies. Industrial pollution has been linked to cancer clusters. Poverty has become entrenched.

Even if residents wanted to move, in an increasingly expensive city their options were slim.

''They've lost in a lot of ways,'' said Letitia Plummer, a Houston city councilwoman. ''These neighborhoods are just having issue after issue, and none of their original issues have been dealt with or resolved. This is layer upon layer of injury.''

Tired but still at it

For nearly four years, Ms. Hall has spent every day at her home but has slept in a spare bed at her sister's apartment, lumbering up stairs her knees can barely take. Her brother, Clifton, refused to leave, and she feared for him. He'd had a stroke and mostly stayed in his dark, disheveled room watching television.

She said she received roughly $18,000 in government disaster relief after Hurricane Harvey, which helped but did not go far. She had contractors who assured her they would help clear out her house and then stopped taking her calls. Her home insurance had been canceled in 2016.

She had old flooring that still needed to be pulled up and walls that were only half torn down. There were holes that allowed vermin and wasps to sneak through. The musty stench of mold was heavy.

''I think he's clearing the air when I come in here,'' Ms. Hall said, having just recited the silent prayer she repeated every time she crossed the threshold into her home. ''God is the only thing in my life that has not let me down.''

The thread of hope that she was holding to was a federally funded program for rehabilitating and rebuilding homes hit by Harvey. She had tried before, but then the program became ensnared in a dispute between the state and the city officials who had been running it. Texas officials asserted that the city had lagged in making progress and wrested away control.

Now that the Texas General Land Office had taken over administering the program, Ms. Hall has had to essentially start anew. She tried to take the bureaucratic hurdles in stride. ''My folks used to say, if it's easy, baby, question it,'' Ms Hall said. Even so, she acknowledged her exasperation, having to gather reams of documents again. Getting this far had taken a long time.

Since the hurricane, she joined neighbors in groups like the Harvey Forgotten Survivors Caucus, which helped patch up her house. She has shared her story in the pages of The Houston Chronicle, approached local officials to vent her frustration and tried to get word of her situation to Trae tha Truth, the Houston rapper who has been helping storm victims rebuild.

And she also learned that hers was, in many ways, a familiar set of circumstances, living in a home that had been handed down through family and amounted to just about the entirety of their wealth.

Just over a year ago, Mal Moses's mother died, and the house he grew up in became his. Mr. Moses, 63, has watched the neighborhood evolve: The community was drained of more than just white residents. Businesses left. So too did a sense of opportunity.

''The property value went down,'' Mr. Moses said. ''The human value went down.''

He did not have insurance, and his other efforts to gain assistance after Hurricane Harvey failed. West Street Recovery, a community nonprofit founded in the immediate aftermath of the storm, repaired his home, replacing drywall and flooring, making much of it livable again.

Still, plenty of work remained: The piers of a back room were sinking, and last month's storm wrecked parts of his plumbing. He constantly hears ''critters'' (roof rats, mostly) skittering through his attic. On a recent afternoon, the house was still messy from the days of freezing cold and rotating power outages that meant only fleeting spurts of electricity.

His house was another thread in the skein of complications that consumed his life, all of which were caused or made worse by a lack of money.

But Mr. Moses can't afford to leave. His Social Security checks don't go far, and his girlfriend, who lives with him, makes $40 a day caring for her mother's bed-bound neighbor part time. ''The only option is to stay where you're at,'' he said. ''That's it.''

'This is an assignment'

Ms. Hall was propelled by a sense of obligation. Even some of her siblings questioned if she dwelled too much in the past. ''Some of my family say, 'You're holding onto a thing,''' she said. ''It's my home. Don't call it a thing.''

Back injuries forced her to leave the job she had with a state agency for more than 20 years. But it allowed her to do something more meaningful: Take care of her 5-year-old grandniece while the girl's mother works.

''My baby,'' she said, pulling out her cellphone to swipe through pictures. Her name is Bella, and she was the first child born in the family in 21 years.

Ms. Hall was 4 when her father, Clifton Sr., bought the house. He moved the family from Normangee, a tiny town outside Madisonville, a slightly less tiny town on the interstate between Houston and Dallas. He got a job as a truck driver, the job he held until he retired.

Her bond with her father had always been tight. He taught her how to change oil and repair light fixtures. When she discovered she could not have children, his words soothed her, telling her God meant for her to tend to the children around her who needed her care. ''You're more of a mother to these children than the mothers,'' he told her. And when he died, he wanted her to oversee his estate.

Ms. Hall had finally assembled the documents she needed. She just had to figure out how to attach them to an email and send them to the state. Her caseworker had pumped up her optimism. The program determines if a home is salvageable and then, using the occupancy rules and the specific needs of a family, maps out a plan. (State officials said they were familiar with Ms. Hall's case and said she seemed like a strong candidate; they were just waiting on her documents.)

She had been through too much not to have skepticism. ''Watch, something else will come up,'' she said. Still, she was already thinking about clearing the house in preparation for construction. She imagined Bella swinging in the backyard.

Given the condition of the home, it would most likely have to be torn down. She accepted that. She loved that house. She spent her childhood there. Her parents died there. But her commitment was less to the house in its physical form than the idea it represented. ''The old American dream, they did it,'' she said of her parents. She would keep her promise to her mother.

''This is an assignment to me, and I want to get it done,'' Ms. Hall said sitting on her front porch, washed in the light of a crisp afternoon filtering through the leaves of the magnolia tree. ''If I die the day after, I'm satisfied.''

Her father's dream was now the one she held for Bella: No matter what, the house would be there, and it would be hers.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/23/us/texas-winter-storm-hurricane-harvey-houston.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/23/us/texas-winter-storm-hurricane-harvey-houston.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mold has outpaced repair work at Juanita Hall's home, which was severely damaged by Hurricane Harvey in 2017 and absorbed another blow from last month's freeze. (A18)

From left, some families in flood-prone areas have opted to raise their houses. Service organizations returned after last month's freeze to repair homes they had worked on after Hurricane Harvey. Aid groups are still seeing demand for water and other essentials. (A18-A19)

A nonprofit group helped repair Mal Moses' home after Hurricane Harvey struck in 2017, but last month's storm damaged the plumbing. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A19)

**Load-Date:** March 25, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Pandemic Is Hitting Co-ops in the Pocket***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:617V-5MF1-JBG3-63K4-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By C. J. Hughes

**Body**

As the pandemic has wrought havoc on the economy, many New York stores have been unable to pay the rent, forcing co-ops to pick up the slack.

As the coronavirus devastates New York's retail economy, making it hard for stores to pay rent, co-op buildings with ground-floor stores are losing a vital source of income. Already stressed co-op shareholders have had to pick up the slack, in some cases with maintenance charges increasing by as much as 40 percent.

''It's a huge problem,'' said Michael Wolfe, the president of Midboro Management, who added that residents are grumbling about the extra costs, as they also struggle with reduced work, furloughs and layoffs.

But Mr. Wolfe said that most residents realize that ''anything is better than a vacancy,'' adding that co-ops would face long odds at finding replacement tenants during the pandemic.

Also driving the decision to accommodate stores rather than evict them is a desire to preserve the convenience of having on-site shops, board members say. Other co-ops want to preserve jobs of employees who have become like family members after years of operating businesses under the same roof, like at 230 West 105th Street, a 14-story co-op at Broadway in the Manhattan Valley neighborhood.

Its board has hiked maintenance fees 15 percent, which for a one-bedroom means a jump to about $1,400 from $1,200 a month, to make up for rent breaks and discounts offered to the four stores that ring the prewar building's base. That aid, which is benefiting a clothing store, coffee shop, deli and cobbler, is the equivalent of as much as a 50-percent rent cut, according to the board.

''One shareholder called the move unconscionable,'' said Robert Chasen, the treasurer of the 70-unit doorman building, which because of the pandemic postponed its annual meeting from its usual time in May to November. According to Mr. Chasen, about half of the apartments in the building are occupied by people on fixed incomes or who are ***working-class***.

''But most neighbors say they are supportive,'' he said. ''These stores contribute to our neighborhood.''

The co-op's largess, however, may only be postponing the inevitable. ''Our business has been severely, severely, severely impacted and may still have to close,'' said Carolina Conigliaro, whose father, Fernando Andrade, owns the cobbler shop, named Andrade Shoe Repair.

Speaking on behalf of her father, an Ecuadorean immigrant who speaks limited English, Ms. Conigliaro said that a drop in commuters has led to a decline in requests for repairs of heels, holes and zippers. Revenue is now often as little as $40 per day, she added, down from highs of as much as $1,400 per day before the coronavirus slammed New York.

''We have never seen anything so heartbreaking,'' added Ms. Conigliaro about the shop, which has leased space in the co-op for four years, and which was located a block away for 32 years before that.

Rents cuts are only one consideration. A punishing retail climate, in which workers and tourists are staying home and not shopping, is occurring at the same time as a major shift in store ownership for many co-ops that were created in the 1980s.

Because of the complicated methods by which co-ops are created, third-party landlords often control buildings' storefronts under long-term master leases. Co-op apartments upstairs usually receive some of the retail rent money. But the amount is usually just a trickle compared with what the landlords rake in, lawyers say.

Many of the master leases date to the 1980s when many of the buildings converted from rentals to co-ops, and after exhausting all of their renewal options, the firms that own those master leases are preparing to relinquish them -- allowing many co-ops to finally take over their retail square footage.

The timing is less than ideal, said Jeffrey Reich, a real estate attorney with Schwartz Sladkus Reich Greenberg Atlas, a New York firm, and a co-op adviser. ''These buildings wanted their retail back for years and now no one wants it,'' Mr. Reich said. ''It really is ironic.''

The retail economy had been deteriorating even before the pandemic because of steeps rents and competition from online shopping. In the third quarter, which ended in September, asking rents in Manhattan's main shopping areas fell to $659 a square foot, the lowest rate in nine years, according to the real estate firm CBRE. And the number of available ground-floor storefronts in Manhattan increased to 254 in the third quarter from 235 in the second quarter, representing a new record, CBRE said.

Only about a quarter of the hundreds of co-ops in Manhattan are anchored by storefronts, and managing agents estimate that even with recent turnovers, co-op boards still control only about half of the shop-lined buildings.

For boards that have long been salivating about the thought of recapturing their retail spaces and getting a boost in revenue, the dismal market statistics can be daunting.

''Frustrating is how I would put it,'' said Charles Sullivan, the president of the board at 201 West 16th Street, a 110-unit co-op at Seventh Avenue in Chelsea that will reclaim its storefront on Jan. 1, 2021, after four lease extensions.

The handover has been a long time coming.

In 1980, five years before the buff-brick 20-story building went co-op, an entity affiliated with the department store Barneys New York (once based across the street) snapped up No. 201's retail berth, leasing it from the original owner of the building, according to Ed Lewis, the board's treasurer. The lease has changed hands a couple times since then.

In recent years, No. 201's corner-wrapping 4,300-square-foot space has been familiar as the home to an outpost of Williams-Sonoma, the home-furnishings chain, which declined to pursue a new lease with the co-op.

And it's not like other tenants are beating down the door. There haven't been any takers since the space hit the market last March, just before the Covid crisis, said Mr. Sullivan, who said the board may hedge its bets and renovate the space to make two stores out of the large space.

The board declined to share the asking rent. But ''it is much, much less than it was in 2015, 2017 and January 2020, ''said Mr. Lewis, who added, ''we won't be stupid about the pricing, but we will be flexible.'' Banks, pharmacies and doctors offices are under consideration.

If shareholders won't see an immediate upside, co-ops like No. 201 are still well-positioned, they say. Collecting all the rent, instead of just a portion of it, will make them better off.

And tax laws are more favorable than before. Rules that once limited retail revenue in a co-op to 20 percent of a co-op's total revenues were relaxed in 2007.

But there's still that nagging issue of attracting and retaining tenants, a concern that has gripped 140 Nassau Street, a wine-red landmark at Beekman Street in the Financial District. The 42-unit co-op, which has four retail spaces, including an eyebrow-threading shop, a hair salon, a dry cleaners and a bank branch, has decided to lower rents and raise maintenance fees as an act of good will. A committee is studying the exact amounts now.

''We have chosen to consider this a catastrophe of global proportions,'' said Dr. Raphael Santore, the dentist who serves as board president. ''We are going to take the compassionate road even if it will cost us.''

Even co-ops that have had relatively good luck enlisting retail tenants are being cautious. Consider 260 West End Avenue, a 74-unit building at West 72nd Street that went co-op in 1979 and, a year later, signed over its five retail units to the building's sponsor, which appears to have controlled the storefronts until this year. In recent years, the co-op had been receiving about $50,000 a year in retail rents.

Before the master lease for those shops expired last month, the co-op secured commitments from four of the five existing tenants, which include a diner, dry cleaners, salon, deli and shoe repair shop.

Out of sensitivity for an ongoing process, Liz Osur-Marcal, the co-op's treasurer, declined to say which tenant was leaving despite an offer of a ''beyond generous'' rent. Those staying inked shorter-than-usual five-year leases, added Ms. Osur-Marcal, who will tuck the rents into a reserve fund at her ''very conservative'' building. (The rents are lower than the co-op originally sought a year ago when negotiations began.)

''Some shareholders were contentious. They wanted maintence to go down right away,'' she said. But the save-now strategy is in part to protect against the soon-to-be-empty space. And of course, leases are no guarantee of future rents.

Still, the co-op is grateful for some occupancy. ''I'm not the kind of woman who uses the word,'' Ms. Osur-Marcal said, ''but I am blessed.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top: The co-op at 230 West 105th Street has said it is willing to increase shareholder maintenance fees to help retain the occupants of its four stores

Charles Sullivan, president of a co-op board that is trying to lease its empty storefront

Carolina Conigliaro with her father, Fernando Andrade, inside Andrade Shoe Repair, a struggling business

and Robert Chasen, the treasurer of the co-op board at 230 West 105th Street, which is trying to support four stores. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KATHERINE MARKS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (RE13)

**Load-Date:** November 15, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A Director Making His Mark in More Ways Than One***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XY5-M1C1-JBG3-6069-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Laura Collins-Hughes

**Highlight:** With powerfully contemporary stagings of “Betrayal” and “Cyrano,” Jamie Lloyd has had an attention-grabbing year. That’s not what makes him hard to miss.

**Body**

With powerfully contemporary stagings of “Betrayal” and “Cyrano,” Jamie Lloyd has had an attention-grabbing year. That’s not what makes him hard to miss.

LONDON — The director Jamie Lloyd was giving me a tour of his tattoos. Not the Pegasus on his chest or the skeleton astronaut floating on his back, though he gamely described those, but the onyx-inked adornments that cover his arms and hands, that wreathe his neck, that wrap around his shaved head.

When I asked about the dragon at his throat, he told me it had been “one of the ones that hurt the least,” then pointed to the flame-licked skulls on either side of his neck: his “covert way,” he said, of representing drama’s traditional emblems for comedy and tragedy.

“I thought maybe it’d be a little bit tacky to have theater masks on my neck,” he added, a laugh bubbling up, and it’s true: His dragon would have eaten them for lunch.

It was early December, and we were in a lounge beneath the Playhouse Theater, where Lloyd’s West End production of “[*Cyrano de Bergerac*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing),” starring James McAvoy in a skintight puffer jacket and his own regular-size nose, would soon open to packed houses and critical praise.

Running through Feb. 29, and [*arriving on cinema screens*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing) Feb. 20 in a National Theater Live broadcast, “Cyrano” — newly adapted by Martin Crimp, and positing its hero as a scrappy spoken-word wonder — capped a year that saw Lloyd celebrated on both sides of the Atlantic.

In London last summer, his outdoor hit “[*Evita*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing)” traded conventional glamour for sexy grit, while his radical reinterpretation of Harold Pinter’s “Betrayal,” starring Tom Hiddleston, was hailed first in the West End, then on Broadway. Ben Brantley, reviewing “Betrayal” in The New York Times,   [*called it*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing) “one of those rare shows I seem destined to think about forever.”

When Time Out London ranked the best theater of 2019, it [*gave the top spot*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing) jointly to all three Lloyd productions, saying that he “has had a year that some of his peers might trade their entire careers for.”

Lloyd, who is 39, did not spring from the same mold as many of those peers. There was for him, he says, no youthful aha moment of watching Derek Jacobi onstage and divining that directing was his path. Epiphanies like that belonged to other kids, the ones who could afford the tickets.

If there is a standard background for a London theater director — and Lloyd would argue that certainly there used to be — that isn’t where he came from, growing up ***working class*** on the south coast of England, in Margaret Thatcher’s Britain.

The first time I laid eyes on him, chatting in the Playhouse lobby after a preview of “Cyrano,” he was the picture of ***working-class*** flair — the gold pirate hoops, the pink and black T-shirt, the belt cinching high-waisted pants.

He looks nothing like your typical West End director. Which of course is precisely the point.

What’s underneath

“It’s quite often said of him,” McAvoy observed by phone, once the reviews were in, “that he strips things away or he tries to take classical works and turn them on their head. I think he’s always just trying to tell the story in the clearest and most exhilarating way possible.”

The “X-Men” star, who put the number of times he’s worked with Lloyd [*in the past decade*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing) at a “gazillion,” calls theirs “probably one of the most defining relationships that I’ve had in my career.”

Yet Lloyd himself is on board with the notion that his assertively contemporary stagings pare back stifling layers of performance history to lay bare what’s underneath.

Like the tiger and dragons that he had emblazoned on his head just last May, though, the unembellished nature of his shows — as minimalist in their way as his tattoos are the opposite — is a relatively recent development.

Lloyd’s first “Cyrano de Bergerac,” starring Douglas Hodge in 2012, was also [*his Broadway debut*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing). It was, he said, “absolutely the ‘Cyrano’ that you would expect,” with the fake nose, the hat, the plume, the sword-fighting.

There is, granted, sword-fighting in the new one — but the audience has to imagine the swords.

Lloyd’s productions, including a lauded revival of Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine’s “[*Passion*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing)” in 2010, long marked him as a hot young director on the rise. But he sees in some of his previous work a noisy tendency toward idea overload.

The pivot point came in 2018, with a season that [*the Jamie Lloyd Company*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing) — which he formed   [*seven years ago*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing) with the commercial producing powerhouse Ambassador Theater Group —   [*devoted to the short works of Harold Pinter*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing). The playwright’s distillation of language forced Lloyd to match it with his staging.

That immersion led to what the director Michael Grandage — one of Lloyd’s early champions, who tapped him at 27 to be his associate director at the [*Donmar Warehouse*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing) — called Lloyd’s “absolute masterpiece.”

“I had quite a lot of ambition to do a production of ‘Betrayal’ in my life,” Grandage said. “And then when I saw Jamie’s, I thought, ‘Right, that’s it. I don’t ever, ever want to direct this play.’ Because that’s, for me, the perfect production.”

Playing dress-up

Charm is a ready currency in the theater, but Lloyd’s is disarming; he seems simply to be being himself, without veneer. Like when I fact-checked something I’d read by asking whether he was a vegan.

“Lapsed vegan,” he confessed immediately, with a tinge of guilt about eating eggs again.

Pay no attention to any tough-guy vibe in photos of him; do not be alarmed by the sharp-toothed cat on the back of his head. In conversation, Lloyd comes across as thoughtful and unassuming, with an animated humor that makes him fun company. If he speaks at the speed of someone with no time to waste, he balances that with focused attentiveness.

His father, Ray, was a truck driver. His mother, Joy (whose name is tattooed on his right forearm, near the elbow), cleaned houses, took in ironing and ran a costume-rental shop, where young Jamie would sneak in to dress up as the children’s cartoon character Rainbow Brite.

“It’s very embarrassing,” he said, squelching a laugh.

Seeing professional theater wasn’t an option then for Lloyd, whose grown-up passion for expanding audience access — one of the things he has made himself known for in the West End — grew out of that exclusion. His company has set aside 15,000 free and 15,000 £15 tickets for its current, characteristically starry three-show season, which will also include Emilia Clarke in “The Seagull” and Jessica Chastain in “A Doll’s House.” At the 786-seat Playhouse, that adds up to just over 38 full houses.

Lloyd, who was studying acting at the [*Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing) when he decided he wanted to direct, found his way to theater as a child by acting in school shows and local amateur productions. Twice he was cast as a monkey; in “The Wizard of Oz,” thrillingly, he got to fly.

The details of his early days have [*always been colorful*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing) — like having a clown as his first stepfather, who performed at children’s parties under the stage name Uncle Funny. But Lloyd is quick to acknowledge the darkness lurking there.

“It sounds a little bit like some dodgy film, because he was actually a really violent man,” he said. “And there were times where he was very physically abusive to my mum. There was a sort of atmosphere of violence in that house that was really uneasy. And yet masked with this literal makeup, but also this sense of trying to entertain people whilst enacting terrible brutality behind the scenes.”

This is where he locates his own connection to Pinter’s work.

“A lot of that is that the violence is beneath the surface,” he said. “And on the top there is this sort of, what I call a kind of topspin, a layer of cover-up.”

Long relationships

Lloyd was still at drama school when he staged a production of Lapine and William Finn’s “[*Falsettoland*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing)” that won a prize: assistant directing a show at the Bush Theater in London. Based on that, Trevor Nunn hired him, at 22, to be his assistant director on “   [*Anything Goes*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing)” in the West End — a job he did so well that Grandage got word of it and hired him to assist on “   [*Guys and Dolls*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing).” While Lloyd was doing that, he also began directing in his own right.

The costume and set designer [*Soutra Gilmour*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing), who has been a constant with Lloyd since he cold-called her for his first professional production, Pinter’s “   [*The Caretaker*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing),” said theirs is an easy relationship, with a “symbiotic transference of ideas.” Even their creative aesthetics have evolved in sync.

“We’ve actually never fallen out in 13 years,” she said over mint tea on a trip to New York last month, just before “Betrayal” closed. “Never! I don’t even know how we would fall out.”

Of course, the one time she tried to decline a Lloyd project five years ago, because its tech rehearsals coincided with the due date for her son’s birth, he told her there was no one else he wanted to work with. So she did the show, warning that at some point she would have to leave. Now, she says, he understands that she won’t sit through endless evening previews, because she needs to go home to her child.

Lloyd and his wife, the actress Suzie Toase (whose name is tattooed on one of his arms), home-school their own three boys (whose names are tattooed on the other). Their eldest, 13-year-old Lewin, is an actor who recently played one of the principal characters, the heroine’s irresistible best friend, on the HBO and BBC One series “[*His Dark Materials*](https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2019/dec/09/cyrano-de-bergerac-review-james-mcavoy-playhouse-london-martin-crimp-rostand-nose-wooing),” whose cast boasts McAvoy as well.

Enter the child

Lloyd’s interpretation of “Betrayal,” a 1978 play that recounts a seven-year affair, imbued it with a distinctly non-’70s awareness of the fragility of family — the notion that children are the bystanders harmed when a marriage is tossed away.

Its gasp-inducing moment came with the entrance of a character Pinter wrote to be mentioned but not seen: the small daughter of the couple whose relationship is imperiled. In putting her onstage, Lloyd didn’t touch the text; it was a simple, wordless role. With it, he altered the resonance of the play.

To me, it seemed logical that Lloyd’s production would have been informed by his experience as a husband and father — and maybe also as a child in a splintering family. How old had he been, anyway, when his parents split up?

“Five,” Lloyd said. “The same age as the character would be.” He paused. “Oh God, yeah, fascinating. I’d not thought about that. Exactly the same age.”

If that fact was of more than intellectual interest to him, he didn’t let on. He volunteered a memory, though — of being a little one “amongst these kind of big giants, and I guess what we can now see as the mess of their lives.”

Blazer-free

Doing “Betrayal” in New York, Lloyd was struck by how eager Americans were to chat about his tattoos. Still, he told me after I texted him a follow-up question about them, he hadn’t expected his appearance to be such a talking point in this story.

It’s not just idle curiosity. It’s about what the tattoos signify in a field where, in Britain as in the United States, the top directors tend to have grown up very comfortably. It’s about who is welcome in a particular space, and who gets to be themselves there.

For a long time after Lloyd started working in the theater, he wore a blazer every day: a conscious attempt to conform in an industry where he felt a nagging sense of difference.

“Every other director at the time was from an Oxbridge background,” he said, “and looked and sounded a particular way. I spent a long time pretending to be like them.”

It was a performance of sorts, with a costume he donned for the role.

It was only about seven or eight years ago — around the time he left the Donmar and started putting together his own company — that he stopped worrying about what people might think if he looked the way he wanted.

“My dad had tattoos” was the first thing he said when I asked him about his own.

“I guess it’s partly getting older,” he mused, “but it’s just sort of going, ‘You can’t pretend to be someone. You’ve got to be who you really are, in every way.’”

The tattoos that have gradually transformed him are from a different aesthetic universe than his recent work onstage. Yet the impulse, somehow, is the same.

In shedding the blazer, in inking his skin, Lloyd has peeled back layers of imposed convention to show who’s underneath.

And should you spot him at the theater, where he is hard to miss, you’ll notice that he looks just like himself.

PHOTOS: Above, the director Jamie Lloyd inside the Bernard B. Jacobs Theater. Below, James McAvoy in Lloyd’s current, contemporary staging of “Cyrano de Bergerac.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GIONCARLO VALENTINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; MARC BRENNER) (AR8); From left: Tom Hiddleston, Charlie Cox and Zawe Ashton in the play “Betrayal. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (AR10)

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Early Voting Numbers in Georgia Senate Races Put G.O.P. on Edge***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61N0-72N1-JBG3-60BF-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** While polls suggest that the state’s crucial runoff elections are up for grabs, Republicans have grown worried about strong turnout in Democratic areas and mixed messages from President Trump.

**Body**

While polls suggest that the state’s crucial runoff elections are up for grabs, Republicans have grown worried about strong turnout in Democratic areas and mixed messages from President Trump.

MACON, Ga. — Senator Kelly Loeffler issued a now-familiar warning during a campaign event on Wednesday in Bibb County: If Democrats win the [*Georgia Senate runoff elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/31/us/politics/georgia-senate-election.html), there will be little left to stem a rising tide of extremist socialism in America.

But Dale Washburn, a Republican state legislator who introduced Ms. Loeffler at the event, had another warning. This one was based not on ideology, but on numbers that suggest Democrats are outpacing Republicans in early voting turnout — which means that Republicans may need a tremendous election-day performance on Jan. 5 if they are to win the state’s two high-stakes runoff races and maintain control of the Senate.

“We’re fully aware of the energy on the other side, and think we’ve been reminded about that,” Mr. Washburn said. “We know demographics have changed in recent years. And if our side hasn’t been aware of that, they’re rapidly becoming aware of that. The Biden victory had a big part.”

Less than a week before election day, the last-minute challenges, messages and strategies for the two parties in Georgia’s runoffs are coming into focus, even as polls indicate that the elections are too close to call. Those messages will be hammered home on the day before the elections by President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr., who plans to campaign on Monday in Atlanta, and by President Trump, who will hold a rally on the same day in Dalton, a city in northwest Georgia.

However, some Republicans are increasingly worried that Mr. Trump, who continues to make the baseless claim that he lost Georgia because of a rigged voting system, is sending confusing signals to his followers that may serve to keep them home on election day. On Wednesday, Mr. Trump on Twitter pushed for the resignation of Gov. Brian Kemp, a staunch conservative and Trump supporter who has declined to take steps to overturn the state’s election results.

The president argued that Mr. Kemp was an “obstructionist who refuses to admit that we won Georgia.”

As Mr. Trump continues to foment a backward-looking drama, Ms. Loeffler and her fellow Republican candidate, Senator [*David Perdue*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/31/us/politics/georgia-senate-election.html), have crisscrossed the state, warning of an ominous future if their Democratic opponents, the Rev. [*Raphael G. Warnock*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/31/us/politics/georgia-senate-election.html) and Jon Ossoff, prevail. Speaking on Fox News on Tuesday, Mr. Perdue said the Republicans were a “last line of defense” against centralized government, [*comparing his struggle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/31/us/politics/georgia-senate-election.html) to military conflicts like World War II.

On “Fox &amp; Friends” on Wednesday morning, he added: “We’re winning this race right now. Kelly and I are all over this state. We’re running against two of the most liberal candidates that the Democrats have ever put up.”

Democrats, for their part, have been crafting messages that they hope will resonate with African-Americans, a constituency crucial to Mr. Biden’s narrow victory in Georgia in November. One TV ad released on Wednesday for Mr. Ossoff featured former President Barack Obama, who says that Mr. Ossoff will pass a new voting rights act if elected, while the musician John Legend plays a rendition of “Georgia on My Mind.”

But it is the numbers from early in-person and absentee voting that are particularly troubling for many Republican operatives in the state. Since the start of early voting on Dec. 14, more than 2.5 million Georgians have cast their votes, and the breakdown appears to be mostly good news for Democrats. (The early voting period runs through the end of Jan. 1, but Georgia counties may choose to close polling sites in observance of holidays on New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day.)

The breakdown of votes so far shows that vote-rich Democratic strongholds, including Fulton and DeKalb Counties in metropolitan Atlanta, are posting high numbers, while African-Americans statewide are “voting their weight and then some,” said Charles S. Bullock III, a political scientist at the University of Georgia.

At the same time, Dr. Bullock noted, turnout has been weak in the northwestern part of the state, which is home to many ***working-class*** white Trump supporters. In Walker County, which Mr. Trump won with 79 percent of the vote, the turnout, as of Wednesday, was only 47 percent of the general election total, [*according to the website georgiavotes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/31/us/politics/georgia-senate-election.html).

That may explain Mr. Trump’s decision to hold his rally on Monday in Dalton, a city known for its flooring and carpet manufacturing. It is also in the heart of the congressional district recently won by Representative-elect Marjorie Taylor Greene, the Republican best known for [*espousing elements of the QAnon conspiracy theory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/31/us/politics/georgia-senate-election.html).

Mr. Trump announced the rally on Dec. 19. Democrats countered on Wednesday with their announcement that Mr. Biden would campaign on the same day in Atlanta. On Sunday, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris also plans to hold an event in Savannah.

Ms. Harris’s visit will most likely serve as a force multiplier for Democrats in Savannah, with a leading Black Democrat visiting a predominantly Black city to stump for Mr. Warnock, who is also Black and is a Savannah native. The move demonstrates how Democrats have embraced [*a strategy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/31/us/politics/georgia-senate-election.html) espoused by Stacey Abrams, the party’s former candidate for governor, that emphasizes paying attention to, and spending money turning out, the state’s minority voters.

While that strategy appears to have given Democrats an early edge, it remains to be seen if it will be enough to counter a surge of Republican voters who are probably waiting until election day to turn up at the polls, as has traditionally been the case.

“Democrats have shown up for the early vote, and the overt emphasis on Black voters has seemingly paid off,” Brian Robinson, a Republican strategist based in Georgia, said in a text message on Wednesday. “Republicans, though, still have a lot of votes out there they can get, particularly in northwest Georgia, where Trump is going Monday. The G.O.P. candidates will win handily among election day voters, so the bigger the turnout on Tuesday, the better the Republican chances.”

But Republicans had similar hopes for Mr. Trump in the general election, in which he fell short by about 12,000 votes in Georgia. And it is unclear whether Mr. Trump, in his visit to Dalton, will end up motivating his followers or causing more headaches for Republicans.

Mr. Trump’s tweet calling for Mr. Kemp to resign was already commanding some of the political spotlight on Wednesday. At a hastily convened news conference, Mr. Kemp did not address Mr. Trump’s comments directly, saying he would not be “distracted” from his goal of electing Mr. Perdue and Ms. Loeffler. The governor also said he was too focused on responding to the coronavirus pandemic to become involved in political infighting.

“That horse has left the barn in Georgia,” Mr. Kemp said of Mr. Biden’s victory in Georgia — dismissing Mr. Trump’s false claims that the state’s election was tainted by fraud.

How the jockeying plays out will not only affect the balance of power in Washington but also offer the first hints at how both parties navigate the post-Trump political future. Mr. Trump has proved to be a unique motivator of the Republican base, and the party is yet to find a figure who is equally adept at maximizing turnout among white conservatives.

Democrats are eager to prove that Mr. Biden’s success in November was not a fluke, and that voters want a robust liberal agenda rather than the Republican-led obstructionism that defined Mr. Obama’s administration.

Mr. Ossoff, who is facing off against Mr. Perdue, has sought in particular to make the election a referendum on Republican inaction on the pandemic. The latest issue at hand this week was whether the Republican senators would support a Senate vote on giving Americans stimulus checks of $2,000 rather than $600, a prospect that Senator Mitch McConnell, the majority leader, [*appeared to dash*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/31/us/politics/georgia-senate-election.html) on Wednesday.

“People are in dire straits,” Mr. Ossoff said. “And if Senators Perdue and Loeffler — who are in the majority, and, let’s be clear, it’s the majority that controls floor action — and if they are serious about $2,000 relief checks for the people, then they should put maximum pressure on Mitch McConnell to move that legislation immediately.”

In a gaggle at her event in Macon, Ms. Loeffler avoided the question. Though she has said she supports the increased stimulus checks, she avoided placing pressure on Senate Republican leaders to bring forth the issue on the floor without caveats. Ms. Loeffler also avoided another hot-button Republican issue: whether to object to the presidential results on Jan. 6, when the Senate must ratify the Electoral College outcome.

“Leader McConnell and I have spoken about bringing another relief package,” Ms. Loeffler said. “But we’re in this situation because Democrats have blocked relief throughout this summer.”

Her carefully chosen words highlighted her current political pickle. In both Georgia and Washington, siding with Mr. Trump can also mean being in direct opposition to Republicans like Mr. McConnell or Mr. Kemp.

Mr. Washburn, the state representative, said the infighting among Republicans had made operating in the state more difficult.

He said he worried that the discord, and the Republicans who have questioned whether their votes will count in the runoffs, were hampering turnout for the party.

“Obviously we would prefer to have complete unity, but the situation is what it is,” Mr. Washburn said. “And we have to tap down any conversation that your vote doesn’t matter. Because it does matter.”

He added, “It’s definitely a big concern.”

Astead W. Herndon reported from Macon, Ga., and Richard Fausset from Atlanta. Stephanie Saul contributed reporting from New York.

Astead W. Herndon reported from Macon, Ga., and Richard Fausset from Atlanta. Stephanie Saul contributed reporting from New York.

PHOTOS: Senator Kelly Loeffler has recently had to navigate clashing messages in Washington while fending off her challenger, the Rev. Raphael G. Warnock, far bottom left. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SEAN RAYFORD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2021

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[***Life Without Amazon (Well, Almost)***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61MP-46J1-DXY4-X27S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 29, 2020 Tuesday 08:57 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1630 words

**Byline:** John Herrman

**Highlight:** For concerned customers, avoiding one of the world’s largest retailers and web service providers is proving harder than expected.

**Body**

For concerned customers, avoiding one of the world’s largest retailers and web service providers is proving harder than expected.

Blaze Cromwell, a 24-year-old cashier living in Washington, D.C., doesn’t order from Amazon.com or shop at Whole Foods. He doesn’t watch movies or shows on Prime Video. He doesn’t own a Ring or a Kindle. And he doesn’t use Audible, Twitch or Zappos. He’s about as close as one can get to abstaining from [*Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/business/dealbook/wondery-amazon-podcasts.html) entirely.

Mr. Cromwell began the work of cutting the company out of his life in 2017, after reading reports about Amazon’s working conditions and what he saw as generally “unethical practices.”

“I reasoned that financially withdrawing from Amazon.com, and later on its subsidiaries, was one of the most material things I could do as a ***working-class*** person with disposable income from time to time,” he said.

Leaving [*Amazon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/business/dealbook/wondery-amazon-podcasts.html) requires some determination, he said, but it’s less daunting once you get started. “It’s a matter of people changing both their habits and expectations for their consumption,” he said. It’s not just a choice, he noted, but an ongoing “practice.” (He has, occasionally, looked up titles on IMDb, an Amazon subsidiary since 1998. He’s in the process of finding alternatives )

People have been advocating boycotts of Amazon for nearly as long as the company has existed. In 1999, the programmer and activist Richard Stallman led one related to a lawsuit the company filed against Barnes &amp; Noble to protect a patent covering “1-click” ordering, which he worried would stifle competition in e-commerce. (The lawsuit against Barnes &amp; Noble was settled, and the patent has since expired.)

There have been countless attempts to shed Amazon since: by authors and book sellers, political activists, labor organizers, [*my colleagues*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/business/dealbook/wondery-amazon-podcasts.html). (Even the most determined abstainers find their limit when trying to eliminate Amazon Web Services, which counts among its clients thousands of other companies, including popular websites and apps, as well as The New York Times.)

Meanwhile, Amazon has grown into a company larger and more powerful than almost any retailer in the world. It sells everything. It directly employs more than a million people. Its founder is a household name. It undergirds much of the internet. And it’s intertwined with politics by default, drawing ire from across the political spectrum. (“My anticapitalist liberal college student and her uber-capitalist conservative grandparents are both boycotting Amazon,” one Twitter user shared in December.)

Unlike in 1999, or even 2009, today the question of whether or not to interact with Amazon has already been answered for many people. The choice is no longer whether to enter the Everything Store. It’s about trying to locate the exit.

“I refused to go to Walmart, and as a small child went to United Farm Worker protests,” said MaryBeth Haslam, 54, an Amazon abstainer from Philadelphia. Dropping Amazon hasn’t been particularly difficult, she said. “Just inconvenient.”

“I could get certain grocery items there that are hard to obtain elsewhere,” she said. “So you just get different stuff, no big deal.” Not every Amazon alternative is a beloved local business, of course — “I have to admit Target has been getting more business out of me,” she said — but Ms. Haslam has specific issues with Amazon and in particular with [*Jeff Bezos*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/business/dealbook/wondery-amazon-podcasts.html), who, she said, “doesn’t need any more of my money.”

Ms. Haslam’s abstention is thorough, but she recently hit a snag: Christmas. A niece asked for a specific gift from Amazon. A nephew asked for an Amazon gift card, which would give him the ability to order whatever he wanted, whenever he wanted. “It kind of hurt to shop there, honestly,” she said.

Char Wells, a 31-year-old Etsy seller, avoids Amazon as much as possible, for reasons both broadly ideological and personally specific. Mx. Wells, who is disabled and takes non-gendered pronouns, objects to the idea that small vendors on other sites should be “expected to meet Prime delivery expectations.” Still, sometimes they need something they can’t easily get somewhere else, or for an item to arrive quickly.

Not every Amazon abstainer has a coherent or specific critique of the company — for some, it’s merely the most visible representation of consumerism, concentrated wealth and big business, taking Walmart’s place in a variety of broad lamentations about culture and the economy.

“It was Nike for a little while. It’s been Nestle, then Coca-Cola,” said Tim Hunt, an editor of the British nonprofit magazine Ethical Consumer. “We can add Amazon to the list of corporate boogeymen, and I don’t mean that flippantly,” he said. Most abstainers don’t suffer any illusions about what they’re doing; Amazon clearly hasn’t suffered from their absence, and their numbers aren’t large enough to make demands — many more people are currently turning to Amazon than are turning away. Instead, for some, opting out of an increasingly ubiquitous and assertive Amazon offers a sense of control and agency, however slight.

The sheer scope of Amazon’s business interests — including surveillance devices (Ring), government contracts (through Amazon Web Services), and a work force that includes both low-wage gig workers and the actual richest person in the world — makes finding a reason to opt out of Amazon nearly as easy as finding something to buy on it. But plenty of Amazon abstainers aren’t merely coping with guilt, reclaiming a lost sense of control, or fighting the thought that “ethical consumption” sounds oxymoronic.

Chris Smalls is the former Amazon Warehouse worker whose March protest about working conditions at a Staten Island fulfillment center, and [*subsequent firing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/business/dealbook/wondery-amazon-podcasts.html), turned him into a leader in the nascent movement to organize Amazon workers. He’s an activist, now, with a potent personal story and a long list of [*specific demands*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/business/dealbook/wondery-amazon-podcasts.html). He’s planned marches on Jeff Bezos’s homes. Asking people to voice support for his cause is one thing. Asking them to actually leave Amazon, it turns out, is quite another.

“A lot of my own relatives, they used to be frequent customers of Amazon,” Mr. Smalls, 31, said. “It was a struggle for them, since they were so accustomed to it. Some of them used to order from Amazon almost every single day.”

Even sympathetic audiences can be hesitant about disentangling themselves from the firm. “My advice is, do it at your own pace,” he said. “I’m always advocating to stand in solidarity with the workers, but I know how hard it is as a customer to stop using the service.” Amazon’s ubiquity, and the millions of habits its customers have formed, put Mr. Smalls in a strange and exhausting position: appealing for empathy for a largely invisible work force laboring through a pandemic, while also sympathizing with Amazon customers accustomed to a relatively new convenience.

“Ten years ago we weren’t ordering toilet paper from Amazon,” Mr. Smalls said. “Maybe that’s how long it will take to get over it, too.”

Harold Pollack, a professor at the University of Chicago, was interviewed by The New York Times in 2012 in a [*story*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/business/dealbook/wondery-amazon-podcasts.html) about customers who were leaving Amazon. Dr. Pollack, who teaches public health, said at the time, “I don’t feel they behave in a way that I want to support with my consumer dollars.” He has since written critically of Amazon, including, in 2018, an op-ed titled “Better Ways for Jeff Bezos to Spend $131 Billion,” recommending that Mr. Bezos divert his “winnings” to philanthropy rather than space travel. (In 2020, that figure would be somewhere north of $180 billion.)

Reached by phone, Dr. Pollack said his critiques of Amazon had both widened and deepened, but that he’s also now a frequent customer. “It’s chastening,” he said, when asked to revisit his stance. “I do use Amazon more in my life than I’m entirely comfortable about. It’s part of the infrastructure of my life in the same way it is the infrastructure of others’ lives, during Covid especially.”

Dr. Pollack then offered a fresh analysis, one that attempted to incorporate, or at least acknowledge, his ambivalence. “I think my own trajectory is emblematic of why there need to be public policy solutions to this,” he said, mentioning concerns about antitrust, Amazon’s broader place in the economy, and, as was his focus in 2012, the welfare of the company’s work force. Amazon, he said, presents an “enormous collective action problem.”

The company has seeped further, inexorably, into his life. Using Amazon makes getting work reimbursements simpler. Amazon gift cards have become de facto standard inducements for study participants (notwithstanding the concern of some fellow researchers). Plus, like most people, Dr. Pollack is busy.

“Amazon provides tremendous value to consumers that allows us to look past a lot of things,” he said. Going forward, he plans to “do the easy things that allow me to minimize my reliance on Amazon and feel good about it, but I will basically not do the things that are less easy. And if I’m honest, you can’t rely on me to discipline the company.”

Mr. Smalls, the former warehouse worker, offered a gentle, practiced take on customers like Dr. Pollack: using Amazon might be like an addiction, or at least something that takes weaning. In an interview earlier this year, though, he was perhaps more candid about the company’s habitual consumers. “You think you need Amazon?” he said in [*April*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/business/dealbook/wondery-amazon-podcasts.html), shortly after his firing. “OK, what were you doing a few years ago?”

PHOTOS: A conveyor belt inside Amazon’s JFK8 distribution center on Staten Island. (ST1); A familiar 2020 tableau. “Ten years ago we weren’t ordering toilet paper from Amazon,” said Chris Smalls, an activist and former Amazon warehouse worker. “Maybe that’s how long it will take to get over it, too.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRENDAN MCDERMID/REUTERS) (ST3)

**Load-Date:** March 4, 2021

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[***Sins of Our Fathers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60SC-VR21-DXY4-X02N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 11; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1383 words

**Byline:** By Walter Isaacson

**Body**

LIFE OF A KLANSMAN A Family History in White Supremacy By Edward Ball

When his mother died in 2003, the writer Edward Ball went to New Orleans, where her family had lived for generations, to bury her and sort through her belongings. Among her papers were documents that had been collected by her late aunt, including tales about the man who was known in the family as ''our Klansman.''

Ball had already written, in 1998, a deeply reported National Book Award-winning history, ''Slaves in the Family,'' for which he tracked down descendants of those who had once been enslaved by his South Carolina ancestors on his father's side. In his new book, ''Life of a Klansman,'' he follows a similar course, taking the reader along with him on a journey of discovery as he teases out facts, engages in speculation and shares his emotions about the sad saga of Constant Lecorgne, an unsuccessful carpenter and embittered racist who was a great-great-grandfather on his mother's side.

The result is a haunting tapestry of interwoven stories that inform us not just about our past but about the resentment-bred demons that are all too present in our society today. ''This is a family story,'' he writes. ''Yet it is not a family story wrapped in sugar, the way some people like to serve them.'' The family is not just his, it's our nation's.

[ Read an excerpt from ''Life of a Klansman.'' ]

Lecorgne, born in 1832, was raised in a New Orleans that was, as it has been throughout its history, very complex racially and ethnically. About a quarter of the population were French-speaking whites, a quarter were English-speaking whites, a quarter were free mixed-race Creoles and a quarter were slaves. The Lecorgnes were in the first category, but they rented a home from a free French-speaking woman of color.

Because he has few documents, Ball indulges in a lot of surmises and speculations, perhaps a bit too many for my taste. He pictures the young boy Lecorgne walking with his family the four blocks to Congo Square, where the slaves were allowed to drum and dance on Sunday afternoons. There is a sexual tension that the boy finds both attractive and appalling. ''I think I can begin to see, in Congo Square, a script and a stage, a place where Blackness and whiteness meet,'' Ball writes. ''Complications ensue. They move apart. Eventually the script calls for a crescendo. Blackness and whiteness collide, and the ending, for our Klansman, is an explosion.''

Lecorgne is the unsuccessful and unpopular middle child of a large family. He tries to make a living as a carpenter, but he descends into what is known in the local parlance as petits blancs, the poor ***working-class*** whites. Resentments accrue. When he marries, his wife's family gives him a household slave as a dowry, but he has to sell her for $500 to afford a home.

The Civil War offers Lecorgne an outlet for his resentments and a chance to finally earn a little respect from his family and neighbors. But even there he fails. After joining one of Louisiana's militias as a captain, he is demoted to a second lieutenant. On a train trip to Virginia he gets into a melee and, along with much of his unit, is court-martialed. At a public ceremony, he and his comrades have one-half of their scalps shaved and are cashiered. Lecorgne heads back to New Orleans in disgrace.

Under Reconstruction, the city becomes integrated. Blacks can vote, testify against whites in court and sit where they want on the streetcars; a few even attend integrated schools. Lecorgne's neighborhood in uptown New Orleans, around where Napoleon Avenue meets the river (which is where I grew up), becomes mixed, with Creoles, Germans, Irish, Blacks and mulattoes all living on the same blocks. It's nice to think what the city, and our nation, might have been had that progression continued. But among the whites, especially the petits blancs, resentments built.

The clubhouses for resentful poor whites are the neighborhood firehouses. Lecorgne joined one just off Napoleon Avenue, the Home Hook & Ladder Company, housed in a Romanesque building with a first-floor facade clad in stone and a second in red brick. Its membership suddenly swelled during Reconstruction to 85 men, far more than were necessary to fight off the neighborhood's house fires. Instead, as Ball writes, ''the firehouses play a big part in the tale of the Ku-klux,'' which is what the loose-knit confederation of white supremacist organizations came to be called.

Lecorgne was a minor player in this movement. But for that reason his tale is valuable, both for understanding his times and for understanding our own; he allows us a glimpse of who becomes one of the mass of followers of racist movements, and why.

His one recorded inglorious moment came in early 1873. With Black support, a Republican was elected governor, and the local white militias took up arms to resist his rule. Lecorgne and a group of armed men gathered with the goal of taking over their neighborhood police precinct station, hoping it would spark a wider white uprising. Although the newspapers referred to them as ''Ku-Kluxers,'' the rebel raiders most likely did not wear robes and hoods. That practice was mainly for rural marauders. They were successful, but the following night the police staged a counterattack. As Lecorgne hid in a staircase, his cousin was wounded and a friend was killed.

Lecorgne surrendered and was carried away to the city jail. In the indictment, which misspelled his name, he is accused of treason and violating federal law for having ''unlawfully maliciously and traitorously conspired'' to attack state authorities. But a local judge quickly dismissed all the charges. That low point was the high point of his life.

Near the end of his book, Ball makes a fascinating digression. It involves a prominent person of color who lived in New Orleans at the same time as Lecorgne. Louis Charles Roudanez was a medical doctor, trained in France and at Dartmouth, who published The New Orleans Tribune, a daily newspaper for the Black community. An homme de couleur libre, Roudanez married a free woman of color. While researching his own family, Ball decided to look for the descendants of the Roudanez family.

He finds one of the physician-publisher's great-great-grandchildren, named Mark Roudané, living in a leafy subdivision of St. Paul, Minn. ''He was raised white, and he appears white,'' Ball writes of Roudané. ''In middle age he learned that according to the one-drop rule of blackness, he was not white.'' Roudané did not know the tale of his father's ancestors, or even the Roudanez spelling of his family name, until he stumbled across some family documents when he was 55. As happened with Ball, the discovery of a bit of family history leads Roudané on a quest. ''When my father died, in 2005, I was going through his papers and throwing stuff away, and I found an unmarked binder,'' Roudané tells Ball. It contained papers showing how his father, who was designated as ''colored'' on his birth certificate, had forsaken his distinguished roots, changed the spelling of his name as a young man, gone to Tulane by passing as white and then moved to the Midwest. Despite this history, or perhaps because of it, he became a resentful white racist. ''When it came to talking about Black people,'' Mark Roudané told Ball, ''all this venom would come out. I thought, 'Why is my dad being ugly?' I didn't understand it.''

The interconnected strands of race and history give Ball's entrancing stories a Faulknerian resonance. In Ball's retelling of his family saga, the sins and stains of the past are still very much with us, not something we can dismiss by blaming them on misguided ancestors who died long ago. ''It is not a distortion to say that Constant's rampage 150 years ago helps, in some impossible-to-measure way, to clear space for the authority and comfort of whites living now -- not just for me and for his 50 or 60 descendants, but for whites in general,'' Ball writes. ''I am an heir to Constant's acts of terror. I do not deny it, and the bitter truth makes me sick at the stomach.''Walter Isaacson is a professor of history at Tulane.LIFE OF A KLANSMAN A Family History in White SupremacyBy Edward BallIllustrated. 395 pp. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/books/review/life-of-a-klansman-edward-ball.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/books/review/life-of-a-klansman-edward-ball.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A Klansman photographed in 1871. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM PRIVATE COLLECTION/PICTURE RESEARCH CONSULTANTS AND ARCHIVES)

**Load-Date:** September 6, 2020

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[***A Murder, Gold Bars, a Jailbreak and Questions About Justice***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:648H-5WH1-DXY4-X0SJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 10, 2021 Friday 21:42 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 3500 words

**Byline:** Danny Hakim and Jesse McKinley

**Highlight:** Was the 1993 killing of a woman near Buffalo committed by a prison escapee? Was the detective who solved the case involved? Is there anything straightforward about this crime?

**Body**

Was the 1993 killing of a woman near Buffalo committed by a prison escapee? Was the detective who solved the case involved? Is there anything straightforward about this crime?

The two men were in the yard at the state prison in Dannemora, N.Y., when Richard Matt brought up an old murder.

It was 2015. Mr. Matt and another inmate, David Sweat, were planning what would become [*the most famous jailbreak in decades*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/06/08/nyregion/prison-escape.html), escaping from a fortress with 30-foot-high walls and spawning a massive manhunt, worldwide headlines and an [*award-winning*](https://envelope.latimes.com/awards/titles/escape-at-dannemora/) television series.

The conversation quickly turned to how to get money “when we got out,” Mr. Sweat recalled in a recent letter to The New York Times.

Mr. Matt had an idea for a score. He knew of a judge in the Niagara Falls area — some 350 miles from Dannemora — who kept gold bars in a safe.

When Mr. Matt was “robbing and collecting extortion money from drug dealers” years earlier, a cop had taken him to the judge’s house twice to drop off money, Mr. Sweat remembered his old friend bragging to him.

Mr. Matt and the officer, David Bentley, were close friends, practically father and son, but in Mr. Sweat’s telling of the story, they had a problem: A woman had found out about what they were doing and was threatening to expose them.

So they took action.

“The cop said she had to go,” Mr. Sweat wrote, “because she was going to rat them out.”

That woman was Deborah Meindl, a nursing student and mother of two young children; she was murdered in her home in Tonawanda, N.Y., a ***working-class*** Buffalo suburb, in 1993.

Mr. Sweat’s accusation that Mr. Bentley and Mr. Matt, who was [*shot and killed by a Border Patrol agent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/27/nyregion/new-york-escaped-prisoners.html) three weeks after he and Mr. Sweat escaped, were the ones responsible for Ms. Meindl’s death is the latest twist in a decades-old case that is suddenly drawing new scrutiny. A team of New York City defense attorneys has accused the state of getting it wrong years ago when a pair of petty thieves — Brian Scott Lorenz and James Pugh — were arrested, convicted and given [*life sentences*](https://buffalonews.com/news/two-given-life-terms-in-slaying/article_b5bed4ad-2890-51db-9dec-18fa98b6c873.html) for the murder of Ms. Meindl.

Though some details were revealed during a court proceeding in November, in the nine-page handwritten letter he sent to The Times, Mr. Sweat provided a more direct telling of what he described as Mr. Matt’s confession.

On Dec. 13, lawyers will be in Buffalo court to challenge the convictions of Mr. Lorenz and Mr. Pugh. The original case has unspooled with each pull of string: inconsistent witnesses, new DNA tests that fail to show any trace of the two men at the murder scene and, finally, Mr. Sweat’s explosive claims. That said, there is no hard evidence that has been publicly disclosed that links anyone else to the crime either.

The detective who led the original case complicates matters further: [*Mr. Bentley*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/richard-matt-buffalo-murder.html), who defense lawyers have suggested may have had a romantic relationship with Ms. Meindl.

Long retired from the Tonawanda Police Department, he denied he knew Ms. Meindl or had anything to do with her killing.

“It’s totally, absolutely, unequivocally insane,” Mr. Bentley said.

Mr. Matt’s involvement and questions about his relationship with Mr. Bentley were among the conclusions of an exhaustive investigation conducted by a pair of prosecutors from the Erie County District Attorney’s office this year, according to a review of their notes as well as interviews with people briefed on their inquiry.

But John J. Flynn, the county district attorney, has rejected their findings, which have not been fully released. He also demoted one of the prosecutors and reassigned the other.

Mr. Flynn has denied that there is any credible evidence to link Mr. Matt to the murder of Ms. Meindl, and he has defended Mr. Bentley. Though there was no DNA evidence connecting Mr. Lorenz or Mr. Pugh to the murder, the genetic testing that is at the heart of the men’s appeal also did not find Mr. Matt’s DNA. Investigators have discovered the DNA of another, still unknown person. The twists in the case raise a pressing question that for decades was thought to be solved: Who killed Deborah Meindl?

“WE DON’T EVEN HAVE A WITNESS”

Mr. Bentley, a veteran officer with a reputation for closing cases, crunched through a few inches of snow still visible on the ground. He was carrying a video camera and recording as he and a technician cataloged the evidence.

“Homicide,” he said. “84 Franklin Street.”

It was Feb. 17, 1993, 3:43 p.m. — the time and date are on the video. From somewhere behind him, there was a female voice howling the background. Mr. Bentley did not react to the continuing screams as he walked up the five steps to the porch and opened the storm door. He went inside and calmly detailed what he saw.

“This is the front door, this is the blanket the daughter Jessica found covering the door, partially blocking her entrance when she came in the front door today,” he said, directing the camera toward a brown and yellow stitched blanket.

The camera swept across a gruesome spectacle. “The living room, that’s the dining room, and the victim, obviously,” he said, evenly. “The blood spatter is all here on the floor. Some things were knocked out of the china cabinet, there’s a ring on the victim’s hand, a trail of blood running this way, into the dining room.”

A five-inch steak knife with blood on the handle and blade was jammed in a kitchen drawer. Blood was also left on a dog toy, a recipe book, a gravy boat. Chairs were overturned, drawers rifled through. And on the floor lay the lifeless Ms. Meindl, repeatedly stabbed, her hands cuffed behind her back, and strangled by her husband’s necktie, still looped around her neck.

The Meindls — Deborah; her husband, Donald; and their two daughters, Jessica, 10, and Lisa, 7 — lived in a small house with two entrances, one on a narrow front porch and the other at the back, surrounded by other homes. It was, as Mr. Bentley said in a recent interview, “one of the least likely houses you would think someone from Buffalo would burglarize.”

Ms. Meindl and the girls had left for school that morning, and Mr. Meindl went to his job at Taco Bell. But that day, a neighbor spotted a young man walking down the family’s driveway. A postal worker heard someone inside when she delivered the mail; the dog, Taffy, usually a noisy menace, didn’t bark.

Sometime between 2:15 and 2:30 p.m., Ms. Meindl arrived home, according to the police. And just after 3 p.m., Jessica came home from school to find her mother’s body. Her purple backpack lay on the floor and was visible on Mr. Bentley’s recording of the scene.

The detective and the technician emerged from the house around 4 p.m. They studied footprints in the snow leading to the back of the house and discovered a small rectangular cut in a screened rear window, about six feet off the ground. Investigators later determined that hole had been cut from the inside.

Later that afternoon, a uniformed officer wearing sunglasses approached from the snowy street, an old Chevrolet Caprice police cruiser behind him. He pointed out that some of the footprints on the ground were left by Lori Rank, the first officer at the scene, who was also Mr. Bentley’s daughter.

Then, walking closer, the officer asked about what was inside. Mr. Bentley said it “had to be someone strong to do what they did,” and later, in his police report that night, Mr. Bentley wrote that the crime was probably too violent for it to be a burglary gone wrong.

Just north of the Buffalo city limits, the Tonawanda neighborhood where the Meindls lived was a collection of modest homes, a quiet enclave just off the Niagara River. Two blocks from the Meindl house was an apartment building owned by a cousin of Mr. Bentley’s son-in-law, Pat Rank, who was also a Tonawanda police officer, according to the notes compiled by the two prosecutors from Erie County. One of the building’s tenants at the time was Mr. Matt.

Mr. Bentley and his team of officers quickly focused their investigation on Mr. Meindl, then 33 and a manager at a Taco Bell at a local mall. He had a friend who worked at Sicilian Delight, a pizza shop in the food court near the Taco Bell. Unhappy in his marriage, Mr. Meindl confided in his friend, discussing the idea of hiring someone to kill his wife, according to the transcripts of Mr. Pugh and Mr. Lorenz’s 1994 trial.

“It should be made to look like a robbery,” the friend recalled, according to a police report cited by the defense.

Mr. Meindl — who did not respond to requests for an interview — insisted later, during the 1994 murder trial, that he was joking and denied any plot to kill his wife.

The Meindls had an open marriage, and Mr. Meindl was seeing a 17-year-old girl who worked for him. He kept photos of her, scantily clad, in his wallet, according to trial testimony. In the initial police report written during the initial investigation, Mr. Bentley noted handcuffs and other items found in the home that were used for “sexual bondage.”

Mr. Meindl also had a $50,000 insurance policy on his wife.

He maintained his innocence and had an alibi: The day of the killing, he was at Taco Bell, getting fired after being accused of sexually harassing his staff.

And days after the murder, a confidential informant — Nancy Hummingbird, a friend of Mr. Pugh who had a passing acquaintance with Mr. Lorenz — led the investigation in another direction: She said that Mr. Lorenz, who had left the Buffalo area, was the killer.

The police searched for Mr. Lorenz and found him in Sioux City, Iowa, where he was jailed for stealing a car.

Mr. Lorenz, then 23, was desperate to return home to New York and get out of an Iowa jail, and so he came up with a foolhardy plan to confess to the murder, Mr. Lorenz’s defense team now says. He implicated Mr. Pugh, his sometime burglary partner, to give his story more credence, the lawyers said.

The confession got some details wrong and was deemed inadmissible at his trial amid concerns that Mr. Lorenz’s right to counsel may not have been properly waived. But Mr. Lorenz and Mr. Pugh were charged with the murder of Ms. Meindl anyway.

At the trial, the prosecution conceded the case’s shortcomings. There was almost no physical evidence or signs of forced entry.

“This is not a case, ladies and gentlemen, involving a lot of forensic evidence,” one of the prosecutors told jurors. “We don’t have any fingerprints to put them there. We don’t have his blood or something to put him there. We don’t have his wallet at the scene. We don’t even have a witness to come in here and tell you, ‘I saw him there.’”

The case hinged on a series of witnesses testified that they heard the men talking about the crime, and the jury took less than six hours to return a guilty verdict.

Both men were sent to prison.

But questions about whether they were guilty continued, especially after the testimony of several witnesses at the trial was later called into question.

“MOMMY, WHAT’S THE MATTER WITH YOU?”

Jessica walked into the living room to find her mother’s slumped, bloodied body. Her mother, she said at age 11 on a witness stand in court, had “shiny things around her wrists.” They were handcuffs.

“I just screamed, ‘Mommy, Mommy, what’s the matter with you?’” she told the jury.

Over the years, the trauma would weigh heavily on Jessica. And she eased her anguish with heroin, said Neil Bennett, her ex-husband.

“She was always a bubbly person and you never knew she was having pain inside,” he added.

In 2005, she unexpectedly showed up at Wende Correctional Facility in Alden, N.Y. to visit Mr. Pugh on two occasions, and told him she was increasingly convinced that the state had mishandled the investigation of her mother’s murder.

“She told me in her own words that she didn’t believe that I was involved,” said Mr. Pugh, who is now paroled and living in the Buffalo area with his sister.

He took notes of what Jessica told him at the time, and they contain multiple jarring allegations: that her mother was having an affair with Mr. Bentley, that he knew she would be home early the day of the murder, and — most shocking — that Jessica thought that the detective was involved in her mother’s death.

“She told me that she believes Det. Bentley is the person who killed her mother,” Mr. Pugh wrote in his notes.

That same year, a Tonawanda detective, Mike Rogers, reopened the case, and at one point showed up at a restaurant where Jessica worked and started asking her questions. He also examined a new suspect, a friend of Donald Meindl’s, after he was implicated by two of his family members; Mr. Flynn’s office discounted those claims, saying they came amid a contentious child custody battle.

Mr. Meindl, now living in Virginia, said that his daughter had asked him “about 100 times whether he was involved.” He told investigators this year that he had heard from several people that his wife and Mr. Bentley had an affair, and has maintained his innocence.

For his part, Mr. Bentley rejects the entire account, including any suggestions of a romantic relationship with Ms. Meindl.

“Are you asking me if I had anything to do with Debbie Meindl in a personal way?” Mr. Bentley said in a text to The New York Times. “If so, not a chance, no, never in my worse day.”

But Mr. Bennett confirmed that his ex-wife had suspicions.

“There was something about a guy that her mom was dating or seeing on the side, maybe even a sheriff, and that he set everything up because she wasn’t going to leave Don,” he said.

But the drugs and her mental health took a toll on their marriage. “I think a lot of her life choices stemmed from having to deal with the traumatic thing as a child,” said Mr. Bennett. “She never really showed it because she was such an outgoing person. She was a people person who talked to anybody. But on the inside you could kind of tell she probably wanted her mom.”

She died in April 2020 at 37 years old.

Mr. Pugh, now 60, says he had never met Jessica before her visits in 2005, and he was nervous because “there was so much I wanted to say to her.”

“I just wanted to be able to have forever to convince her that they got it wrong,” he said recently. “To let her know that I’m not the person who did that.”

When she stood to leave the prison, he offered her his hand. She looked at it, and hugged him instead.

“THE BIGGEST LIAR YOU’VE MET”

The convicted men held out hope that they would someday be cleared, and Mr. Lorenz wrote countless appeals for help to outside groups. [*Ilann Maazel*](https://ecbawm.com/), a New York City civil rights lawyer, took an interest about seven years ago, struck by the lack of evidence tying the men to the murder and by the number of potential suspects.

“I met Scott for a long time,” Mr. Maazel said. “And I believed him.”

The voluminous blood at the crime scene had been tested only with basic serological techniques available in 1994. Mr. Maazel met immediate resistance from Mr. Flynn, the Erie County district attorney, who initially refused to test to see if there was any DNA that could match Mr. Lorenz’s and Mr. Pugh’s.

In 2018, a state judge ordered Erie County to test blood-splattered items from the crime scene, including the steak knife and the victim’s clothing.

Mr. Lorenz was elated when the results came back that year showing that neither man’s DNA had been found.

“I thought I was going home immediately,” he said.

Instead, Mr. Flynn appointed two prosecutors to review the case: Michael J. Hillery, who ran the office’s appeals bureau, and David A. Heraty, an assistant district attorney in the same division. They interviewed more than 50 witnesses and poked holes in the testimonies that had led to the convictions.

At the trial in 1994, some prosecution witnesses professed only passing knowledge of the case; one was a career criminal with a history of cooperating with murder prosecutions.

Some jewelry and cash had been stolen from the house, according to the prosecution, but the only physical evidence linking Mr. Lorenz was a rare coin in his possession. During the trial, Mr. Meindl told the jury that the coin was taken from his home, bolstering the theory that his wife’s killing had resulted from a burglary gone bad. But Mr. Meindl later told Mr. Heraty and Mr. Hillery that he actually wasn’t sure whether the coin was taken from his house, according to their findings.

One man, Carlos Gonzalez, testified at the trial that he had seen Mr. Lorenz say he couldn’t believe he had killed someone. Mr. Gonzalez, who was released from jail for cooperating with the authorities, told Mr. Hillery and Mr. Heraty he wasn’t sure if what he said was true.

“Said his brain is fried,” according to the prosecutors’ notes.

A key witness was Ms. Hummingbird, who had a drinking problem, according to her son Gabriel Rodriguez, and was given alcohol by Mr. Bentley during his interviews with her. He described his mother, who died in 2019, as a fabulist who spun tales from random facts.

“My mom was the biggest liar you’ve met in your life,” Mr. Rodriguez said.

Mr. Rodriguez said he saw Mr. Lorenz the afternoon of the murder. Then 14, Mr. Rodriguez said he and Mr. Lorenz went to have a shotgun sawed off at a local auto shop and visited two women at a mall. He said there was no indication that Mr. Lorenz had committed a murder just hours before, despite his mother’s testimony in 1994 that he was “hyped up.”

“He was perfectly normal,” he said.

Defense attorneys have also keyed in on inconsistencies in Ms. Hummingbird’s testimony, including the fact that she told a jury that she had overheard Mr. Lorenz and Mr. Pugh talking about murder.

But the victim, she said repeatedly, was a man, not a woman.

“YOU COULD ALMOST SAY I LOVED THE KID”

Mr. Bentley had a reputation as a tough cop, and he was the subject of at least 15 police brutality and [*harassment complaints*](https://buffalonews.com/news/police-veteran-draws-praise-brutality-suits/article_6a70c6c8-9511-5531-9890-bf222af20254.html). Another consistency for much of his career was Mr. Matt, whom he had known long before the jailbreak that would make him infamous.

They met when Richard Matt was 13. He made an obscene gesture at Mr. Bentley, who lectured the teenager.

He said he had a soft spot for Mr. Matt because of their similarly hard upbringings — “I was an illegitimate child, my parents were alcoholics and abusive,” Mr. Bentley said, in a text, adding, “I could relate to the lower-class people who are often criminals due to my street smarts.”

Mr. Bentley began using Mr. Matt as an informant, helping him get jobs and places to live.

“I felt bad for him,” Mr. Bentley said in an interview in early November. “You could almost say I loved the kid.”

They grew so close that Mr. Bentley helped raise Mr. Matt’s daughter Jamie, who once wrote that the detective “knew my father probably as well as anyone on the outside.”

Mr. Bentley insisted that Mr. Matt — who would later become a convicted killer, twice over — could not have killed Ms. Meindl. He “just wasn’t a candidate for a crime like that,” Mr. Bentley said, adding that the idea of Mr. Matt’s involvement had been “planted” in an attempt to exonerate Mr. Pugh and Mr. Lorenz. “Never gave it a thought,” Mr. Bentley said, of whether he ever considered Mr. Matt as a possible suspect.

The man who could help to overturn the convictions of Mr. Lorenz and Mr. Pugh agrees. Mr. Flynn, the district attorney, resoundingly rejects any suggestion that Mr. Matt was involved, and he said he would continue to oppose efforts to vacate the convictions. As for the demotion and reassigning of the two prosecutors who reopened the case, he says that he and his senior aides disagreed with their findings “due to a lack of any credible evidence.”

“Both attorneys did not accept my decision with the professionalism expected of career prosecutors,” he said.

Neither Mr. Hillery nor Mr. Heraty would comment on the case.

Mr. Sweat, who was convicted of [*killing a sheriff’s deputy*](https://people.com/crime/ny-prison-escape-david-sweat-killed-sheriffs-deputy-kevin-tarsia-in-2002/) in New York in 2002, said in his letter to The Times that after Mr. Flynn removed the prosecutors, he sent other investigators to pressure him to recant what he had said. He insisted he was not speaking out in the hopes of any deal, saying, “Clearly I’m not doing what the D.A. wants!”

“The real question,” he added, “is whether Mr. Flynn will do what’s right and free two innocent men.”

Susan Beachy contributed research.

PHOTOS: Deborah Meindl, above, a nursing student and a mother of two, was murdered in 1993 in her home, top, in Tonawanda, N.Y., near Buffalo. (MB1); David Bentley, a former detective, denies any role in the murder. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DEREK GEE/BUFFALO NEWS); Richard Matt was recently accused of killing Ms. Meindl. He died in 2015. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES NEISS/NIAGARA GAZETTE, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS); David Sweat, an inmate, said Mr. Matt told him he committed the murder. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINNE MUSCHI/REUTERS); John J. Flynn, the local district attorney, defends the convictions. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SHARON CANTILLON/BUFFALO NEWS); James Pugh, above, and Brian Scott Lorenz were convicted of the murder of Deborah Meindl.; (MB4); Photographs of Mr. Lorenz from 1993 and 2020. He was convicted with Mr. Pugh in Ms. Meindl’s murder. But new doubts have surfaced. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LIBBY MARCH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB5)

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[***How Do You Advertise a Town Ravaged by Hurricanes?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:617K-MP51-DXY4-X0MG-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Kathryn Shea Duncan, 24, works to promote tourism in Lake Charles, La., which was hit hard by Laura and Delta this year.

**Body**

Kathryn Shea Duncan, 24, works to promote tourism in Lake Charles, La., which was hit hard by Laura and Delta this year.

As a 24-year-old public relations representative for her city, Kathryn Shea Duncan eats, sleeps and breathes Lake Charles, La.

The [***working-class*** *town*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/20/us/lake-charles-hurricane-laura-delta.html), home to about 80,000 people and just inland from the Gulf of Mexico, is the big city she grew up visiting, and where she spent Thanksgiving with family. She rented her first home in Lake Charles. She met her boyfriend, Ryan Beeson, at the Panorama Music House downtown. She can tell you the best place to get a po&#39; boy, hold a baby alligator or crab off dry land.

But Ms. Duncan’s resolve to stay in the city has been shaken by the series of hurricanes that have devastated the place and much of the surrounding area this year. Thousands of residents remain displaced, and aid — in the form of charitable giving and volunteers — has been hard to come by with the whole country struggling with coronavirus outbreaks and distracted by politics. (The mayor, Nic Hunter, has worked to spread awareness of the state of his city, appearing on CNN, Fox News and NPR, [*where he told listeners*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/20/us/lake-charles-hurricane-laura-delta.html), “I am begging, I am pleading for Americans not to forget about Lake Charles.”)

It has Ms. Duncan questioning how she will continue to do the job of promoting the place she loves.

“The reality is, what product do we have to pitch?” she said. “What event? What’s open? We know that all of our hotels are going to be filled till the end of the year with utility workers and first responders. And then, sooner or later, with families who have been displaced.”

It has also shifted her thinking about her own future. (Lake Charles is not located on the coast, but it is still affected by frequent storms, [*a changing coast line*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/20/us/lake-charles-hurricane-laura-delta.html) and [*sea level rise*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/20/us/lake-charles-hurricane-laura-delta.html).)

“You start thinking, what does your house look like?” Ms. Duncan said. “What does your job look like? What is everything that I do for a living, promote for a living, going to look like?”

Hurricanes One and Two

Before the storms, Ms. Duncan’s job was to pitch stories to out-of-state writers and reporters about Lake Charles and Southwest Louisiana, including about the Creole Nature Trail, a scenic byway that lets visitors walk through Louisiana tall grasses and alligator habitats, and Adventure Point, an attraction along the trail where kids can don real-life hunting gear and smell spices used in Louisiana cooking.

“We were still pitching stories during Covid-19,” she said, “but we couldn’t host anyone, because we really just can’t do that safely.” When Hurricane Laura hit, though, her bosses “mainly cared about our well-being and our health.”

On Aug. 25, the night Laura made landfall, Mr. Beeson and Ms. Duncan were at Ms. Duncan’s mother’s house in Crowley, La., a town about a quarter of the size of Lake Charles, and about an hour away by car.

Mr. Beeson woke Ms. Duncan in the middle of the night. “I know you don’t want to see this, but I think you should know what’s going on,” he said, handing Ms. Duncan his phone. It revealed a photograph of the Panorama Music House, completely destroyed.

“Literally, it had just fallen,” Ms. Duncan said. “Like a waterfall.”

The owners had been in the process of building a small museum on the top floor dedicated to the musical history of Lake Charles, which Ms. Duncan was excited to recommend to visitors. (The country musician Lucinda Williams, for example, was born and raised nearby and named [*one of her most famous songs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/20/us/lake-charles-hurricane-laura-delta.html) after the town.)

“I just sat there, sobbing,” Ms. Duncan said. “Grieving for what might be lost.”

That hurricane, a category four storm, ended up displacing more than 6,000 Lake Charles residents. Wind damage left small buildings and big box stores, like Best Buy and Hobby Lobby, in pieces, and [*tens of thousands*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/20/us/lake-charles-hurricane-laura-delta.html) of people were without electricity for weeks.

Ms. Duncan’s home survived with minimal damage, but her office had to be gutted. Her neighbor had it much worse. “She had ceiling damage, so they’re gutting her side out,” she said. “She can’t live there. And she’s a nurse.”

Then, in October, Hurricane Delta made a turn for Lake Charles. Ms. Duncan boarded up her house once again, storing her television in her laundry room along with framed photographs of her deceased father.

A Changing State

Ms. Duncan’s family has lived in this region of Louisiana for generations, and have roots going back to the original group of Cajuns who were exiled from Acadia, in Canada, by the British in the 1700s.

Physically, the state has changed a lot since then. In 2014, the map was redrawn to account for a shrinking coastline, and storms are more frequent — and more deadly — than ever. But Ms. Duncan is committed to riding it out.

“We can make it better,” she said. “Through economic development and improving our infrastructure, and having a cleaner environment, and better transportation. You can’t do all of those big things if you don’t stay and work at it day by day.”

“I’m a very future-oriented person,” Ms. Duncan said, sitting in her den in Lake Charles, under a framed, hand-drawn map of the state of Louisiana. “I’m always planning the next five years.”

It stands to reason that Ms. Duncan might eventually want to move to a different city. But Lake Charles is her home, she said. And leaving never felt as alluring as staying put.

“If I were to move somewhere with a million people, it would be almost meaningless to try and make a difference,” she said. “But if I stay here, and am resilient, living in a city of 80,000, where mostly all of them think and act the same, and I’m a millennial who probably does not have the same thoughts and experiences as those around me, I can make a difference.”

“If I leave,” she added, “then who is going to stay? Who is going to be that person?”

October was a different story. With Hurricane Delta bearing down on Lake Charles, she and Mr. Beeson evacuated once again, this time to San Antonio to stay with friends. With traffic, the normally five-hour drive took them 12. “To be completely honest with you, I wanted to move,” Ms. Duncan said. “I was frustrated. I was angry that this kept happening.”

But after the storm, Ms. Duncan was overwhelmed with emotion seeing the work her community did together to rebuild. It’s exciting, she said, to be a part of that. There’s a Facebook group for her neighborhood, where people check in on one another, making sure they all have what they need.

“Even our mail lady is in the group,” Ms. Duncan said, “and two days after Laura, she posted that she was on her way home, and that she was going to drop off the mail when she got there.”

It made Ms. Duncan reconsider her frustration. “I was kind of like, OK, maybe I need to chill out, and stay here a little longer,” she said, adding she felt that there was a reason she was here.

Coming Attractions

Now, back at the satellite office, Ms. Duncan and her team are working on budgeting for the next fiscal year, trying to come up with a plan to sell Lake Charles again. It’s about rebuilding, but rebuilding better, and taking advantage of the new things that might come out of this dark period of the city’s history.

“There may be new restaurants, and new attractions that come from this,” she said. “There’s sort of this unfortunate beauty that might come from this. Maybe the inside of one of our attractions is gutted, and that sucks, but maybe they have an opportunity to reinvent themselves.”

Seeing how Lake Charles has come together in the wake of two hurricanes has only made the decision easier. “It’s more fulfilling now, to be sure,” she said. “It validates why I choose to stay here. Yes, everyone’s lives are in chaos right now. But we’re still checking in on each other, making sure we’re OK. We worry about our neighbors, even in the midst of our own struggles.”

Something about the fact that there are many obstacles ahead makes Ms. Duncan more dedicated to the place. “If I were to leave, I would be a different environment and all that,” she said. “But by staying, I’m constantly challenging myself. It’s that constant, daily challenge of thinking, what can I do better? How can I make this place better? How can I leave it better for the next generation?”

PHOTOS: Kathryn Shea Duncan, 24, pitches stories about tourism in Lake Charles, La.; Hurricanes Laura and Delta devastated the Lake Charles area, displacing thousands. Above, student housing near McNeese University was surrounded by debris. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES BILLEAUDEAU FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2020

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[***Menaced by White Mob as a Girl, She Is Now Boston's Mayor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:628T-P9S1-DXY4-X2JB-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

At 11, Kim Janey was bused into a neighborhood where Black students were pelted with rocks. As acting mayor, she hopes to help Boston step out of the shadow of that era.

BOSTON -- On a September morning in 1976, an 11-year-old Black girl climbed onto a yellow school bus, one of tens of thousands of children sent crisscrossing the city by court order and deposited in the insular neighborhoods of Boston in an effort to force them to integrate.

As her bus swung uphill into the heart of the Irish-American enclave of Charlestown, she could see police officers taking protective positions around the bus. After that, the mob: white teenagers and adults, shouting and throwing rocks, telling them to go back to Africa.

That girl, Kim Janey, became acting mayor of Boston on Monday, making her the first Black person to occupy the position, at a moment of uncommon opportunity for people of color in this city.

With the confirmation of her predecessor, Martin J. Walsh, as U.S. labor secretary, the 91-year succession of Irish-American and Italian-American mayors appears to be ending, creating an opening for communities long shut out of the city's power politics.

It isn't clear what role Ms. Janey, 55, will play in this moment. As the president of Boston's City Council, she automatically takes the position for seven months before the November election, and she has not said whether she plans to run. But the five candidates already in the race are all people of color, and racial justice is certain to be a central theme of the campaign.

Nearly 50 years after court-ordered desegregation, Boston, the home of abolitionism, remains profoundly unequal. In 2015, the median net worth for white families in the city was nearly $250,000 compared with just $8 for Black families, according to a study from the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.

Boston's police force remains disproportionately white. And a recent review of city contracts found that during the first term of Mr. Walsh's administration, Black-owned firms landed roughly half of 1 percent of the $2.1 billion in prime contracts.

None of this comes as a surprise to Bostonians who, like Ms. Janey, came of age in the 1970s -- the ''kids on the bus,'' as one of them put it. Now in their 50s, they are a group without illusions about what it will take to close those gaps.

Denella J. Clark, 53, president of the Boston Arts Academy Foundation, carries a scar on her left leg from a broken bottle that was thrown at her by a white woman when she was a 9-year-old being bused into a South Boston elementary school.

''I still think we have those people that are throwing bottles, they're just not doing it overtly,'' she said. ''When you see some of this change, it's because people were forced to make those changes, just like in the court case'' that led to busing in Boston.

Michael Curry, who was 7 when he was first bused into Charlestown, described a similar conclusion: In a city with a limited pool of jobs and contracts, ''the people who have taken advantage of those things are being asked to share that pie.''

''Boston will not go without a fight,'' he said.

'Where Are They Now?'

Mr. Curry, now 52, recently realized something: More than four decades after he was bused to the Warren-Prescott elementary school, he has rarely returned to Charlestown.

He is middle-aged now, a father of three and a lawyer. But he can still close his eyes and replay the path of that bus as it slid past the Museum of Science, then turned right and crossed into Charlestown, where crowds were waiting, armed with rocks or bricks.

''It boggles my mind to this day,'' he said. ''How much hate and frustration and anger would you have to have to do that to children?''

He wonders sometimes about those white parents. ''Where are they now?'' he said. ''Do they look back and say 'I was there that day'?''

This month, Mr. Curry, a former president of Boston's N.A.A.C.P. branch, reached out to his social media networks, asking friends for their own memories. The responses came back fast -- and raw. ''Absolutely no interest in recollecting memories from that era,'' one said. ''It was a nightmare.''

One person who has struggled to put that time behind her is Rachel Twymon, 59, whose family's story was the subject of a Pulitzer Prize-winning 1985 book, ''Common Ground,'' which later became a television mini-series. Ms. Twymon still seethes at her mother, one of the book's protagonists, for sending her to school in Charlestown in the name of racial justice.

''For adults to think their decision was going to change the world, that was crazy,'' said Ms. Twymon, an occupational therapist who lives in New Bedford, Mass. ''How dare you put children in harm's way? How dare you? I have never been able to come to grips with that.''

Ms. Janey's recollections of busing are tempered, by comparison.

''I had no idea what would be in store,'' she said. ''When I finally sat on the school bus and faced angry mobs of people, had rocks thrown at our bus, racial slurs hurled at us, I was not expecting that. And there's nothing that can prepare you for that.''

She quickly added, though, that the environment changed as soon as she stepped inside Edwards Middle School, where her closest friend was Cathy, a white girl from an Irish-American family.

''The other thing that I would share, and I think this gets lost when we talk about this painful part of our history, is that inside that school building, I was a kid,'' she said. ''We were children. We cared about who we would play with, and who's going to play jump rope, and who wants to play hopscotch.''

Lost and Gained

The city Ms. Janey will lead as mayor is radically changed, in part because of what happened after busing: The ***working-class***, Irish-American neighborhoods that fiercely resisted integration began to wane under pressure from white flight and gentrification.

They had been poor neighborhoods. Patricia Kelly, 69, a Black teacher from New Jersey who was assigned to a Charlestown elementary school in 1974, recalled her shock at the deprivation she encountered there; once, she gingerly approached a boy's mother about the stench of urine on his clothes and was told that they had no hot water.

After busing began, Boston's public schools lost almost a third of their white students in 18 months, as white families enrolled their children in parochial schools or boycotted schools in protest.

For David Arbuckle, 58, who is white, it meant that most of his old friends were gone. He recalled walking to school through crowds of white residents who bellowed at him for violating the antibusing boycott, a daily gantlet that gave him stomachaches.

For decades, some of those childhood friends blamed desegregation for ruining their chances in life, Mr. Arbuckle said.

''They would tell you, 'I didn't get an education because Black people came to my school and took my seat,''' he said. The 1980s only deepened their grievances, he said; factory jobs were drying up, and court-ordered affirmative action policies, many complained, made it more difficult to be hired by the Police or Fire Departments.

''It almost feels like a lost generation, to some extent,'' said Mr. Arbuckle, who now works in management for the commuter rail system in Boston. Returning to Charlestown as an adult, shuttling his sons to hockey practice, he sometimes wore a suit, straight from the office, and people from the neighborhood ''would turn on me because I was a yuppie.''

He said it was hard to imagine members of the older generation softening their views, even as the city surrounding them became wealthier and more diverse.

''I don't know if people have to die off,'' he said. ''I know it sounds awful.''

'A Hundred-Year Fight'

Ms. Janey -- whose ancestors escaped to Canada through the Underground Railroad and began settling in Boston in the second half of the 19th century -- does not dwell on busing when she tells the story of her life, except to say that it was a setback.

''It was the first time that I didn't feel safe in school,'' she said. ''It was the first time that I was not confident about how teachers felt about me as a little Black girl, the way I felt in elementary school.''

Her parents withdrew her as soon as they could, sending her to the middle-class suburb of Reading through a voluntary busing program, starting in the eighth grade. She would go on to work as a community activist, serving at Massachusetts Advocates for Children for almost two decades before running for a seat on the Boston City Council in 2017.

She described her work in education, in a talk to students last year, as an extension of the civil rights movement that swept up her parents.

''The fight for quality education for Black families in this city dates to the beginning of this country,'' she said. ''It's a hundred-year fight.''

The fury unleashed by busing reshaped Boston in many ways, including by setting back the ambitions of Black candidates. White anger made it difficult for them to build the multiracial coalitions that were necessary to win citywide office in Boston, said Jason Sokol, a historian and author of ''All Eyes Are Upon Us: Race and Politics From Boston to Brooklyn.''

''You can't overlook how powerful the legacy of the battles over school desegregation were,'' he said. ''The white resistance was so vicious that it didn't seem like a political system a lot of African-Americans wanted to be part of. It was just very poisoned for a long time.''

Ms. Janey, who became mayor when Mr. Walsh stepped down on Monday, will officially take the oath of office on Wednesday, acutely conscious of her place in history.

The city will be watching to see if she makes a mark between now and November: The powers of an acting mayor in Boston are limited, and she may have difficulty making key appointments. Ms. Clark of the Boston Arts Academy Foundation, who serves on Ms. Janey's transition committee, warned against expecting swift change in the city's politics.

''I worry they're going to block her at every instance,'' she said. ''We all know what Frederick Douglass said: 'Power concedes nothing.' This is Boston. This is a big boys' game.''

Still, Thomas M. Menino, one of Ms. Janey's predecessors, became acting mayor under similar circumstances, when the city's mayor was appointed as a U.S. ambassador. Mr. Menino used the platform to build a powerful political base and was elected mayor four months later, becoming the city's first Italian-American mayor. He went on to be re-elected four times, serving for more than 20 years.

Ms. Janey, by all appearances, would like to follow a similar path. Her swearing-in, she said last week, is a moment full of hope, a measure of how far Boston has come.

''I'm at a loss for words, because, at 11 years old, I saw firsthand some of the darkest days of our city,'' she said. ''And here I am.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/23/us/kim-janey-boston-mayor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/23/us/kim-janey-boston-mayor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: KIM JANEY, acting mayor of Boston, who at age 11 was bused to a neighborhood where a white mob threw rocks at Black students.

MICHAEL CURRY, who was 7 when he was first bused into Charlestown, an Irish-American enclave where crowds were armed with rocks or bricks.

RACHEL TWYMON, who still seethes at her mother for sending her to school in Charlestown in the name of racial justice. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP KEITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Students arrived by bus at South Boston High School in 1976. Nearly 50 years after court-ordered desegregation, deep inequality persists. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ED JENNER/THE BOSTON GLOBE, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2021

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[***The ‘Old American Dream,’ a Trap as the Floods Keep Coming***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:628K-H1G1-DXY4-X0FR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 23, 2021 Tuesday 08:42 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1838 words

**Byline:** Rick Rojas and Tamir Kalifa

**Highlight:** In Houston’s poorest neighborhoods, an unfamiliar winter storm stoked a familiar anguish, one fueled by recurring floods and what residents see as a pattern of neglect.

**Body**

HOUSTON — In her kitchen, Juanita Hall routinely found opossums staring back at her from the cage trap she kept under the table. In one room, the flooring had simply washed away. The door to the back bedroom — her mother’s, and still filled with her possessions — stayed closed. Those walls, like many others in the house, were streaked with mold.

And that was all before a winter storm last month left Ms. Hall shivering over a heater and caused pipes to leak. The culprit behind so much of the damage to her home had been Hurricane Harvey. The storm hit Houston in 2017, and for many, the trauma endured as a haunting memory. But for Ms. Hall, almost four years later, the devastation remained a grinding reality.

“I think about it every day, all day long,” Ms. Hall, 59, said as she walked through the house she had lived in since childhood.

The modest house on Eugene Street, clad in white siding and shaded by a magnolia tree, was the embodiment of her father’s aspirations for his family. It was the inheritance he left for Ms. Hall and the generations to come: a place to return to when relationships faltered or jobs were lost. No matter what, the house would be there, and it would be theirs.

Owning a home has long been part of Houston’s promise for many ***working-class*** families, offering security and a foothold for upward mobility. But disasters — [*flood*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html) after flood — have kept coming. A changing climate threatens more. In Houston’s poorest neighborhoods, the houses are no longer the safety net they were intended to be.

A few months before Harvey, Ms. Hall ran into her mother’s bedroom and found her collapsed on the floor. Now, she cannot forget the request her mother made soon before she died: Don’t y’all lose my house.

After all this time, and all this frustration, her patience had worn thin. “I’m tired of the unknown,” Ms. Hall conceded. Still, she wanted so badly to keep her word.

On top of everything else, disaster

A storm, as it cuts its path, may not recognize race or class, but the pace of recovery very often does. It is an imbalance that becomes more pronounced with each storm: There are the neighborhoods that bounce back. And there are the others — with lower incomes and largely nonwhite residents — where every event arrives as another setback on an interminable slog.

The [*winter storm*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html) that enveloped [*Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html) last month brought conditions that felt alien. Residents were stuck in dark, unheated homes in single-digit temperatures, fingers tingling and words slurring from the intense cold.

Yet it also plunged them into a familiar agony: no electricity, waterlogged homes (this time from burst pipes) and certainty that they faced more of a frustration they knew all too well from wrangling with bureaucracies for help that was rarely enough, if it ever came at all.

As temperatures and sea levels rise, as wildfire seasons grow more intense, and as hurricanes have become slower and stronger, more and more communities are grappling with friction powered by climate change — between practicality and the comfort of the status quo, the pull of home and the fatigue from pushing against the momentum of nature to stay there.

In a section of the northeastern part of Houston hemmed by intersecting freeways — in neighborhoods like the Fifth Ward, Kashmere Gardens and Trinity Gardens — many residents see the unevenness of their recovery fitting into a pattern of neglect. They drive down main thoroughfares where storefronts aren’t just vacant, but long abandoned. They have to leave their neighborhoods to find supermarkets and pharmacies. Industrial pollution has [*been linked to cancer clusters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html). Poverty has become entrenched.

Even if residents wanted to move, in an increasingly expensive city their options were slim.

“They’ve lost in a lot of ways,” said Letitia Plummer, a Houston city councilwoman. “These neighborhoods are just having issue after issue, and none of their original issues have been dealt with or resolved. This is layer upon layer of injury.”

Tired but still at it

For nearly four years, Ms. Hall has spent every day at her home but has slept in a spare bed at her sister’s apartment, lumbering up stairs her knees can barely take. Her brother, Clifton, refused to leave, and she feared for him. He’d had a stroke and mostly stayed in his dark, disheveled room watching television.

She said she received roughly $18,000 in government disaster relief after Hurricane Harvey, which helped but did not go far. She had contractors who assured her they would help clear out her house and then stopped taking her calls. Her home insurance had been canceled in 2016.

She had old flooring that still needed to be pulled up and walls that were only half torn down. There were holes that allowed vermin and wasps to sneak through. The musty stench of mold was heavy.

“I think he’s clearing the air when I come in here,” Ms. Hall said, having just recited the silent prayer she repeated every time she crossed the threshold into her home. “God is the only thing in my life that has not let me down.”

The thread of hope that she was holding to was a federally funded program for rehabilitating and rebuilding homes hit by Harvey. She had tried before, but then the program became ensnared in a dispute between the state and the city officials who had been running it. Texas officials asserted that the city had lagged in making progress and wrested away control.

Now that the Texas General Land Office had [*taken over administering*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html)the program, Ms. Hall has had to essentially start anew. She tried to take the bureaucratic hurdles in stride. “My folks used to say, if it’s easy, baby, question it,” Ms Hall said. Even so, she acknowledged her exasperation, having to gather reams of documents again. Getting this far had taken a long time.

Since the hurricane, she joined neighbors in groups like the Harvey Forgotten Survivors Caucus, which helped patch up her house. She has shared her [*story in the pages of The Houston Chronicle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html), approached local officials to vent her frustration and tried to get word of her situation to Trae tha Truth, the Houston rapper who has [*been helping storm victims rebuild*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html).

And she also learned that hers was, in many ways, a familiar set of circumstances, living in a home that had been handed down through family and amounted to just about the entirety of their wealth.

Just over a year ago, Mal Moses’s mother died, and the house he grew up in became his. Mr. Moses, 63, has watched the neighborhood evolve: The community was drained of more than just white residents. Businesses left. So too did a sense of opportunity.

“The property value went down,” Mr. Moses said. “The human value went down.”

He did not have insurance, and his other efforts to gain assistance after Hurricane Harvey failed. West Street Recovery, a community nonprofit [*founded in the immediate aftermath of the storm*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/28/us/nashville-flooding.html), repaired his home, replacing drywall and flooring, making much of it livable again.

Still, plenty of work remained: The piers of a back room were sinking, and last month’s storm wrecked parts of his plumbing. He constantly hears “critters” (roof rats, mostly) skittering through his attic. On a recent afternoon, the house was still messy from the days of freezing cold and rotating power outages that meant only fleeting spurts of electricity.

His house was another thread in the skein of complications that consumed his life, all of which were caused or made worse by a lack of money.

But Mr. Moses can’t afford to leave. His Social Security checks don’t go far, and his girlfriend, who lives with him, makes $40 a day caring for her mother’s bed-bound neighbor part time. “The only option is to stay where you’re at,” he said. “That’s it.”

‘This is an assignment’

Ms. Hall was propelled by a sense of obligation. Even some of her siblings questioned if she dwelled too much in the past. “Some of my family say, ‘You’re holding onto a thing,’” she said. “It’s my home. Don’t call it a thing.”

Back injuries forced her to leave the job she had with a state agency for more than 20 years. But it allowed her to do something more meaningful: Take care of her 5-year-old grandniece while the girl’s mother works.

“My baby,” she said, pulling out her cellphone to swipe through pictures. Her name is Bella, and she was the first child born in the family in 21 years.

Ms. Hall was 4 when her father, Clifton Sr., bought the house. He moved the family from Normangee, a tiny town outside Madisonville, a slightly less tiny town on the interstate between Houston and Dallas. He got a job as a truck driver, the job he held until he retired.

Her bond with her father had always been tight. He taught her how to change oil and repair light fixtures. When she discovered she could not have children, his words soothed her, telling her God meant for her to tend to the children around her who needed her care. “You’re more of a mother to these children than the mothers,” he told her. And when he died, he wanted her to oversee his estate.

Ms. Hall had finally assembled the documents she needed. She just had to figure out how to attach them to an email and send them to the state. Her caseworker had pumped up her optimism. The program determines if a home is salvageable and then, using the occupancy rules and the specific needs of a family, maps out a plan. (State officials said they were familiar with Ms. Hall’s case and said she seemed like a strong candidate; they were just waiting on her documents.)

She had been through too much not to have skepticism. “Watch, something else will come up,” she said. Still, she was already thinking about clearing the house in preparation for construction. She imagined Bella swinging in the backyard.

Given the condition of the home, it would most likely have to be torn down. She accepted that. She loved that house. She spent her childhood there. Her parents died there. But her commitment was less to the house in its physical form than the idea it represented. “The old American dream, they did it,” she said of her parents. She would keep her promise to her mother.

“This is an assignment to me, and I want to get it done,” Ms. Hall said sitting on her front porch, washed in the light of a crisp afternoon filtering through the leaves of the magnolia tree. “If I die the day after, I’m satisfied.”

Her father’s dream was now the one she held for Bella: No matter what, the house would be there, and it would be hers.

PHOTOS: Mold has outpaced repair work at Juanita Hall’s home, which was severely damaged by Hurricane Harvey in 2017 and absorbed another blow from last month’s freeze. (A18); From left, some families in flood-prone areas have opted to raise their houses. Service organizations returned after last month’s freeze to repair homes they had worked on after Hurricane Harvey. Aid groups are still seeing demand for water and other essentials. (A18-A19); A nonprofit group helped repair Mal Moses’ home after Hurricane Harvey struck in 2017, but last month’s storm damaged the plumbing. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A19)

**Load-Date:** August 16, 2021

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[***The Latest on the Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6170-14D1-JBG3-6535-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1561 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** And what else you need to know today.

**Body**

And what else you need to know today.

Want to get The Morning by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Good morning. There is no presidential winner yet. Biden appears to be in a better position than Trump, and Republicans seem in better shape to hold Senate control.

Joe Biden is now the favorite to win the presidency, and Republicans are favored to keep Senate control — but [*both results are far from certain*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). And Democrats failed to win the resounding victory that pre-election polls had suggested they could.

Here’s where we stand after a topsy-turvy election night, in which the situation shifted multiple times:

* The outcome is unclear in six swing states — Georgia, [*Michigan*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — and all are still counting votes. We may get some final vote counts today, while others could take a few days.

1. “Biden’s the favorite, even if narrowly, just about everywhere,” [*Nate Cohn of The Times tweeted*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), listing five of the six states above (all but North Carolina). [*Sean Trende*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of RealClearPolitics agreed: “Would probably rather be Biden than Trump.”
2. The outstanding ballots are mostly mail-in ballots, which are likely to favor Biden, because more Democrats than Republicans voted early this year. He leads in the current vote count in Nevada and Wisconsin, while Trump leads in the remaining four. “I don’t think people have fully internalized how Democratic these mail and absentee ballots will be in MI/PA/WI,” Nate wrote.
3. If Biden holds onto his lead in Nevada and Wisconsin, he would need to win only one of three states — Georgia, Michigan or Pennsylvania — to secure a majority of electoral votes (and could still lose North Carolina).
4. The counting of ballots seems likely to be slowest in Michigan and Pennsylvania. [*Officials in Pennsylvania*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) have said they expect all votes to be counted by Friday.
5. Even with Biden’s seeming advantages at this point, the country has never experienced an election with such heavy voting by mail, which creates significant uncertainty. It is entirely possible that Trump will retain his lead in the states where he now leads and win the election.
6. The situation in the Senate is different — and [*more favorable to Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). They appear to be in a strong position to retain Senate control, which would give them a veto over nearly all of a President Biden’s legislative plans.
7. Democrats needed to win at least five of the 14 competitive Senate races and have so far won only two. Six races remain up in the air. The only incumbent Republicans to have lost are Martha McSally in Arizona and Cory Gardner in Colorado.
8. Biden, addressing supporters after midnight, [*urged patience*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). “We believe we’re on track to win this election,” he said. “We’re going to have to be patient until the hard work of tallying the votes is finished. And it ain’t over until every vote is counted, every ballot is counted.”
9. Trump [*falsely declared himself the winner*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) around 2:30 a.m. Eastern. He said he would call on the Supreme Court to stop counting ballots in states where he led, while urging more counting in states where he was behind. He claimed “fraud” (for which there is no evidence) and he called the election an “embarrassment to the country.”
10. Many of the state polls were wrong and underestimated support for Republicans — again. A big question in coming days will be why: Did polls again fail to include enough ***working-class*** white voters, as was the case in 2016? Or was it something else?
11. Democrats’ struggled to match their 2016 margins among Hispanic voters. We’ve covered that theme in some detail in this newsletter, and it hurt Biden, especially in Florida and Texas.
12. [*You can visit The Times all day for the latest coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Further down, you’ll find information on some of this year’s other races — including more detail on the Senate, as well as the latest on state ballot initiatives. First, though, I want to give you a selection of commentary on the national scene.

Election Commentary

“The vote-counting happening now is…. exactly what we knew and reported would happen. This is legitimate vote-counting, of ballots that were returned before or on Election Day.” — [*Scott Detrow, NPR*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

“This is an extremely flammable situation and the president just threw a match into it,” Chris Wallace said on Fox News, after Trump’s remarks. “He hasn’t won these states.”

“Donald Trump called it a ‘fraud’ to continue to count votes. This does not sound like a democracy.” — [*Olivia Nuzzi*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), New York Magazine

“What Trump did tonight is shocking, even though he’s been telegraphing this for some time. He’s primed his supporters to believe any result that doesn’t involve him winning is fraud.” — [*Rosie Gray*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), BuzzFeed News

“Trump may indeed win. But he certainly hasn’t yet. And, he doesn’t get to say that your vote shouldn’t be counted.” — [*S.E. Cupp*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), CNN

“Every single serious analysis I read of this election said that it would be long and drawn out, and that Trump would try to steal the election by trying to discount late-arriving Biden votes. And now that it’s happening…everyone seems shocked.” — [*Anne Applebaum*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), The Atlantic

“Incredible how competitive Trump is with 230K+ covid deaths and kids being locked in cages and everything else. Even if Biden wins he will have to govern in a Trump country. This is who America is.” — [*Gabriel Sherman*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), Vanity Fair

“In any normal presidential democracy, this would not be a close election right now. It is only close because of our strange Electoral College.” — [*Lee Drutman, New America think tank*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

“A key question moving forward is whether public opinion polling is irreparably broken or if polling is just broken in elections with Trump on the ballot.” — [*Nathan Gonzales of Inside Elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

“Biden POTUS with GOP Senate is a recipe for a horrifically nasty politics next year.” — [*Matt Glassman*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), Georgetown political scientist

“Democrats had hoped for a massive, unequivocal repudiation of Donald Trump for his mishandling of the pandemic, his raging White House incompetence, and his disdain for the rule of law. Instead, there was the sobering message that Trump’s support in key states like Florida was, in truth, greater than the polls had predicted.” — [*Walter Shapiro*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of The New Republic.

The Senate

* Democratic Senate candidates were running slightly behind Biden in several states, making it difficult for the party to retake Senate control.

1. Republicans flipped one seat: Tommy Tuberville beat the Democrat Doug Jones in Alabama. Gary Peters, the Democratic incumbent in Michigan, is locked in a close race with his Republican challenger, John James; it will depend on the outstanding votes.
2. Democrats flipped two seats: John Hickenlooper [*defeated Gardner*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in Colorado, and [*Mark Kelly defeated McSally in Arizona*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
3. In Iowa, [*Senator Joni Ernst, a Republican, won re-election*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). Republicans also won races in Montana, South Carolina — [*where Lindsey Graham held on to his seat*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) — and Texas.
4. Several other races remain too close to call, including in Maine, where Senator Susan Collins leads the Democratic nominee, Sara Gideon. In a special Senate election in Georgia, the incumbent Kelly Loeffler is headed to a January runoff against the Democrat Raphael Warnock.

State Ballot Initiatives

* Florida [*voted to raise its minimum wage*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to $15 an hour by 2026, getting support from 61 percent of voters — which means that a large number of Floridians voted for both Trump and a big increase in the minimum wage.

1. Colorado’s proposed ban on late-term abortions [*did not pass.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)
2. [*New Jersey*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), [*South Dakota*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and [*Arizona*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) voted to legalize recreational marijuana, and [*Oregon*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) became the first state to decriminalize possessing a small amount of any street drug.
3. Mississippi voted to [*adopt a new state flag*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) that does not feature the Confederate Battle Flag.
4. California voted to allow workers for companies like Uber or Lyft to be independent contractors, instead of employees, [*The Los Angeles Times reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

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PLAY, WATCH, EAT, BAKE

Make something comforting

Cornbread tamale pie, [*a recipe from The Joy of Cooking*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), is a crowd-pleasing classic. It elevates a beef chili by baking it with a simple cornbread batter on top.

Diversions

* [*Here are the best TV shows and movies*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)hitting streaming services this month.

1. The late-night hosts weighed in on results [*on their election specials*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Games

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was chantey. Today’s puzzle is above — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) if you have a Games subscription.

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and a clue: Hop happily (four letters).

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

P.S. The word “quarterboomers” appeared for the first time in The Times yesterday, as noted by the Twitter bot [*@NYT\_first\_said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” is an update on the election outcome. On the latest “[*Popcast*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing),” the many versions of Mariah Carey.

Lalena Fisher, Claire Moses, Amelia Nierenberg, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Remy Tumin and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: Election workers sort through ballots at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kriston Jae Bethel for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Legalized Bribery by Elites Is Here to Stay. Now What?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y2D-10F1-JBG3-60PH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1436 words

**Byline:** Talmon Joseph Smith

**Highlight:** Conservatives have won a generational lock on the highest courts, entrenching Citizens United. But the courts aren’t the only way to bring change.

**Body**

Conservatives have won a generational lock on the highest courts, entrenching Citizens United. But the courts aren’t the only way to bring change.

This week marked 10 years since the Supreme Court’s landmark [*Citizens United v. FEC*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html) decision, which opened a floodgate for wealthy donors and corporate money’s flow into politics. And with the exception of a few anniversary articles, like this one, it largely went unnoticed. That’s because the world Citizens United created — unlimited money in politics and legally unchallenged corporate personhood — is now simply the toxic civic air we breathe.

“Independent” expenditures from super PACs — unfettered committees often only marginally independent from campaigns — and “dark money” from nonprofits with unknown backers comprised roughly 40 percent of total spending on federal campaigns in 2016. And although a small but high-profile cadre of congressional candidates, and presidential candidates like Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, rely on online small-dollar fund-raising, experts expect moneyed interests and megadonors to shatter spending records in the 2020 cycle.

The unceasing, norm-destroying political chaos of the Trump era has eclipsed the fact that the environment Citizens United unleashed could be the status quo for a lifetime, courtesy of the generational lock on the courts Donald Trump handed conservatives. It’s a feat that has earned the president the fealty of the professional right. And it has forced reformists on the left — who briefly had hopes for a liberal majority on the Supreme Court, before Mr. Trump’s election — to come up with alternative plans for nationwide democratic change.

“Opportunity definitely died on election night 2016 for federal court reform,” said Scott Greytak, a lawyer who worked at Free Speech for People, a boutique litigation firm that, until then, was leading the charge against Citizens United. Now, he said, “All the energy and attention has been pushed down to the state and local level. And importantly, it’s no longer money in politics only.”

“During the Obama administration, people out in the country used to look to us in D.C.,” Mr. Greytak added. “Now they’re like, forget about it.”

Over the past three years, previously siloed reform organizations have been decentralizing, widening their network of collaborators. Heavyweights like Eric Holder, the former attorney general, have joined with lesser-known state representatives, everyday people and even [*university math wonks, to tackle gerrymandering*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html). Rising stars like Stacey Abrams have helped refocus efforts on increasing voting access, registration and turnout. White-collar professionals on the coasts with roots in the interior of the country are sharing resources and working directly with organizers in their hometowns, through groups like Heartland Rising, to flip previously abandoned districts.

Ritzy gatherings of the liberal intelligentsia have telegraphed a new openness as well, by inviting grass roots groups to co-host events. Take, for one, the Ford Foundation’s Realizing Democracy conference this past fall in Manhattan, a professed “learning series” where longtime political figures and representatives from the Open Society Foundations shared the spotlight with swing state activists and City Council representatives. Dorian Warren, the head of the nonprofit Community Change, was among the lead panelists; Chris Hughes, a founder of Facebook, and other big name guests mostly listened on.

Even as a national election begins, talk of “gearing hyperlocal solutions,” strengthening regional labor unions and re-establishing the states as “laboratories of democracy” abounds. But this passion in the democracy reform space is still paired with a nagging dread over how much work there is to do.

Despite the “blue wave” of the 2018 midterms, the Republican Party still holds 61 percent of state legislative chambers. Their struggle is compounded by the tilted playing field created by Citizens United, especially at the state and local levels: A study looking back at the 2010s conducted by Anna Harvey, a professor of politics at New York University, published this fall [*in the journal Public Choice*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html), concluded that Citizens United “led not only to greater likelihoods of election for Republican state legislative candidates but also to larger within-district increases in their conservatism.”

And until the last couple of years, “it just hasn’t been the case that progressives have built up organizations that are federated,” said Alex Hertel-Fernandez, a Columbia professor and author of the book “State Capture: How Conservative Activists, Big Businesses and Wealthy Donors Reshaped the American States — and the Nation.” He argues that, even now, rather than “pool resources across states” as conservative networks do, liberals in rich blue states tend to send money to single-issue nationally led organizations, like Planned Parenthood or the American Civil Liberties Union.

One solution being pushed by some activists is to create a system of public campaign financing parallel to the widened stream of private funds. Seattle has recently adopted a “democracy voucher” program, which distributes funds to voters who can then donate to the candidates of their choice. (Seattle has also recently restricted corporate involvement in local politics through foreign interference laws.) And New York State will match six to one donations by people who give less than $250.

If broadened to the federal level, public financing might free candidates from the disproportionate influence of affluent and corporate donors, while allowing much of the money currently geared toward electioneering to be rededicated to movement building.

[*Once candidates are in office*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html), such a program would spare politicians (and their constituents) the indignity of their spending [*as much as 70 percent*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html) of their time asking donors for money, as members of Congress currently do. Those dynamics have a concrete effect: A now infamous [*2014 study*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html) that analyzed American politics across three decades found that “average citizens and mass-based interest groups have little or no independent influence” on public policy.

Though partisanship dominates national discourse, polls show that [*large majorities*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html) remain united in the belief that corruption is the most important issue facing the country. Armed with this knowledge, House Democrats passed a sprawling democracy bill last year that would provide [*a six-to-one federal match*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html) for any donation of $200 or less. These people-powered matching funds could supercharge the democratizing influence on politics that small online donations have already demonstrated in limited doses.

Whether campaign-finance reform will be atop the agenda, in the event of another blue wave this fall, remains to be seen. In their best case 2021 scenario, Democrats will only have gained a slim majority in the Senate. Yet, Bill Dauster, a former deputy chief of staff to Harry Reid, is among a crop of Democrats who think “budget reconciliation,” a maneuver Republicans used in 2017 to pass tax cuts, could also be used to pass public financing with a simple majority.

Sabeel Rahman, the leader of the progressive think tank Demos, insists that his group’s recent, successful campaign for public financing in the District of Columbia — a majority-minority city with wealthy and ***working-class*** residents — “showed it’s an issue all communities can get behind.”

Mr. Warren, the president of Community Change, which coordinates with over 200 grass roots organizations, was a bit more cautious: “If there is a political opening, we’re all going to be fighting over priorities.” Any progressive White House in 2021 would inevitably be pressed by many in his coalition to put direct, pocketbook issues first.

Still, he added, “There is more energy on democracy reform now than 10 years ago,” when practical, direct policies were mostly stopped in their tracks. “People realize we can’t get there with the democracy that we don’t have.”

Talmon Joseph Smith is on the staff of The New York Times Opinion section.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.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.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/08-205.ZS.html).

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PHOTO: A protestor outside the Supreme Court in July, where Senate Democrats unveiled the Democracy for All Amendment, aimed at overturning Citizens United. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Caroline Brehman/CQ Roll Call, via Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***Incumbent Democrats Win in N.J. House Races; Van Drew Is Narrowly Ahead***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616Y-6621-JBG3-63D7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 4, 2020 Wednesday 01:24 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1484 words

**Byline:** Tracey Tully

**Highlight:** Voter turnout was on track to set records, complicating the counting process. Mail ballots may be counted for up to a week after the election.

**Body**

Voter turnout was on track to set records, complicating the counting process. Mail ballots may be counted for up to a week after the election.

The Democratic incumbents in two of New Jersey’s closest congressional races were declared winners just after midnight on Wednesday in an election that was conducted mostly by mail and that yielded a voter turnout likely to set records. But no winner emerged yet in the state’s most closely watched House race.

Representatives Andy Kim and Tom Malinowski, first-term Democrats who were elected two years ago as part of a [*so-called blue wave*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html) aligned against President Trump, beat back spirited challenges, according to preliminary results from The Associated Press.

In a marquee matchup, Amy Kennedy, a former schoolteacher and the wife of a scion of the storied Democratic political dynasty, was narrowly trailing Jeff Van Drew, a party-switching Republican ally of Mr. Trump’s, though the race had not been officially called.

As of Wednesday morning, Mr. Van Drew led Ms. Kennedy by about four percentage points with about 75 percent of the estimated vote counted, according to The A.P.

Mr. Van Drew, a retired dentist who was elected as a Democrat in 2018, was a [*vocal opponent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html) of the president’s impeachment. In December, he joined Republicans in a pledge of “[*undying support*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html)” to Mr. Trump after it became clear that he could not count on re-election support from Democratic leaders in his South Jersey district.

He had political payback written on his back, and an opponent with a celebrity surname in a conservative-leaning district that stretches from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pennsylvania border. The district is more rural and ***working class*** than suburban regions in the north that have tilted more Democratic in recent years.

Shortly before midnight Tuesday, Mr. Van Drew told supporters he had weathered an aggressive effort to defeat him.

“A lot of money and a lot of power was used against me, quite frankly, to remove me from my seat during a difficult year,” he said.

“But the truth is, we believed,” he added. “We believed in the America that we know, the America that we love, the America that we know is this great place.”

Ms. Kennedy’s campaign manager, Josh Roesch, said it was too early for Mr. Van Drew to suggest that he had won.

“Tens of thousands of votes need to be counted over the next few weeks and we will work hard to make sure every vote is counted and every voice is heard,” he said in a statement.

As of 11 a.m. on Wednesday, 3.89 million mail ballots had been received, representing 98.7 percent of the total voter turnout four years ago. The figure does not include ballots delivered to polling locations or provisional paper ballots that were completed on Tuesday by voters at the polls. Provisional ballots will not be counted until Nov. 11, and only after officials ensure that no one voted twice.

In the days before the election, Saily Avelenda, the executive director of the New Jersey Democratic State Committee, said the organization was taking nothing for granted.

“This is it,” said Ms. Avelenda, a former bank lawyer whose life as an activist started after the 2016 election. “This is the Super Bowl. This is the moment I have been working for since the morning after the election when Hillary lost and I cried my eyes out.”

On Wednesday, she said that voters had seen through the “lies and the extremism of the Republican Party” to re-elect all 10 Democratic House incumbents.

“New Jersey Democrats turned out in droves and we made sure to protect our delegation — first and foremost,” Ms. Avelenda said.

U.S. Senator Cory Booker, a Democrat, was re-elected in his race against the Republican candidate, Rik Mehta, a biotech entrepreneur who fell short in his long-shot bid to unseat the former Newark mayor.

Mr. Booker, in comments delivered on Zoom with his girlfriend, the actress Rosario Dawson, standing behind him, invoked the Women’s March in Washington four years ago as the symbolic start of the campaign that culminated on Tuesday.

“This is a state that never, ever gave up or gave in, or even sat down to watch what was happening with Trump,” Mr. Booker said. “We were activists. We were organized. We were fighting.”

Just before 10 p.m., Representative Mikie Sherrill, a first-term Democrat and former Navy helicopter pilot, was declared the winner against her Republican challenger, Rosemary Becchi, a tax lawyer, according to The Associated Press.

By early Wednesday, The A.P. had called the races for all 10 of New Jersey’s Democratic House incumbents.

The race in the Seventh Congressional District, in northern New Jersey, pitted Mr. Malinowski against State Senator Tom Kean Jr., a fiscal moderate whose father was a beloved Republican governor of New Jersey. The contest was seen as a measure of moderate Republicans’ ability to compete in a party overhauled in Mr. Trump’s image.

During the campaign, Mr. Malinowski was targeted by [*QAnon supporters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html) who sent him death threats after the House Republicans’ campaign arm falsely accused him of lobbying to protect sexual predators. The harassment began after Mr. Malinowski led [*a bipartisan resolution*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html) condemning the movement, which spreads a baseless conspiracy theory that Mr. Trump is battling a cabal of Democratic pedophiles.

Ms. Kennedy, a first-time candidate who is married to Patrick J. Kennedy, a nephew of the former president, signaled interest in competing for Mr. Van Drew’s seat two days after word began to spread that the freshman congressman intended to [*join the Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html), a move that prompted a [*mass exodus of his staff members*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html).

Her entry into the race upended the playing field and ushered in a bruising primary against two formidable challengers: Will Cunningham, a lawyer and former investigator for the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, and [*Brigid Callahan Harrison*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html), a college professor who was the choice of the South Jersey Democratic political machine.

Ms. Kennedy cruised to an [*easy victory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html), buoyed by the star power of her surname and the support of progressive groups that were eager to notch a win against the county power brokers who had long determined the outcome of regional races.

Ms. Kennedy, the education director for a mental health advocacy forum founded by her husband, has tried to play down her famous name, while saying that she is “grateful for the support of our family.” The Kennedy connections no doubt helped her generate [*$4.25 million*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html) in contributions, compared with the $3.9 million that Mr. Van Drew raised.

Mr. Trump was never far from mind in the Second Congressional District, which he won by about five percentage points in 2016.

About two hours south of New York City and in the Philadelphia media market, the region was saturated by presidential campaign ads from both sides.

Soon after Mr. Van Drew switched parties, the president came to Wildwood, N.J., for a raucous, [*campaign-style rally*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html) that aimed to solidify the lifelong Democrat’s standing in the eyes of the Republican faithful.

As Mr. Van Drew basked in Mr. Trump’s glow, David Richter, a wealthy Republican businessman who had planned to run against Mr. Van Drew before he switched parties, chose to run in a neighboring district instead, clearing the path for Mr. Van Drew.

Mr. Richter’s race against Mr. Kim was considered one of the most competitive in New Jersey, and one of the best chances for Republicans to regain more of a toehold in Congress.

Before Mr. Van Drew [*switched parties*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html), only one Republican represented New Jersey in Congress: Chris Smith, who was re-elected to a 21st term on Tuesday.

Mr. Van Drew rose in politics from mayor of Dennis, N.J., to county legislator to state lawmaker, serving in the Assembly and Senate for 16 years before being elected to Congress.

There was nothing typical about the election, which was held during a pandemic that has killed more than 16,000 New Jersey residents and against a backdrop of an [*alarming statewide uptick in coronavirus cases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html).

Social distancing restrictions affected the candidates’ ability to campaign freely and raise money, and mail voting altered the get-out-the-vote strategy altogether in a state where residents began casting [*paper ballots*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/house-republicans-election-northeast.html) in September.

On Monday, Ms. Kennedy was forced to suspend in-person campaigning after being exposed to a person who later tested positive for the virus at an outdoor weekend event.

Ms. Kennedy, in a statement, said she was proud of the race she had run.

“We stood up and spoke out instead of sitting back in silence,” she said. “We stayed true to our values and we ran a campaign focused on service and putting forth real plans and solutions that will make a better South Jersey for everyone.”

Patrick McGeehan contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Representative Jeff Van Drew, above, a party-switching Republican, was defending his seat against Amy Kennedy’s star power (PHOTOGRAPH BY GAIL WILSON/THE PRESS OF ATLANTIC CITY, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** November 5, 2020

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[***Seriously, He's a Funny Man***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61YW-2181-DXY4-X2BB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 10, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1585 words

**Byline:** By Salamishah Tillet

**Body**

''In the Long Run,'' a sweetly comic series set in 1980s London, is based on the real-life childhood of an actor best known for intense dramas like ''The Wire'' and ''Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom.''

''In the Long Run,'' which just wrapped up its third season on Starz, is a comedy based on the actor Idris Elba's childhood in the Holly Street Estate, a racially diverse public housing community in the Hackney borough of London. Set in the fictionalized Eastbridge Estate in the early '80s, Elba, who created the series for Britain's Sky One, plays Walter Easmon, who, like Elba's actual father, Winston, immigrated to England from Sierra Leone and worked in a nearby American-owned car parts factory.

But this story of migration and integration isn't told exclusively from the perspectives of Walter or his 13-year-old British-born son, Kobna (Sammy Kamara), who is based on Elba. Instead, the show is a broad, upbeat portrayal of a community, a story about interracial ***working-class*** Britons and West African immigrant families living together in London right after the infamous Brixton race riots in 1981, during the heyday of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's conservatism.

Adding to this lively mix of characters is Agnes (Madeline Appiah), Walter's Ghanaian stay-at-home wife turned community organizer and corporate secretary; his brother Valentine (Jimmy Akingbola), a former professional soccer player who arrives in England only to refuse a steady gig in the factory and become a local D.J.; Walter's white best friend and neighbor, the curmudgeonly yet cuddly Bagpipes (Bill Bailey); and Bagpipes' peppy and entrepreneurial wife, Kirsty (Kellie Shirley). All three seasons are streaming on Starz, which picked up the show in 2019.

Elba is known mainly for more serious roles, both in TV shows like ''The Wire'' and ''Luther'' and in movies like ''Beasts of No Nation,'' ''Thor'' and ''Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom'' (or for being named as the Sexiest Man Alive by People magazine in 2018.) But the gently comedic ''In the Long Run'' better reflects who he is as a person. It's an intimate portrait of his childhood, made possible by his illustrious career.

It is also part of a string of recent works, produced by his company Green Door Pictures, that highlight his love of Black music. Like his real-life uncle and the character Valentine, Elba is also a D.J., who as D.J. Big Driis spun records at the wedding reception of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, in 2018, and at Coachella in 2019.

Elba's directorial debut, the 2019 crime drama ''Yardie,'' follows its main character, a Jamaican drug courier named D (Aml Ameen), as he moves to London to avenge the murder of his brother, a DJ who died trying to unite warring gangs with his music. That same year, Elba starred in ''Turn Up Charlie,'' a comedy series he created with Gary Reich about a down-on-his-luck British D.J. who ends up taking care of his best friend's 11-year-old white daughter, Gabrielle (Frankie Hervey).

Neither received much critical love, and Netflix canceled ''Turn Up Charlie'' after one season. (''He's just not funny,'' Mike Hale, a New York Times TV critic, wrote of Elba in his review.)

''In the Long Run,'' however, debuted to plenty of praise in Britain in 2018. Elba is really funny in it and routinely cedes the spotlight to his dynamic co-stars, and the show shifts focus smoothly between sobering topics -- racial profiling, gentrification, AIDS activism -- and sillier ones, like Jheri curls, schoolboy crushes and missed D.J. sets.

Currently in Australia filming George Miller's ''Three Thousand Years of Longing'' with Tilda Swinton, Elba spoke in a video call last week about the cultural vibrancy of the African and Caribbean communities of 1980s London and why he, as a generally private person, wanted to see his parents' love story on TV. These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

How did ''In the Long Run'' come about?

Just working backward, this show came to life as an idea about four years ago. I had this yearning to do some comedy, and since I'm considered a dramatic actor, the roles weren't coming in. Kevin Hart was stealing all of them! So I just thought, I've got to do something to put myself in this marketplace. My kids think I'm funny; my family thinks I'm funny; let's go for it. And because my dad was one of the funniest storytellers I had come across, I wanted to find a way to tell his story and honor my parents. It was just the three of us, my mom, my dad and me, and they came from West Africa to the U.K. with a whole bunch of lively stories and experiences. I wanted to harness our lives together into something relatable and turn their hardships and integration into the U.K. into stories that were lighthearted.

Many Americans first saw your comedic side when you played Michael Scott's boss on ''The Office.'' Why did you choose comedy here to tell this very personal story? Do you really believe people don't think you're funny?

I had to write my own show to get some comedy! ''The Office'' was amazing, but essentially, my character wasn't comedic. He was kind of like the tough guy. I find that a lot of the writing about Black culture tends to be about hardships, crime, or tends to have scenarios that feel worthy of a dramatic lens. And when people think about Africa, they tend to think in doom and gloom or stereotypes, which I am not keen to keep fueling. We don't make light of the racism and adversities at the time on our show, but sometimes with comedy you can cover a bit more ground in a lighter way.

''In the Long Run'' just finished its third season. How did your series anticipate some of the issues that ''The Crown'' and ''Small Axe,'' which are also set in 1980s Britain, explore? What unique perspective are you hoping to show about that time period?

When you think about the '80s, you think about Margaret Thatcher but also neon lights and Jheri curls. It was definitely a time of incredible evolution and expansion. And it was also a real political narrowing in Britain that was undeniably Thatcher led. The show is about the life that spawned, fizzled and nurtured people my age underneath all of that.

But our lens is very specific to African, Caribbean and Asian cultures that were the majority in these council clusters, homes that were designed for low-income residents. Those homes were an incubator of life, and there's a mountain of culture, politics, thinkers, books and people that were born in that era and in those communities that are coming to middle life now. As a kid born in the early '70s who was a teenager in the '80s, I look back at that era with fondness. ''In the Long Run'' is a love letter to that time period.

With ''I May Destroy You'' and ''Bridgerton'' doing so well, there seems to be new excitement for shows about Black British life here in the United States. Do you think it is a trend or a transformation?

Over the last 10 years in the U.K., there have been real strides to put a lens on Black culture in a dramatic way. We've seen lots of young writers and producers coming out and telling their stories, and then you've got people like Steve McQueen who's telling these big stories, me telling another story in ''Yardie.'' I think that in general, everyone's lenses are starting to widen out. I'm so excited that there is an appetite for U.K. Black cultures in a way that penetrates the world. I also want to see the same for French, German or Belgian shows because these are also places where Black people migrated from Africa or the Caribbean. We're everywhere.

Music is a big part of the show, and in each episode a teenage boy suddenly breaks into an R&B song right in the middle of a scene. Where did that idea come from?

You're talking about the singing boy? He is a texture that I distinctly remember from growing up in the Holly Street Estate -- these sprawling projects in Hackney that on one side had the tower blocks where we lived, and on the other side were the lower flats that were notorious for crime and gangsters. My mom used to hate me going down there, but every time I went there to see my friends, there was always someone singing. I never knew who he was, but it was a kid who had a wicked voice, or just could rap. And he would just sing out of his window and was like a peace siren. When he was singing, there were no issues in the hood. So in the show, I wanted it to be a small character and part of the fabric of how I remember what was going on back then. Just a lovely memory.

And yet the show has a modern sensibility, too -- you confront gender roles, homophobia and your character's struggle to be emotionally vulnerable with his son. How much do current conversations about Black masculinity shape your storytelling?

Valentine looking at his own homophobia was definitely a product of our modern storytelling. It is a topic that is relatable now and really shows how far we've come in areas. But I also love my dad and I miss him now he's gone -- if I'm honest there are postcards all over ''In the Long Run'' of things I wish I said, or how I imagine it could have gone. And when I think back, my dad and my mom were best friends, even though they also could be at odds. Their tenderness is always depicted in my show because I think it is important to see Black people in love and kind, and not sexualized or a stereotype of a Black man not being affectionate. I want to show something that offers an alternative perspective to what most people think.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/09/arts/television/idris-elba-in-the-long-run.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/09/arts/television/idris-elba-in-the-long-run.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOYCE KIM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C1)

Idris Elba, above center, with, Sammy Kamara, left, Madeline Appiah and Jimmy Akingbola of ''In the Long Run,'' a comedy inspired by Elba's childhood in the Hackney borough of London. Below, Elba is best known for more serious roles, like playing Stringer Bell in ''The Wire. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY STARZ

PAUL SCHIRALDI/HBO) (C6)

**Load-Date:** February 10, 2021

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[***A Challenge in Wisconsin to Reach Those Few Who Haven't Yet Voted***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616R-VMK1-JBG3-60WB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 3, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1529 words

**Byline:** By Reid J. Epstein

**Body**

Early voting has soared in Wisconsin, as have coronavirus cases, moving most campaigning online. But volunteers are working hard to reach the dwindling number of voters who have yet to cast ballots.

MILWAUKEE -- As Wisconsin weathers the worst coronavirus outbreak of any presidential battleground, the state Democratic Party is calling and texting voters instead of going door to door. The Biden campaign's get-out-the-vote effort in the state is all virtual.

Stepping into the void to make face-to-face contact with voters are people like Rita Saavedra, who is taking Election Day off from her job as a community relations officer for a local health insurance company so she can drive friends and family members to their polling sites.

''I'm reaching out to everybody I know, all the people who haven't voted yet,'' she said. ''I'll even go to the house and get them out of bed.''

With early voting over and no time left for a mailed ballot to arrive by the Election Day deadline in Wisconsin, the typically herculean task of reminding voters in person to get to the polls and, in many cases, transporting them there, is being left to an informal group of volunteers like Ms. Saavedra, 43. This is happening as the entire infrastructure of the state Democratic Party and Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s campaign is focused on calling and texting the small universe of would-be supporters who still haven't voted.

The total push toward official online campaigning comes as Wisconsin is experiencing a coronavirus spike unlike any other swing state. The state's daily average case count was the third-highest in the country per capita over the past week. Only one other presidential battleground, Iowa, is in the top 12.

Absentee turnout in Wisconsin so far amounts to 63 percent of the state's 2016 electorate. More than half the state's registered voters have already voted. But there remain thousands of people in vote-rich urban and suburban areas who have yet to cast ballots.

''It is very weird how we're going to inevitably have the most volunteers on Election Day, but that gigantic number of volunteers is going to be working to turn out a much smaller number of votes,'' said Ben Wikler, the chairman of the Wisconsin Democrats. ''There's a kind of extra return on yard signs and chalk murals and holding a sign near a grocery store and all the things that human beings can do using atoms instead of electrons.''

There is ample evidence that Democratic turnout in Wisconsin has boomed.

Ten counties, including Dane, the state's most Democratic and the home of Madison, and Milwaukee, the state's largest, have exceeded 70 percent of their 2016 turnout, according to Wisconsin Election Commission data released on Monday.

At the same time, the state's 29 counties with the lowest pre-Election Day turnout relative to 2016 are all rural enclaves that voted for President Trump four years ago.

Still, Republicans in the state believe its presidential contest is far closer than public polling suggests. A New York Times and Siena College poll released on Sunday found Mr. Biden had an 11-point advantage over Mr. Trump.

''The Democratic absentee lead has evaporated over the past four to five days as voters in Republican areas have surged to vote early in person,'' said Matt Batzel, the executive director of American Majority Action, a conservative group. ''I've never seen anything like it.''

In Milwaukee, bands spent the past few days driving around the city on the back of flatbed trucks, jamming while holding large ''VOTE'' signs. In Madison, volunteers who would have knocked on doors to remind people to vote are instead holding signs on busy street corners. At night, the Democratic National Committee is projecting reminders to vote onto the sides of buildings at the University of Wisconsin campuses in both cities.

And instead of big rallies during the final weekend of the campaign, Wisconsin Democrats put on a dizzying number of virtual events that were geared toward die-hard supporters and local media.

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont spoke at a virtual rally while the party held virtual phone banks that featured local elected officials, musicians, players from the N.B.A.'s Milwaukee Bucks and Pete Souza, the official White House photographer during the Obama administration.

The most prominent out-of-state surrogate campaigning in Wisconsin on Sunday, Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, appeared with Senator Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin at events that were not announced to the public, a nod to the state's deteriorating public health situation.

There is more appetite for canvassing and in-person events in states where the pandemic is somewhat less dire. In Pennsylvania, Democrats spent the weekend block-walking in Philadelphia. Barack Obama campaigned in Michigan on Saturday and was set to hold rallies in Florida and Georgia on Monday. A group called Walk the Vote organized parades to deliver ballots in drop boxes in 48 cities across 12 states over the weekend, but just one parade was in Wisconsin, in the leafy and liberal Milwaukee suburb of Whitefish Bay.

And in Texas, Tom Perez, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, stumped with Gilberto Hinojosa, the state Democratic chairman, while Mr. Hinojosa directed door-to-door canvassing that the Biden campaign has forbidden.

''This is our money, our money is being used to knock doors in all of South Texas,'' Mr. Hinojosa said. ''This is the gap area where you need to do everything you do to increase the turnout.''

Republicans in Wisconsin have taken a more aggressive approach toward in-person campaigning than their Democratic counterparts. Senator Ron Johnson, Representative Bryan Steil and former Gov. Scott Walker appeared before crowds in Kenosha and at several other campaign stops in southeastern Wisconsin on Saturday. Melania Trump, the first lady, spoke to a crowd in West Bend.

And conservative groups like Mr. Batzel's have spent the final days of the campaign knocking on tens of thousands of doors trying to convince voters to back both Mr. Trump and Wisconsin's Republican candidates for the state legislature, who are facing a potential blood bath if Tuesday's results mirror polling showing Mr. Biden with a sizable lead.

On Friday, Mr. Batzel canvassed in West Allis, a largely white ***working-class*** Milwaukee suburb, in a ward where Mr. Trump won 53 percent to Mrs. Clinton's 40 percent.

Mr. Batzel's organization is betting there is a competitive advantage to knocking on doors and greeting voters in person, even at a six-foot distance.

During 90 minutes of door-knocking, Mr. Batzel found 13 Trump voters, three people who said they would vote for Mr. Biden and nine people who said they had already voted.

''I usually vote in person, but with Covid I figured I'd stay safe,'' said Jodi Hansen, 36, a customer service representative who told Mr. Batzel she had already voted for Mr. Biden.

Later in the afternoon, Rance Frankum, 38, a quality assurance technician, told Mr. Batzel he planned to vote for Mr. Trump at the polls on Election Day.

''I just know that I have no complaints about how the world is under his administration,'' Mr. Frankum said.

Milwaukee voters casting ballots on Saturday afternoon at the Tippecanoe branch of the public library expressed varying degrees of exasperation over the onslaught of calls, texts and mail they had been receiving from various parties, campaigns and outside groups.

''I get them every other hour from random people,'' said Marilisa Gonzalez, 36, a vice president of a commercial cleaning company. ''I don't read the messages and I have unknown calls blocked.''

For people who haven't cast their ballots, the calls and texts won't stop until the polls close on Tuesday night.

''They're going to be looking around for any phone number that doesn't have a check mark by it that says, 'We know they voted,''' said State Senator Janet Bewley, the Democratic leader. ''They're going to keep on calling and calling.''

In Madison, where just 35,587 registered voters in a city of 258,000 have yet to vote, according to the city clerk, Democratic volunteers get through their dwindling lists of locals to contact early each day and spend the rest of their time calling voters in the rest of the state.

''We have the most volunteers and the fewest people left to vote,'' said Alexia Sabor, the chairwoman of the Dane County Democrats.

Even Ms. Sabor, who cast her ballot weeks ago, said she still receives multiple texts a day from other liberal groups reminding her to vote. ''People are tired of all the texts and calls,'' she said.

On Saturday, Ms. Saavedra got a head start on her Tuesday vote-shuttling by driving her nephew Juan A. Saavedra, 19, to vote early for Mr. Biden.

''She got me out of bed and told me I had to vote,'' Mr. Saavedra said. ''I was going to wait until Tuesday but she wouldn't let me.''

Ms. Saavedra, who cast her ballot two weeks ago, said she was planning to take at least 10 people to the polls on Tuesday.

''I wouldn't necessarily pick up a stranger,'' she said. ''But I have stopped people on the street and asked them, 'Did you vote yet?'''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/02/us/politics/wisconsin-voters.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/02/us/politics/wisconsin-voters.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A ballot box at the Tippecanoe branch of the Milwaukee Public Library. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***‘It’s Just Crazy’ in Pennsylvania: Mail Voting and the Anxiety That Followed***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616H-SPK1-DXY4-X1GH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1507 words

**Byline:** Trip Gabriel

**Highlight:** A county northeast of Pittsburgh is a microcosm of the high tension, confusion and deep uncertainty that have accompanied the expansion of mail-in voting.

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A county northeast of Pittsburgh is a microcosm of the high tension, confusion and deep uncertainty that have accompanied the expansion of mail-in voting.

KITTANNING, Pa. — “Hello, Elections.”

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“Hello, Elections.”

The rapid-fire calls were pouring in to Marybeth Kuznik, the one-woman Elections Department of Armstrong County, a few days before Election Day. “This is crazy,” she told an anxious caller. “Crazy, crazy, crazy. It’s a good thing because everybody should vote,” she added, “but it’s just crazy.”

Armstrong County, northeast of Pittsburgh, is one of Pennsylvania’s smaller counties with 44,829 registered voters. But it is a microcosm of the high tension, confusion and deep uncertainty that have accompanied the broad expansion of mail-in voting this year, during an election of passionate intensity.

With all [*Pennsylvania*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-pennsylvania.html) voters eligible for the first time to vote by mail, more than three million ballots were requested statewide — nearly half the total turnout from 2016. One in five voters in Armstrong County requested a mail-in ballot.

A complicated two-envelope ballot, uncertainty over the reliability of the Postal Service and a glitchy online system for tracking returned votes have caused Ms. Kuznik to be bombarded by callers. And, though to a lesser extent, she has also been visited by a stream of walk-ins at her small second-floor office in the county administration building, where an American flag was stuck into a dying plant above her desk.

“All righty, let’s look you up, see what’s going on,” she told voters who called seeking assistance.

“Gotcha,” she said whenever she found a voter’s name in her Dell computer.

The state-run portal intended to track mail ballots was unreliable, Ms. Kuznik said. By using a database available only to election officials, she was able to reassure voters about the status of a ballot — in nearly all cases, it had been received.

Many callers were alarmed that they had not received a ballot. For some, it was because they had not checked a box on their application for a mail ballot for the primary, asking to receive a general-election mail ballot. “There was a little wee tiny box on there to check,” she told one voter. “Don’t worry about it. Just go and vote.”

She told an upset caller that his ballot had been mailed on Oct. 16, two weeks earlier. “It’s kind of a long time if you haven’t gotten it,” she said. The voter could either visit Ms. Kuznik’s office to have the original ballot canceled and a replacement issued, or vote using a provisional ballot in person on Tuesday.

When the caller complained of not being able to get through to her earlier by phone, Ms. Kuznik said: “Yeah, I apologize, it’s been very, very busy here. But we will get you a ballot. We want you to vote.”

She then helped Beverly Nason, 84, who was waiting behind a swinging half-door and said her 87-year-old husband, William, had not received his ballot.

“Hold on for a minute,” Ms. Kuznik told a phone caller while helping Ms. Nason. “I’m right in the middle of processing a voter, and I will look up and see what’s going on with that.”

As she readied a new ballot to be printed for Mr. Nason, she talked back to a pop-up on her computer: “No, Adobe, I do not want to give a review of this software. No.”

Amanda Wallace, a child-care worker, appeared and asked where to drop off her completed ballot. “Well, that isn’t the whole thing,” Ms. Kuznik told her, explaining that Ms. Wallace, 48, had the inner “secrecy” envelope with her ballot inside but hadn’t brought the outer envelope that she was required to sign. The outer envelope includes a bar code to stop anyone from trying to vote more than once. “You absolutely have to have it in that, or it will not count,” Ms. Kuznik told her.

Sharon Kerr was upset that no ballot had been delivered to her home. It turned out she had entered a post office box for an address. “I can’t fix this today,” Ms. Kuznik told her, “but for right now, I’ll cancel that ballot that was sent out and I’ll get you another one.”

“God bless you, honey,” Ms. Kerr said. “I was worried that mine wouldn’t be counted, and we’ve got to do something. I’m very, very upset with what we have. We need changes.”

Ms. Kuznik, whose job is nonpartisan, did not respond to that, nor to any other comments about candidates. President Trump carried Armstrong County, whose population is almost entirely white and ***working class***, by a margin of more than 16,000 in 2016. Kittanning, the county seat on the Allegheny River, has a population of 4,000. The largest employers are a hospital, government and Walmart.

[*Many election analysts*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-pennsylvania.html) believe Pennsylvania is the knife’s edge on which the race is balanced, the closest of the three “blue wall” states where Joseph R. Biden Jr., if he sweeps them, has his most likely path to the White House. [*A New York Times/Siena College poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-pennsylvania.html) of Pennsylvania on Sunday showed Mr. Biden with a lead of six percentage points, and a margin of error of 2.4 points.

With more Republicans expected to vote on Election Day and Democrats favoring mail ballots in [*Pennsylvania, when to count and report results*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-pennsylvania.html) have become partisan flash points. Mr. Trump [*has demanded, without a basis in law*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-pennsylvania.html), that the vote leader on election night be named the winner. Democrats are braced for early returns from in-person voters to show a significant Trump lead, with the tide shifting bluer as mail ballots are reported.

Though counties have hired extra workers and in some cases bought machines to rapidly slit envelopes and extract ballots — which they cannot begin to do before 7 a.m. on Nov. 3 — there are wide differences among counties, with some not expecting full results for days.

“No way,” was how Ms. Kuznik responded when asked whether Armstrong County would have all of its votes counted in the hours after polls close at 8 p.m. “We’ll go as quickly as we can, but we’re not going to rush it,” she said. “It’s not the Super Bowl. Nobody’s going to hoist a trophy on election night.”

The state’s largest cities, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, are aiming to report results of mail-in ballots on Tuesday night, according to an aide to a top Democratic official briefed on statewide preparations. But many second-tier counties, including in the Philadelphia suburbs, will be slower. “Erie, Berks, Bucks, Delaware and Lackawanna are real problems,” the aide said. “Their reporting of mail-in votes could go into Wednesday, which will create a lot of election night anxiety.”

Erie County, a swing county that Mr. Trump won in 2016, is expecting about 50,000 mail ballots. Election Day results will be reported first, then starting at 11 p.m., the results from about 10,000 mail ballots will be released, said Carl Anderson III, chair of the Erie County Election Board.

“They’ll still be separating envelopes and ballots on Wednesday, probably Thursday,” he said.

He did not rule out the following Monday for a count of all ballots, including those received in the three days after Election Day that are postmarked by Nov. 3. The secretary of state has ordered counties to segregate ballots received in that window because of potential litigation that has [*already reached the U.S. Supreme Court*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-pennsylvania.html).

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**Graphic**

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With early voting over and no time left for a mailed ballot to arrive by the Election Day deadline in [*Wisconsin*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-wisconsin.html), the typically herculean task of reminding voters in person to get to the polls and, in many cases, transporting them there, is being left to an informal group of volunteers like Ms. Saavedra, 43. This is happening as the entire infrastructure of the state Democratic Party and Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s campaign is focused on calling and texting the small universe of would-be supporters who still haven’t voted.

The total push toward official online campaigning comes as Wisconsin is experiencing a coronavirus spike unlike any other swing state. The state’s daily average case count was the [*third-highest in the country per capita over the past week*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-wisconsin.html). Only one other presidential battleground, Iowa, is in the top 12.

Absentee turnout in Wisconsin so far amounts to 63 percent of the state’s 2016 electorate. More than half the state’s registered voters have already voted. But there remain thousands of people in vote-rich urban and suburban areas who have yet to cast ballots.

“It is very weird how we’re going to inevitably have the most volunteers on Election Day, but that gigantic number of volunteers is going to be working to turn out a much smaller number of votes,” said Ben Wikler, the chairman of the Wisconsin Democrats. “There’s a kind of extra return on yard signs and chalk murals and holding a sign near a grocery store and all the things that human beings can do using atoms instead of electrons.”

There is ample evidence that Democratic turnout in Wisconsin has boomed.

Ten counties, including Dane, the state’s most Democratic and the home of Madison, and Milwaukee, the state’s largest, have exceeded 70 percent of their 2016 turnout, according to [*Wisconsin Election Commission data released on*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-wisconsin.html) Monday.

At the same time, the state’s 29 counties with the lowest pre-Election Day turnout relative to 2016 are all rural enclaves that voted for President Trump four years ago.

Still, Republicans in the state believe its presidential contest is far closer than public polling suggests. A [*New York Times and Siena College poll released on Sunday*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-wisconsin.html) found Mr. Biden had an 11-point advantage over Mr. Trump.

“The Democratic absentee lead has evaporated over the past four to five days as voters in Republican areas have surged to vote early in person,” said Matt Batzel, the executive director of American Majority Action, a conservative group. “I’ve never seen anything like it.”

In Milwaukee, bands spent the past few days driving around the city on the back of flatbed trucks, jamming while holding large “VOTE” signs. In Madison, volunteers who would have knocked on doors to remind people to vote are instead holding signs on busy street corners. At night, the Democratic National Committee is projecting reminders to vote onto the sides of buildings at the University of Wisconsin campuses in both cities.

And instead of big rallies during the final weekend of the campaign, Wisconsin Democrats put on a dizzying number of virtual events that were geared toward die-hard supporters and local media.

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont spoke at a virtual rally while the party held virtual phone banks that featured local elected officials, musicians, players from the N.B.A.’s Milwaukee Bucks and Pete Souza, the official White House photographer during the Obama administration.

The most prominent out-of-state surrogate campaigning in Wisconsin on Sunday, Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, appeared with Senator Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin at events that were not announced to the public, a nod to the state’s deteriorating public health situation.

There is more appetite for canvassing and in-person events in states where the pandemic is somewhat less dire. In Pennsylvania, Democrats spent the weekend block-walking in Philadelphia. Barack Obama campaigned in Michigan on Saturday and was set to hold rallies in Florida and Georgia on Monday. A group called Walk the Vote organized parades to deliver ballots in drop boxes in 48 cities across 12 states over the weekend, but just one parade was in Wisconsin, in the leafy and liberal Milwaukee suburb of Whitefish Bay.

And in Texas, Tom Perez, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, stumped with Gilberto Hinojosa, the state Democratic chairman, while Mr. Hinojosa directed door-to-door canvassing that the Biden campaign has forbidden.

“This is our money, our money is being used to knock doors in all of South Texas,” Mr. Hinojosa said. “This is the gap area where you need to do everything you do to increase the turnout.”

Republicans in Wisconsin have taken a more aggressive approach toward in-person campaigning than their Democratic counterparts. Senator Ron Johnson, Representative Bryan Steil and former Gov. Scott Walker [*appeared before crowds*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-wisconsin.html) in Kenosha and at several other campaign stops in southeastern Wisconsin on Saturday. Melania Trump, the first lady, spoke to a crowd in West Bend.

And conservative groups like Mr. Batzel’s have spent the final days of the campaign knocking on tens of thousands of doors trying to convince voters to back both Mr. Trump and Wisconsin’s Republican candidates for the state legislature, who are facing a potential blood bath if Tuesday’s results mirror polling showing Mr. Biden with a sizable lead.

On Friday, Mr. Batzel canvassed in West Allis, a largely white ***working-class*** Milwaukee suburb, in a ward where Mr. Trump won 53 percent to Mrs. Clinton’s 40 percent.

Mr. Batzel’s organization is betting there is a competitive advantage to knocking on doors and greeting voters in person, even at a six-foot distance.

During 90 minutes of door-knocking, Mr. Batzel found 13 Trump voters, three people who said they would vote for Mr. Biden and nine people who said they had already voted.

“I usually vote in person, but with [*Covid*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-wisconsin.html) I figured I’d stay safe,” said Jodi Hansen, 36, a customer service representative who told Mr. Batzel she had already voted for Mr. Biden.

Later in the afternoon, Rance Frankum, 38, a quality assurance technician, told Mr. Batzel he planned to vote for Mr. Trump at the polls on Election Day.

“I just know that I have no complaints about how the world is under his administration,” Mr. Frankum said.

Milwaukee voters casting ballots on Saturday afternoon at the Tippecanoe branch of the public library expressed varying degrees of exasperation over the onslaught of calls, texts and mail they had been receiving from various parties, campaigns and outside groups.

“I get them every other hour from random people,” said Marilisa Gonzalez, 36, a vice president of a commercial cleaning company. “I don’t read the messages and I have unknown calls blocked.”

For people who haven’t cast their ballots, the calls and texts won’t stop until the polls close on Tuesday night.

“They’re going to be looking around for any phone number that doesn’t have a check mark by it that says, ‘We know they voted,’” said State Senator Janet Bewley, the Democratic leader. “They’re going to keep on calling and calling.”

In Madison, where just 35,587 registered voters in a city of 258,000 have yet to vote, [*according to the city clerk*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-wisconsin.html), Democratic volunteers get through their dwindling lists of locals to contact early each day and spend the rest of their time calling voters in the rest of the state.

“We have the most volunteers and the fewest people left to vote,” said Alexia Sabor, the chairwoman of the Dane County Democrats.

Even Ms. Sabor, who cast her ballot weeks ago, said she still receives multiple texts a day from other liberal groups reminding her to vote. “People are tired of all the texts and calls,” she said.

On Saturday, Ms. Saavedra got a head start on her Tuesday vote-shuttling by driving her nephew Juan A. Saavedra, 19, to vote early for Mr. Biden.

“She got me out of bed and told me I had to vote,” Mr. Saavedra said. “I was going to wait until Tuesday but she wouldn’t let me.”

Ms. Saavedra, who cast her ballot two weeks ago, said she was planning to take at least 10 people to the polls on Tuesday.

“I wouldn’t necessarily pick up a stranger,” she said. “But I have stopped people on the street and asked them, ‘Did you vote yet?’”

PHOTO: A ballot box at the Tippecanoe branch of the Milwaukee Public Library. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 8, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Hudson Valley Real Estate Market Still Overheated***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:627R-M9B1-JBG3-62Y4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** REALESTATE

**Length:** 1825 words

**Byline:** Julie Lasky

**Highlight:** New Yorkers scouring northern towns for second homes have pushed prices up and made it harder for locals to find affordable homes.

**Body**

New Yorkers scouring northern towns for second homes have pushed prices up and made it harder for locals to find affordable homes.

Meghan McCann, a sales representative for a wine and liquor company, has spent more than a year looking for a house in Columbia County, in the northern Hudson Valley, where she was born and raised.

Ms. McCann, 39, who grew up in Copake Falls, less than 10 minutes from the town of Hillsdale, where she currently rents with her fiancé, Joseph Walters, said she was preapproved for a $270,000 mortgage, but “it wasn’t enough.” Every house she and Mr. Walters looked at sold within two weeks for prices that beggared belief.

Now they are budgeting up to $350,000, or maybe more, in hopes of finding a small property on a few acres that they expect will probably have foundation problems or a leaky roof. Though it helps that Mr. Walters is in construction, this wasn’t what they had bargained for.

“We don’t want to have to do a lot of work,” Ms. McCann said, pointing out that the cost of building materials has recently skyrocketed, making a fixer-upper a more serious investment. “We want to go out to dinner and take vacations.”

As the real estate market remains on a boil in New York’s Hudson Valley, heated in large part by second-home buyers re-evaluating their commitment to urban living, longtime residents are experiencing both prosperity and pain.

A wave of newcomers, drawn by the painterly beauty and burgeoning craft and food culture of this region, are helping to sustain local businesses, allowing bars and shops to flourish, and keeping construction companies and maintenance crews active.

At the same time, they are vacuuming up much of the available housing, leading to bidding wars and inflated prices. The ambitions of many second-home seekers from outside the area are frustrated, but so are the desires of locals looking for primary residences. Houses listed far above their appraisal values sell to buyers with suitcases of cash. Property taxes threaten to rise. Hearts break. Lives are disrupted.

Patricia, a 55-year-old nurse who lives in Rockland County, in the southern Hudson Valley, and who asked that her last name not be divulged in case it scuttled her chances of buying a house, was so confident that she could find the upstate home of her dreams that she and her husband sold their farmhouse in August before completing their search.

They wanted a historic property in turnkey condition with at least two acres and a swimming pool. Now, after combing through listings and submitting half a dozen bids — all rejected — they are resigned to settling for a fixer-upper that breaks their $650,000 budget. They have until May — when the new owners take possession of their Rockland County house — to find it.

“We have a lead on something because somebody has passed away, and somebody who knew somebody who knew somebody said it might work for us,” she said.

Ten New York counties make up the Hudson Valley, from Westchester to Rensselaer on the east side of the river, and from Rockland to Albany on the west side. From January 2020 through January 2021, the average median sale price of a home in Columbia County, where Hillsdale is located, rose 13.6 percent, from $266,250 to $302,500, according to the New York State Association of Realtors. (This is close to the national median sale price as of January of $303,900, a year-over-year increase of 14.1 percent.)

In Dutchess County, just south of Columbia County, the median sale price rose 30.3 percent through 2020, arriving at $358,250 in January.

As with overheated markets throughout the country, these price hikes reflect a diminishing supply. In that same period, the average number of residences for sale in both Columbia and Dutchess counties dropped 37 percent, as owners clung to their homes as refuges, rented them at juicy rates or realized that they could sell at a profit, but then where would they go?

Robert Bradway, who owns a plumbing and heating business in Hillsdale, said he knows people in the community who have chosen to cash out and move as far away as South Carolina. “If I was on the brink of wanting to go somewhere else, it would be the time,” he said.

But Mr. Bradway, 38, is running a surging business, thanks in large part to the second-home community. In the first, cold months of the pandemic, he got houses ready for owners who planned to use them as shelters and wanted to cram in extended family members and friends. Mr. Bradway had to install bigger hot water heaters and replace sewer lines to support the overload.

In summer, he was busy with air conditioning. Through the fall and into winter, he repaired frozen pipes in houses where absent owners neglected to turn off the water, and set fixtures for increasingly large and lavish new builds.

He said he is thankful but somewhat weary. His team of seven, including him and his wife, Rachael, went from 40-hour to 80-hour workweeks in March “and never looked back.” Eventually he added three people, but it was still not enough to meet rapid demand. Some of his newer clients have shown little tolerance for delays, he said, chalking up their impatience to a lack of familiarity with the town and its rhythms, and possibly to pandemic-related stress.

“There would be no problem growing the business to twice or three times what it was if the employees were here,” Mr. Bradway said. But “it’s tough in this area to find qualified help for what we do.”

West of the Hudson River, in the tiny Ulster County hamlet of Accord, Jacob Meglio also has found profit — and some ambivalence — in the influx of newcomers. Mr. Meglio, 32, is a co-founder and managing partner of Arrowood Farm, a brewery and distillery that grows much of the produce it uses and was able to keep its bar open this winter for the first time in five years of operation.

Born in nearby Kingston and a citizen of Accord, he views this windfall through a double lens. The pandemic has been “great for business, but challenging for the people we care about,” he said.

“Airbnb’s the third rail around here,” he noted. “People either own one or they don’t, and they begrudge each other because of it.” From the business side, Airbnbs are a boon — the renters often patronize his bar. From the community side, the price of houses that used to rent for $1,000 have quintupled, “and it’s totally inaccessible for regular folks.”

Mr. Meglio pointed to a long-term trend of urbanites discovering the Hudson Valley. His own parents moved from New York City in the late 1980s, and there was a large wave after 9/11. Like many of his peers, he left Ulster County to attend college and have a look at the world, returning in 2012.

The area has always had poverty, he said. What is different now is the number of ***working-class*** people who are struggling to find affordable housing. And some of his peers who moved away would like to repatriate but are shut out of the market. (The median sale price in the county in January was $275,000, a year-over-year increase of 14.6 percent; at that time, there were 682 homes for sale, a year-over-year decline of 42.3 percent.)

“It’s not so much that change is happening, but that it’s happening so fast. What is the collateral damage?” Mr. Meglio asked.

The [*Housing Action Plan*](https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/planning/2021_uc_hap.pdf), a report released this month by Ulster County, describes a crisis that was years in the making but sharply exacerbated by the pandemic. It found that in two-thirds of the county’s municipalities, a family earning “a typical income” could afford fewer than 10 percent of the homes that were on the market last fall. Among its recommendations is investigating scattered sites and buildings that could be developed and repurposed for residential use. Next year, construction will begin where a jail now stands in Kingston to create 80 units each of senior and work force housing affordable to people making between 30 and 130 percent of the median income in the area.

Throughout the Hudson Valley, communities are struggling to loosen the economic chokehold on the housing market. They are regulating short-term rentals, approving accessory dwelling units, imposing transfer taxes on high-value properties [*to subsidize environmental protections and enacting other measures designed to increase equity*](https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/planning/2021_uc_hap.pdf) that are promoted by old-timers and newcomers alike.

Tod Wohlfarth, a creative marketing director who moved into his weekend house in Hillsdale in 2014 and has been active in Democratic politics in both the town and Columbia County, acknowledges a persistent divide between the haves and have-nots. It dates, he said, from more than a century ago, when the Hudson Valley was a refuge for New Yorkers fleeing outbreaks of cholera and yellow fever. It accelerated in the last eight years, after the economic downturn diverted wealth to the region from places like the Hamptons and Martha’s Vineyard. And it is sustained by high-speed internet, which has allowed people earning their living beyond the community to remain and work remotely in what is often a bubble.

But Mr. Wohlfarth, 50, who labored to bring broadband to Hillsdale, believes remote work is its future. He also dreams of more vocational training for area job seekers, a transfer tax that could be diverted to finance affordable housing, and a mentorship program at the schools that would bring together some of the highly successful part-timers with the local population. “If you have a community that’s really only here Saturday and Sunday, there’s a disconnect, he said. “They don’t feel invested.”

A lack of emotional investment is what Patricia, the nurse in Rockland County, fears from her competitors in the market for antique homes. Given how tetchy an old house can be, she was surprised to find herself competing with so many eager bidders. Were the properties being scooped up out of desperation? Would the buyers gut their interiors to make them over in the image of the houses they couldn’t find? Would “these treasures,” as she described them, end up looking like everything else?

And what will she do if she doesn’t secure her own treasure by May? “We’ll put our stuff in storage and maybe rent a motor house and camp out on my nephew’s lawn,” she said.

For weekly email updates on residential real estate news, [*sign up here*](https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/planning/2021_uc_hap.pdf). Follow us on Twitter: [*@nytrealestate*](https://ulstercountyny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/planning/2021_uc_hap.pdf).

PHOTOS: Hillsdale, N.Y., above, has had a surge in new construction. Joseph Walters and Meghan McCann, above right with their dog, Reilly, have been looking for over a year for a house in Columbia County, where they grew up. Jacob Meglio, right, with his dog, Kiva, is a founder of Arrowood Farm, a brewery and distillery in Accord, N.Y. The pandemic has been “great for business,” he said, but housing has become “totally inaccessible for regular folks.” Below, Kerhonkson, in Ulster County, is home to a big garden gnome. Bottom, Tod Wohlfarth, with his dog, Orange, helped bring broadband to Hillsdale. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (RE10)

**Load-Date:** March 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Here to Help; 5 Great Movies on HBO Max***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:605H-3571-JBG3-60X3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 18, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1374 words

**Byline:** By Jason Bailey

**Body**

Getting started on the new streaming service? Here's a guide to some of the best film offerings, from classics to contemporary hits.

The landing was a bit rougher than expected, but HBO Max has arrived, offering up an all-you-can-eat buffet of HBO programming, hit sitcoms and streaming originals. And, of course, there are movies -- thousands of them, pulled from a wide array of blockbuster franchises and canon classics. It's a lot of programming to choose from (10,000 hours, we're told), so here's a quick tour through some of the highlights and entry points:

'Citizen Kane'

Stream it here.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

When AT&T shuttered the movie-buff-friendly FilmStruck streaming service in 2018, the company promised an extensive classics library for what eventually became HBO Max. And they weren't kidding; the Turner Classic Movies-branded tab of the Max interface boasts such all-time favorites as ''Singin' in the Rain,'' ''Casablanca'' and ''Ben-Hur.'' But if you're looking to dive into Hollywood's Golden Age, why not start with the film routinely singled out as the best of them all? HBO Max is the exclusive streaming service home of Orson Welles's 1941 masterpiece, the fast-paced and funny chronicle of the rise and fall of an American media tycoon -- a picture as delightfully entertaining as it was technically and structurally innovative.

'City Lights'

Stream it here.

The TCM tab is currently spotlighting the work of one of the greatest filmmakers and performers of all time, Charlie Chaplin, and it's an excellent representation of his filmography. It's tough to say where to start, but you can't go wrong with ''City Lights,'' the tender story of Chaplin's Little Tramp and the blind flower girl (Virginia Cherrill) he befriends and helps to see again. Their heart-rending reunion makes for one of the most moving conclusions in all of movies, and this remarkable picture -- which Chaplin released as a silent film with music and sound effects in 1931, well after the age of talkies began -- serves as a potent reminder of the power of cinematic pantomime.

'Bicycle Thieves'

Stream it here.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The carefully curated Criterion Collection was one of the highlights of the FilmStruck platform, and its subsequent spinoff service, The Criterion Channel, remains the gold standard for cinephile streaming. But the 200 or so Criterion titles included with HBO Max are an excellent introductory film studies course, with generous helpings of the essentials: Bergman, Fellini, Kurosawa ... and Godzilla. But Vittorio De Sica's 1948 masterpiece may be the best place to start. A key entry in the neorealist movement that defined postwar Italian cinema, it concerns a ***working-class*** father whose bicycle -- crucial to his work and thus his ability to feed his family -- is stolen. But it's much more than a simple story of lost and found; De Sica and his cast (none of them trained actors) beautifully capture the fear and desperation of living on the brink of poverty.

'My Neighbor Totoro'

Stream it here.

HBO Max grabbed headlines with its pricey acquisitions of series like ''Friends'' and ''The Big Bang Theory,'' but film fans were delighted that the service landed the great white whale of the digital age: streaming rights to the Studio Ghibli catalog. HBO Max's 21-film selection represents the bulk of the feature output from the Japanese animation studio, and while the best of the bunch is up for debate, Hayao Miyazaki's 1988 feature is easily the best introduction to the studio's distinctive style, a delightful combination of animated exaggeration and detail-oriented, character-driven realism. ''Totoro,'' the story of two young girls and the wood spirits they befriend, is vivacious and warmhearted, trafficking in the everyday magic and fertile imagination of childhood.

'Wonder Woman'

Stream it here.

The service's DC-branded tab is very much a work in progress -- presumably because of the complexities of licensing deals, it's missing such beloved comic book-inspired properties as the original ''Superman'' movies and the Christopher Nolan-directed ''Dark Knight'' trilogy. But the tab does include Tim Burton's Batman films, last year's Oscar-winning ''Joker'' origin story, and Patty Jenkins's smash 2017 big-screen take on the iconic superheroine, with Gal Gadot charismatically deflecting bullets and swinging her Lasso of Truth as the Amazonian princess who saves humanity from evil during World War I.

'Behind the Candelabra'

Stream it here.

Since the 1983 broadcast of ''The Terry Fox Story,'' the first made-for-HBO movie, the network has attracted numerous marquee directors -- including Mike Nichols, Barry Levinson, Dee Rees and Steven Soderbergh, who won widespread acclaim for this 2013 snapshot of Liberace's later years. Michael Douglas is pitch-perfect as the flamboyant yet closeted entertainer, capturing the charisma and charm of his public persona while ably downshifting in his tender moments with Scott Thorson (Matt Damon), the young lover who tells the story.

'At the Heart of Gold: Inside the USA Gymnastics Scandal'

Stream it here.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

HBO's documentaries have celebrated cultural figures, revisited historical events and addressed social ills. One of the most affecting is Erin Lee Carr's exposé of Dr. Larry Nassar, the notorious abuser of hundreds of young gymnasts. Carr addresses the crimes (in all their explicit and sickening detail), the psychology of their perpetrator, and the power structures that allowed him to get away with it for so long. But her focus is on the victims, and the heavy burden of guilt and shame they carried for so long (and still carry). It's a piercing documentary and an upsetting experience, but most of all, it's a film about believing women -- before it's too late.

'Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban'

Stream it here.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The streaming exclusivity of the eight filmed adaptations of J.K. Rowling's best-selling book series is another of HBO Max's big selling points, and all of the movies have their fine qualities -- yes, even the first two entries. But the first great film in the franchise (and, arguably, still its best) was the third, in which the future Oscar winner Alfonso Cuarón (of ''Roma'' and ''Gravity'') took the wheel, augmenting the familiar characters and iconography with a dash of his own moral complexity and subtle pathos.

'Her Smell'

Stream it here.

Thankfully, the service's contemporary offerings aren't just limited to blockbusters. Many a memorable indie picture is nestled in the Max catalog, including Ryan Fleck and Anna Boden's ''Half Nelson,'' Debra Granik's ''Winter's Bone,'' Gerardo Naranjo's ''Miss Bala'' and this scorching musical drama from the writer and director Alex Ross Perry. Elisabeth Moss comes on like a hurricane as Becky Something, a Courtney Love-esque punk rock star whose inner demons and self-destructive behavior threaten to collapse her career -- a descent and resurrection captured in a series of unnervingly claustrophobic backstage meltdowns and recording studio encounters.

'Us'

Stream it here.

Lest we forget, for years upon years, the primary draw of HBO was right there in the name: Home Box Office, i.e., going to the movies without leaving your home. In those distant, pre-''Sopranos,'' pre-''Sex and the City'' days, people mostly watched HBO to see big Hollywood movies, a year or so after their theatrical runs. And there are plenty of those too: Charlize Theron and Seth Rogen in ''Long Shot,'' the Bradley Cooper and Lady Gaga-fronted ''A Star Is Born'' or Jordan Peele's mind-bending horror thriller ''Us.'' It may well be the best of the bunch, not only for its inventive screenplay, goosebump-raising suspense, and terrific performances (particularly a chilling, double-edged turn by Lupita Nyong'o), but also for sheer nostalgia: it's exactly the kind of nightmare-fueled horror picture that us children of the '80s loved to tiptoe out of our bedrooms in the middle of the night to sneak-watch on HBO.

Update June 10, 2020: HBO Max has temporarily dropped ''Gone With the Wind'' from its lineup. A brief mention of it has been removed from this article.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/05/movies/best-movies-hbo-max.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/05/movies/best-movies-hbo-max.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Lupita Nyong'o in ''Us,'' from the director Jordan Peele. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Claudette Barius/Universal Pictures FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***He’s a Rare House Republican in a District Trump Lost. Can He Hold On?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6163-BK81-DXY4-X1HV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1474 words

**Byline:** Luis Ferré-Sadurní

**Highlight:** Representative John Katko has managed to keep his seat in Central New York by distancing himself from the president. Will that be enough this year?

**Body**

Representative John Katko has managed to keep his seat in Central New York by distancing himself from the president. Will that be enough this year?

Two years ago, a pair of House Republicans in Central New York became prime targets for the Democratic Party, which had hoped to unseat them in the midterm elections by exploiting voters’ unhappiness with President Trump.

The strategy partially worked: Claudia Tenney, a staunch Republican defender of Mr. Trump, was defeated by Anthony Brindisi, a Democrat. But Representative John M. Katko, a more moderate Republican, managed to hold off his Democratic challenger, Dana Balter.

All four candidates are back this year, and Mr. Trump seems even more of a divisive force now than in the midterm elections — a factor that Democrats hope will push Ms. Balter to victory in the 24th Congressional District this time around.

The district, anchored in the city of Syracuse and dotted with farmlands and university towns, was one of the few House districts in the country whose voters favored Hillary Clinton in 2016, but which Republicans still hold.

“My overall sense is that people here are less interested in what party you’re affiliated with than they are interested in who are you fighting for, whose side are you on,” said Ms. Balter, a community organizer and former Syracuse University professor.

“One of the reasons that Congressman Katko had been successful in holding onto this seat is that he’s been masquerading as a moderate for years,” she added.

Indeed, Mr. Katko often references his history of working across party lines. He has voted for most Republican priorities, but he was one of 20 Republicans to vote [*against a G.O.P. bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) in 2017. In 2019, he was ranked the [*second most bipartisan*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) member of Congress, according to an index released by the nonprofit Lugar Center and Georgetown University.

“That’s a remarkable record and I’m very proud of that, because that’s what this district wants,” Mr. Katko, a former federal prosecutor, said during an October debate. “I’m a centrist and a moderate, and I respect my opponent for her tenacity, but she is a far-left person and she just doesn’t fit this district.”

Mr. Katko’s campaign did not make the congressman available for an interview.

His moderate stances have enabled him to claim an unusual distinction: Mr. Katko’s district is now the only Democratic-leaning House district in the country to be held by a Republican, according to [*the Cook Partisan Voter Index*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill), which measures how strongly a district leans toward either party.

Cook ranked the contest between Mr. Katko and Ms. Balter as [*a tossup*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill), as did a recent Siena College poll, which showed the candidates in a dead heat — a reflection of Mr. Katko’s strong crossover appeal, but also of Ms. Balter’s headway as an upstart candidate.

“For years, Katko has been Democrats’ white whale,” said David Wasserman, House editor of the Cook Political Report. “He’s been able to survive in a Democratic district, but the problem this time is he endorsed Trump at the beginning of the year, when it looked that might benefit him politically with his base. But since then, Trump’s fortunes have fallen.”

With a small likelihood of riding on Mr. Trump’s coattails, Mr. Katko is aiming to reassemble the coalition that got him elected three times in a district that voted for President Barack Obama twice.

The strategy includes Republican voters, of course, but also enough independent voters, who account for 25 percent of active voters in the district, and Democrats to offset the edge Democrats currently hold over Republicans [*in voter registration*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill).

The 24th District — which borders Lake Ontario and includes all of Cayuga, Onondaga and Wayne Counties — has a moderate streak, with a history of seesawing between representatives from both parties.

In 2016, when Ms. Clinton won the area by about four percentage points, Mr. Katko won his race in a landslide, making him one of the 25 Republicans to win in districts Ms. Clinton carried.

But buoyed by national anti-Trump fervor, Democrats flipped 22 of those Republican-held seats in 2018 to retake control of the House. Mr. Katko survived that trend, a testament to his shrewd handling of the electoral landscape despite Mr. Trump’s unpopularity.

“Katko, to date, had been pretty good at weathering different political climates and storms,” said Luke Perry, director of the Utica College [*Center of Public Affairs and Election Research*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill). “He was elected under multiple administrations and his favorability was always pretty good. But Biden has changed the dynamics.”

To win, Ms. Balter will also have to attract independent voters and win by wide enough margins in Syracuse, a liberal stronghold, to offset Mr. Katko’s support in the rural counties.

Her brand of [*progressive policy stances*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill), from expanding affordable health care to raising the minimum wage, resonates in a region with a “Rust Belt mind-set,” according to Bruce Gyory, a Democratic consultant.

She could also get a substantial boost from a big victory by Joseph R. Biden Jr. — recent polls found he has a double-digit lead in the district — especially if older voters and suburban women who have [*turned their backs on Mr. Trump*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) turn out en masse and vote Democrat in down-ballot races.

Mr. Katko has outpaced his opponent in fund-raising, [*raising $3.5 million*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) as of Oct. 14, compared with Ms. Balter’s $2.7 million. He also had more cash on hand heading into the final stretch of the campaign.

But an influx of money from super PACs and both parties’ congressional campaign committees has placed the race among the top 25 in the country to attract the most [*outside spending*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill), with [*the majority of it*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill), about $5.4 million, directed against Mr. Katko.

Amid an onslaught of negative ads in recent weeks, the candidates participated in [*their final debate on Sunday*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill), when their differences — and the ever-present shadow of Mr. Trump — were on full display. They disagreed on everything from taxes and health care to climate change.

Ms. Balter sought to pin Mr. Trump’s handling of the pandemic on Mr. Katko, who endorsed Mr. Trump [*in January*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) — a sharp contrast to 2016, when he called on Mr. Trump to drop out after the release of the “Access Hollywood” tape. He has said he wrote in the name of Nikki Haley, the former United Nations ambassador, on the 2016 presidential ballot.

“As I’ve said, Donald Trump is the most dangerous and corrupt president of our lifetime and is making us less safe with every passing week,” Ms. Balter said. “And it says a lot about the congressman’s judgment that he chooses to endorse him.”

Mr. Katko, who has said he supports Mr. Trump’s tax cuts and trade policies despite being troubled by the president’s conduct and rhetoric, sought to assert his independence from the president.

“I’m not Donald Trump,” said Mr. Katko, who voted against impeaching Mr. Trump, when asked if the race had devolved into a referendum on the president.

He added, “For those who are undecided, please keep in mind that I’ll work with anybody, including President Biden, if he wins.”

Ms. Balter, who taught public policy at Syracuse University’s Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, her alma mater, has mostly centered her campaign on liberal policies, especially “Medicare for all” and getting corporate money out of politics.

On the campaign trail, she has pitched [*her personal story*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) as one synonymous with that of ***working-class*** New Yorkers. She talks about her brother’s cognitive disabilities, juggling three jobs in college and nearly going bankrupt after suffering a head injury and being denied health coverage.

Her race is one of three 2020 New York races the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee poured money into as part of its national [*Red to Blue*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) program. The committee supported two other Republican seats that Democrats also [*came close to winning*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) in 2018, on Long Island.

Two years ago, Mr. Brindisi made the committee’s Red to Blue list, using its backing to defeat Ms. Tenney by [*4,473 votes*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) in the 22nd District, just east of Syracuse.

This year, the district has 28,000 more registered active Republicans than Democrats, and a sizable contingent of unaffiliated voters. In 2016, Mr. Trump won the district by 15 percentage points.

In her bid to reclaim her seat, Ms. Tenney has not shied away from the president, who endorsed her earlier this year, even though [*a recent poll indicated*](https://katko.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/icymi-rep-katko-why-i-voted-against-gop-healthcare-bill) that Mr. Trump is far less popular in the 22nd District than he was four years ago.

PHOTOS: Dana Balter, center, in the Westcott section of Syracuse. She is trying to unseat the Republican John Katko in the 24th district. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HEATHER AINSWORTH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Mr. Katko has kept his seat in a Democratic-leaning district with a record as one of the most moderate Republicans in Congress. (POOL PHOTO BY ANNA MONEYMAKER)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2020

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[***'2020 Can Go to Hell'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60P7-7N51-DXY4-X0NC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 27, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 19

**Length:** 1329 words

**Byline:** By Jack Healy

**Body**

LAKE BERRYESSA, Calif. -- In the sprawling destruction of California's wildfires, one photo became an instant icon for 2020's miseries: On a hillside roaring with flames stood a sign that asked visitors to a senior center to wear masks, wash their hands and be safe. ''Come Join Us,'' it beckoned creepily.

The virus. Lost jobs. A world aflame.

Yep, said Judi Vollmer, whose trailer home down the road from the sign burned down last week, just days after she learned that her 92-year-old father had tested positive for the coronavirus -- that pretty much sums up life right now.

Ms. Vollmer, 65, was succinct: ''2020 can go to hell. This has been the worst year of my life.''

Somehow, that welcome sign outside the Lake Berryessa senior center was still standing on Tuesday as residents trickled back through police barricades and road closures to check out what little had survived.

Three people were killed -- one of them a 71-year-old man in a wheelchair -- when flames swarmed their mountainside property. Family members said they had tried to escape, but as a last resort took refuge in a homemade ''burn shelter.'' Relatives identified the victims as Mary Hintemeyer, 70, her boyfriend, Leo McDermott, 71, and Mr. McDermott's 41-year-old son, Tom.

Much of the lakefront community of retirees and young families who commute to landscaping, winery and service jobs in wealthier corners of Napa County had been reduced to a thicket of tangled steel and ash.

Now, as people in this community of 1,700 salvaged chipped tea saucers and wooden lanterns from the char of about 100 destroyed homes, their worries were a microcosm of the question haunting so many people during this season of pandemic and strife: Would they ever get their old lives back?

''We've lost so many people who won't be back,'' said Jerry Rehmke, 80, who runs the country store with his wife, Marcia Ritz, 77. Her trailer home, with all of the drawings and paintings she had made, burned in the Spanish Flat Villa mobile home park, along with Ms. Vollmer's trailer and about 50 others.

''Everything,'' Ms. Ritz said. ''It's down to the ground.''

The constellation of wildfires staining California's skies and stinging people's lungs across the West have now killed seven and destroyed at least 1,690 homes and other buildings, officials said. It is still early in a wildfire season expected to rage through the fall. So as 15,000 firefighters pushed to gain control of the blazes around the state, thousands of families who evacuated are now streaming back and wondering whether they will have to flee again.

On Wednesday, Gov. Gavin Newsom said the accounting of death and damage could rise as people return home. ''We've never seen fire of this scale in this part of the state,'' he said. ''It demonstrates the reality -- not just the point of view -- of climate change and its impact in this state.''

Ms. Ritz moved to Lake Berryessa 13 years ago and took over running the country store (which survived, as did some marinas and campgrounds). Their store actually boomed during the pandemic as stir-crazy boaters and anglers flooded the area and snapped up orders of chicken sandwiches and meatloaf. That is over now, and faced with years of rebuilding and a bleak economic future, Ms. Ritz said she was ready to quit altogether.

''Our customers have gone,'' Ms. Ritz said on Tuesday morning, a few minutes after she woke up from another night sleeping outside on an air mattress beside the country store. ''By the end of the year I'll be out. This is it.''

Her husband piped up: ''We should take down the sign that says 'Only Five People in the Store.' There may not be five people up here.''

It was never simple living along Lake Berryessa, a reservoir stocked with trout and catfish that is also famous for a drain that creates a vortex-like hole during wet years. Work is scarce, and cities and groceries are a 40-minute drive along vertiginous mountain roads. The roads can glaze with ice in the winter, and on 90-degree summer days, pints of ice cream melt into soup before you can get them home.

People said they moved from bigger cities because they liked the rural quiet and seeing mountain lions out their windows. On Tuesday morning, a singed fox limped through the mobile home park, paying no heed to the residents and power crews in the street.

Some people had been drawn to the lake by California's affordable-housing crisis, pushed out of the rest of Napa. They said this was one of the last corners of affordable housing for people earning minimum wage or living off Social Security in a county where the average home costs more than $700,000.

Fire had always been a threat, but evacuations and smoke have gotten even more common as climate change compounds the risk of fires in what is known as the wildland-urban interface. Hillsides overgrown with dry fuel are broiling, and the greenery that people say they cherish about life here has gone as brown as scorched crust.

For the past four years, people around the lake said they watched fires march toward their homes, only to be beaten back. The local Lions Club would donate money to fire victims. Local officials installed a cache of emergency beds and supplies and a big new generator at the senior center to be used as a fallback spot, residents said.

''We know what devastation it does,'' Pam Stadnyk, whose trailer home burned, including the wood deck she had just put in, said as she walked through the area on Tuesday for the first time since the fires. ''We've been living with it. You just get to a point where you --'' and she trailed off.

Months of the pandemic already had worn on the mobile home park's ***working-class*** residents. Some lost work at Napa's wineries and restaurants.

Edward Morrison, 57, had lost overtime work doing delivery runs to businesses that closed as the pandemic dragged on. One of his sons had been living near Paradise last year when a wildfire gutted the town and killed more than 50 people. Now, his trailer was rubble and his cat was missing. He called a dispatcher.

''Your address?'' she asked Mr. Morrison.

''Well my address burned down,'' he said.

Ms. Vollmer, who had lived at the lake for 18 years, kept working throughout the pandemic. Her $13-an-hour job at the country store was considered essential work, and though she had asthma and customers sometimes refused to wear masks, she kept going and did not get sick.

She had stayed away from her 92-year-old father's nursing home since February until a couple of weeks ago, when Ms. Vollmer said she got a call telling her that he had tested positive for the coronavirus. Ms. Vollmer said that he had Alzheimer's disease and sometimes did not know if she was his daughter or wife, but that he seemed fine when she visited him through his window recently.

''I don't know if it could get any more stressful than this,'' she said.

The fire, like the pandemic, has hit California's poorest residents hardest. Homeowners able to keep up with the complications and rising costs of insuring property in a fire zone had a safety net. But Ms. Vollmer said her carrier dropped her after a wildfire a few years ago. The trailer was her life's investment and her retirement plan, and it burned alongside the $3,000 in cash she had tucked away inside.

The Red Cross is putting her up in a hotel near the airport in Napa along with three of her five cats -- the ones she was able to rescue. She received a paper bag stuffed with donated clothes, but said she did not know where to go at the end of the week when her hotel stay was up.

She said she loved the community. When her husband died eight years ago, people took up a collection to pay for his cremation. She said she did not know how to start over at 65.

''We're survivors from up there,'' she said. ''We dodged the bullet so many times. We always were OK.''

Jill Cowan contributed reporting from Los Angeles.Jill Cowan contributed reporting from Los Angeles.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/26/us/california-wildfires-lake-berryessa.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/26/us/california-wildfires-lake-berryessa.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: An ironic, but not funny, image from Napa County, Calif., where fires have destroyed scores of homes, including at the Spanish Flat Villa mobile park, top. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NOAH BERGER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

MAX WHITTAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Andrea Shumate comforted her husband, Josh, as he sifted through the remains of his grandmother's home at the Spanish Flat mobile park. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAX WHITTAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 27, 2020

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[***Feminist Factions United and Filled the Streets for This Historic March***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60P1-KMV1-DXY4-X39P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 26, 2020 Wednesday 15:25 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1392 words

**Byline:** Maggie Doherty

**Highlight:** In 1970, on the 50th anniversary of suffrage, the Women’s Strike for Equality brought together a diverse group of protesters.

**Body**

The 1970 Women’s Strike for Equality was the largest women’s rights demonstration since the era of suffrage — and more inclusive than anything that had been seen before. Fifty years to the day after suffragists secured the vote for American women, tens of thousands of women took to the streets of New York to commemorate this past success and to demand “the unfinished business of our equality.”

All women were invited, and many showed up. “Every kind of woman you ever see in New York was there,” The New York Times [*reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/30/archives/it-was-a-great-day-for-women-on-the-march.html) on Aug. 30, 1970. “Limping octogenarians, braless teenagers, Black Panther women, telephone operators, waitresses, Westchester matrons, fashion models, Puerto Rican factory workers, nurses in uniform, young mothers carrying babies on their backs.” There were even some men.

The evening of Aug. 26 was warm and windy, and Manhattan’s streets were filled. Crowds surged along Fifth Avenue, with people toting signs and chanting. Marchers had a permit but disregarded the city’s order to stay in a single traffic lane. They spilled over barricades, tangling up traffic and disrupting business as usual. Too many of them had been trapped indoors for too long. It was time to be outside, together, in public.

Betty Friedan, the author of “The Feminine Mystique” and a co-founder of the [*National Organization for Women (NOW)*](https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/30/archives/it-was-a-great-day-for-women-on-the-march.html), was unusually open to a younger, often angrier generation. Her book might have narrowly focused on white housewives, but as an organizer, she was eager to build coalitions with ***working-class*** women and women of color. She collaborated closely with the lawyer and activist Pauli Murray, the first Black student to earn a juris doctorate degree from Yale Law School; together, they developed the idea for NOW. When NOW elected its first slate of officers, the Black union organizer Aileen Hernandez was elected executive vice president, and she later served as president of the organization.

Friedan, then 49, was likewise open to the self-styled “radical feminists,” young women, many of them white, who believed that society needed a total overhaul. Everything had to change, from federal policies to personal habits: no more bras, no more natural childbirth, no more sex with men.

While “traditional” women’s organizations, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution and the League of Women Voters, denounced the young militants (“[*so many of them are just so unattractive*](https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/30/archives/it-was-a-great-day-for-women-on-the-march.html)”), Friedan wanted to forge an alliance with her younger counterparts. She knew who could help her build a mass movement, and it was not the Junior League. Instead, she focused on the radical feminist cells — New York Radical Feminists, [*Redstockings*](https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/30/archives/it-was-a-great-day-for-women-on-the-march.html) — that were springing up all over New York.

When it came to second-wave feminism’s coming-out party, these radical women were on the guest list. They would link arms with Black feminists, immigrants, socialists and well-to-do white housewives.

The midtown march was part of a day of decentralized actions. In many major American cities, there were events, from “baby-ins,” which protested the lack of affordable child care, to mock garden parties and teach-ins about welfare and unions. These actions were in the service of three main demands: free abortion on demand in every state; free, 24-hour, community-run child-care centers; and equal opportunity in education and employment.

Though she called it a strike, Friedan had always intended the event to be a symbolic act, not a true labor action. She hoped women would stop doing traditional feminine work — both paid and unpaid — for one day, but what she really wanted was to make women’s liberation visible. Rather than “cooking dinner or making love,” women would rally in public squares and “occupy for the night the political decision-making arena.” Out of the bedroom and into the streets.

The strike demonstrated “the awesome political power of 53 percent of the population,” she said. But it was hard to get members of this “oppressed majority” on the same page. Socialist feminists had little time for the professionalism and politicking of NOW. And many lesbians felt marginalized within the movement, since Friedan had recently called them a “lavender menace.” But they showed up in force anyway. At an evening rally in Bryant Park, a member of Radicalesbians described the police brutality that lesbians faced. “We’re your sisters and we need your help!” she pleaded.

Black women, whose experiences of oppression have historically been diminished or dismissed by white feminists, arrived at the New York march with acute and utterly different concerns. Organizers of the Third World Women’s Alliance (T.W.W.A.) carried a banner demanding “Hands Off Angela Davis,” the Black activist who had recently been arrested. As Frances Beal, a T.W.W.A. leader, remembered it, a leader of NOW confronted her group and told them, “Angela Davis has nothing to do with women’s liberation.” Beal disagreed, saying, “It has nothing to do with the kind of liberation you’re talking about, but it has everything to do with the kind of liberation we’re talking about.”

Today, when so much political discussion happens online, and “blocking” someone requires only the flick of a finger, it can be hard to imagine such politically divergent groups making common cause. Then, the stakes felt high enough — and change felt close enough — that all kinds of women joined forces and walked together in the same direction. There were anywhere from 10,000 and 50,000 participants in New York City alone. Five thousand women gathered on Boston Common, 2,000 in San Francisco’s Union Square, 1,000 in Washington, another 1,000 in Los Angeles and hundreds more in cities like Baltimore, Seattle and Dayton, Ohio. Such a massive demonstration for women’s rights wouldn’t be seen again until the 2017 Women’s Marches, judged to be the largest demonstration in U.S. history.

As women marched, hecklers — mostly men, some wearing brassieres mockingly — stood on the sidelines, throwing pennies and jeering, “You look pretty good for being oppressed!” Two women’s groups, Men Our Master’s (MOM) and the Pussy-Cat League, Inc. (slogan: “Purr, Baby, Purr”) also held their own counterprotests. But for many women, Aug. 26, 1970, was just a normal day full of errands and chores. “We’re busy squeezing tomatoes like we do every day,” said one shopper, flanked by her three children.

The day ended at 8 p.m. in Bryant Park, with a series of speeches. Friedan thanked God that she was born a woman. The future congresswoman Bella Abzug drew cheers when she reiterated the day’s three core demands. Eleanor Holmes Norton, chair of the city’s Commission on Human Rights, demanded that the Senate pass the Equal Rights Amendment (E.R.A.). Kate Millett, who earned her Ph.D. at Columbia University in New York and was the author of the best-selling book “Sexual Politics,” surveyed the women before her. “You’re beautiful — I love you,” she said. “At last we have a movement.”

In the weeks after the strike, NOW’s membership increased by 50 percent, and a CBS News poll found that four out of five people had read or heard about women’s liberation. In 1972, Title IX passed, guaranteeing equality in education. In 1973, the Supreme Court ruled in Roe v. Wade that women had the constitutional right to access abortion services without excessive government interference. But just one year after the strike, President Richard Nixon crushed one of the movement’s major goals by vetoing a national child care bill, warning that it would amount to [*“a long leap into the dark for the United States government and the American people.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/30/archives/it-was-a-great-day-for-women-on-the-march.html)

Today, [*the*](https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/30/archives/it-was-a-great-day-for-women-on-the-march.html) [*gender pay gap has narrowed*](https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/30/archives/it-was-a-great-day-for-women-on-the-march.html), and according to a Pew Research Center poll, [*61 percent of American women*](https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/30/archives/it-was-a-great-day-for-women-on-the-march.html) think the term “feminist” describes them well. Yet 45 percent of this same group think feminism is not inclusive.

That was exactly the issue that Friedan had in mind when planning 1970 Women’s Strike, insisting that the action be for all women, including and especially for groups “whose style, origins, structure and general ambience might be quite different from ours.”

PHOTO: The Women’s Strike for Equality was meant to mark the 50th anniversary of suffrage in the United States, but also form a new feminist coalition. Aug. 26, 1970. (PHOTOGRAPH BY John Olson/The LIFE Picture Collection, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 3, 2020

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[***The Coronavirus Debate; On Politics With Lisa Lerer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YF8-NWH1-JBG3-644J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1236 words

**Byline:** Lisa Lerer

**Highlight:** A crisis can provide a sharper view of how candidates approach the problems facing the country.

**Body**

A crisis can provide a sharper view of how candidates approach the problems facing the country.

Good morning and 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, taking over the morning edition for our debate recap.

[*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) to get On Politics in your inbox every weekday.

It’s a good thing that last night’s debate wasn’t taking place in California, because both candidates would have been forced to violate new state guidelines to attend.

On Sunday afternoon, Gov. Gavin Newsom [*called for all residents 65 years and older*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) to isolate themselves at home. Both Joe Biden, 77, and Bernie Sanders, 78, would have fallen into that category.

I mention that new rule as a way of underscoring how quickly and profoundly American life changed over the weekend, as [*the country grapples with the spread*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) of the coronavirus.

Crises have a way of clarifying distinctions. In last night’s debate, we got a much sharper glimpse into how Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders view the problems facing the country.

Both of the Democratic primary candidates dismissed President Trump’s approach as insufficient, embracing a much further-reaching government strategy to try to mitigate the health and economic impacts of the virus.

But the scope of their responses differed significantly. Mr. Biden focused on immediate solutions, saying he would call upon the military to help handle the situation and work to enact a “multi-multi-billion-dollar program.”

The virus, as he sees it, is a short-term problem that requires an American reckoning, but then life would return largely to normal.

“Regardless of whether my plan was in place or his, this is a crisis,” Mr. Biden said. “This is like we are being attacked from abroad. This is something that is of great consequence. This is like a war. And in a war, you do whatever is needed to be done to take care of your people.”

Mr. Sanders, meanwhile, sees the virus as a symptom of systemic problems in American society like income inequality, the power of big corporations and the demise of the ***working class***. He offered a more structural critique, rooted in the virus.

“As a result of the virus here, the coronavirus,” he said, “what we have got to do also is understand the fragility of the economy and how unjust and unfair it is that so few have so much and so many have so little.”

Mr. Biden shot back: “People are looking for results, not a revolution. They want to deal with the results they need right now.”

The two-man, audience-free debate certainly led to a more substantive discussion. There was no playing to the crowd or moderators dwelling on candidates without a clear shot at the nomination (ahem, Michael Bloomberg). Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders debated bankruptcy law, campaign finance, climate change, immigration, Social Security, the Iran deal, the Iraq war, abortion rights and foreign policy.

Mr. Sanders delivered a forceful performance, turning policy critiques into questions about Mr. Biden’s leadership and trustworthiness. Mr. Biden’s team appeared to expect a less aggressive approach from Mr. Sanders. Anita Dunn, a top Biden aide, later described her candidate’s debate performance as “graciously dealing with the kind of protester who often shows up at campaign events, on live television.”

But none of the disagreements were particularly new. Voters paying enough attention to understand the details of those policy-heavy spats had most likely already settled on a candidate and which side of the party’s ideological divide they favor.

In that way, this debate seemed unlikely to inspire the kind of fundamental shift that would be required for Mr. Sanders to win the nomination. (Of course, at a time when our daily lives feel so scrambled, it’s not out of the question that something surprising could happen with our politics.)

Whether or not Mr. Sanders defies the odds and captures the nomination, his worldview — and the energized wing of the Democratic Party that it represents — isn’t going away. And if Mr. Biden wants to win the general election, he needs to find a way to see Mr. Sanders less as a pesky protester and more as a key partner in his political coalition.

A few other moments worth noting:

* Paging Senators Amy Klobuchar, Kamala Harris, Elizabeth Warren and other would-be vice-presidential picks. The news out of this debate is that Mr. Biden [*committed outright*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) to picking a female running mate.   [*The push for a woman on the ticket*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) escalated after Ms. Warren dropped out of the race. For all you veepstakes lovers, this declaration isn’t that surprising but it does narrow Mr. Biden’s list of possibilities.

1. Beyond the shrunken field of candidates, [*debating in the time of coronavirus looks awfully different*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics). The podiums were placed six feet apart, in line with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for keeping a safe distance from others. Only a dozen people were physically present in the Washington television studio where the debate took place. Hand sanitizer was widely available, and the candidates greeted each other with a careful elbow bump.
2. Even if the logistics were different, it’s nice to see a campaign event happening, as so many primary elections are getting postponed. [*Georgia and Louisiana have delayed their presidential primaries*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), and Wyoming has suspended its in-person Democratic caucus voting. Yesterday, we reported that   [*New York officials are considering plans*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) to postpone the state’s presidential primary election from April 28 to June 23.
3. In an interview after the debate, Mr. Sanders suggested that holding primaries may not “make a lot of sense” right now. “I would hope governors listen to the public health experts,” he said. “I’m thinking about some of the elderly people sitting behind the desks, registering people, all that stuff. It does not make a lot of sense.”

Photo of the day

Podiums were cleaned before the start of the Democratic debate on Sunday. The debate was moved from a theater in Phoenix to a CNN television studio in Washington because of concerns about the coronavirus.

Want more debate coverage?

* Here’s the recap that’s on the front page of the newspaper: On matters beyond the virus, the two men clashed [*over their divergent policy agendas and records in office*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).

1. The coronavirus crisis brought Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders together for an unusual debate, and the debate highlighted their distance, [*our news analysis says*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).
2. We also have articles on Mr. Biden’s pledge [*to select a woman as his running mate*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), the candidates’   [*clash over Social Security*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), and their   [*strategies to stay safe from the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).
3. So, [*how well did Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders perform*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) in the debate? Campaign experts weighed in on the candidates’ first one-on-one clash, and we rounded up their reactions.
4. We [*fact-checked the candidates’ claims*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) on topics including the coronavirus response, their health care plans, super PACs, the Green New Deal, immigration and the auto bailout.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Democrats Take House Races Into G.O.P. Turf***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615G-0DY1-DXY4-X54N-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

House Democrats are training their resources on once-solid Republican footholds in affluent suburban districts where voters feel alienated by President Trump.

VERONA, N.Y. -- Pushing further into Republican territory one week before Election Day, Democrats are poised to expand their majority in the House while Republicans, weighed down by President Trump's low standing in crucial battlegrounds, are scrambling to offset losses.

Bolstered by an enormous cash-on-hand advantage, a series of critical Republican recruitment failures and a wave of liberal enthusiasm, Democrats have fortified their grip on hard-fought seats won in 2018 that allowed them to seize control of the House. They have trained their firepower and huge campaign coffers on once-solid Republican footholds in affluent suburban districts, where many voters have become disillusioned with Mr. Trump.

That has left Republicans, who started the cycle hoping to retake the House by clawing back a number of the competitive districts they lost to Democrats in 2018, straining to meet a bleaker goal: limiting the reach of another Democratic sweep by winning largely rural, white ***working-class*** districts like this one in central New York where Mr. Trump is still popular. Depending on how successful those efforts are, Republican strategists, citing a national environment that has turned against them, privately forecast losing anywhere from a handful of seats to as many as 20.

That is starkly at odds with Mr. Trump's own prediction just days ago that Republicans would win back control of the House, which Speaker Nancy Pelosi declared ''delusional,'' echoing the private assessments of many in the president's own party.

''The Democrats' green wave in 2018 has turned into a green tsunami in 2020, which combined with ongoing struggles with college-educated suburban voters, makes for an extremely challenging environment,'' said Corry Bliss, a Republican strategist who helped lead the party's failed effort in 2018 to protect its House majority, referring to the torrent of Democratic campaign cash. ''There are about a dozen 50-50 races across the country, and the most important factor in each is if the president can close strong in the final stretch.''

The terrain for House Republicans was not supposed to be this grim. But Mr. Trump's stumbling response to the pandemic and inflammatory brand of politics have alienated critical segments of the electorate, particularly suburban voters and women, dragging down congressional Republicans and opening inroads for Democrats in districts that once would have been unfathomable.

''I don't think too many people would have thought that at the beginning of this cycle, but we are playing deep into Trump country,'' Representative Cheri Bustos of Illinois, the chairwoman of House Democrats' campaign arm, said, noting that ''a third of a billion dollars'' and strong recruits had yielded ''a good secret sauce.''

Eyeing new opportunities in districts that have traditionally been conservative strongholds, Democrats have charged into suburbs across the country. In the Midwest, they are targeting Representatives Don Bacon of Nebraska, Ann Wagner of Missouri, and Rodney Davis of Illinois. They are also storming once ruby-red parts of Texas, positioning themselves in striking distance of picking up as many as five seats on the outskirts of Houston and Dallas.

Perhaps nowhere is the dynamic on starker display than outside Indianapolis, in a sea horse-shaped district held by Representative Susan W. Brooks, Republican of Indiana, who is retiring. The district, one of the state's wealthiest and most educated, has been reliably conservative, sending Republicans to the House since the early 1990s and supporting Mr. Trump in 2016 by eight points.

But this year, Democrats view the district as one of their best opportunities to flip a seat, betting that distaste for Mr. Trump will buoy support for their candidate, Christina Hale, a former member of the Indiana General Assembly who boasts of having worked to pass legislation with Vice President Mike Pence when he was the state's governor.

''People here are just so fatigued of all the drama and the constant news cycle,'' Ms. Hale said in an interview. ''They're just really looking for practical, competent, empathetic people to represent them in Washington and people that will collaborate across the aisle.''

Two years ago, armed with similar brands and messages, Democrats won 31 districts where Mr. Trump had prevailed in 2016. Most of them are expected to cruise to re-election, capitalizing on their huge fund-raising hauls and weak Republican challengers.

If Republicans have any reason for optimism, it is in largely rural areas like New York's 22nd District, populated by mostly white voters who still strongly support the president. They are bullish about their chances in this race, where Claudia Tenney is seeking to reclaim her seat from Representative Anthony Brindisi, the Democrat who ousted her in 2018 after winning by fewer than 4,500 votes.

While Ms. Tenney described herself in an interview as independent, her campaign is gambling that Mr. Trump's presence on the ballot this year could help her edge past Mr. Brindisi on Election Day. All through the district, along roads that wind through farmland and tucked among elaborate Halloween displays, yard signs paid for by the Tenney campaign blare, in all capital letters, ''Trump Tenney'' -- a clear indication of how their fortunes are intertwined. (Mr. Trump on Tuesday also tweeted in support of Ms. Tenney.)

''I just find it really hard to believe that he's not going to win this district by double digits, and I think his policies have done really well for our region,'' Ms. Tenney said of Mr. Trump. ''They would rather have a president and a leader who's going to stand up for them than get hung up on personality issues.''

But Mr. Brindisi, who has sought to build a platform rooted in health care and local constituency work and legislation, argued that Ms. Tenney lost in 2018 because she had failed to deliver on her promises to the district.

''People don't want to turn back the clock. They want to continue to go forward,'' Mr. Brindisi said. ''At the end of the day, if I meet with people on the street in this district, what they'll tell me is, 'Anthony, I don't care if you're a Democrat or Republican, just get things done.'''

Elsewhere around the country, some challengers whom Republicans had promoted as strong recruits, like Nancy Mace, the first woman to graduate from the Citadel who is running against Representative Joe Cunningham of South Carolina, have found themselves stunted by a dismal national environment and unable to get their attacks against centrist lawmakers to stick.

''When you try and paint somebody that's clearly a moderate as super extreme, I just don't think it works,'' said A.J. Lenar, a Democratic ad maker and strategist who works with Mr. Cunningham and cut an ad poking fun at attempts to brand him a socialist.

Making matters worse for Republicans is the state of their fund-raising. Democrats in the most competitive races are sitting on a 5-to-1 cash-on-hand advantage over their Republican challengers, and Democratic candidates overall were poised to spend nearly twice as much on television ads from Labor Day to Election Day, according to strategists tracking the buys. In New York, Democrats are outspending Republicans by $9 million on television in support of Representative Max Rose, who holds a Staten Island seat that Republicans believe is one of their best opportunities.

Some Republican candidates, including Ms. Tenney, were out-raised so handily that outside groups, like the Congressional Leadership Fund, a House Republican super PAC, have been forced to step in to carry out campaign fundamentals like advertising and phone calls, as well as get-out-the-vote programs. Ms. Tenney is among a group of Republican candidates this cycle who have run almost no ads themselves, leaving the super PAC to carry their entire television campaign.

Democrats' giant cash advantage also means they can afford to play in longer-shot races in Alaska and Montana, forcing Republicans to sink millions into those at-large seats in an effort to build a firewall against a potential wave.

Even though his party appeared to be playing more defense than offense, Representative Tom Emmer of Minnesota, the chairman of the National Republican Campaign Committee, argued in an interview that Republicans could still take back the House. Democrats in districts like New York's 22nd, which Mr. Brindisi flipped two years ago, appear to be on stronger footing than they actually are, he said, because of national polls that undercount conservatives -- an assertion few of his peers share.

But he acknowledged his prediction assumed Mr. Trump was as popular with voters in those districts as he was four years ago.

''It really depends on if the president performs at or near 2016 levels,'' Mr. Emmer said. ''If not, it becomes a lot more difficult.''

That is also the challenge for Victoria Spartz, the Republican state senator who is running against Ms. Hale in the suburbs of Indiana, where internal polls show support for Mr. Trump eroding. She has used her rags-to-riches story of emigrating from the Soviet Ukraine to emphasize her strong belief in limited government.

But Ms. Spartz is facing the same headwinds buffeting her party in districts around the nation. After prevailing in a crowded primary by flaunting her conservative credentials, she must now convince voters of her independence from Mr. Trump and Republicans.

''I wish people would pay more attention and actually vote for the candidate,'' she said in an interview, ''not for the party.''

Emily Cochrane reported from Verona, N.Y., and Catie Edmondson from Washington. Luke Broadwater contributed reporting from Washington.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/us/politics/democrats-house-elections.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/27/us/politics/democrats-house-elections.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The Democrat Christina Hale sees opportunity in an Indiana district President Trump won in 2016. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN P. CLEARY/THE HERALD-BULLETIN, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** October 28, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A New Day Dawns For New Age Music***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6157-DXY1-DXY4-X2R0-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Eric Ducker

**Body**

A genre known for cheesiness is thriving once again in Los Angeles, taking root on the label Leaving Records.

Nailah Hunter grew up in a household where magic was considered demonic, so her parents didn't let her read the ''Harry Potter'' books. Her father was a pastor in the South Los Angeles neighborhood Ladera Heights and she sang at his church, and later wrote songs on acoustic guitar and performed in her high school's choir. She also read fantasy novels and listened to Gary Stadler, a fanciful composer whose titles are filled with ''fairy'' or ''faerie.''

''The nerdiness started early,'' said Hunter, now 26 and quite close to her parents, over FaceTime on a September morning.

In college, she felt stifled as a traditional singer-songwriter or the vocalist in groups where others, ''namely white dudes,'' controlled the creative direction. She got a Korg Triton synthesizer and the audio production software Logic Pro. She also got deep into the harp. ''The realm it accesses -- the timbre, the texture, the low notes -- it feels like you're summoning things out of your body as you're playing,'' she said.

Hunter's creations began to break from conventional song structures and develop into something freer, and in March, she put out her debut EP, ''Spells.'' Last Friday, she released new music alongside fellow artists on the Los Angeles label Leaving Records who likewise create a distinctive version of new age music. It's an often derided, and loosely defined, genre that's been called out for its cheesiness and outmoded conventions (is that a wind chime tinkling in the distance?), but the Leaving roster offers an updated perception of what new age can be, and who makes it.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The collaborative project, which features Hunter, Matthew McQueen, Diva Dompé, Ami Dang and Olive Ardizoni, is known as Galdre Visions, a name that references the Old Norwegian word for a sorcerer, or a Celtic druid that uses songs for incantations. Like Hunter, its members arrived at new age after exploring other musical avenues, though a teenage love of Enya and an interest in alternative spiritualities was not uncommon.

McQueen, who is 36 and releases music as Matthewdavid, started Leaving in 2009, inspired by harsher scenes like drone and noise music. (While the label puts out other genres, new age is one of its pillars.) He first became interested in the sound over a decade ago after discovering new age tapes at a Goodwill in Tallahassee, Fla. He also called ''Planetary Unfolding,'' a 1981 cosmic ambient album by Michael Stearns, ''a record that saved my life.''

The label's artists include his wife, Dompé, 33, who previously played in the Los Angeles rock bands Blackblack and Pocahaunted. In her adolescence she endured bouts of sleep paralysis, where she would wake up but seemingly could not move her body and saw terrifying hallucinations. As she nurtured an interest in occultism and mysticism, she concluded that her condition was connected to astral projecting, the belief that an individual's consciousness can traverse different dimensions. Guided meditations she made to help process her own supernatural experiences developed into the deeply spacey and sometimes unsettling project Yialmelic Frequencies.

Dang, 36, a producer and sitarist, studied electronic composition at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music before joining Baltimore's experimental music scene. As she's gotten older, she has become more interested in creating music that will de-stress her listeners, rather than challenge them. ''If you came to my show and fell asleep, that's great,'' she said. ''If that's what happens, that's flattering.''

Ardizoni too has targeted an extremely chill audience: foliage. The musician, who is 33, identifies as nonbinary and uses gender-neutral pronouns, was introduced to crystals and Eastern philosophies as a teenager in South Florida around the same time they got into Pink Floyd and acid. After singing in punk and metal bands, Ardizoni moved to Los Angeles and talked to the plants they encountered during walks or long hikes, eventually making music for them under the name Green-House.

Ardizoni also sees their music as a therapeutic force that works in both directions. ''I'm a ***working-class*** queer person, assigned female at birth, and life is not always easy,'' they said. ''Every type of music I've ever made has been healing to me in some way, and I've wanted to share that with others.''

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

It's not surprising that these Leaving artists have mostly taken root in Los Angeles: California has long been the nexus of new age music. As the 1960s turned into the '70s, musicians working in the state produced foundational albums like Paul Horn's ''Inside'' and Iasos's ''Inter-Dimensional Music.''

New age didn't just develop out of the era's woolly counterculture; it took inspiration from sources like Transcendental Meditation, the work of the philosophical writer Alan Watts, and German naturists from the early 20th century. ''The new age movement was looking to liberate through this spiritual awakening,'' said Carlos Niño, a musician who has released music on Leaving and is a longtime D.J. for Los Angeles's Dublab internet radio station. ''All that information is in the music.''

Suzanne Doucet, a German pop star during the 1960s who came to America in the early '80s after embracing new age, said of the sound, ''It's not entertainment, it's to expand your conscious being.''

Throughout the '70s and most of the '80s, new age music remained an underground phenomenon, mostly sold on cassette in bookstores. In 1987, Doucet opened Only New Age Music on a corner of Melrose Boulevard; it was the first record shop of its kind. That same year, the Grammys awarded its inaugural trophy for best new age recording.

Though new age artists soon had their albums stocked in national chains like Tower Records, for younger generations growing up in a culture transformed by punk and hip-hop, the music seemed irredeemably hokey. But in recent years, aspects of broader new age living have dovetailed with the rise of the wellness movement. ''On a more mainstream level, culture has openly embraced yoga and meditation, clean and soothing design, psychedelics, the existence of aliens,'' said Brian Sweeny, the creator of the Ambient Church concert series. ''It's not fringe anymore.''

When Sweeny booked the first Ambient Church performance in New York in the summer of 2016, he sold 100 tickets. At the last shows he had in New York and L.A. before the pandemic shutdown, he drew almost 2,000 attendees.

Though practices associated with new age culture are now a part of the popular firmament, this shift has come with some attendant problems, like wellness influencers latching onto QAnon conspiracy theories and continued instances of cultural appropriation. ''This year I've been very confused because new age or the spiritual movement is the place that I've sought refuge and healing in a lot of my life, but I feel very disconnected from it,'' Dompé said. ''There's just so many ways that it can be used to cause harm, to control people, to bypass people's experiences, to amplify your own traumas in this really weird way.''

In order to create a more inclusive community, in 2018, McQueen started a biweekly series of free, outdoor performances at La Tierra de la Culebra, a small art park between two houses on a stretch of Highland Park. Operating under the comically direct name Listen to Music Outside in the Daylight Under a Tree, the series featured Leaving artists and friends of the label. After Covid-19 struck, McQueen transformed it into a livestreamed event (that's now on hiatus) called Listen to Music Safely in Your Home Next to a Fern.

As the separation and uncertainty of the pandemic stretched into months, the plan for Galdre Visions came together as a way for the artists to connect with one another. Hunter, Dompé and Ardizoni each picked incomplete pieces of music and passed them around, layering them with shimmering digital textures and twinkling ripples from Hunter's harp. Dang added elements like sitar and harmonium, while McQueen handled the mixing and mastering.

The members of Galdre Visions consider the songs on the EP individual spells and included vocals on each one to activate their intentions. Their voices permeate the space either through wordless chanting or Ardizoni intoning comforting phrases like, ''The sun will rise again, in time.''

''Everyone is hurting in an obvious way right now,'' Hunter said. ''Everyone is scared and just wants to be held, so if there ever was a time for this to be received more widely, it would be now.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/26/arts/music/new-age-leaving-records.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/26/arts/music/new-age-leaving-records.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ''The realm it accesses -- the timbre, the texture, the low notes -- it feels like you're summoning things out of your body as you're playing,'' Nailah Hunter said of the harp.

''Every type of music I've ever made has been healing to me in some way, and I've wanted to share that with others,'' Olive Ardizoni said.

Diva Dompé previously played in the Los Angeles rock bands Blackblack and Pocahaunted. She is married to Matthew McQueen, the founder of Leaving Records.

McQueen, who is 36 and releases music as Matthewdavid, started Leaving in 2009, inspired by harsher scenes like drone and noise music. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROZETTE RAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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**End of Document**



[***Cuts Hit Bone As Pandemic Saps Colleges***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6157-DXY1-DXY4-X2RY-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Liberal arts departments, graduate student aid and even tenured teaching positions are targets as the coronavirus causes shortfalls.

Follow our live coverage of the coronavirus pandemic here.

Ohio Wesleyan University is eliminating 18 majors. The University of Florida's trustees this month took the first steps toward letting the school furlough faculty. The University of California, Berkeley, has paused admissions to its Ph.D. programs in anthropology, sociology and art history.

As it resurges across the country, the coronavirus is forcing universities large and small to make deep and possibly lasting cuts to close widening budget shortfalls. By one estimate, the pandemic has cost colleges at least $120 billion, with even Harvard University, despite its $41.9 billion endowment, reporting a $10 million deficit that has prompted belt tightening.

Though many colleges imposed stopgap measures such as hiring freezes and early retirements to save money in the spring, the persistence of the economic downturn is taking a devastating financial toll, pushing many to lay off or furlough employees, delay graduate admissions and even cut or consolidate core programs like liberal arts departments.

The University of South Florida announced this month that its college of education would become a graduate school only, phasing out undergraduate education degrees to help close a $6.8 million budget gap. In Ohio, the University of Akron, citing the coronavirus, successfully invoked a clause in its collective-bargaining agreement in September to supersede tenure rules and lay off 97 unionized faculty members.

''We haven't seen a budget crisis like this in a generation,'' said Robert Kelchen, a Seton Hall University associate professor of higher education who has been tracking the administrative response to the pandemic. ''There's nothing off-limits at this point.''

Even before the pandemic, colleges and universities were grappling with a growing financial crisis, brought on by years of shrinking state support, declining enrollment, and student concerns with skyrocketing tuition and burdensome debt. Now the coronavirus has amplified the financial trouble systemwide, though elite, well-endowed colleges seem sure to weather it with far less pain.

''We have been in aggressive recession management for 12 years -- probably more than 12 years,'' Daniel Greenstein, chancellor of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, told his board of governors this month as they voted to forge ahead with a proposal to merge a half-dozen small schools into two academic entities.

Once linchpins of social mobility in the state's ***working-class*** coal towns, the 14 campuses in Pennsylvania's system have lost roughly a fifth of their enrollment over the past decade. The proposal, long underway but made more urgent by pandemic losses, would merge Clarion, California, and Edinboro universities into one unit and Bloomsburg, Lock Haven and Mansfield universities into another to serve a region whose demographics have changed.

Such pressures have reached critical mass throughout the country in the months since the pandemic hit. State governments from Washington to Connecticut, tightening their own belts, have told public universities to expect steep cuts in appropriations. Students and families, facing skyrocketing unemployment, have balked at the prospect of paying full fare for largely online instruction, opting instead for gap years or less expensive schools closer to home.

Costs have also soared as colleges have spent millions on testing, tracing and quarantining students, only to face outbreaks. A New York Times database has confirmed more than 214,000 cases this year at college campuses, with at least 75 deaths, mostly among adults last spring, but also including some students more recently.

Freshman enrollment is down more than 16 percent from last year, the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center has reported -- part of a 4 percent overall drop in undergraduate enrollment that is taking tuition revenue down with it.

In a letter to Congress last week, the American Council on Education and other higher education organizations estimated that the virus would cost institutions more than $120 billion in increased student aid, lost housing fees, forgone sports revenue, public health measures, learning technology and other adjustments.

And because donations to all but the heftiest endowments limit those funds to specific uses, most colleges cannot freely dip into them as emergency reserves. Harvard has the largest endowment in the nation, but its pandemic losses turned a $300 million-plus surplus in 2019 into a $10 million operating loss in 2020, according to an annual report posted last week, forcing the university to freeze hiring, slash capital spending and cut senior managers' pay.

That has meant months of cutbacks, including abolishing athletic programs, deferring campus construction and laying off administrative staff and cafeteria workers. Scores of graduate programs, including some at elite research universities such as Harvard, Princeton and U.C. Berkeley, have temporarily stopped taking new Ph.D. students -- the result of financial aid budgets strained by current doctoral candidates whose research is taking more time because of the pandemic.

A Chronicle of Higher Education database tracking the budgetary triage has documented more than 100 such suspended programs, from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Arts and Sciences, which will not take new school-funded doctoral students next fall, to Rice University, which paused admissions to all five of the Ph.D. programs in its school of humanities.

Most of the suspensions are in social sciences and humanities programs where the universities -- rather than outside funders such as corporations, foundations and the federal government -- typically underwrite the multiyear financial aid packages offered to doctoral students. University officials say the suspensions are necessary to ensure their strapped budgets can continue supporting students already in Ph.D. pipelines.

But Suzanne T. Ortega, president of the Council of Graduate Schools, noted that interrupting that pipeline could also have a lingering impact on the higher education work force, diverting promising students from low-income households, for example, or discouraging candidates who might bring much needed diversity to faculty rosters.

As it is, the pandemic has had an outsize impact on less affluent students: A survey of 292 private, nonprofit schools released this month by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities reported a nearly 8 percent decrease in enrollment among students who receive federal Pell Grants.

''A couple years off is not necessarily the end of the world and may even be a wise thing,'' Ms. Ortega said. ''But if our universities don't remain in touch with those students, and connect with them, and encourage them to keep thinking about grad school, we could have our own lost generation of students who get busy with other things and then don't fulfill their dreams.''

As schools exhaust the possibilities of trims around the margins, what is left, administrators say, is payroll, typically the largest line item in higher education. Since February, when the coronavirus hit, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that colleges and universities have shed more than 300,000 mostly nonfaculty jobs.

''Some of these institutions have redone their budgets three, four, five times,'' said Jim Hundrieser, vice president for consulting and business development at the National Association of College and University Business Officers, a professional organization for finance officers in higher education.

''As this next chapter unfolds, what's left is just staffing. For most, this will be the toughest round.''

In central New York, Ithaca College's provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, La Jerne T. Cornish, said ''there is no joy'' as the school accelerated plans to cut 131 full-time faculty jobs, a result of declining enrollment exacerbated by the pandemic. Ms. Cornish said the school had already furloughed 167 nonfaculty staff members and offered early retirement to 30 faculty members to address an $8 million shortfall.

But, Ms. Cornish said, further action was needed to bring the payroll into line with enrollment declines.

Ohio Wesleyan's president, Rock Jones, told students in a recent email that the university would eliminate or phase out majors in comparative literature, urban studies, journalism and 15 other subjects. The move, he wrote, would merge religion and philosophy into one department and lump Black studies and women's studies into a single ''critical identity studies'' program, but also will save about $4 million and limit faculty layoffs to one tenured post.

The school's plan followed a yearlong faculty-led review, but Mr. Kelchen, the higher education professor, said such consolidations often can allow institutions to downsize despite faculty job protections as well as encourage people in positions deemed redundant to take early retirement.

''Even if the faculty can stay on,'' he said, ''they'll get reassigned, maybe to teach in another department or do administrative work.''

Other schools are laying the groundwork now for cuts they expect later. Trustees at the University of Florida took the first step in September to allow faculty furloughs to help close a projected $49 million shortfall from the coronavirus. Steve Orlando, a university spokesman, said the next step -- a formal furlough policy -- is expected to come to the board this year.

Daniel Meisenzahl, a spokesman for the University of Hawaii, said the 10-campus system had embarked on an exhaustive fiscal review in which ''every single unit'' was being examined, including an array of bachelors' programs and university centers for public policy and conflict resolution. The system is facing a projected 13 percent decline in revenue and a net loss of nearly $67 million in operating income.

Mr. Kelchen said that the coronavirus had worked its way into the core of the nation's academic machinery, and that the damage would likely be lasting.

''These cuts are going to continue long past the pandemic,'' he said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/26/us/colleges-coronavirus-budget-cuts.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/26/us/colleges-coronavirus-budget-cuts.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Ithaca College in central New York has accelerated plans to cut 131 full-time faculty jobs. Left, Ohio Wesleyan University will eliminate or phase out 18 majors, including urban studies and journalism. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HEATHER AINSWORTH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ANDREW SPEAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

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[***What Rashida Tlaib Represents***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XV-3DJ1-DXY4-X008-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

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Last May, following protests in East Jerusalem over planned evictions of Palestinians, Hamas started firing rockets toward Tel Aviv, and Israeli airstrikes pounded residential buildings in the Gaza Strip. Shortly after, a group of nine Democratic lawmakers, all longstanding Israel supporters, took to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to reaffirm the country's right to defend itself. ''We have a duty as Americans to stand by the side of Israel in the face of attacks from terrorists,'' Elaine Luria, a representative from Virginia, said, ''who again, have the same goal in mind: to kill Jews.''

Later that evening, about a dozen other Democrats spoke as well -- to question the justice of funneling almost $4 billion a year to a country that was in the midst of bombing civilians. ''Do Palestinians have a right to survive?'' Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the New York Democrat, said. ''Do we believe that? And, if so, we have a responsibility to that as well.''

The speeches were a rare occasion when Palestinian rights have been addressed at such length on the House floor. They were introduced by Representative Mark Pocan of Wisconsin. But the driving message of the session came from Rashida Tlaib, the 45-year-old second-term congresswoman from Detroit, who, according to several people familiar with the discussions, played a significant role in making the speeches happen. ''How many Palestinians have to die for their lives to matter?'' Tlaib said in her own remarks, fighting back tears.

Tlaib is the only Palestinian American now serving in the House of Representatives, and the first with family currently living in the West Bank, whose three million inhabitants' lives are intimately shaped by American support for Israel. As the May fighting intensified, colleagues approached Tlaib to ask if her family was safe. ''It's a voice that hasn't been heard before,'' Betty McCollum, a Democratic representative from Minnesota, told me.

Tlaib has been criticized, sometimes viciously, by Republicans and pro-Israel Democrats for calling Israel an ''apartheid regime,'' and for her support of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, which aims to end military occupation by exerting economic pressure on Israel. She has been called anti-Semitic for her criticism of Israeli policies, and has become a favored quarry of Fox News. Tony Paris, a close friend and former colleague of Tlaib's, told me that in conversations with some of his relatives, conservative Democrats, he has ''tiptoed around the Rashida thing.''

But Tlaib's arrival on the national stage has also coincided with an opening, albeit a small one, within the Democratic Party to challenge the United States' Israel policy. The Palestinian cause has become a significant part of the politics of the American left at the same time that the left has gained a legible footing on the national stage. Tlaib, a democratic socialist who is if anything more outspoken on domestic issues than she is on the Palestinian cause, has found herself at the center of this turn. She appeared in a traditional Palestinian dress made by her mother during her swearing in, sometimes wears a kaffiyeh (symbolically tied to the Palestinian resistance) on the House floor and speaks often about her grandmother in the West Bank. Rebecca Abou-Chedid, a lawyer and longtime Arab American activist, told me that the simple fact of Tlaib's presence on the Hill means that ''we are now actual people to them.''

Yet Tlaib is wary of adopting the role of the only Palestinian voice in the room. ''I feel like no one wants to see me as anyone but Palestinian,'' she told me. ''I'm a mother, I'm a woman, I have gone through a lot being the daughter of two immigrants in the United States. I'm also the big sister of 13 younger siblings. I'm also a neighbor in a predominantly Black city.''

Tlaib's pitch is that the roads to a fairer Israel policy and to fix the problems that plague her district -- poverty, water access, pollution -- are not so different. She didn't run for Congress with a strategic plan to shift the Israeli-Palestinian debate, or even a coherent vision to do so. Sometimes she even seemed to equivocate. ''We need to be not choosing a side,'' she told The Washington Post during her 2018 campaign. But over her three years in Washington, Tlaib's argument has sharpened: If the United States cares about democratic values, then upholding Palestinian rights is inherently American.

I first met Tlaib last summer at a cafe in the Midtown neighborhood of Detroit, a gentrifying area of dive bars and boutiques. Two days of thunderstorms had left 850,000 people without power, and several restaurants were still closed. Tlaib was in a white summer dress and sneakers (''My mother hates when I wear them''); a congressional pin hung around her neck. I had ambitiously ordered a cinnamon roll, and as we sat down, Tlaib, who had gotten a coffee, eyed it and brought me a fork and napkins. ''I'm such a mom,'' she said. Shortly after they arrived in Washington, Ilhan Omar, a Democratic representative from Minnesota, gave bracelets to fellow members of ''the Squad'': the young, left-leaning congress members of color that at the time included Tlaib, Omar, Ocasio-Cortez and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts, all of whom were elected in 2018. Omar had Tlaib's inscribed ''Mama Bear.''

Tlaib grew up caring for her seven brothers and six sisters, balancing diapers with homework. Her father, Harbi Elabed, was born in East Jerusalem, and her mother, Fatima, grew up in Beit Ur al-Fouqa, a village in the West Bank. They were already settled in Detroit before 1976, the year Tlaib was born. The city was reeling from years of deindustrialization and redlining and the deadly unrest of 1967. Capital had fled in search of cheap labor, as had white residents, leaving the city majority Black.

Michigan's 13th District, which Tlaib represents, cuts through most of ***working-class*** Detroit before veering abruptly west into slices of three other cities: Dearborn Heights, Romulus and Wayne. It is the second-poorest district in the country. Tlaib, who grew up relying on food assistance, came to Congress at a time when more than half its members were millionaires. She recalls voicing her frustrations about finding an affordable place in Washington to a freshman colleague, who nonchalantly mentioned that he'd bought an apartment nearby. ''That's like $800,000, isn't it?'' she said in amazement.

Tlaib's father, who died in 2017, was an assembly-line worker at the Ford Motor Company and a United Auto Workers member. They had a difficult relationship, but she credits him with introducing her to politics. When she turned 18, instead of wishing her a happy birthday, he told her to register to vote. ''I think it's because maybe he knew it's a privilege, because he didn't have that opportunity anywhere else,'' she told me.

After law school, she worked at a nonprofit serving the Arab American community, then moved to the Statehouse as a staff member. In 2008, she won an eight-way primary race to become a state representative -- a surprise to her father, who was skeptical Americans would elect an Arab after 9/11. (Soon after the attacks, like many Muslims, Tlaib's parents were interrogated for hours by F.B.I. agents about their travel and whom they knew among potential suspects on the agency's radar, according to Tlaib.) In office, she developed a reputation for taking matters into her own hands. When plumes of black dust appeared over the Detroit River, in 2013, she and a few environmental activists drove to the river's edge, marched past a ''No Trespassing'' sign and crossed old train tracks to the source: an industrial site where petroleum coke was piled in 40-foot-high black dunes. Tlaib scooped the substance into Ziploc bags and sent it off to a lab. A storage company was stockpiling the petcoke -- prolonged exposure to which at high concentrations can cause lung disease -- without a city permit. For weeks, Tlaib held up a bag of the residue in interviews, and the company was later ordered to remove the piles.

In 2017, John Conyers, Detroit's longtime congressman, resigned following a sexual-harassment scandal, opening up a House seat in the city for the first time in 52 years. Many residents believed the seat should go to another Black person, and the mayor and the Wayne County executive endorsed Tlaib's primary rival, Brenda Jones, the City Council president at the time, who is Black. But Tlaib won the primary against Jones the following August, and with it, the near guarantee of winning the general election.

When she and the Somalia-born Omar were elected that November, they became the first Muslim women in the House. ''I guess I was naïve,'' Tlaib told me, ''in not understanding how bipartisan Islamophobia is in Congress.'' It was the subtle things, she said: colleagues shocked to know that most American Muslims are Black, or stereotypes of Muslim women being submissive. One colleague approached Omar and touched her hijab. Besides ignorance, Tlaib said, ''I think there's a tremendous amount of fear.''

Her election also made her the third Palestinian American in the House after Justin Amash, a Republican representative from Michigan, and John E. Sununu, a Republican representative from New Hampshire. Amash at times bucked his party, which he left before exiting Congress in 2021, on Israel. In 2014, he voted against funding for Israel's Iron Dome missile-defense system, which has been significantly financed by the United States since it was established in 2011. Amash, a libertarian, explained his opposition on the grounds of government spending. Tlaib's views, by contrast, are deeply and openly personal. She grew up hearing stories of family members being forced out of their homes. At age 12, she visited the West Bank and saw for herself the walls and checkpoints.

Still, foreign policy had hardly come up in her years as state representative. Shortly after her bid for Congress, Steve Tobocman, a former state representative for whom she worked early in her career, sat down with her. The two had discussed the conflict in the past, but now Tobocman, who was working on her campaign, wanted to further understand her views.

Tlaib, he recalls, offered few specifics for a policy agenda, but told him about playing with children of Israeli settlers when she visited her grandmother, and recognizing the humanity of people on both sides. Ultimately, she told him, her position on the conflict would be driven by values of equality, peace and justice. She reminded Tobocman of Barbara Lee, the California Democratic congresswoman who cast the sole vote against the authorization of force in Afghanistan in 2001, quoting in her floor speech a clergy member's warning to ''not become the evil we deplore.''

''I said, 'You aspire to be like Barbara Lee,''' Tobocman told me. ''And she said, 'Absolutely.'''

In the fall of 1973, shortly before Tlaib's parents arrived in Michigan, almost 3,000 Arab American U.A.W. members marched to the U.A.W. Dearborn office and demanded that the local union liquidate about $300,000 in bonds it had purchased from the State of Israel with money collected from union dues. At another protest, workers waved signs that read: ''Jewish People Yes, Zionism No.'' The U.A.W. later liquidated some Israeli bonds.

Only recently had the Israeli-Palestinian conflict fully entered American politics. In 1967, after a six-day war with its Arab neighbors, Israel captured the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights; swaths of Palestinian land were now under Israeli control, and so were one million additional Palestinians. To American leaders, Israel proved itself a capable ally against Soviet-backed regimes in Egypt and Syria. By 1976, Israel had become the biggest recipient of U.S. military aid.

Around the same time, James Zogby, who is now president of the Arab American Institute, helped found the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, part of a nascent Palestinian rights movement that had a few allies in the Capitol. But its efforts were dwarfed by those of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), founded over a decade earlier, which helped form pro-Israel political action committees that fund-raised for both parties. Israel also successfully framed the Middle East conflict for American audiences as a battle between the West and Soviet-sponsored terrorism. In 1988, Zogby, who advised Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign that year, was a delegate at the Democratic National Convention. He tried to persuade the party's leadership to include language about the ''legitimate rights of Palestinian people'' in the party platform, but failed. ''Palestinian became the prefix for the word 'terrorist' or 'terrorism,''' Zogby told me. ''You couldn't say one without the other.''

Since then, the question of U.S. aid to Israel, in the words of Lara Friedman, the president of the Foundation for Middle East Peace, has remained ''sacrosanct.'' Barack Obama committed the United States to an additional $33 billion in military aid, even as Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister, brazenly waded into American politics on the side of the Republican Party and presided over Israeli politics' lurch to the right. Israel legitimized settlement expansion despite international condemnation and, in 2018, passed a controversial ''nation-state'' law that in part affirms that only Jewish people have the ''right to national self-determination.''

But beneath the unbroken surface of U.S. policy, the consensus has begun to slip. According to Gallup polling, Americans' views of the conflict have changed significantly since 2013, with sympathy for the Israelis falling slightly and sympathy for the Palestinians more than doubling. The shift has overwhelmingly been on account of Democrats; while Republican opinion has changed little, Democrats have gone from sympathizing more with Israel by a margin of 30 points in 2002 to being more or less evenly split today.

The beginning of this shift roughly coincides with the resumption of the active conflict in 2014, when Israel launched a major military operation in the Gaza Strip after the kidnapping and murder of several Israeli teenagers by the Hamas militant organization. Social media was flooded with testimonials and videos of Israeli airstrikes, which killed nearly 1,500 Palestinian civilians (six Israeli civilians were killed by Hamas rockets).

The American Jewish community, which is broadly Democratic, has meanwhile begun to fracture in its support for Israel. According to a recent poll from the Jewish Electorate Institute, 43 percent of Jewish voters under 40 say that Israeli treatment of Palestinians is comparable to racism in the United States, versus 27 percent of those over 64. And pro-Palestinian activists have more successfully integrated their cause with the last decades' currents of American activism, most notably marching alongside Black Lives Matter protesters in Ferguson, Mo., in 2014, while halfway around the world, Palestinians tweeted tactical advice (''Don't keep much distance from the Police, if you're close to them they can't tear gas'').

Although most Democratic lawmakers continue to side with Israel when the conflict finds its way into Congress, a handful have begun to reflect the shifting sympathies of the party's base. In 2017, McCollum introduced the first piece of legislation to directly support Palestinian rights, a bill that would have restricted U.S. aid from being used to detain Palestinian children in military prisons. The bill never came up for a vote, but it garnered 30 co-sponsors. ''It's a bit of new space that might be cracking open,'' says Brad Parker, a senior policy adviser for Defense for Children International -- Palestine. He added, ''We're trying to force it open.''

In interviews, Tlaib speaks about the occupied Palestinian territories in the context of Detroit, pointing to issues of water access in both, comparing their patterns of segregation and poverty. ''I don't separate them,'' Tlaib told me. Both places have ''what I call 'othering' politics,'' she said, ''or feeling like government or systems are making us feel 'less than.'''

In 2013, Detroit entered the largest municipal bankruptcy in American history. It came under emergency management, which granted a governor-appointed trustee, a bankruptcy lawyer from the Jones Day law firm, authority to overhaul spending on city services. At the time, the city's unemployment rate hovered around 15 percent, and more than a third of the population was living under the poverty line. Widespread power outages followed; people opened their faucets to find them dry. Today, a quarter of the city's population is unemployed. In office, Tlaib has been more focused on the affairs of her district than of the Middle East, including persuading the House to pass a national moratorium on utility shut-offs when the pandemic started, as well as pushing legislation to replace lead water pipes. But from her first days in office, it was Tlaib's positions on Israel that attracted both attention and criticism.

In January 2019, on the day that Tlaib and Omar were sworn in, Senate Republicans added language to a bipartisan bill reauthorizing aid to Israel that affirmed state and local governments' right to sever ties with companies that boycotted or divested from the country. This was a nod to the more than two dozen state legislatures that already had laws responding to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. The Democratic Socialists of America, of which Tlaib is a member, endorsed B.D.S. in 2017, and both Tlaib and Omar had voiced support for the movement. In response to the Republicans' bill, a version of which was previously introduced in 2017, Tlaib tweeted that the sponsors ''forgot what country they represent,'' which critics charged was perpetuating an anti-Semitic trope accusing Jews of dual loyalty.

Tlaib's timing couldn't have been worse: The Democrats had recently taken control of the House, and Republicans had already zeroed in on the Squad's left-wing politics. ''I don't see much hope for changing where Tlaib and Omar are, but there is a battle in the Democratic Party,'' Norm Coleman, the former Republican senator from Minnesota who now presides over the Republican Jewish Coalition, said at the time. House Democrats ''will have to make choices about whether they'll quiet those voices or whether they'll remain quiet.''

Kevin McCarthy, the House minority leader, admonished Democratic leadership for not ''taking action'' against the anti-Israel stance of Tlaib and Omar, to which Omar tweeted in reply, ''It's all about the Benjamins'' -- $100 bills. The ensuing maelstrom defined Tlaib's career for the next several months. Tlaib came to the defense of Omar (who apologized the next day) even as Democratic leaders issued a statement to condemn Omar for anti-Semitic remarks. The party was already sharply divided on B.D.S.; Speaker Nancy Pelosi described it as a ''dangerous'' ideology ''masquerading as policy.'' By that summer, the House overwhelmingly passed a bipartisan resolution to oppose boycott efforts targeting Israel; Pressley broke with her Squadmates and voted in favor. The anti-Semitism charge, Lara Friedman told me, was a ''sharp knife'' that Republicans could throw ''and watch Democrats attack each other.''

According to Tlaib's friends and staff, she hadn't expected the level of vitriol flung at her and her colleagues. Yet, at times, even her critics seemed unsure of how to respond to Tlaib's unique position as a Palestinian American member of Congress. Shortly after her election in 2018, Tlaib announced plans to lead a congressional delegation to the Palestinian territories, a tour that would focus on poverty and water access. The trip would coincide with the annual AIPAC-sponsored congressional visit to Israel led by Steny Hoyer, the House majority leader. After public encouragement from Donald Trump, Netanyahu announced on Twitter that Tlaib and Omar, who planned to join the trip, were barred from entering because of their support for B.D.S. The move drew criticism from Hoyer, and even AIPAC and several Republicans. Tlaib asked permission to at least visit her grandmother in the West Bank, who was 90 years old at the time, promising to not promote boycotts while there. Israel acceded to the terms, but in a sudden about-face, Tlaib decided not to go. In a statement, Tlaib said that visiting under ''oppressive conditions meant to humiliate me would break my grandmother's heart.''

One aide to a Squad member, who asked for anonymity to speak freely, told me that wanting to show solidarity with Tlaib gave their boss more courage to speak on the issue. McCollum told me she receives less pushback from colleagues now than she did for her earlier efforts to recognize basic rights of Palestinians. ''If I can speak out about what's happening at home,'' she said, ''why can't I point out when another democracy is not behaving in a way that I think lives up to human rights norms?''

Even President Biden, who during the May 2021 conflict reiterated Israel's right to defend itself, made a point of speaking to Tlaib about the situation when he met her on an airport tarmac during a trip to Michigan. According to Tlaib, Biden brought up the conflict first, asking how her family was doing in the West Bank. Over the course of the eight-minute conversation that followed, the president listened as Tlaib spoke about the dire situation in the West Bank. ''Everything you're doing is enabling it more,'' she later said she told him.

Tlaib arrived in Washington with one genuinely vanguard position on the conflict. During the 1990s the Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organization, along with the United States, agreed that the best solution to the conflict was the establishment of two states: a sovereign Palestine and a sovereign Israel coexisting side by side. Though the borders have never been agreed upon, the two-state outcome remains a ''core U.S. policy objective,'' according to the State Department. But since then, settlements have grown steadily, while military occupation of the Palestinian territories continues. Today, nearly 700,000 Jewish settlers occupy land in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, which has not only cut off some residents' access to water and electricity but also left Palestinians with less -- and more fragmented -- territory for a Palestinian state in any hypothetical future negotiation. This has led Middle East experts like Zaha Hassan from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Steven Cook from the Council on Foreign Relations and commentators like Peter Beinart to publicly give up on a two-state solution as a fair or realistic outcome. Some have turned toward what was once considered a radical prospect in the debate: a single democratic state with equal rights for Arabs and Jews.

Tlaib didn't seem to have a firm view on the best road to peace before her election. During her 2018 campaign, the liberal pro-Israel group J Street endorsed her candidacy based on a meeting and a policy paper that her team submitted, which argued that a two-state outcome, while increasingly difficult to achieve, was the best aim. Soon after, in an interview with the left-wing magazine In These Times, she reversed herself, questioning the two-state solution. After seeking clarification from Tlaib about her position, J Street pulled its endorsement. By the time Tlaib reached Washington, she was the only member of Congress to publicly back a single, fully democratic state.

This position has put Tlaib out of step with most of her Democratic colleagues. Hoyer, with whom she has grown close and who calls her ''my Palestinian daughter,'' told me she has not swayed him on his views on Israel. Even her progressive colleagues like Omar support a two-state solution.

To other congressional Democrats, talk of a secular one-state outcome, which by definition rejects the idea of Jewish nationalism, is tantamount to calling for the eradication of a Jewish state. ''The whole idea of a one state solution denies either party the right to self-determination,'' Ted Deutch, a Democratic congressman from Florida who chairs the House Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa and Global Counterterrorism and is a staunch Israel supporter, told me. If you advocate getting rid of a Jewish state, he said, ''that's when you end up on the path to anti-Semitism.''

Deutch clashed directly with Tlaib on the House floor in September, when Hoyer forced a vote on a bill that would provide Israel with an additional $1 billion for its Iron Dome program. Tlaib has long seen U.S. aid as a crucial source of leverage in the fight for Palestinian rights. She argued against the resolution, declaring Israel to be an ''apartheid regime.'' (Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization, have all taken the position that Israel has committed the crime of ''apartheid,'' but Human Rights Watch has stopped short of calling it an ''apartheid regime.'') Chuck Fleischmann, the Tennessee Republican representative who was floor manager during the debate, urged Democrats to condemn Tlaib's words. Deutch spoke up, saying the House would always stand by Israel and suggesting that Tlaib's position was anti-Semitic.

Afterward, Tlaib told me, her colleagues ''whispered, 'Are you OK?' The whispering needs to stop,'' she said, ''and they need to speak up and say, 'That was wrong.''' Hoyer told me he didn't consider Tlaib's remarks anti-Semitic, but thought they were ''harsher than they needed to be.''

Some Palestinian rights advocates, including McCollum, didn't join Tlaib's nay. Only nine lawmakers voted against the measure. Ocasio-Cortez, who the previous May introduced legislation to block a $735 million weapons sale to Israel, was about to join them, but ultimately changed her vote to present, crying as she did so. She didn't give a clear reason for the switch but later said there were pressures of ''vitriol, disingenuous framing, deeply racist accusations'' and ''lack of substantive discussion.'' Tlaib spoke with her privately after, but wouldn't reveal details. She had conversations with several others too. ''People were really sincere about the guard rails they felt were present,'' Tlaib told me. ''They kept saying 'guard rails.'''

The pro-Palestinian cohort in Congress remains only informally organized. The House has nearly 400 caucuses, including one for rum and another for candy, but none focused on Palestinian rights. Staff members of about a dozen current House and Senate members meet informally to discuss the latest efforts to advance Palestinian rights and their long-term objectives, according to several participants in the discussions. But no one has yet filed the paperwork to start a formal caucus. ''They're kind of looking at me, and I'm like, 'I'm not doing it by myself!''' Tlaib told me. ''You all cared before I came here.''

In the years since Tlaib's election, several Democratic battles involving the left have included fights over Palestinian rights -- a difference that maps onto wider fights over the future of the Democratic Party. Cori Bush, the Missouri Black Lives Matter activist elected in 2020 to Congress, and Pressley now often link the Palestinian cause to issues of police brutality and segregation at home. Jamaal Bowman, who beat the longtime (and pro-Israel) incumbent Eliot Engel for a New York congressional seat in 2020, recently came under criticism from some in the D.S.A., which endorsed him, for his vote to support Iron Dome funding and for visiting Israel on a J Street-sponsored trip. In North Carolina, Nida Allam, the Durham County commissioner who is running for Congress on a platform of environmental justice, has called for conditioning military aid to Israel on Palestinian rights; she was recently endorsed by Tlaib.

In 2020, meanwhile, Zogby, who had been attending the D.N.C. for nearly four decades, finally succeeded in inserting changes to the party's platform. Party leaders wouldn't accept the word ''occupation,'' but for the first time, allowed the phrase ''we oppose settlement expansion.''

Sensing a shift, however small, a new pro-Israel organization called the Democratic Majority for Israel was formed in 2019 to campaign for Democratic candidates who would uphold current U.S. Israel policy. ''We thought it was important,'' Mark Mellman, its founding president, told me, ''before things get out of hand, if you will, to be a force in the Democratic Party and maintain support for Israel.''

D.M.F.I.'s political action committee has targeted primary races that often involve candidates backed by Justice Democrats, an influential left-wing PAC that recruited Ocasio-Cortez and Bowman. Last summer, D.M.F.I. PAC injected more than $2 million into the Democratic primary of a congressional special election in Ohio, and aired ads against Nina Turner, who supports placing conditions on military aid. (Turner lost.) Notably, the ads focused less on Turner's position on Israel and more on her disagreements with party leadership. ''In the super PAC business, one is about winning elections,'' Mellman told me.

According to D.M.F.I., 28 out of its 29 candidates won their primaries in the last cycle. Among them was Ritchie Torres, a congressman representing the South Bronx, the poorest district in the country. Some Israel advocates see Torres as the model for bringing disaffected Democrats back into the fold: a self-described progressive who maintains support for Israel. For the first time since its founding, AIPAC is starting two political action committees. Writing in The Jerusalem Post, Douglas Bloomfield, a former AIPAC lobbyist, said the group will ''probably accelerate its ad campaign against'' Omar and Tlaib, as well as ''a few others on its enemies list.''

The politics of Tlaib's own position on the Palestinian question, however, may be improving for other reasons. Detroit's population has fallen again, and congressional lines were recently redrawn into another jigsaw piece of a district, costing Michigan a seat. In January, Tlaib announced she would run for the new District 12, which includes only two-thirds of her old constituents, but now also includes Dearborn, a city with a large concentrated Arab American population. Tlaib's challenger, Shanelle Jackson, has already tried to wield her identity against her, telling Jewish Insider: ''She obviously is carrying the water of Palestine in all that she does.''

In 2019, days after telling the Squad to ''go back'' to their countries, Donald Trump called Tlaib a ''crazed lunatic.'' Denzel McCampbell, Tlaib's communication director, told me that whenever there is an uptick in hateful calls and threats at the office, he knows that Fox News must have mentioned her. A Republican political tracker -- an operative who regularly films the activities of a politician -- follows her around regularly, a practice usually reserved for campaign season.

In her Washington office, Tlaib keeps a sample of the petroleum coke she collected in Detroit in a glass cabinet. A framed photo of Tlaib's grandmother, whom she hasn't seen in more than 10 years, looks over her desk. ''You know how some people take naps?'' she told me. ''I quit in my head for 20 minutes, and pretend I'm not the Congressmember for the 13,'' she said, referring to her district. ''Not because of them, but because of this place.''

Rozina Ali is a contributing writer at the magazine. She is working on a book about the history of Islamophobia in the United States. Jarod Lew is an artist and a photographer based in Detroit. His works explore community, identity and displacement and have been exhibited at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, the Design Museum of London and the Philharmonie de Paris.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAROD LEW) (MM23)

Rashida Tlaib at a pro-Palestinian rally in Dearborn, Mich., last spring. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/DETROIT FREE PRESS, VIA ZUMA) (MM24)

Tlaib speaking with President Biden on the airport tarmac in Detroit about the Israeli-Palestinian confl ict last May. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM25)

A building in Michigan's 13th Congressional District, which Tlaib represents -- the second poorest in the country. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE JORDANO) (MM26)

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[***When Humans Are the Prey: A Plot Made for Every Era; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YDN-K981-JBG3-60WW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1124 words

**Byline:** Jason Bailey

**Highlight:** “The Hunt” puts a satirical, political spin on a premise that has been remade many times. Why is it so attractive to filmmakers?

**Body**

“The Hunt” puts a satirical, political spin on a premise that has been remade many times. Why is it so attractive to filmmakers?

A young woman awakens in the woods, gagged, confused and afraid. Wandering through the trees and brush, she spots several other people similarly constrained, and together they move toward an open field, where a giant wooden crate awaits them. Inside they find, strangely, a fully clothed pig — and an arsenal of weapons. No sooner have they armed themselves than the carnage begins, and these confused strangers are picked off in a flurry of gunfire, land mines and hand grenades. They’re being hunted.

The opening scenes of Craig Zobel’s “The Hunt” are pointedly free of all but the vaguest exposition, mostly for dramatic effect; it takes some time to figure out exactly who is doing the hunting, who is being hunted and why — and these revelations provide much of the narrative fuel for the [*controversy-soaked picture*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/10/movies/hunt-movie.html). The screenwriters Nick Cuse and Damon Lindelof are able to leave their audience in the dark, at least in terms of specifics, because they’re drawing on a story that has become common cultural currency.

Richard Connell’s short story “[*The Most Dangerous Game*](https://www.classicshorts.com/stories/danger.html)” was first published in Collier’s magazine in 1924. This grisly little tale concerned a big-game hunter who finds himself on a remote island inhabited by the character General Zaroff, a wealthy eccentric who has grown tired of stalking wild creatures and instead “had to invent a new animal to hunt”: man.

“Life is for the strong, to be lived by the strong, and, if needs be, taken by the strong,” Zaroff explains. “The weak of the world were put here to give the strong pleasure. I am strong. Why should I not use my gift?”

Connell’s story and the taboos of its underlying idea have proven surprisingly durable in popular culture — and, like the best horror narratives, malleable to the political and artistic ideas of changing times. If the original short story was part of the tradition of adventure fiction so prevalent in the era, Zaroff’s philosophy smacks of Darwin’s “survival of the fittest” concept, or at least a misinterpretation of it.

By the time the first film adaptation of [*“The Most Dangerous Game”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DXLTw22HOQ) hit screens eight years later, Zaroff was being shown in a new way. Released in 1932, this B-movie from RKO Radio Pictures and directed by Irving Pichel and Ernest B. Schoedsack (the latter would go on to co-direct “King Kong,” using many of the same jungle sets and some of the same cast) was [*praised*](https://www.nytimes.com/1932/11/21/archives/leslie-banks-in-a-fantastic-tale-of-a-mad-russian-hunter-ann.html) by the Times critic Mordaunt Hall, in spite of “its gruesome ideas and its weird plot.”

The adaptation is fairly faithful, with one key alteration: the screenwriter James Ashmore Creelman changed its villainous mastermind from a Cossack general to a Russian count. Heavily accented dialogue emanating from beneath his knitted brow as he creepily roams his luxurious mansion, Count Zaroff seems less inspired by Connell’s text than by Bela Lugosi’s performance in Universal’s 1931 film “Dracula” — with a dash of the mad scientist from the studio’s “Frankenstein” (released the same year).

Whatever the source, Zaroff’s isolation, accent and insanity (the original ads referred to him as a “half-mad hunter”) mark him as one thing above all else: an Other. This idea was made more explicit by the next official adaptation, “A Game of Death” (1945), which transformed Zaroff into Erich Krieger, a Nazi hiding on his own island in the wake of World War II. Subsequent adaptations, like “[*Run for the Sun*](https://www.nytimes.com/1956/08/25/archives/screen-neat-thriller-run-for-the-sun-opens-at-palace-theatre.html)” (1956) and “Bloodlust!” (1961), maintained this comfortable structure: a madman, targeting and slaughtering innocents in isolation.

But times have changed, audiences have grown more cynical, and filmmakers’ approaches to this pliable narrative have adjusted accordingly — sculpting the broad strokes and basic ideas of “The Most Dangerous Game” into pointed social commentary and dystopian hypotheticals in which the hunter of man is not a deranged maniac but the State itself.

One of the earliest (and grisliest) such examples is “Turkey Shoot” (1982), from the Australian exploitation director Brian Trenchard-Smith. In a totalitarian state in the near-future, the film’s hunted are social rebels and so-called deviants, plucked from a concentration camp and set out in the surrounding wilderness to kill or be killed by guards and elite “special guests.” The victims are, of course, ***working class***, their struggle contrasted with images of their hunters drinking from brandy snifters and giggling, “Beats the hell out of network television.”

Then again, why not televise it? Paul Michael Glaser’s “[*The Running Man*](https://www.nytimes.com/1987/11/13/movies/film-schwarzenegger-in-the-running-man.html)” (1987), adapted from the pseudonymous Stephen King novel, works from a similar premise: In this police-state future, criminals are promised a chance at pardons if they can outrun and outwit “stalkers” bent on killing them. The spectacle is broadcast on live television, in a game-show format. Those elements also come into play in the Japanese film “[*Battle Royale*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/25/movies/battle-royale-directed-by-kinji-fukasaku.html)” (2000) and the similar (some would say suspiciously so) “[*Hunger Games*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/23/movies/the-hunger-games-movie-adapts-the-suzanne-collins-novel.html)” franchise, in which government elites force their lower-class youth to hunt each other for sport — and for everyone else’s entertainment.

But the most effective modern takes are those, like “The Hunt,” that shine the narrative through a prism of class (and, to a lesser extent, race). John Woo’s “[*Hard Target*](https://www.nytimes.com/1993/08/20/movies/hunting-to-the-death-when-the-prey-is-human.html)” (1993) imagines a New Orleans underworld in which ultrarich big-game hunters pay big bucks to stalk homeless veterans. Similar prey sits at the center of Ernest R. Dickerson’s “[*Surviving the Game*](https://www.nytimes.com/1994/04/16/movies/review-film-proving-manhood-by-hunting-men.html)” (1994), as a hunting party — including a Wall Street titan and a Texas oilman — hire a resourceful homeless man to be their wilderness guide. Only later does he discover that they’ve paid $50,000 each for a chance to kill him.

When the predators and their prey have only the elements at their disposal — without wealth and influence — the playing field is leveled. That’s the situation facing Crystal (Betty Gilpin), the heroine of “The Hunt,” in a story that connects itself even more explicitly ([*clumsily, perhaps*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/11/movies/the-hunt-review.html)) to the current political climate.

But ultimately, the latest twist on “The Most Dangerous Game” proves it a timeless story in which a powerful force (be it a rich madman, a hidden Nazi, a fascist government or a wealthy cabal) believes they can violate the ultimate taboo, only to find that morality and civility must prevail. No matter how high the body count may be.

PHOTOS: “The Most Dangerous Game” has been remade many times. Among the most recent is “The Hunt,” above. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PATTI PERRET/UNIVERSAL PICTURES) (C1); Joel McCrea and Fay Wray in the first film version of “The Most Dangerous Game,” in 1932. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RKO RADIO PICTURES) (C4)

**Load-Date:** May 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[***‘2020 Can Go to Hell’: The Story Behind the Viral Fire Photo That Said It All***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60P3-N1N1-DXY4-X4J3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 26, 2020 Wednesday 05:18 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1384 words

**Byline:** Jack Healy

**Highlight:** Pandemic, unemployment, wildfire — Lake Berryessa, Calif., has seen it all this year. A photo from the town that evoked the trauma of 2020 sped across the internet. Here, though, it was real life.

**Body**

LAKE BERRYESSA, Calif. — In the sprawling destruction of California’s wildfires, [*one photo became an instant icon*](https://ktla.com/news/california/thats-2020-photographers-california-wildfire-image-a-sign-of-the-times/) for 2020’s miseries: On a hillside roaring with flames stood a sign that asked visitors to a senior center to wear masks, wash their hands and be safe. “Come Join Us,” it beckoned creepily.

The virus. Lost jobs. A world aflame.

Yep, said Judi Vollmer, whose trailer home down the road from the sign burned down last week, just days after she learned that her 92-year-old father had tested positive for the coronavirus — that pretty much sums up life right now.

Ms. Vollmer, 65, was succinct: “2020 can go to hell. This has been the worst year of my life.”

Somehow, that welcome sign outside the Lake Berryessa senior center was still standing on Tuesday as residents trickled back through police barricades and road closures to check out what little had survived.

[*Three people were killed*](https://ktla.com/news/california/thats-2020-photographers-california-wildfire-image-a-sign-of-the-times/) — one of them a 71-year-old man in a wheelchair — when [*flames swarmed their mountainside property*](https://ktla.com/news/california/thats-2020-photographers-california-wildfire-image-a-sign-of-the-times/). Family members said they had tried to escape, but as a last resort took refuge in a homemade “burn shelter.” Relatives identified the victims as Mary Hintemeyer, 70, her boyfriend, Leo McDermott, 71, and Mr. McDermott’s 41-year-old son, Tom.

Much of the lakefront community of retirees and young families who commute to landscaping, winery and service jobs in wealthier corners of Napa County had been reduced to a thicket of tangled steel and ash.

Now, as people in this community of 1,700 salvaged chipped tea saucers and wooden lanterns from the char of about 100 destroyed homes, their worries were a microcosm of the question haunting so many people during this season of pandemic and strife: Would they ever get their old lives back?

“We’ve lost so many people who won’t be back,” said Jerry Rehmke, 80, who runs the country store with his wife, Marcia Ritz, 77. Her trailer home, with all of the drawings and paintings she had made, burned in the Spanish Flat Villa mobile home park, along with Ms. Vollmer’s trailer and about 50 others.

“Everything,” Ms. Ritz said. “It’s down to the ground.”

The constellation of wildfires staining California’s skies and stinging people’s lungs across the West have now killed seven and destroyed at least 1,690 homes and other buildings, officials said. It is still early in a wildfire season expected to rage through the fall. So as 15,000 firefighters pushed to gain control of the blazes around the state, thousands of families who evacuated are now streaming back and wondering whether they will have to flee again.

On Wednesday, Gov. Gavin Newsom said the accounting of death and damage could rise as people return home. “We’ve never seen fire of this scale in this part of the state,” he said. “It demonstrates the reality — not just the point of view — of climate change and its impact in this state.”

Ms. Ritz moved to Lake Berryessa 13 years ago and took over running the country store (which survived, as did some marinas and campgrounds). Their store actually boomed during the pandemic as stir-crazy boaters and anglers flooded the area and snapped up orders of chicken sandwiches and meatloaf. That is over now, and faced with years of rebuilding and a bleak economic future, Ms. Ritz said she was ready to quit altogether.

“Our customers have gone,” Ms. Ritz said on Tuesday morning, a few minutes after she woke up from another night sleeping outside on an air mattress beside the country store. “By the end of the year I’ll be out. This is it.”

Her husband piped up: “We should take down the sign that says ‘Only Five People in the Store.’ There may not be five people up here.”

It was never simple living along Lake Berryessa, a reservoir stocked with trout and catfish that is also famous for a drain that creates a vortex-like hole during wet years. Work is scarce, and cities and groceries are a 40-minute drive along vertiginous mountain roads. The roads can glaze with ice in the winter, and on 90-degree summer days, pints of ice cream melt into soup before you can get them home.

People said they moved from bigger cities because they liked the rural quiet and seeing mountain lions out their windows. On Tuesday morning, a singed fox limped through the mobile home park, paying no heed to the residents and power crews in the street.

Some people had been drawn to the lake by California’s affordable-housing crisis, pushed out of the rest of Napa. They said this was one of the last corners of affordable housing for people earning minimum wage or living off Social Security in a county where the average home costs more than $700,000.

Fire had always been a threat, but evacuations and smoke have gotten even more common as climate change compounds the risk of fires in what is known as the wildland-urban interface. Hillsides overgrown with dry fuel are broiling, and the greenery that people say they cherish about life here has gone as brown as scorched crust.

For the past four years, people around the lake said they watched fires march toward their homes, only to be beaten back. The local Lions Club would donate money to fire victims. Local officials installed a cache of emergency beds and supplies and a big new generator at the senior center to be used as a fallback spot, residents said.

“We know what devastation it does,” Pam Stadnyk, whose trailer home burned, including the wood deck she had just put in, said as she walked through the area on Tuesday for the first time since the fires. “We’ve been living with it. You just get to a point where you —” and she trailed off.

Months of the pandemic already had worn on the mobile home park’s ***working-class*** residents. Some lost work at Napa’s wineries and restaurants.

Edward Morrison, 57, had lost overtime work doing delivery runs to businesses that closed as the pandemic dragged on. One of his sons had been living near Paradise last year when a wildfire gutted the town and killed more than 50 people. Now, his trailer was rubble and his cat was missing. He called a dispatcher.

“Your address?” she asked Mr. Morrison.

“Well my address burned down,” he said.

Ms. Vollmer, who had lived at the lake for 18 years, kept working throughout the pandemic. Her $13-an-hour job at the country store was considered essential work, and though she had asthma and customers sometimes refused to wear masks, she kept going and did not get sick.

She had stayed away from her 92-year-old father’s nursing home since February until a couple of weeks ago, when Ms. Vollmer said she got a call telling her that he had tested positive for the coronavirus. Ms. Vollmer said that he had Alzheimer’s disease and sometimes did not know if she was his daughter or wife, but that he seemed fine when she visited him through his window recently.

“I don’t know if it could get any more stressful than this,” she said.

The fire, like the pandemic, has hit California’s poorest residents hardest. Homeowners able to keep up with the complications and rising costs of insuring property in a fire zone had a safety net. But Ms. Vollmer said her carrier dropped her after a wildfire a few years ago. The trailer was her life’s investment and her retirement plan, and it burned alongside the $3,000 in cash she had tucked away inside.

The Red Cross is putting her up in a hotel near the airport in Napa along with three of her five cats — the ones she was able to rescue. She received a paper bag stuffed with donated clothes, but said she did not know where to go at the end of the week when her hotel stay was up.

She said she loved the community. When her husband died eight years ago, people took up a collection to pay for his cremation. She said she did not know how to start over at 65.

“We’re survivors from up there,” she said. “We dodged the bullet so many times. We always were OK.”

Jill Cowan contributed reporting from Los Angeles.

Jill Cowan contributed reporting from Los Angeles.

PHOTOS: An ironic, but not funny, image from Napa County, Calif., where fires have destroyed scores of homes, including at the Spanish Flat Villa mobile park, top. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NOAH BERGER/ASSOCIATED PRESS; MAX WHITTAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Andrea Shumate comforted her husband, Josh, as he sifted through the remains of his grandmother’s home at the Spanish Flat mobile park. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAX WHITTAKER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 27, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Colleges Slash Budgets in the Pandemic, With ‘Nothing Off-Limits’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6151-V471-DXY4-X0BB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 26, 2020 Monday 05:13 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1757 words

**Byline:** Shawn Hubler

**Highlight:** Liberal arts departments, graduate student aid and even tenured teaching positions are targets as the coronavirus causes shortfalls.

**Body**

Liberal arts departments, graduate student aid and even tenured teaching positions are targets as the coronavirus causes shortfalls.

[*Follow our live coverage of the coronavirus pandemic here*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates).

Ohio Wesleyan University is eliminating 18 majors. The University of Florida’s trustees this month took the first steps toward letting the school furlough faculty. The University of California, Berkeley, has paused admissions to its Ph.D. programs in anthropology, sociology and art history.

As it resurges across the country, the coronavirus is forcing universities large and small to make deep and possibly lasting cuts to close widening budget shortfalls. By one estimate[*,*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) the pandemic has cost colleges at least $120 billion, with even Harvard University, despite its $41.9 billion endowment, reporting a $10 million deficit that has prompted belt tightening.

Though many colleges imposed stopgap measures such as hiring freezes and early retirements to save money in the spring, the persistence of the economic downturn is taking a devastating financial toll, pushing many to lay off or furlough employees, delay graduate admissions and even cut or consolidate core programs like liberal arts departments.

The University of South Florida announced this month that its college of education would become a graduate school only, phasing out undergraduate education degrees to help close a $6.8 million budget gap. In Ohio, the University of Akron, citing the coronavirus, [*successfully invoked a clause*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) in its collective-bargaining agreement in September to supersede tenure rules and [*lay off 97 unionized faculty members*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates).

“We haven’t seen a budget crisis like this in a generation,” said Robert Kelchen, a Seton Hall University associate professor of higher education who has been [*tracking the administrative response*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) to the pandemic. “There’s nothing off-limits at this point.”

Even before the pandemic, colleges and universities were grappling with a [*growing financial crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates), brought on by years of shrinking state support, declining enrollment, and student concerns with skyrocketing tuition and burdensome debt. Now the coronavirus has amplified the financial trouble systemwide, though elite, well-endowed colleges seem sure to weather it with far less pain.

“We have been in aggressive recession management for 12 years — probably more than 12 years,” Daniel Greenstein, chancellor of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, told his board of governors this month as they [*voted to forge ahead*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) with a proposal to merge a half-dozen small schools into two academic entities.

Once linchpins of social mobility in the state’s ***working-class*** coal towns, the 14 campuses in Pennsylvania’s system have lost roughly a fifth of their enrollment over the past decade. The proposal, long underway but made more urgent by pandemic losses, would merge Clarion, California, and Edinboro universities into one unit and Bloomsburg, Lock Haven and Mansfield universities into another to serve a region whose demographics have changed.

Such pressures have reached critical mass throughout the country in the months since the pandemic hit. State governments from [*Washington*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) to [*Connecticut*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates), tightening their own belts, have told public universities to expect steep cuts in appropriations. Students and families, facing skyrocketing unemployment, have [*balked at the prospect of paying full fare*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) for largely online instruction, opting instead for gap years or less expensive schools closer to home.

Costs have also soared as colleges have spent millions on testing, tracing and quarantining students, only to face outbreaks. [*A New York Times database*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) has confirmed more than 214,000 cases this year at college campuses, with at least 75 deaths, mostly among adults last spring, but also [*including some students*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) more recently.

Freshman enrollment is down more than 16 percent from last year, [*the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) has reported — part of a 4 percent overall drop in undergraduate enrollment that is taking tuition revenue down with it.

[*In a letter to Congress*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) last week, the American Council on Education and other higher education organizations estimated that the virus would cost institutions more than $120 billion in increased student aid, lost housing fees, forgone sports revenue, public health measures, learning technology and other adjustments.

And because donations to all but the heftiest endowments limit those funds to specific uses, most colleges cannot freely dip into them as emergency reserves. Harvard has the largest endowment in the nation, but its pandemic losses turned a $300 million-plus surplus in 2019 into a $10 million operating loss in 2020, according to an [*annual report posted last week*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates), forcing the university to freeze hiring, slash capital spending and cut senior managers’ pay.

That has meant months of cutbacks, including abolishing athletic programs, deferring campus construction and laying off administrative staff and cafeteria workers. Scores of graduate programs, including some at elite research universities such as Harvard, Princeton and U.C. Berkeley, have temporarily stopped taking new Ph.D. students — the result of financial aid budgets strained by current doctoral candidates whose research is taking more time because of the pandemic.

[*A Chronicle of Higher Education database*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) tracking the budgetary triage has documented more than 100 such suspended programs, from the [*University of Pennsylvania’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) School of Arts and Sciences, which will not take new school-funded doctoral students next fall, to [*Rice University*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates), which paused admissions to all five of the Ph.D. programs in its school of humanities.

Most of the suspensions are in social sciences and humanities programs where the universities — rather than outside funders such as corporations, foundations and the federal government — typically underwrite the multiyear financial aid packages offered to doctoral students. University officials say the suspensions are necessary to ensure their strapped budgets can continue supporting students already in Ph.D. pipelines.

But Suzanne T. Ortega, president of the Council of Graduate Schools, noted that interrupting that pipeline could also have a lingering impact on the higher education work force, diverting promising students from low-income households, for example, or discouraging candidates who might bring much needed diversity to faculty rosters.

As it is, the pandemic has had an outsize impact on less affluent students: [*A survey of 292 private, nonprofit schools*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) released this month by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities reported a nearly 8 percent decrease in enrollment among students who receive federal Pell Grants.

“A couple years off is not necessarily the end of the world and may even be a wise thing,” Ms. Ortega said. “But if our universities don’t remain in touch with those students, and connect with them, and encourage them to keep thinking about grad school, we could have our own lost generation of students who get busy with other things and then don’t fulfill their dreams.”

As schools exhaust the possibilities of trims around the margins, what is left, administrators say, is payroll, typically the largest line item in higher education. Since February, when the coronavirus hit, the [*Bureau of Labor Statistics*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates) has reported that colleges and universities have shed more than 300,000 mostly nonfaculty jobs.

“Some of these institutions have redone their budgets three, four, five times,” said Jim Hundrieser, vice president for consulting and business development at the National Association of College and University Business Officers, a professional organization for finance officers in higher education.

“As this next chapter unfolds, what’s left is just staffing. For most, this will be the toughest round.”

In central New York, Ithaca College’s provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, La Jerne T. Cornish, said “there is no joy” as the school accelerated plans to [*cut 131 full-time faculty jobs*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/11/02/world/covid-19-coronavirus-updates), a result of declining enrollment exacerbated by the pandemic. Ms. Cornish said the school had already furloughed 167 nonfaculty staff members and offered early retirement to 30 faculty members to address an $8 million shortfall.

But, Ms. Cornish said, further action was needed to bring the payroll into line with enrollment declines.

Ohio Wesleyan’s president, Rock Jones, told students in a recent email that the university would eliminate or phase out majors in comparative literature, urban studies, journalism and 15 other subjects. The move, he wrote, would merge religion and philosophy into one department and lump Black studies and women’s studies into a single “critical identity studies” program, but also will save about $4 million and limit faculty layoffs to one tenured post.

The school’s plan followed a yearlong faculty-led review, but Mr. Kelchen, the higher education professor, said such consolidations often can allow institutions to downsize despite faculty job protections as well as encourage people in positions deemed redundant to take early retirement.

“Even if the faculty can stay on,” he said, “they’ll get reassigned, maybe to teach in another department or do administrative work.”

Other schools are laying the groundwork now for cuts they expect later. Trustees at the University of Florida took the first step in September to allow faculty furloughs to help close a projected $49 million shortfall from the coronavirus. Steve Orlando, a university spokesman, said the next step — a formal furlough policy — is expected to come to the board this year.

Daniel Meisenzahl, a spokesman for the University of Hawaii, said the 10-campus system had embarked on an exhaustive fiscal review in which “every single unit” was being examined, including an array of bachelors’ programs and university centers for public policy and conflict resolution. The system is facing a projected 13 percent decline in revenue and a net loss of nearly $67 million in operating income.

Mr. Kelchen said that the coronavirus had worked its way into the core of the nation’s academic machinery, and that the damage would likely be lasting.

“These cuts are going to continue long past the pandemic,” he said.

PHOTOS: Above, Ithaca College in central New York has accelerated plans to cut 131 full-time faculty jobs. Left, Ohio Wesleyan University will eliminate or phase out 18 majors, including urban studies and journalism. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HEATHER AINSWORTH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ANDREW SPEAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Chill Vibes, Minus the Wind Chimes: It’s a New Day for New Age Music***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6153-DM41-JBG3-64M6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 26, 2020 Monday 00:30 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 1544 words

**Byline:** Eric Ducker

**Highlight:** A genre known for cheesiness is thriving once again in Los Angeles, taking root on the label Leaving Records.

**Body**

A genre known for cheesiness is thriving once again in Los Angeles, taking root on the label Leaving Records.

Nailah Hunter grew up in a household where magic was considered demonic, so her parents didn’t let her read the “Harry Potter” books. Her father was a pastor in the South Los Angeles neighborhood Ladera Heights and she sang at his church, and later wrote songs on acoustic guitar and performed in her high school’s choir. She also read fantasy novels and listened to Gary Stadler, a fanciful composer whose titles are filled with “fairy” or “faerie.”

“The nerdiness started early,” said Hunter, now 26 and quite close to her parents, over FaceTime on a September morning.

In college, she felt stifled as a traditional singer-songwriter or the vocalist in groups where others, “namely white dudes,” controlled the creative direction. She got a Korg Triton synthesizer and the audio production software Logic Pro. She also got deep into the harp. “The realm it accesses — the timbre, the texture, the low notes — it feels like you’re summoning things out of your body as you’re playing,” she said.

Hunter’s creations began to break from conventional song structures and develop into something freer, and in March, she put out her debut EP, “Spells.” Last Friday, she released new music alongside fellow artists on the Los Angeles label [*Leaving Records*](https://leavingrecords.com/) who likewise create a distinctive version of new age music. It’s an often derided, and loosely defined, genre that’s been called out for its cheesiness and outmoded conventions (is that a wind chime tinkling in the distance?), but the Leaving roster offers an updated perception of what new age can be, and who makes it.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://leavingrecords.com/)]

The collaborative project, which features Hunter, Matthew McQueen, Diva Dompé, Ami Dang and Olive Ardizoni, is known as Galdre Visions, a name that references the Old Norwegian word for a sorcerer, or a Celtic druid that uses songs for incantations. Like Hunter, its members arrived at new age after exploring other musical avenues, though a teenage love of Enya and an interest in alternative spiritualities was not uncommon.

McQueen, who is 36 and releases music as Matthewdavid, started Leaving in 2009, inspired by harsher scenes like drone and noise music. (While the label puts out other genres, new age is one of its pillars.) He first became interested in the sound over a decade ago after discovering new age tapes at a Goodwill in Tallahassee, Fla. He also called [*“Planetary Unfolding,”*](https://leavingrecords.com/) a 1981 cosmic ambient album by Michael Stearns, “a record that saved my life.”

The label’s artists include his wife, Dompé, 33, who previously played in the Los Angeles rock bands Blackblack and Pocahaunted. In her adolescence she endured bouts of sleep paralysis, where she would wake up but seemingly could not move her body and saw terrifying hallucinations. As she nurtured an interest in occultism and mysticism, she concluded that her condition was connected to astral projecting, the belief that an individual’s consciousness can traverse different dimensions. Guided meditations she made to help process her own supernatural experiences developed into the deeply spacey and sometimes unsettling project Yialmelic Frequencies.

Dang, 36, a producer and sitarist, studied electronic composition at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music before joining Baltimore’s experimental music scene. As she’s gotten older, she has become more interested in creating music that will de-stress her listeners, rather than challenge them. “If you came to my show and fell asleep, that’s great,” she said. “If that’s what happens, that’s flattering.”

Ardizoni too has targeted an extremely chill audience: foliage. The musician, who is 33, identifies as nonbinary and uses gender-neutral pronouns, was introduced to crystals and Eastern philosophies as a teenager in South Florida around the same time they got into Pink Floyd and acid. After singing in punk and metal bands, Ardizoni moved to Los Angeles and talked to the plants they encountered during walks or long hikes, eventually making music for them under the name Green-House.

Ardizoni also sees their music as a therapeutic force that works in both directions. “I’m a ***working-class*** queer person, assigned female at birth, and life is not always easy,” they said. “Every type of music I’ve ever made has been healing to me in some way, and I’ve wanted to share that with others.”

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://leavingrecords.com/)]

It’s not surprising that these Leaving artists have mostly taken root in Los Angeles: California has long been the nexus of new age music. As the 1960s turned into the ’70s, musicians working in the state produced foundational albums like Paul Horn’s “Inside” and Iasos’s “Inter-Dimensional Music.”

New age didn’t just develop out of the era’s woolly counterculture; it took inspiration from sources like Transcendental Meditation, the work of the philosophical writer Alan Watts, and German naturists from the early 20th century. “The new age movement was looking to liberate through this spiritual awakening,” said Carlos Niño, a musician who has released music on Leaving and is a longtime D.J. for Los Angeles’s Dublab internet radio station. “All that information is in the music.”

Suzanne Doucet, a German pop star during the 1960s who came to America in the early ’80s after embracing new age, said of the sound, “It’s not entertainment, it’s to expand your conscious being.”

Throughout the ’70s and most of the ’80s, new age music remained an underground phenomenon, mostly sold on cassette in bookstores. In 1987, Doucet opened Only New Age Music on a corner of Melrose Boulevard; it was the first record shop of its kind. That same year, the Grammys awarded its inaugural trophy for best new age recording.

Though new age artists soon had their albums stocked in national chains like Tower Records, for younger generations growing up in a culture transformed by punk and hip-hop, the music seemed irredeemably hokey. But in recent years, aspects of broader new age living have dovetailed with the rise of the wellness movement. “On a more mainstream level, culture has openly embraced yoga and meditation, clean and soothing design, psychedelics, the existence of aliens,” said Brian Sweeny, the creator of the [*Ambient Church*](https://leavingrecords.com/) concert series. “It’s not fringe anymore.”

When Sweeny booked the first Ambient Church performance in New York in the summer of 2016, he sold 100 tickets. At the last shows he had in New York and L.A. before the pandemic shutdown, he drew almost 2,000 attendees.

Though practices associated with new age culture are now a part of the popular firmament, this shift has come with some attendant problems, like [*wellness influencers latching onto QAnon conspiracy theories*](https://leavingrecords.com/) and continued instances of cultural appropriation. “This year I’ve been very confused because new age or the spiritual movement is the place that I’ve sought refuge and healing in a lot of my life, but I feel very disconnected from it,” Dompé said. “There’s just so many ways that it can be used to cause harm, to control people, to bypass people’s experiences, to amplify your own traumas in this really weird way.”

In order to create a more inclusive community, in 2018, McQueen started a biweekly series of free, outdoor performances at La Tierra de la Culebra, a small art park between two houses on a stretch of Highland Park. Operating under the comically direct name Listen to Music Outside in the Daylight Under a Tree, the series featured Leaving artists and friends of the label. After Covid-19 struck, McQueen transformed it into a livestreamed event (that’s now on hiatus) called Listen to Music Safely in Your Home Next to a Fern.

As the separation and uncertainty of the pandemic stretched into months, the plan for Galdre Visions came together as a way for the artists to connect with one another. Hunter, Dompé and Ardizoni each picked incomplete pieces of music and passed them around, layering them with shimmering digital textures and twinkling ripples from Hunter’s harp. Dang added elements like sitar and harmonium, while McQueen handled the mixing and mastering.

The members of Galdre Visions consider the songs on the EP individual spells and included vocals on each one to activate their intentions. Their voices permeate the space either through wordless chanting or Ardizoni intoning comforting phrases like, “The sun will rise again, in time.”

“Everyone is hurting in an obvious way right now,” Hunter said. “Everyone is scared and just wants to be held, so if there ever was a time for this to be received more widely, it would be now.”

PHOTOS: “The realm it accesses — the timbre, the texture, the low notes — it feels like you’re summoning things out of your body as you’re playing,” Nailah Hunter said of the harp.; “Every type of music I’ve ever made has been healing to me in some way, and I’ve wanted to share that with others,” Olive Ardizoni said.; Diva Dompé previously played in the Los Angeles rock bands Blackblack and Pocahaunted. She is married to Matthew McQueen, the founder of Leaving Records.; McQueen, who is 36 and releases music as Matthewdavid, started Leaving in 2009, inspired by harsher scenes like drone and noise music. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROZETTE RAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 27, 2020

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[***Congress May Finally Give Americans More Money***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61J6-KNP1-JBG3-611D-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Spencer Bokat-Lindell

**Highlight:** But is it enough?

**Body**

But is it enough?

This article is part of the Debatable newsletter. You can [*sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) to receive it on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Eight months after Congress cut the first stimulus checks to help Americans absorb the shock of a pandemic-induced recession, it’s finally making plans for a second round. “We are going to stay right here, right here, until we are finished,” Senator Mitch McConnell, the majority leader, [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) on Thursday, “even if that means working through the weekend.”

How does the relief package differ from the first one Congress [*passed in March*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable), and will it be enough to help workers, unemployed people and businesses weather the winter? Here’s what people are saying.

Inside the deal

A follow-up to the $2 trillion Cares Act, which was widely credited with [*staving off economic disaster*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable), has been a long time coming. The House of Representatives twice passed relief packages — a $3.4 trillion one, the Heroes Act, in May and a scaled-back [*$2.2 trillion*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) version in October — but both went nowhere in the Senate, where Republican members disputed the necessity and cost of additional aid.

As a compromise, the White House put its weight behind a $1.8 trillion deal in October that some Democrats felt was acceptable, but Nancy Pelosi, the House speaker, rejected it — possibly, the White House suggested, because she did not want to hand President Trump a legislative victory before the election — while Senate Republicans [*revolted against it*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable).

But with the last remnants of the Cares Act expiring at the end of December, and with the Georgia runoff elections that will determine control of the Senate taking place at the beginning of January, the delay has become untenable for both parties. The details are not yet final, but the package, spearheaded by a bipartisan group of senators, is [*reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) to be a $900 billion proposal including the following provisions:

* A second round of relief checks, of between $600 and $700 each, down from $1,200 in the Cares Act, with an additional $600 per child. The checks were not part of the initial deal, but Senators Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Josh Hawley of Missouri pushed for their inclusion by threatening to block government funding legislation.

1. $300 enhancement of weekly unemployment insurance benefits, down from the $600 enhancement that expired at the end of July.
2. $300 billion in small business aid.
3. $25 billion for emergency rental assistance, which will apply to both past and future rent payments.
4. An extension of the federal eviction moratorium to Jan. 31.

The proposal is also notable for what it doesn’t include: There is no liability shield to protect corporations against coronavirus-related lawsuits from workers, which Mr. McConnell had previously said was indispensable, nor is there aid to state and local governments, a major concession from Democrats.

The deal is expected to become law before next week, when Congress breaks for the holidays. For many Americans, the relief cannot come soon enough:

* Nearly [*8 million Americans*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) have fallen into poverty since the summer, after the poverty rate declined in the spring because of the Cares Act.

1. One in eight adults do not [*have enough to eat*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). In households with children, that number is one in six.
2. Nearly 12 million renters will owe [*an estimated average $5,850*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) in back rent and utilities by January.

‘Far too paltry’

The largest objection to the $900 billion package is that it is simply not enough money to carry Americans to the other side of the pandemic. In [*a summer survey*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) of 25 economists conducted by The Washington Post, 20 urged $2 trillion or more in relief, while only five favored roughly $1 trillion. “The risk of overdoing it is less than the risk of under doing it,” Jerome Powell, the chairman of the Federal Reserve, [*told*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) Congress this month.

So why are Republicans insisting on a smaller bill? In The Washington Post, Greg Sargent [*argues*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) that it’s because they want to saddle the Biden presidency with a halting recovery. “If the underlying economic damage done to the economy is serious — and the [*recent jobs report suggests a whole lot of jobs*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) aren’t coming back — we could see a long, brutal slog of a recovery, [*similar to the one*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) during the Obama presidency,” he writes. And because Mr. McConnell’s newfound motivation to pass a bill appears linked to the Georgia runoffs, Mr. Sargent [*argues*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) that Republicans will be much more resistant next year to economic relief if they retain control of the Senate.

Some on the left, however, blame Democrats for not taking the $1.8 trillion deal the White House offered in October, if only to weaponize [*Republican opposition*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) to it before the election. “Those who see the previous proposals as missed political opportunities that might have helped Democrats take the Senate are, of course, operating on a different plane from Pelosi and leadership,” Osita Nwanevu [*writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). “Forcing McConnell to say no was too difficult to be bothered with; instead, they said no themselves.”

But even granting the $900 billion constraint, many are criticizing the Democrats for making the wrong trade-offs. As Jeff Stein has [*reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) for The Washington Post, some experts say that stimulus checks are not sufficiently targeted toward those most in need. And to extract stimulus checks as a concession from Republicans, Democrats [*reportedly*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) were forced not only to forfeit state and local aid but also to shorten the duration of the enhanced unemployment program to three months from four. To some, this seemed like a lousy deal. Jordan Weissmann, Slate’s senior business and economics correspondent, tweeted:

At the same time, others have argued that the stimulus checks are necessary because they reach tens of millions of people in need who aren’t eligible for unemployment insurance, such as those with low wages or disabilities as well as the deeply impoverished. The stimulus checks can also be distributed much more quickly and efficiently, as Claudia Sahm, an economist and expert on recessions, tweeted.

The relief proposal has also come under fire for offering a “double-dip” benefit to small businesses. The benefit — which [*some*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) Democrats have pushed for and some [*Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) have opposed — will allow businesses to deduct their already tax-free, forgivable loans from their taxable income. Because about 70 percent of business income is earned by the top 1 percent of taxpayers, [*according*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) to Adam Looney of the Brookings Institution, the provision would amount to a $120 billion windfall to wealthy Americans. “It’s hard to imagine a tax cut that is so large in magnitude and still so targeted to those who need it least,” he [*told*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) Mother Jones.

‘Better than nothing’

The Times editorial board argues that the deal, flawed as it is, is still worth taking. “A wave of good news about vaccines offers reason for hope that the coronavirus pandemic will loosen its grip next year and that economic growth will accelerate,” the board [*writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). “It’s not enough money, but Republicans are refusing to do more, and Democratic leaders have concluded that some aid is better than nothing.”

The eviction ban extension and rental assistance, for example, will offer the more than [*30 million people*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) estimated to be at risk of eviction a much-needed, if temporary, reprieve. “While $25 billion in emergency rental assistance is clearly not enough to meet the estimated $70 billion in accrued back rent or the ongoing need for rental assistance to keep families stably housed, these resources are essential and desperately needed,” Diane Yentel, president and chief executive of the National Low Income Housing Coalition, [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) in a statement. “Extending the moratorium through January provides time for emergency rental assistance to be distributed, and for President-elect Biden to improve and further extend the moratorium immediately after being sworn into office.”

Concerns about the absence of state and local funding may also be less urgent than some think. For months, as states continue to face [*severe budget shortfalls*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable), local officials across the country have been warning that they do not have enough money to keep their [*transportation systems*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) afloat and carry out [*a mass vaccination campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable).

“We need to make sure that state and local communities have the money to get the job done,” Senator Cory Booker [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) on Wednesday of the need for more vaccine funding. “We know that when these barriers are erected or the challenges are faced, they’re most difficult when it comes to Black and brown communities, in low income and poor communities.”

But the current proposal still does have some state and local aid, even if it&#39;s not earmarked as such, the business journalist Josh Barro [*points out*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). It includes, for example, $82 billion for schools, $35 billion for health care providers, $16 billion for testing, tracing and vaccine distribution, $10 billion for broadband and $15 billion for public transit.

And with the addition of stimulus checks, even Mr. Sanders appeared to warm slightly to the compromise bill. “I’m glad we’re at some $600 per ***working class*** adult and $600 for the kids,” he [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). “For a family of four, that would be $2,400, which I think will be pretty good news during this rather bleak Christmas period. But we have got to do more.”

Senators Mitt Romney and Joe Manchin, part of the bipartisan group of lawmakers who helped craft the legislation, say they anticipated such criticism. “We realize that the smaller bill will not be popular in our respective parties,” they [*write*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) in The Washington Post. “But we are confident that it provides the emergency Covid-19 relief our nation desperately needs to get us all through the early spring.”

Do you have a point of view we missed? Email us at [*debatable@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable). Please note your name, age and location in your response, which may be included in the next newsletter.

MORE ON CORONAVIRUS RELIEF

[*“The C.D.C. banned evictions for those affected by Covid. Why are tenants being thrown out on the street?”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [NBC]

[*“What’s Between 30 Million Americans and an Eviction Tsunami?”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [The New York Times]

[*“Whatever Congress does on stimulus, millions of workers are already screwed”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [Vox]

[*“More Americans are shoplifting food as aid runs out during the pandemic”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/debatable) [The Washington Post]

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by The New York Times; photographs by Alyssa Schukar, Elizabeth Frantz, Stefani Reynolds for The New York Times, and Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Wave of New Polling Suggests an Erosion of Trump’s Support***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:603C-WBH1-DXY4-X0N1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Highlight:** Joe Biden appears in a stronger position to oust an incumbent president than any challenger since Bill Clinton in the summer of 1992.

**Body**

Joe Biden appears in a stronger position to oust an incumbent president than any challenger since Bill Clinton in the summer of 1992.

The coronavirus pandemic, a severe economic downturn and the widespread demonstrations in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd in police custody would pose a serious political challenge to any president seeking re-election. They are certainly posing one to [*President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html).

His approval rating has fallen to 13.2 percentage points under water among registered or likely voters, down from negative 6.7 points on April 15, according to [*FiveThirtyEight estimates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html). And now a wave of new polls shows [*Joe Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html) with a significant national lead, placing him in a stronger position to oust an incumbent president than any challenger since Bill Clinton in the summer of 1992.

He leads the president by around 10 percentage points in an average of recent live-interview telephone surveys of registered voters. It’s a four-point improvement over the six-point lead he held in a similar series of polls in late March and early April. Since then, Bernie Sanders has left the Democratic race, the severity of the coronavirus pandemic has become fully evident, and the president’s standing has gradually eroded.

[View our NYTimes/Siena College poll in which [*Biden leads Trump by 14 points*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html).]

The erosion has been fairly broad, spanning virtually all demographic groups. But in a longer-term context, the president’s weakness is most stark in one respect: his deficit among women.

Women were supposed to carry the first female major-party nominee to victory four years ago, as many assumed that Mr. Trump’s treatment of women, including [*allegations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html) of sexual assault, would prove to be his undoing. But women might be his undoing this time. He trails Mr. Biden by 25 points among them, far worse than his 14-point deficit four years ago. He still leads among men by six points in the most recent polls, about the same margin as he led by in the final polls of registered voters in 2016.

Over the shorter term, the [*decline in the president’s standing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html) has been particularly pronounced among white voters without a college degree, helping to explain why the Trump campaign has felt compelled to air advertisements in Ohio and Iowa, two mostly white ***working-class*** battleground states where Mr. Trump won by nearly 10 points four years ago.

In the most recent polls, white voters without a college degree back the president by 21 points, down from 31 points in March and April and down from the 29-point lead Mr. Trump held in the final polls of registered voters in 2016.

Mr. Trump didn’t just lose support to the undecided column; Mr. Biden ticked up to an average of 37 percent among white voters without a degree. The figure would be enough to assure Mr. Biden the presidency, given his considerable strength among white college graduates. In the most recent polls, white college graduates back Mr. Biden by a 20-point margin, up four points since the spring. It’s also an eight-point improvement for the Democratic nominee since 2016, and a 26-point improvement since 2012.

Mr. Biden has also made some progress toward redressing his weakness among younger voters. Voters ages 18 to 34 now back Mr. Biden by a 22-point margin, up six points from the spring and now somewhat ahead of Hillary Clinton’s lead in the final polls of 2016. Young voters will probably never be a strength for Mr. Biden — a septuagenarian who promised a return to normal, rather than fundamental change during the Democratic primary — but for now his margin is not so small as to constitute a grave threat to his prospects.

Remarkably, Mr. Biden still leads by seven points among voters 65 and over in the most recent surveys, despite the kind of racial unrest that led many of these voters to support Republican candidates at various points in their lifetimes. It should be noted that Mr. Biden’s lead among older voters is somewhat narrower than it was a few months ago, either reflecting the statistical noise of small sample sizes or reflecting the toll of recent events. Yet it is still a commanding strength for Mr. Biden compared with Mrs. Clinton’s five-point deficit among this group four years ago.

Perhaps more surprising in light of recent events is that Mr. Biden has not made substantial gains with nonwhite voters. He leads among them by 46 points in the most recent polls, up a mere percentage point from the polls conducted in March and April. It’s still behind the 50-point margin held by Mrs. Clinton in the final weeks of the 2016 race. Most pollsters do not break out nonwhite voters in much depth because of the small sample size, making it hard to explore the precise sources of Mr. Biden’s relative weakness. But for now, it seems reasonable to assume that his struggles are most acute among young nonwhite voters and nonwhite men, given the overall national figures.

Of course, five months remain until the [*presidential election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html). There is plenty of time for the race to swing in Mr. Trump’s favor, just as it did in the final stretch of the 2016 campaign. Indeed, the 2016 race was characterized by a predictable, mean-reverting oscillation between nearly double-digit leads for Mrs. Clinton — as in August and October — and a tighter race in which Mr. Trump trailed in national polls but remained highly competitive — as in July, September and November.

Mr. Biden’s lead in the polls today is not vastly different from the leads Mrs. Clinton claimed at her peaks after the “[*Access Hollywood*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html)” tape was revealed or when Mr. Trump became embroiled in a [*feud*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html) with a Muslim Gold Star military family.

There are reasons to doubt that the polling this year will again take on the character of a slow-motion, [*sine-wave*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/28/us/politics/trump-approval-older-voters-coronavirus.html) roller-coaster ride. Many of the swings toward Mr. Trump were driven at least in part by news and negative coverage about Mrs. Clinton’s emails or her health. Joe Biden’s stay-at-home campaign tends to keep the spotlight focused on Mr. Trump. The Trump campaign has not resolved on a central attack on Mr. Biden. Perhaps as a result, Mr. Trump’s high points in national polls have never been as high as they were in 2016.

Even so, this could be a low point for Mr. Trump. There is certainly cause to doubt whether the protests today, or even the president’s early response to the pandemic, will loom as large for voters in November as they do today. No one can predict what the national political environment will look like in five months; surely, no one would have predicted what has unfolded over the last five. The president’s supporters can still hope that the economy will rapidly recover over the summer and fall, before a hypothesized second wave of coronavirus hits over the late fall or winter.

If the race does revert toward the president, as it did on so many occasions four years ago, he could quickly find himself back within striking distance of squeaking out a narrow win. His relative advantage in the Electoral College compared with the nation as a whole, or possibly among likely voters compared with registered voters, means that he doesn’t need to gain anywhere near 10 points to get back within striking distance of re-election. In the final national polls of registered voters in 2016, Mr. Trump trailed by around an average of five points. It was close enough.

But for now, the president trails by too much for these factors to play a decisive role. If the election were held today, the Electoral College would pose no serious obstacle to Mr. Biden, thanks to his strength compared with Mrs. Clinton among white voters and particularly those without a college degree. He would win even if the polls were exactly as wrong as they were four years ago.

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

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2020

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[***Making Their Own Jazz History***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YDD-4J71-JBG3-62J5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Giovanni Russonello

**Body**

If jazz is looking to reinvent itself -- or catch its breath and take stock of how much it already has in the past 10 years or so -- the music of Shabaka and the Ancestors might be a good place to start.

A relatively recent partnership between the British saxophonist Shabaka Hutchings, 35, and a group of South African musicians from the same generation, the Ancestors' music isn't like any other jazz being played today -- even in South Africa -- but that doesn't mean it can't be a model. Their second album, ''We Are Sent Here by History,'' due Friday, seems to argue that by escaping any single context or outside expectation, a group can hit upon a kind of liberation that's fresh enough to be useful.

''One thing that's come up in our conversations, and has been transmitted into the narrative of the album, is the fact that we need to try to imagine what the future can hold idealistically,'' Mr. Hutchings said from London in a phone interview. ''We need to start articulating our utopias, articulating what needs to be burned and what needs to be saved.''

The pillars of this band are the fire-stirring voice of Siyabonga Mthembu; the sinewy, palpitating tenor saxophone of Mr. Hutchings, its leader and main composer; and the churning thrust of its rhythm section: the bassist Ariel Zamonsky, the percussionist Gontse Makhene and the drummer Tumi Mogorosi.

The alto saxophonist Mthunzi Mvubu is also deeply in the mix, often entwined with Mr. Hutchings's lines. So are a few guest musicians, who appear on the album in select spots: the pianists Nduduzo Makhathini and Thandi Ntuli, and the trumpeter Mandla Mlangeni. All but Mr. Hutchings are based in Johannesburg or nearby Soweto.

The bandleader typically writes out the basic structure of each piece, but ''that's just the first step,'' he said. ''How the musicians then react to it, give their feedback -- that's what creates the album, the energy, good music.''

Mr. Hutchings is a linchpin and an ambassador of the London scene, but the defining quality of his life and music has been travel. As a child, he spent years living in Barbados, internalizing its musical and cultural traditions, before returning to London for high school. It was on a series of trips to South Africa, stemming from a romantic relationship, that Mr. Hutchings fell in with Mr. Mlangeni and the members of his Amandla Freedom Ensemble, most of whom would eventually join the Ancestors.

Mr. Mthembu, whose art-rock band The Brother Moves On has always stood adjacent to Johannesburg's jazz scene proper, was glad to finally link up with this cast of improvisers. ''Brother Moves On has always been this periphery act,'' Mr. Mthembu said. ''The jazz cats never got why we were able to get the jazz venues full.'' When he was invited to the first recording session for Mr. Hutchings's band in 2015, he said, ''Everyone on it was cats that I looked up to in Joburg.''

Mr. Mthembu was supposed to record vocals on just two tracks, but he ended up staying for the entire session and appears on about half of the Ancestors' stirring debut album, ''Wisdom of Elders,'' which was released the next year on Brownswood Recordings. Mr. Hutchings soon signed a multi-project contract with Impulse! Records; ''We Are Sent Here by History'' will be his third album for the label in three years, and his first on Impulse! with the Ancestors.

Mr. Hutchings has said he hoped the band would capture some of the ''restless energy'' of Johannesburg, a metropolitan but deeply ***working-class*** city, where much of the arts activity takes place underground. ''We Are Sent Here by History'' is intended specifically as both a lament and an embrace of the coming climate apocalypse.

''We're talking about imaginative structures, we're talking about how we perceive things and how we process information that's given to us -- how we see ourselves in the sense of how we relate to history,'' he said. ''Hopefully it's just a starting point to get people thinking about their own relationship to these things.''

The members of the Ancestors all have a distanced relationship to the American jazz tradition, which is to say they enjoy the privilege of choice. Together they have plucked some specific inspirations -- the spiritual jazz of Sun Ra, Alice Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders; and the recent success of Kamasi Washington, which showed them what might be possible -- but more or less left the rest. Beyond that, the Ancestors' sonic inheritance comes mostly from South Africa, from bands like the indigenous jazz-rockers Batsumi and the numerous apartheid-era musicians who found refuge in Britain like Louis Moholo, Chris McGregor, Johnny Dyani and Hugh Masekela.

''There's a sense that there is a particular sound that's being inherited, but then there's also a shared forward motion with other people from other parts of the world,'' said Mr. Mogorosi, the drummer. ''We're trying to use the tradition to do something more with it -- or rather, using the tradition to try to bring play into it. I think this sense of play really pushes things forward.''

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The saxophonist Shabaka Hutchings, top, is a linchpin of the London jazz scene, but the defining quality of his life and music has been travel. Above, Shabaka and the Ancestors performed at the 2017 Winter Jazzfest in New York, at Le Poisson Rouge. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAMA JALLOH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

MARK ABRAMSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***New Numbers Suggest a Major Erosion of Trump's Support***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:603K-H7W1-DXY4-X21F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 10, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 20

**Length:** 1275 words

**Byline:** By Nate Cohn

**Body**

Joe Biden appears in a stronger position to oust an incumbent president than any challenger since Bill Clinton in the summer of 1992.

The coronavirus pandemic, a severe economic downturn and the widespread demonstrations in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd in police custody would pose a serious political challenge to any president seeking re-election. They are certainly posing one to President Trump.

His approval rating has fallen to 13.2 percentage points under water among registered or likely voters, down from negative 6.7 points on April 15, according to FiveThirtyEight estimates. And now a wave of new polls shows Joe Biden with a significant national lead, placing him in a stronger position to oust an incumbent president than any challenger since Bill Clinton in the summer of 1992.

He leads the president by around 10 percentage points in an average of recent live-interview telephone surveys of registered voters. It's a four-point improvement over the six-point lead he held in a similar series of polls in late March and early April. Since then, Bernie Sanders has left the Democratic race, the severity of the coronavirus pandemic has become fully evident, and the president's standing has gradually eroded.

The erosion has been fairly broad, spanning virtually all demographic groups. But in a longer-term context, the president's weakness is most stark in one respect: his deficit among women.

Women were supposed to carry the first female major-party nominee to victory four years ago, as many assumed that Mr. Trump's treatment of women, including allegations of sexual assault, would prove to be his undoing. But women might be his undoing this time. He trails Mr. Biden by 25 points among them, far worse than his 14-point deficit four years ago. He still leads among men by six points in the most recent polls, about the same margin as he led by in the final polls of registered voters in 2016.

Over the shorter term, the decline in the president's standing has been particularly pronounced among white voters without a college degree, helping to explain why the Trump campaign has felt compelled to air advertisements in Ohio and Iowa, two mostly white ***working-class*** battleground states where Mr. Trump won by nearly 10 points four years ago.

In the most recent polls, white voters without a college degree back the president by 21 points, down from 31 points in March and April and down from the 29-point lead Mr. Trump held in the final polls of registered voters in 2016.

Mr. Trump didn't just lose support to the undecided column; Mr. Biden ticked up to an average of 37 percent among white voters without a degree. The figure would be enough to assure Mr. Biden the presidency, given his considerable strength among white college graduates. In the most recent polls, white college graduates back Mr. Biden by a 20-point margin, up four points since the spring. It's also an eight-point improvement for the Democratic nominee since 2016, and a 26-point improvement since 2012.

Mr. Biden has also made some progress toward redressing his weakness among younger voters. Voters ages 18 to 34 now back Mr. Biden by a 22-point margin, up six points from the spring and now somewhat ahead of Hillary Clinton's lead in the final polls of 2016. Young voters will probably never be a strength for Mr. Biden -- a septuagenarian who promised a return to normal, rather than fundamental change during the Democratic primary -- but for now his margin is not so small as to constitute a grave threat to his prospects.

Remarkably, Mr. Biden still leads by seven points among voters 65 and over in the most recent surveys, despite the kind of racial unrest that led many of these voters to support Republican candidates at various points in their lifetimes. It should be noted that Mr. Biden's lead among older voters is somewhat narrower than it was a few months ago, either reflecting the statistical noise of small sample sizes or reflecting the toll of recent events. Yet it is still a commanding strength for Mr. Biden compared with Mrs. Clinton's five-point deficit among this group four years ago.

Perhaps more surprising in light of recent events is that Mr. Biden has not made substantial gains with nonwhite voters. He leads among them by 46 points in the most recent polls, up a mere percentage point from the polls conducted in March and April. It's still behind the 50-point margin held by Mrs. Clinton in the final weeks of the 2016 race. Most pollsters do not break out nonwhite voters in much depth because of the small sample size, making it hard to explore the precise sources of Mr. Biden's relative weakness. But for now, it seems reasonable to assume that his struggles are most acute among young nonwhite voters and nonwhite men, given the overall national figures.

Of course, five months remain until the presidential election. There is plenty of time for the race to swing in Mr. Trump's favor, just as it did in the final stretch of the 2016 campaign. Indeed, the 2016 race was characterized by a predictable, mean-reverting oscillation between nearly double-digit leads for Mrs. Clinton -- as in August and October -- and a tighter race in which Mr. Trump trailed in national polls but remained highly competitive -- as in July, September and November.

Mr. Biden's lead in the polls today is not vastly different from the leads Mrs. Clinton claimed at her peaks after the ''Access Hollywood'' tape was revealed or when Mr. Trump became embroiled in a feud with a Muslim Gold Star military family.

There are reasons to doubt that the polling this year will again take on the character of a slow-motion, sine-wave roller-coaster ride. Many of the swings toward Mr. Trump were driven at least in part by news and negative coverage about Mrs. Clinton's emails or her health. Joe Biden's stay-at-home campaign tends to keep the spotlight focused on Mr. Trump. The Trump campaign has not resolved on a central attack on Mr. Biden. Perhaps as a result, Mr. Trump's high points in national polls have never been as high as they were in 2016.

Even so, this could be a low point for Mr. Trump. There is certainly cause to doubt whether the protests today, or even the president's early response to the pandemic, will loom as large for voters in November as they do today. No one can predict what the national political environment will look like in five months; surely, no one would have predicted what has unfolded over the last five. The president's supporters can still hope that the economy will rapidly recover over the summer and fall, before a hypothesized second wave of coronavirus hits over the late fall or winter.

If the race does revert toward the president, as it did on so many occasions four years ago, he could quickly find himself back within striking distance of squeaking out a narrow win. His relative advantage in the Electoral College compared with the nation as a whole, or possibly among likely voters compared with registered voters, means that he doesn't need to gain anywhere near 10 points to get back within striking distance of re-election. In the final national polls of registered voters in 2016, Mr. Trump trailed by around an average of five points. It was close enough.

But for now, the president trails by too much for these factors to play a decisive role. If the election were held today, the Electoral College would pose no serious obstacle to Mr. Biden, thanks to his strength compared with Mrs. Clinton among white voters and particularly those without a college degree. He would win even if the polls were exactly as wrong as they were four years ago.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/09/upshot/polling-trump-erosion-support.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/09/upshot/polling-trump-erosion-support.html)

**Graphic**

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

**Load-Date:** June 10, 2020

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[***Shabaka and the Ancestors Are Making Their Own Jazz History***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YD8-18B1-DXY4-X122-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 11, 2020 Wednesday 13:24 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 1180 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** The partnership between the British saxophonist Shabaka Hutchings and a group of South African musicians has produced an imaginative second album.

**Body**

If jazz is looking to reinvent itself — or catch its breath and take stock of how much it already has in the past 10 years or so — the music of Shabaka and the Ancestors might be a good place to start.

A relatively recent partnership between the British saxophonist Shabaka Hutchings, 35, and a group of South African musicians from the same generation, the Ancestors’ music isn’t like any other jazz being played today — even in South Africa — but that doesn’t mean it can’t be a model. Their second album, “We Are Sent Here by History,” due Friday, seems to argue that by escaping any single context or outside expectation, a group can hit upon a kind of liberation that’s fresh enough to be useful.

“One thing that’s come up in our conversations, and has been transmitted into the narrative of the album, is the fact that we need to try to imagine what the future can hold idealistically,” Mr. Hutchings said from London in a phone interview. “We need to start articulating our utopias, articulating what needs to be burned and what needs to be saved.”

The pillars of this band are the fire-stirring voice of Siyabonga Mthembu; the sinewy, palpitating tenor saxophone of Mr. Hutchings, its leader and main composer; and the churning thrust of its rhythm section: the bassist Ariel Zamonsky, the percussionist Gontse Makhene and the drummer Tumi Mogorosi.

The alto saxophonist Mthunzi Mvubu is also deeply in the mix, often entwined with Mr. Hutchings’s lines. So are a few guest musicians, who appear on the album in select spots: the pianists Nduduzo Makhathini and Thandi Ntuli, and the trumpeter Mandla Mlangeni. All but Mr. Hutchings are based in Johannesburg or nearby Soweto.

The bandleader typically writes out the basic structure of each piece, but “that’s just the first step,” he said. “How the musicians then react to it, give their feedback — that’s what creates the album, the energy, good music.”

Mr. Hutchings is [*a linchpin and an ambassador*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/29/arts/music/jazz-refreshed-london.html) of the London scene, but the defining quality of his life and music has been travel. As a child, he spent years living in Barbados, internalizing its musical and cultural traditions, before returning to London for high school. It was on a series of trips to South Africa, stemming from a romantic relationship, that Mr. Hutchings fell in with Mr. Mlangeni and the members of his Amandla Freedom Ensemble, most of whom would eventually join the Ancestors.

Mr. Mthembu, whose art-rock band The Brother Moves On has always stood adjacent to Johannesburg’s jazz scene proper, was glad to finally link up with this cast of improvisers. “Brother Moves On has always been this periphery act,” Mr. Mthembu said. “The jazz cats never got why we were able to get the jazz venues full.” When he was invited to the first recording session for Mr. Hutchings’s band in 2015, he said, “Everyone on it was cats that I looked up to in Joburg.”

Mr. Mthembu was supposed to record vocals on just two tracks, but he ended up staying for the entire session and appears on about half of the Ancestors’ stirring debut album, [*“Wisdom of Elders,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/29/arts/music/jazz-refreshed-london.html) which was released the next year on Brownswood Recordings. Mr. Hutchings soon signed a multi-project contract with Impulse! Records; “We Are Sent Here by History” will be his third album for the label in three years, and his first on Impulse! with the Ancestors.

Mr. Hutchings has said he hoped the band would capture some of the “restless energy” of Johannesburg, a metropolitan but deeply ***working-class*** city, where much of the arts activity takes place underground. “We Are Sent Here by History” is intended specifically as both a lament and an embrace of the coming climate apocalypse.

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[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/29/arts/music/jazz-refreshed-london.html)]

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PHOTOS: The saxophonist Shabaka Hutchings, top, is a linchpin of the London jazz scene, but the defining quality of his life and music has been travel. Above, Shabaka and the Ancestors performed at the 2017 Winter Jazzfest in New York, at Le Poisson Rouge. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAMA JALLOH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; MARK ABRAMSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2020

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[***After Debate, Climate Takes Center Stage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:614M-5BG1-JBG3-60RJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 24, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1562 words

**Byline:** By Lisa Friedman

**Body**

WASHINGTON -- Joseph R. Biden's pledge Thursday night to ''transition away from the oil industry'' to address global warming put the topic of climate change on center stage for the final stretch of a campaign year in which the issue has played a larger role than ever.

Mr. Biden's statement in the closing moments of Thursday's debate gave President Trump what his campaign saw as an enormous opportunity to blunt his opponent's appeal to ***working-class*** voters. Mr. Biden's campaign tried to downplay it, saying he was merely stating that he would phase out longstanding tax subsidies for the oil industry.

But transitioning away from fossil fuels is the inevitable end game of Mr. Biden's promise to end net carbon pollution by 2050. That policy has energized some young voters and helped unite the Democrats' left and moderate wings, but has always carried risks for Mr. Biden.

''Last night, Joe Biden issued a crystal-clear threat to 19 million Americans with his promise to eliminate the oil industry. No amount of spin or cleanup from Biden or his team can rectify this error,'' Steve Guest, a Republican National Committee spokesman, said Friday morning.

In no political year has climate change been as dominant an issue as in 2020.

Both presidential debates delved into the matter in depth for the first time in history. Mr. Biden campaigned hard on promises to reduce planet-warming emissions, proposing a $2 trillion program to promote clean energy, construct 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations and build 1.5 million new energy-efficient homes.

President Trump has worked sporadically to moderate his longtime climate denial by promoting tree-planting as an environmental solution, even as he has maintained his avid support for the coal and oil industries, taken steps to roll back climate regulation implemented by his predecessor and moved to withdraw the United States from the international Paris Agreement on climate change.

But the closing moments of the debate reverted back to an older question: Can the nation transition to clean energy from fossil fuels without enormous economic and political disruption?

''Basically what he is saying is, he is going to destroy the oil industry,'' Mr. Trump charged, adding, straight to the camera, ''Will you remember that, Texas? Will you remember that, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma?''

The line was reminiscent of the Republican response in 2016 to Hillary Clinton's acknowledgment that ''we're going to put a lot of coal miners and coal companies out of business'' as the nation moves to clean energy. Those comments resonated in coal states like West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Wyoming.

Mr. Biden's comments may focus attention on a different set of battlegrounds, such as Texas and New Mexico. Representative Xochitl Torres Small, an endangered freshman Democrat in New Mexico, said on Twitter, ''We need to work together to promote responsible energy production and stop climate change, not demonize a single industry.''

Representative Kendra Horn of Oklahoma, another freshman Democrat facing a tough re-election bid, declared, ''Here's one of the places Biden and I disagree. We must stand up for our oil and gas industry.''

Though more alluded to than stated outright, transitioning from fossil fuels will be necessary to meet Mr. Biden's goals of eliminating emissions from the power sector by 2035 and reaching net-zero emissions across the economy by midcentury. That transition, scientists say, is required to avert the worst consequences of climate change.

Yet he has walked a fine line throughout the campaign, insisting that natural gas production -- and the jobs it creates -- will remain a core part of the United States energy composition for several years to come even as he envisions a future powered more by wind, solar and other renewable sources.

Some energy experts said the Trump campaign's attacks on Mr. Biden may not have the same resonance as those on Mrs. Clinton four years ago, in large part because public understanding of climate change has grown and the major oil companies of the world have, to varying degrees, pledged to reduce their emissions.

''This is a playbook that they keep coming back to, and it's less and less effective. The economy is moving on and the public is moving on,'' said Joshua Freed, who leads the climate and energy program at Third Way, a center-left think tank.

Mr. Freed called the level of attention climate change received at the two presidential debates and throughout the campaign ''overdue'' and said he believes the United States has turned a corner on its acceptance of the need to reduce greenhouse gases. ''When you have the worst wildfires in history on the West Coast, when you have flood after flood after record-breaking storm and hurricane across the rest of the country, you have people saying, 'This is a big problem and we want to see it addressed,''' he said.

During the 12 minutes that NBC devoted to climate change on Thursday, the moderator, NBC's Kristen Welker, framed human-caused global warming as a fact. She asked candidates for their solutions rather than whether they ''believe'' the science.

Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump engaged in a sustained debate about the economic effects of both addressing and failing to address the problem. And for what many analysts said was the first time ever, the candidates were asked to talk about the consequences of pollution on communities of color who disproportionately live near industrial sites.

''Its presence in both debates underscores the difference and the magnitude in which this issue is thought of as a voting issue and not just a niche issue in a party primary,'' said Robert Gibbs, a former White House press secretary under President Barack Obama.

''What it means is that climate change and climate-change solutions have jumped a number of other really important issues into the forefront of not only what's being discussed in the waning days of the election, but likely at the top of the agenda in the beginning of the next Congress. That's fundamentally different,'' Mr. Gibbs said.

Anthony Leiserowitz, director of the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, credited the shift to a surge in public awareness and engagement around climate change over the past five years. Mr. Obama made climate change a centerpiece of his second term. The science around the dangerous consequences of climate has gotten stronger. And increasingly Americans are faced with the reality of record-setting weather extremes along with floods, hurricanes and wildfires.

''Americans have a different consciousness about climate change than they did 12 years ago,'' he said.

And for the first time, climate change polled as a top issue for Democrats during the primaries, which Mr. Leiserowitz called ''hugely consequential.''

He also said Mr. Trump's outspoken denial of climate science has helped bring attention to the issue. ''Having a climate denier in chief who is out there saying it's a Chinese hoax, all of that helps sharpen the distinction between the positions of the two parties,'' Mr. Leiserowitz said.

Douglas Holtz-Eakin, who was an economic policy adviser to Senator John McCain's 2008 presidential campaign against Mr. Obama, said areas of agreement make poor rallying points. That year, both candidates not only believed that climate change was real and serious but had similar proposals to address it.

''I thought this would be a moment when the nation learned a lot about greenhouse gas emissions,'' Mr. Holtz-Eakin said. But other than a handful of news articles, it was largely ignored.

''Issues become important when they're a point of differentiation among the candidates,'' Mr. Holtz-Eakin said. ''What I finally realized in retrospect was, there was no point in talking about it because it doesn't help you pick.''

In the 2020 election, the difference between the candidates could not be more stark.

Mr. Trump has disparaged climate science and installed climate change deniers in prominent positions at both the White House and environmental agencies. He has sought to roll back every federal regulation aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, moved to make it easier for aging coal plants to keep operating and promoted greater oil and gas production.

During Thursday's debate, Mr. Trump claimed he has ''so many different programs'' to address climate change but offered no solutions beyond an executive order he signed to support a World Economic Forum tree-planting initiative. He attacked renewable energy and said, falsely, that retrofitting buildings to make them energy efficient would shrink windows to tiny portals.

Mr. Biden called climate change an ''existential threat to humanity.''

Back in 2012, recalled Lanhee Chen, policy director for Mitt Romney's presidential campaign against Mr. Obama, ''there really wasn't any pressure of any kind in the political marketplace to have, for example, your climate change plan.'' In that race, both candidates also accepted the reality of climate change and the need to address it, albeit to different degrees.

But, he said, even the Obama campaign did not raise the issue to force a public debate. ''Politicians and campaigns are very good reflections of where the public is at. Campaigns don't tend to spend time on issues that people don't care about,'' he said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/climate/biden-debate-oil.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/climate/biden-debate-oil.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: An oil rig and pump jacks in Texas. In Thursday's debate, President Trump said Joseph R. Biden Jr. would ''destroy the oil industry.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** October 24, 2020

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[***Badge of Courage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6030-GTN1-JBG3-6083-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 7, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 12; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1267 words

**Byline:** By Samuel G. Freedman

**Body**

TROOP 6000The Girl Scout Troop That Began in a Shelter and Inspired the WorldBy Nikita Stewart

On the morning after Easter Sunday in 2017, the front page of The New York Times featured a different sort of resurrection story. This one, written by the reporter Nikita Stewart, told of a Girl Scout troop that homeless families had formed in the threadbare hotel that functioned as a city shelter.

As an uplifting testament, the article went viral (in the pre-Covid meaning of the term) and attracted an enormous amount of celebrity support for the dozen or so girls in Troop 6000. They were feted on the TV talk show ''The View,'' hosted by the New York Liberty of the W.N.B.A. and given a supply of Jessica Alba's name-brand shampoo. The founding mother of the troop, Giselle Burgess, received a $6,000 check from Jimmy Fallon on his late-night show.

That groundswell of response, with its complicated alloy of heartfelt generosity and overdog guilt, was surely the boon and the bane for ''Troop 6000,'' the book that Stewart has expanded from her initial article. I do not mean in any way to diminish Stewart's impressive journalistic skills when I wonder if this book would have existed without the boldface-name buzz that Troop 6000 received. Indeed, the publisher has packaged this book as a feel-good yarn, complete with a hyperbolic subtitle about how the homeless girls ''inspired the world.''

To her great credit, Stewart has too much integrity and clarity to go along with the fairy-tale version of Troop 6000's experience. She problematizes the myth, relentlessly returning to the debilitating chaos of homelessness itself.

Yet Stewart also has to struggle with the result of her own article. Troop 6000 was only several months into existence at that point. What would have been the more normal, gradual and genuine effort to build and maintain a Girl Scout troop in extremis was overwhelmed by its instant vogue. Any journalist or author who practices immersion reporting has to worry about the effect of his, her, or their presence on the subjects and events being observed. But in my decades of experience, I have never encountered a more nettlesome example than ''Troop 6000.''

Certainly, the story of Troop 6000 contains irresistible elements for both its writer and her readers. Giselle Burgess, the dominant figure in the book, embodies an essential and often overlooked truth about homelessness: Many of its victims work. As ''Troop 6000'' opens, Burgess is straining to pay rent for her family of six on her salary as the office manager for a Manhattan dentist. She is a loving and devoted mother, and nothing short of a brilliant crisis manager in navigating the family's journey through the homelessness bureaucracy.

The nearly fatal flaw is Burgess's choice of men. She has five children by three fathers. One has vanished entirely and another lands in jail after Burgess breaks off with him because of his violent outbursts.

Then again, a certain president of a certain country of ours happens to have five children by three mothers. But as Stewart's assiduous reporting implicitly shows, in the ruthless economic system of modern America, if one is born into a ***working-class*** family rather than a real estate empire, then all the emotional strength and practical canniness that Burgess possesses may not be sufficient to save her family.

Before Burgess's family became homeless, she had placed her older daughters into a Girl Scout troop sponsored by a church in her Queens neighborhood. Burgess had assumed that scouting was ''an elusive, uncool, white-people thing. Badges? Cookies? Who needs it?'' -- but she, as much as her daughters, ends up thriving on the sisterhood, goal-setting and mercifully predictable schedule. To Burgess's own experience, Stewart adds a helpful bit of history on the Girl Scouts' long history of reaching across lines of color and class.

When Burgess and her children finally arrive at the Sleep Inn, a de facto homeless shelter tantalizingly within sight of Manhattan's bejeweled skyline, she comes up with the improbable plan of starting a troop there. In that endeavor, she is greatly helped by two other heroes of the book -- the City Council member Jimmy Van Bramer, who had been homeless during his own childhood, and the Girl Scouts administrator Meridith Maskara, who is now C.E.O. of the organization for greater New York.

Despite help from those two allies, Burgess faces exasperating obstacles in forming a troop with the rules regulating life in homeless shelters. Families cannot visit one another in their assigned rooms. Food cannot be cooked on-site. Field trips require a welter of paperwork. The iconic Girl Scout cookies cannot be sold to shelter residents in the way that innumerable other Girl Scouts can knock on doors in their neighborhoods.

''Even if they recognized her, many parents ignored Giselle as she tried to hand them flyers,'' Stewart writes of Burgess's recruitment efforts. ''Or they nodded their heads yes, but meant no. They were just too busy, buried in worries and the endless paperwork required for public assistance, food stamps, job applications, transferring a child from one school to another, and documentation of continuing need for shelter. ... They were just trying to make it through each day.''

A paragraph like that one conveys the rigor of Stewart's reporting and thinking. She dutifully describes the Cinderella episodes the girls and parents of Troop 6000 enjoy, but she refuses to avert her eyes from their precarious lives. It takes Burgess's connection to Van Bramer, for instance, to spare the families at the Sleep Inn from being evicted en masse when the hotel owners want to free up rooms for tourists paying full rates.

The instability of homelessness presents a challenge to any journalist or author portraying it. How does one accurately depict incessant disorder without the writing itself turning disorderly? Stewart has not solved that problem. She splinters her book into 26 chapters and each chapter into multiple scenes; she flits from character to character, event to event, often failing to build depth or sustain narrative drive. One unintended result is that, in a book illuminating the life-changing power of scouting, none of the girls in Troop 6000 wind up being nearly as memorable for a reader as Giselle Burgess and several other adults.

Troop 6000, however, has its own staying power. As of August 2018, the end of the time frame for this book, the troop had expanded to 16 shelters throughout New York. Giselle Burgess, meanwhile, has been working full time as a paid outreach coordinator for the Girl Scouts, enabling her family to get out of the shelter and into its own rented home. (Since this book was completed, Burgess has had a sixth child and announced her candidacy for City Council.)

''How had the six of them been able to live crammed into this single room for close to a year and a half on top of all this clutter?'' Stewart writes about their moving day. ''How had they gotten up and gone to work or school each day only to return to this room to eat, do homework, and take care of the normal chores of life -- and start a Girl Scout troop -- without constant bickering and disagreement. Looking back now, it seems like they'd accomplished the impossible.''Samuel G. Freedman, a former columnist about religion and education for The Times, is a professor of journalism at Columbia University and the author of eight books.TROOP 6000The Girl Scout Troop That Began in a Shelter and Inspired the WorldBy Nikita Stewart288 pp. Ballantine. $27.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/19/books/review/troop-6000-nikita-stewart.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/19/books/review/troop-6000-nikita-stewart.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Girl Scouts from Troop 6000 at the Girl Scouts of Greater New York headquarters in New York. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM HODGSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 7, 2020

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[***A Debate Pledge to ‘Transition’ From Oil Puts Climate at Center of Campaign Finale***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:614D-THY1-DXY4-X374-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 23, 2020 Friday 15:36 EST

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 1575 words

**Byline:** Lisa Friedman

**Highlight:** Joseph R. Biden Jr.&#39;s debate statement that he would "transition" the country away from oil gave President Trump an opening and thrust climate change center stage.

**Body**

WASHINGTON — Joseph R. Biden’s pledge Thursday night to “transition away from the [*oil industry*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/business/energy-environment/joe-biden-oil-debate-reaction.html)” to address global warming put the topic of [*climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/business/energy-environment/joe-biden-oil-debate-reaction.html) on center stage for the final stretch of a campaign year in which the issue has played a larger role than ever.

Mr. Biden’s statement in the closing moments of [*Thursday’s debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/business/energy-environment/joe-biden-oil-debate-reaction.html) gave President Trump what his campaign saw as an enormous opportunity to blunt his opponent’s appeal to ***working-class*** voters. Mr. Biden’s campaign tried to downplay it, saying he was merely stating that he would phase out longstanding tax subsidies for the oil industry.

But transitioning away from fossil fuels is the inevitable end game of Mr. Biden’s promise to end net carbon pollution by 2050. That [*policy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/business/energy-environment/joe-biden-oil-debate-reaction.html) has energized some young voters and helped unite the Democrats’ left and moderate wings, but has always carried risks for Mr. Biden.

“Last night, Joe Biden issued a crystal-clear threat to 19 million Americans with his promise to eliminate the oil industry. No amount of spin or cleanup from Biden or his team can rectify this error,” Steve Guest, a Republican National Committee spokesman, said Friday morning.

In no political year has climate change been as dominant an issue as in 2020.

Both presidential debates delved into the matter in depth for the first time in history. Mr. Biden campaigned hard on promises to reduce planet-warming emissions, proposing a $2 trillion program to promote clean energy, construct 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations and build 1.5 million new energy-efficient homes.

President Trump has worked sporadically to moderate his longtime climate denial by promoting tree-planting as an environmental solution, even as he has maintained his avid support for the coal and oil industries, taken steps to roll back climate regulation implemented by his predecessor and moved to withdraw the United States from the international [*Paris Agreement on climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/business/energy-environment/joe-biden-oil-debate-reaction.html).

But the closing moments of the debate reverted back to an older question: Can the nation transition to clean energy from fossil fuels without enormous economic and political disruption?

“Basically what he is saying is, he is going to destroy the oil industry,” Mr. Trump charged, adding, straight to the camera, “Will you remember that, Texas? Will you remember that, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma?”

The line was reminiscent of the Republican response in 2016 to [*Hillary Clinton’s acknowledgment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/business/energy-environment/joe-biden-oil-debate-reaction.html) that “we’re going to put a lot of coal miners and coal companies out of business” as the nation moves to clean energy. Those comments resonated in coal states like West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Wyoming.

Mr. Biden’s comments may focus attention on a different set of battlegrounds, such as Texas and New Mexico. Representative Xochitl Torres Small, an endangered freshman Democrat in New Mexico, [*said on Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/business/energy-environment/joe-biden-oil-debate-reaction.html), “We need to work together to promote responsible energy production and stop climate change, not demonize a single industry.”

Representative Kendra Horn of Oklahoma, another freshman Democrat facing a tough re-election bid, [*declared*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/business/energy-environment/joe-biden-oil-debate-reaction.html), “Here’s one of the places Biden and I disagree. We must stand up for our oil and gas industry.”

Though more alluded to than stated outright, transitioning from fossil fuels will be necessary to meet Mr. Biden’s goals of eliminating emissions from the power sector by 2035 and reaching net-zero emissions across the economy by midcentury. That transition, scientists say, is required to avert the worst consequences of climate change.

Yet he has walked a fine line throughout the campaign, insisting that natural gas production — and the jobs it creates — will remain a core part of the United States energy composition for several years to come even as he envisions a future powered more by wind, solar and other renewable sources.

Some energy experts said the Trump campaign’s attacks on Mr. Biden may not have the same resonance as those on Mrs. Clinton four years ago, in large part because public understanding of climate change has grown and the major oil companies of the world have, to varying degrees, pledged to reduce their emissions.

“This is a playbook that they keep coming back to, and it’s less and less effective. The economy is moving on and the public is moving on,” said Joshua Freed, who leads the climate and energy program at Third Way, a center-left think tank.

Mr. Freed called the level of attention climate change received at the two presidential debates and throughout the campaign “overdue” and said he believes the United States has turned a corner on its acceptance of the need to reduce greenhouse gases. “When you have the worst wildfires in history on the West Coast, when you have flood after flood after record-breaking storm and hurricane across the rest of the country, you have people saying, ‘This is a big problem and we want to see it addressed,’” he said.

During the 12 minutes that NBC devoted to climate change on Thursday, the moderator, NBC’s Kristen Welker, framed human-caused global warming as a fact. She asked candidates for their solutions rather than whether they “believe” the science.

Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump engaged in a sustained debate about the economic effects of both addressing and failing to address the problem. And for what many analysts said was the first time ever, the candidates were asked to talk about the consequences of pollution on communities of color who disproportionately live near industrial sites.

“Its presence in both debates underscores the difference and the magnitude in which this issue is thought of as a voting issue and not just a niche issue in a party primary,” said Robert Gibbs, a former White House press secretary under President Barack Obama.

“What it means is that climate change and climate-change solutions have jumped a number of other really important issues into the forefront of not only what’s being discussed in the waning days of the election, but likely at the top of the agenda in the beginning of the next Congress. That’s fundamentally different,” Mr. Gibbs said.

Anthony Leiserowitz, director of the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, credited the shift to a surge in public awareness and engagement around climate change over the past five years. Mr. Obama made climate change a centerpiece of his second term. The science around the dangerous consequences of climate has gotten stronger. And increasingly Americans are faced with the reality of record-setting weather extremes along with floods, hurricanes and wildfires.

“Americans have a different consciousness about climate change than they did 12 years ago,” he said.

And for the first time, climate change polled as a top issue for Democrats during the primaries, which Mr. Leiserowitz called “hugely consequential.”

He also said Mr. Trump’s outspoken denial of climate science has helped bring attention to the issue. “Having a climate denier in chief who is out there saying it’s a Chinese hoax, all of that helps sharpen the distinction between the positions of the two parties,” Mr. Leiserowitz said.

Douglas Holtz-Eakin, who was an economic policy adviser to Senator John McCain’s 2008 presidential campaign against Mr. Obama, said areas of agreement make poor rallying points. That year, both candidates not only believed that climate change was real and serious but had similar proposals to address it.

“I thought this would be a moment when the nation learned a lot about greenhouse gas emissions,” Mr. Holtz-Eakin said. But other than a handful of [*news articles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/business/energy-environment/joe-biden-oil-debate-reaction.html), it was largely ignored.

“Issues become important when they’re a point of differentiation among the candidates,” Mr. Holtz-Eakin said. “What I finally realized in retrospect was, there was no point in talking about it because it doesn’t help you pick.”

In the 2020 election, the difference between the candidates could not be more stark.

Mr. Trump has disparaged climate science and installed climate change deniers in prominent positions at both the White House and environmental agencies. He has sought to roll back every federal regulation aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, moved to make it easier for aging coal plants to keep operating and promoted greater oil and gas production.

During Thursday’s debate, Mr. Trump claimed he has “so many different programs” to address climate change but offered no solutions beyond an executive order he signed to support a World Economic Forum tree-planting initiative. He attacked renewable energy and said, falsely, that retrofitting buildings to make them energy efficient would shrink windows to tiny portals.

Mr. Biden called climate change an “existential threat to humanity.”

Back in 2012, recalled Lanhee Chen, policy director for Mitt Romney’s presidential campaign against Mr. Obama, “there really wasn’t any pressure of any kind in the political marketplace to have, for example, your climate change plan.” In that race, both candidates also accepted the reality of climate change and the need to address it, albeit to different degrees.

But, he said, even the Obama campaign did not raise the issue to force a public debate. “Politicians and campaigns are very good reflections of where the public is at. Campaigns don’t tend to spend time on issues that people don’t care about,” he said.

PHOTO: An oil rig and pump jacks in Texas. In Thursday’s debate, President Trump said Joseph R. Biden Jr. would “destroy the oil industry.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2020

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[***What Rashida Tlaib Represents***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64X5-M551-JBG3-617R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 3, 2022 Thursday 09:56 EST

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 5386 words

**Byline:** Rozina Ali

**Highlight:** She changed the Israeli-Palestinian debate in Congress by reminding her colleagues of the human stakes. It’s a burden she would rather not carry.

**Body**

Last May, following protests in East Jerusalem over planned evictions of Palestinians, [*Hamas started firing rockets toward Tel Aviv, and Israeli airstrikes pounded residential buildings in the Gaza Strip.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/10/world/middleeast/jerusalem-protests-aqsa-palestinians.html)Shortly after, a group of nine Democratic lawmakers, all longstanding Israel supporters, took to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to reaffirm the country’s right to defend itself. “We have a duty as Americans to stand by the side of Israel in the face of attacks from terrorists,” Elaine Luria, a representative from Virginia, said, “who again, have the same goal in mind: to kill Jews.”

Later that evening, about a dozen other Democrats spoke as well — to question the justice of funneling almost $4 billion a year to a country that was in the midst of bombing civilians. “Do Palestinians have a right to survive?” Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the New York Democrat, said. “Do we believe that? And, if so, we have a responsibility to that as well.”

The speeches were a rare occasion when Palestinian rights have been addressed at such length on the House floor. They were introduced by Representative Mark Pocan of Wisconsin. But the driving message of the session came from Rashida Tlaib, the 45-year-old second-term congresswoman from Detroit, who, according to several people familiar with the discussions, played a significant role in making the speeches happen. “How many Palestinians have to die for their lives to matter?” Tlaib said in her own remarks, fighting back tears.

Tlaib is the only Palestinian American now serving in the House of Representatives, and the first with family currently living in the West Bank, whose three million inhabitants’ lives are intimately shaped by American support for Israel. As the May fighting intensified, colleagues approached Tlaib to ask if her family was safe. “It’s a voice that hasn’t been heard before,” Betty McCollum, a Democratic representative from Minnesota, told me.

Tlaib has been criticized, sometimes viciously, by Republicans and pro-Israel Democrats for calling Israel an “apartheid regime,” and for her support of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, which aims to end military occupation by exerting economic pressure on Israel. She has been called anti-Semitic for her criticism of Israeli policies, and has become a favored quarry of Fox News. Tony Paris, a close friend and former colleague of Tlaib’s, told me that in conversations with some of his relatives, conservative Democrats, he has “tiptoed around the Rashida thing.”

But Tlaib’s arrival on the national stage has also coincided with an opening, albeit a small one, within the Democratic Party to challenge the United States’ Israel policy. The Palestinian cause has become a significant part of the politics of the American left at the same time that the left has gained a legible footing on the national stage. Tlaib, a democratic socialist who is if anything more outspoken on domestic issues than she is on the Palestinian cause, has found herself at the center of this turn. She appeared in a traditional Palestinian dress made by her mother during her swearing in, sometimes wears a kaffiyeh (symbolically tied to the Palestinian resistance) on the House floor and speaks often about her grandmother in the West Bank. Rebecca Abou-Chedid, a lawyer and longtime Arab American activist, told me that the simple fact of Tlaib’s presence on the Hill means that “we are now actual people to them.”

Yet Tlaib is wary of adopting the role of the only Palestinian voice in the room. “I feel like no one wants to see me as anyone but Palestinian,” she told me. “I’m a mother, I’m a woman, I have gone through a lot being the daughter of two immigrants in the United States. I’m also the big sister of 13 younger siblings. I’m also a neighbor in a predominantly Black city.”

Tlaib’s pitch is that the roads to a fairer Israel policy and to fix the problems that plague her district — poverty, water access, pollution — are not so different. She didn’t run for Congress with a strategic plan to shift the Israeli-Palestinian debate, or even a coherent vision to do so. Sometimes she even seemed to equivocate. “We need to be not choosing a side,” [*she told The Washington Post during her 2018 campaign.*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2018/07/30/muslim-candidates-band-together-in-michigan/) But over her three years in Washington, Tlaib’s argument has sharpened: If the United States cares about democratic values, then upholding Palestinian rights is inherently American.

I first met Tlaib last summer at a cafe in the Midtown neighborhood of Detroit, a gentrifying area of dive bars and boutiques. Two days of thunderstorms had left 850,000 people without power, and several restaurants were still closed. Tlaib was in a white summer dress and sneakers (“My mother hates when I wear them”); a congressional pin hung around her neck. I had ambitiously ordered a cinnamon roll, and as we sat down, Tlaib, who had gotten a coffee, eyed it and brought me a fork and napkins. “I’m such a mom,” she said. Shortly after they arrived in Washington, Ilhan Omar, a Democratic representative from Minnesota, gave bracelets to fellow members of “the Squad”: the young, left-leaning congress members of color that at the time included Tlaib, Omar, Ocasio-Cortez and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts, all of whom were elected in 2018. Omar had Tlaib’s inscribed “Mama Bear.”

Tlaib grew up caring for her seven brothers and six sisters, balancing diapers with homework. Her father, Harbi Elabed, was born in East Jerusalem, and her mother, Fatima, grew up in Beit Ur al-Fouqa, a village in the West Bank. They were already settled in Detroit before 1976, the year Tlaib was born. The city was reeling from years of deindustrialization and redlining and the deadly unrest of 1967. Capital had fled in search of cheap labor, as had white residents, leaving the city majority Black.

Michigan’s 13th District, which Tlaib represents, cuts through most of ***working-class*** Detroit before veering abruptly west into slices of three other cities: Dearborn Heights, Romulus and Wayne. It is the second-poorest district in the country. Tlaib, who grew up relying on food assistance, came to Congress at a time when more than half its members were millionaires. She recalls voicing her frustrations about finding an affordable place in Washington to a freshman colleague, who nonchalantly mentioned that he’d bought an apartment nearby. “That’s like $800,000, isn’t it?” she said in amazement.

Tlaib’s father, who died in 2017, was an assembly-line worker at the Ford Motor Company and a United Auto Workers member. They had a difficult relationship, but she credits him with introducing her to politics. When she turned 18, instead of wishing her a happy birthday, he told her to register to vote. “I think it’s because maybe he knew it’s a privilege, because he didn’t have that opportunity anywhere else,” she told me.

After law school, she worked at a nonprofit serving the Arab American community, then moved to the Statehouse as a staff member. In 2008, she won an eight-way primary race to become a state representative — a surprise to her father, who was skeptical Americans would elect an Arab after 9/11. (Soon after the attacks, like many Muslims, Tlaib’s parents were interrogated for hours by F.B.I. agents about their travel and whom they knew among potential suspects on the agency’s radar, according to Tlaib.) In office, she developed a reputation for taking matters into her own hands. When plumes of black dust appeared over the Detroit River, in 2013, she and a few environmental activists drove to the river’s edge, marched past a “No Trespassing” sign and crossed old train tracks to the source: an industrial site where petroleum coke was piled in 40-foot-high black dunes. Tlaib scooped the substance into Ziploc bags and sent it off to a lab. A storage company was stockpiling the petcoke — prolonged exposure to which at high concentrations can cause lung disease — without a city permit. For weeks, Tlaib held up a bag of the residue in interviews, and the company was later ordered to remove the piles.

In 2017, [*John Conyers, Detroit’s longtime congressman, resigned following a sexual-harassment scandal,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/05/us/politics/john-conyers-election.html) opening up a House seat in the city for the first time in 52 years. Many residents believed the seat should go to another Black person, and the mayor and the Wayne County executive endorsed Tlaib’s primary rival, Brenda Jones, the City Council president at the time, who is Black. But Tlaib won the primary against Jones the following August, and with it, the near guarantee of winning the general election.

When she and the Somalia-born Omar were elected that November, they became the first Muslim women in the House. “I guess I was naïve,” Tlaib told me, “in not understanding how bipartisan Islamophobia is in Congress.” It was the subtle things, she said: colleagues shocked to know that most American Muslims are Black, or stereotypes of Muslim women being submissive. One colleague approached Omar and touched her hijab. Besides ignorance, Tlaib said, “I think there’s a tremendous amount of fear.”

Her election also made her the third Palestinian American in the House after Justin Amash, a Republican representative from Michigan, and John E. Sununu, a Republican representative from New Hampshire. Amash at times bucked his party, which he left before exiting Congress in 2021, on Israel. In 2014, he voted against funding for Israel’s Iron Dome missile-defense system, which has been significantly financed by the United States since it was established in 2011. Amash, a libertarian, explained his opposition on the grounds of government spending. Tlaib’s views, by contrast, are deeply and openly personal. She grew up hearing stories of family members being forced out of their homes. At age 12, she visited the West Bank and saw for herself the walls and checkpoints.

Still, foreign policy had hardly come up in her years as state representative. Shortly after her bid for Congress, Steve Tobocman, a former state representative for whom she worked early in her career, sat down with her. The two had discussed the conflict in the past, but now Tobocman, who was working on her campaign, wanted to further understand her views.

Tlaib, he recalls, offered few specifics for a policy agenda, but told him about playing with children of Israeli settlers when she visited her grandmother, and recognizing the humanity of people on both sides. Ultimately, she told him, her position on the conflict would be driven by values of equality, peace and justice. She reminded Tobocman of Barbara Lee, the California Democratic congresswoman who cast the sole vote against the authorization of force in Afghanistan in 2001, quoting in her floor speech a clergy member’s warning to “not become the evil we deplore.”

“I said, ‘You aspire to be like Barbara Lee,’” Tobocman told me. “And she said, ‘Absolutely.’”

In the fall of 1973, shortly before Tlaib’s parents arrived in Michigan, almost 3,000 Arab American U.A.W. members marched to the U.A.W. Dearborn office and demanded that the local union liquidate about $300,000 in bonds it had purchased from the State of Israel with money collected from union dues. At another protest, workers waved signs that read: “Jewish People Yes, Zionism No.” The U.A.W. later liquidated some Israeli bonds.

Only recently had the Israeli-Palestinian conflict fully entered American politics. In [*1967, after a six-day war*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/the-six-day-war-at-50) with its Arab neighbors, Israel captured the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights; swaths of Palestinian land were now under Israeli control, and so were one million additional Palestinians. To American leaders, Israel proved itself a capable ally against Soviet-backed regimes in Egypt and Syria. By 1976, Israel had become the biggest recipient of U.S. military aid.

Around the same time, James Zogby, who is now president of the Arab American Institute, helped found the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, part of a nascent Palestinian rights movement that had a few allies in the Capitol. But its efforts were dwarfed by those of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), founded over a decade earlier, which helped form pro-Israel political action committees that fund-raised for both parties. Israel also successfully framed the Middle East conflict for American audiences as a battle between the West and Soviet-sponsored terrorism. In 1988, Zogby, who advised Jesse Jackson’s presidential campaign that year, was a delegate at the Democratic National Convention. He tried to persuade the party’s leadership to include language about the “legitimate rights of Palestinian people” in the party platform, but failed. “Palestinian became the prefix for the word ‘terrorist’ or ‘terrorism,’” Zogby told me. “You couldn’t say one without the other.”

Since then, the question of U.S. aid to Israel, in the words of Lara Friedman, the president of the Foundation for Middle East Peace, has remained “sacrosanct.” Barack Obama committed the United States to an additional $33 billion in military aid, even as Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel’s prime minister, brazenly waded into American politics on the side of the Republican Party and presided over Israeli politics’ lurch to the right. Israel legitimized settlement expansion despite international condemnation and, in 2018, passed a controversial “nation-state” law that in part affirms that only Jewish people have the “right to national self-determination.”

But beneath the unbroken surface of U.S. policy, the consensus has begun to slip. According to Gallup polling, Americans’ views of the conflict have changed significantly since 2013, with sympathy for the Israelis falling slightly and sympathy for the Palestinians more than doubling. The shift has overwhelmingly been on account of Democrats; while Republican opinion has changed little, [*Democrats have gone from sympathizing more with Israel by a margin of 30 points in 2002 to being more or less evenly split today.*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/350393/key-trends-views-israel-palestinians.aspx)

The beginning of this shift roughly coincides with the resumption of the active conflict in 2014, when Israel launched a major military operation in the Gaza Strip after the kidnapping and murder of several Israeli teenagers by the Hamas militant organization. Social media was flooded with testimonials and videos of Israeli airstrikes, which killed nearly 1,500 Palestinian civilians (six Israeli civilians were killed by Hamas rockets).

The American Jewish community, which is broadly Democratic, has meanwhile begun to fracture in its support for Israel. According to a recent poll from the Jewish Electorate Institute, 43 percent of Jewish voters under 40 say that Israeli treatment of Palestinians is comparable to racism in the United States, versus 27 percent of those over 64. And pro-Palestinian activists have more successfully integrated their cause with the last decades’ currents of American activism, most notably marching alongside Black Lives Matter protesters in Ferguson, Mo., in 2014, while halfway around the world, Palestinians tweeted tactical advice (“Don’t keep much distance from the Police, if you’re close to them they can’t tear gas”).

Although most Democratic lawmakers continue to side with Israel when the conflict finds its way into Congress, a handful have begun to reflect the shifting sympathies of the party’s base. In 2017, McCollum introduced the first piece of legislation to directly support Palestinian rights, a bill that would have restricted U.S. aid from being used to detain Palestinian children in military prisons. The bill never came up for a vote, but it garnered 30 co-sponsors. “It’s a bit of new space that might be cracking open,” says Brad Parker, a senior policy adviser for Defense for Children International — Palestine. He added, “We’re trying to force it open.”

In interviews, Tlaib speaks about the occupied Palestinian territories in the context of Detroit, pointing to issues of water access in both, comparing their patterns of segregation and poverty. “I don’t separate them,” Tlaib told me. Both places have “what I call ‘othering’ politics,” she said, “or feeling like government or systems are making us feel ‘less than.”’

In [*2013, Detroit entered the largest municipal bankruptcy in American history.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/19/us/detroit-files-for-bankruptcy.html) It came under emergency management, which granted a governor-appointed trustee, a bankruptcy lawyer from the Jones Day law firm, authority to overhaul spending on city services. At the time, the city’s unemployment rate hovered around 15 percent, and more than a third of the population was living under the poverty line. Widespread power outages followed; people opened their faucets to find them dry. Today, a quarter of the city’s population is unemployed. In office, Tlaib has been more focused on the affairs of her district than of the Middle East, including persuading the House to pass a national moratorium on utility shut-offs when the pandemic started, as well as pushing legislation to replace lead water pipes. But from her first days in office, it was Tlaib’s positions on Israel that attracted both attention and criticism.

In January 2019, on the day that Tlaib and Omar were sworn in, Senate Republicans added language to a bipartisan bill reauthorizing aid to Israel that affirmed state and local governments’ right to sever ties with companies that boycotted or divested from the country. This was a nod to the more than two dozen state legislatures that already had laws responding to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement. The Democratic Socialists of America, of which Tlaib is a member, endorsed B.D.S. in 2017, and both Tlaib and Omar had voiced support for the movement. In response to the Republicans’ bill, a version of which was previously introduced in 2017, Tlaib tweeted that the sponsors “forgot what country they represent,” which critics charged was perpetuating an anti-Semitic trope accusing Jews of dual loyalty.

Tlaib’s timing couldn’t have been worse: The Democrats had recently taken control of the House, and Republicans had already zeroed in on the Squad’s left-wing politics. “I don’t see much hope for changing where Tlaib and Omar are, but there is a battle in the Democratic Party,” Norm Coleman, the former Republican senator from Minnesota who now presides over the Republican Jewish Coalition, said at the time. House Democrats “will have to make choices about whether they’ll quiet those voices or whether they’ll remain quiet.”

Kevin McCarthy, the House minority leader, admonished Democratic leadership for not “taking action” against the anti-Israel stance of Tlaib and Omar, to which Omar tweeted in reply, “It’s all about the Benjamins” — $100 bills. The ensuing maelstrom defined Tlaib’s career for the next several months. Tlaib came to the defense of Omar (who apologized the next day) even as Democratic leaders issued a statement to condemn Omar for anti-Semitic remarks. The party was already sharply divided on B.D.S.; Speaker Nancy Pelosi described it as a “dangerous” ideology “masquerading as policy.” By that summer, the House overwhelmingly passed a bipartisan resolution to oppose boycott efforts targeting Israel; Pressley broke with her Squadmates and voted in favor. The anti-Semitism charge, Lara Friedman told me, was a “sharp knife” that Republicans could throw “and watch Democrats attack each other.”

According to Tlaib’s friends and staff, she hadn’t expected the level of vitriol flung at her and her colleagues. Yet, at times, even her critics seemed unsure of how to respond to Tlaib’s unique position as a Palestinian American member of Congress. Shortly after her election in 2018, Tlaib announced plans to lead a congressional delegation to the Palestinian territories, a tour that would focus on poverty and water access. The trip would coincide with the annual AIPAC-sponsored congressional visit to Israel led by Steny Hoyer, the House majority leader. After public encouragement from Donald Trump, Netanyahu announced on Twitter that Tlaib and Omar, who planned to join the trip, were barred from entering because of their support for B.D.S. The move drew criticism from Hoyer, and even AIPAC and several Republicans. Tlaib asked permission to at least visit her grandmother in the West Bank, who was 90 years old at the time, promising to not promote boycotts while there. Israel acceded to the terms, but in a sudden about-face, Tlaib decided not to go. In a statement, Tlaib said that visiting under “oppressive conditions meant to humiliate me would break my grandmother’s heart.”

One aide to a Squad member, who asked for anonymity to speak freely, told me that wanting to show solidarity with Tlaib gave their boss more courage to speak on the issue. McCollum told me she receives less pushback from colleagues now than she did for her earlier efforts to recognize basic rights of Palestinians. “If I can speak out about what’s happening at home,” she said, “why can’t I point out when another democracy is not behaving in a way that I think lives up to human rights norms?”

Even President Biden, who during the May 2021 conflict reiterated Israel’s right to defend itself, made a point of speaking to Tlaib about the situation when he met her on an airport tarmac during a trip to Michigan. According to Tlaib, Biden brought up the conflict first, asking how her family was doing in the West Bank. Over the course of the eight-minute conversation that followed, the president listened as Tlaib spoke about the dire situation in the West Bank. “Everything you’re doing is enabling it more,” she later said she told him.

Tlaib arrived in Washington with one genuinely vanguard position on the conflict. During the 1990s the Israeli government and the Palestine Liberation Organization, along with the United States, agreed that the best solution to the conflict was the establishment of two states: a sovereign Palestine and a sovereign Israel coexisting side by side. Though the borders have never been agreed upon, the two-state outcome remains a “core U.S. policy objective,” according to the State Department. But since then, settlements have grown steadily, while military occupation of the Palestinian territories continues. Today, nearly 700,000 Jewish settlers occupy land in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, which has not only cut off some residents’ access to water and electricity but also left Palestinians with less — and more fragmented — territory for a Palestinian state in any hypothetical future negotiation. This has led Middle East experts like Zaha Hassan from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Steven Cook from the Council on Foreign Relations and commentators like Peter Beinart to publicly give up on a two-state solution as a fair or realistic outcome. Some have turned toward what was once considered a radical prospect in the debate: a single democratic state with equal rights for Arabs and Jews.

Tlaib didn’t seem to have a firm view on the best road to peace before her election. During her 2018 campaign, the liberal pro-Israel group J Street endorsed her candidacy based on a meeting and a policy paper that her team submitted, which argued that a two-state outcome, while increasingly difficult to achieve, was the best aim. Soon after, in an interview with the left-wing magazine In These Times, she reversed herself, questioning the two-state solution. After seeking clarification from Tlaib about her position, J Street pulled its endorsement. By the time Tlaib reached Washington, she was the only member of Congress to publicly back a single, fully democratic state.

This position has put Tlaib out of step with most of her Democratic colleagues. Hoyer, with whom she has grown close and who calls her “my Palestinian daughter,” told me she has not swayed him on his views on Israel. Even her progressive colleagues like Omar support a two-state solution.

To other congressional Democrats, talk of a secular one-state outcome, which by definition rejects the idea of Jewish nationalism, is tantamount to calling for the eradication of a Jewish state. “The whole idea of a one state solution denies either party the right to self-determination,” Ted Deutch, a Democratic congressman from Florida who chairs the House Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa and Global Counterterrorism and is a staunch Israel supporter, told me. If you advocate getting rid of a Jewish state, he said, “that’s when you end up on the path to anti-Semitism.”

Deutch clashed directly with Tlaib on the House floor in September, when Hoyer forced a vote on a bill that would provide Israel with an additional $1 billion for its Iron Dome program. Tlaib has long seen U.S. aid as a crucial source of leverage in the fight for Palestinian rights. She argued against the resolution, declaring Israel to be an “apartheid regime.” (Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and B’Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization, have all taken the position that Israel has committed the crime of “apartheid,” but Human Rights Watch has stopped short of calling it an “apartheid regime.”) Chuck Fleischmann, the Tennessee Republican representative who was floor manager during the debate, urged Democrats to condemn Tlaib’s words. Deutch spoke up, saying the House would always stand by Israel and suggesting that Tlaib’s position was anti-Semitic.

Afterward, Tlaib told me, her colleagues “whispered, ‘Are you OK?’ The whispering needs to stop,” she said, “and they need to speak up and say, ‘That was wrong.’” Hoyer told me he didn’t consider Tlaib’s remarks anti-Semitic, but thought they were “harsher than they needed to be.”

Some Palestinian rights advocates, including McCollum, didn’t join Tlaib’s nay. Only nine lawmakers voted against the measure. Ocasio-Cortez, who the previous May introduced legislation to block a $735 million weapons sale to Israel, was about to join them, but ultimately changed her vote to present, crying as she did so. She didn’t give a clear reason for the switch but later said there were pressures of “vitriol, disingenuous framing, deeply racist accusations” and “lack of substantive discussion.” Tlaib spoke with her privately after, but wouldn’t reveal details. She had conversations with several others too. “People were really sincere about the guard rails they felt were present,” Tlaib told me. “They kept saying ‘guard rails.’”

The pro-Palestinian cohort in Congress remains only informally organized. The House has nearly 400 caucuses, including one for rum and another for candy, but none focused on Palestinian rights. Staff members of about a dozen current House and Senate members meet informally to discuss the latest efforts to advance Palestinian rights and their long-term objectives, according to several participants in the discussions. But no one has yet filed the paperwork to start a formal caucus. “They’re kind of looking at me, and I’m like, ‘I’m not doing it by myself!’” Tlaib told me. “You all cared before I came here.”

In the years since Tlaib’s election, several Democratic battles involving the left have included fights over Palestinian rights — a difference that maps onto wider fights over the future of the Democratic Party. Cori Bush, the Missouri Black Lives Matter activist elected in 2020 to Congress, and Pressley now often link the Palestinian cause to issues of police brutality and segregation at home. Jamaal Bowman, who beat the longtime (and pro-Israel) incumbent Eliot Engel for a New York congressional seat in 2020, recently came under criticism from some in the D.S.A., which endorsed him, for his vote to support Iron Dome funding and for visiting Israel on a J Street-sponsored trip. In North Carolina, Nida Allam, the Durham County commissioner who is running for Congress on a platform of environmental justice, has called for conditioning military aid to Israel on Palestinian rights; she was recently endorsed by Tlaib.

In 2020, meanwhile, Zogby, who had been attending the D.N.C. for nearly four decades, finally succeeded in inserting changes to the party’s platform. Party leaders wouldn’t accept the word “occupation,” but for the first time, allowed the phrase “we oppose settlement expansion.”

Sensing a shift, however small, a new pro-Israel organization called the Democratic Majority for Israel was formed in 2019 to campaign for Democratic candidates who would uphold current U.S. Israel policy. “We thought it was important,” Mark Mellman, its founding president, told me, “before things get out of hand, if you will, to be a force in the Democratic Party and maintain support for Israel.”

D.M.F.I.’s political action committee has targeted primary races that often involve candidates backed by Justice Democrats, an influential left-wing PAC that recruited Ocasio-Cortez and Bowman. Last summer, D.M.F.I. PAC injected more than $2 million into the Democratic primary of a congressional special election in Ohio, and aired ads against Nina Turner, who supports placing conditions on military aid. (Turner lost.) Notably, the ads focused less on Turner’s position on Israel and more on her disagreements with party leadership. “In the super PAC business, one is about winning elections,” Mellman told me.

According to D.M.F.I., 28 out of its 29 candidates won their primaries in the last cycle. Among them was Ritchie Torres, a congressman representing the South Bronx, the poorest district in the country. Some Israel advocates see Torres as the model for bringing disaffected Democrats back into the fold: a self-described progressive who maintains support for Israel. For the first time since its founding, AIPAC is starting two political action committees. Writing in The Jerusalem Post, Douglas Bloomfield, a former AIPAC lobbyist, said the group will “probably accelerate its ad campaign against” Omar and Tlaib, as well as “a few others on its enemies list.”

The politics of Tlaib’s own position on the Palestinian question, however, may be improving for other reasons. Detroit’s population has fallen again, and congressional lines were recently redrawn into another jigsaw piece of a district, costing Michigan a seat. In January, Tlaib announced she would run for the new District 12, which includes only two-thirds of her old constituents, but now also includes Dearborn, a city with a large concentrated Arab American population. Tlaib’s challenger, Shanelle Jackson, has already tried to wield her identity against her, telling Jewish Insider: “She obviously is carrying the water of Palestine in all that she does.”

In 2019, days after telling the Squad to “go back” to their countries, Donald Trump called Tlaib a “crazed lunatic.” Denzel McCampbell, Tlaib’s communication director, told me that whenever there is an uptick in hateful calls and threats at the office, he knows that Fox News must have mentioned her. A Republican political tracker — an operative who regularly films the activities of a politician — follows her around regularly, a practice usually reserved for campaign season.

In her Washington office, Tlaib keeps a sample of the petroleum coke she collected in Detroit in a glass cabinet. A framed photo of Tlaib’s grandmother, whom she hasn’t seen in more than 10 years, looks over her desk. “You know how some people take naps?” she told me. “I quit in my head for 20 minutes, and pretend I’m not the Congressmember for the 13,” she said, referring to her district. “Not because of them, but because of this place.”

Rozina Ali is a contributing writer at the magazine. She is working on a book about the history of Islamophobia in the United States. Jarod Lew is an artist and a photographer based in Detroit. His works explore community, identity and displacement and have been exhibited at the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery, the Design Museum of London and the Philharmonie de Paris.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAROD LEW) (MM23); Rashida Tlaib at a pro-Palestinian rally in Dearborn, Mich., last spring. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANTRANIK TAVITIAN/DETROIT FREE PRESS, VIA ZUMA) (MM24); Tlaib speaking with President Biden on the airport tarmac in Detroit about the Israeli-Palestinian confl ict last May. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM25); A building in Michigan’s 13th Congressional District, which Tlaib represents — the second poorest in the country. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE JORDANO) (MM26)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2023

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[***'Of Course It Is Worth It': War Promises Gains in a Land of Loss***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6146-5YB1-JBG3-654K-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Carlotta Gall and Ivor Prickett

**Body**

As the country's soldiers advance in the conflict with Armenia, every ''liberated'' territory is celebrated and tens of thousands of refugees plan their return to lost lands.

BAKU, Azerbaijan -- As dusk fell, the sound of wailing carried on the soft evening breeze. Women filled the courtyard of a small house, keening over a coffin draped in the national flag. Men clustered in hushed groups in the narrow alley outside.

The ***working-class*** neighborhood of Ahmedli, in the Azerbaijani capital, Baku, was mourning its first martyred son since war broke out anew between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the southern Caucasus three weeks ago. Eldar Aliyev, 26, a manager in one of Azerbaijan's biggest finance companies and a volunteer soldier, had spent barely two weeks at the front before returning home in a coffin.

Azerbaijan has not released numbers of military casualties, but funerals are underway, bringing the war home to its people. As well as Mr. Aliyev, a colonel of the army was also buried in Baku on Sunday.

''If the nation calls, he has to go,'' said Mr. Aliyev's father, Suleyman Eldar Aliyev, standing against a wall and leaning on a crutch. His face deeply lined, he had few words. ''Long live the nation,'' he said.

Azerbaijan is in full war mode as it engages in the heaviest fighting since the original conflict with Armenia in the early 1990s over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnic Armenian district inside Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan suffered a bitter defeat then, losing about 13 percent of its territory, with as many as 26,000 dead and around 800,000 displaced.

That's where matters stood for 26 years of a frozen truce, interrupted periodically by spasms of violence that were quickly tamped down by outside powers. But Azerbaijan, an oil-and-gas-rich former Soviet republic, has been quietly rearming for years. When clashes broke out three weeks ago, the country plunged into an all-out war to reclaim the lands it lost.

Around the capital of Baku, signs of war fever are not hard to spot. The country's bright three-colored flag hangs from every public building, while giant screens along the main streets downtown play horrifying video footage of precision drone strikes on Armenian soldiers. Every few days, President Ilham Aliyev, who has ruled the country since inheriting the office from his father in 2003, speaks to the nation and announces the names of villages and towns that have been newly ''liberated.''

Anar Mamedov, 36, a cousin of the volunteer soldier who was buried in Baku on Sunday, said, ''The Azerbaijani Army has shown its power.''

''This will continue until we liberate the last piece of our land, and at the end I would like to note that everyone will finally understand Azerbaijan,'' added Mr. Mamedov, himself a war veteran who lost an arm.

''We were all waiting for this,'' he said. ''We were waiting for Ilham Aliyev to give the order.''

Azerbaijan is a tightly controlled society where dissent is quickly quashed. Criticism of the war, where it exists, is muted. Yet the general mood is overwhelmingly supportive. In numerous interviews, Azerbaijanis expressed their frustration that peace efforts led by France, Russia and the United States have never brought a resolution, despite repeated United Nations resolutions in Azerbaijan's favor.

''This is not Aliyev's war,'' said Zaur Shiriyev, the South Caucasus analyst for the International Crisis Group, in reference to the president. ''It is all of the people's war.''

Mr. Shiriyev said that many Armenians, and Western officials working in the region, had never fully understood how important the losses of both life and territory were to Azerbaijanis.

An award-winning investigative journalist, Khadija Ismayilova, who was jailed by the Aliyev government for her work in 2015, said that she and other activists were keeping a moratorium on dissent while the war raged. ''You keep it down because soldiers are dying there,'' she said.

But she said she could feel popular anger building in recent months as the Armenian side adopted an increasingly aggressive stance. ''I am usually cool about politics,'' she said, ''but I was angry.''

In a dilapidated, half-built school building in a northern suburb of Baku, more than 1,000 refugees still live in cramped, unsanitary conditions where they first found refuge from the war decades ago. Their rooms are divided by flimsy plywood walls and residents cook and hang washing along a narrow underground corridor.

''Everyone lost hope with the peace discussions,'' said Ulriya Suleymanova, 34, who lives with an extended family of eight in a damp set of rooms that smelled of the sewers below. ''Our president offered peace for years, but nothing changed.''

But now she has reason to celebrate. Both her family and that of her husband are refugees from Jabrail, a district near the Iranian border. She pulled out her cellphone and played a video of Azerbaijani soldiers celebrating a day earlier as they raised the national flag at a bridge near her village.

''From 1993, we were called refugees, but now our lands have been liberated, we are no longer refugees,'' she said. ''We have proof. We saw the bridge and the flags in Jabrail. Of course we are very happy when we see these things. I was 7 when we left.''

For Ms. Suleymanova, there is no doubt they will return home. In Baku, she works cleaning houses and her husband sells security cameras. But work has dried up with the coronavirus, and they are struggling, she said.

''My grandfather had lands, we had fruit and vegetable farms,'' she noted wistfully. ''It was not like now, this poor life.''

Many of the Azerbaijani refugees come from agricultural villages and towns in seven districts, including Jabrail, that surround Nagorno-Karabakh, which was populated mainly by ethnic Armenians and was always the focus of the dispute between the two countries.

The districts now lie largely abandoned except for military defenses. The withdrawal of occupying Armenian troops and the return of the Azerbaijani refugees have long been considered first steps in any negotiated settlement.

The Azerbaijani Army has sought to push back the Armenian troops by force, focusing on three of the southernmost districts, Fizuli, Jabrail and Zengilan, that border Iran. On Tuesday, the president, Mr. Aliyev, announced that troops had secured Zengilan, the third district, though an Armenian government spokesman said that heavy fighting was continuing.

The declared capture of some of their home districts has fired the refugees with excitement but also brought painful emotions flooding back.

''We were crying and smiling at the same time,'' said Ulker Allahverdiyev, 78, a refugee at the derelict school building who lost her husband and a son in the war. A widow with five children, she worked as a cleaner in a school, but lost two more daughters in the years as a refugee. ''I was working day and night,'' she said. ''I was scared of my own shadow.''

A teenager lay asleep under covers on the sofa beside her. ''Her uncle and her neighbor went to the war and we cannot reach them and we are worried about them, so we are taking care of her,'' she said.

Her memories from the earlier conflict were crowding in. ''It makes it harder,'' she said. ''Our children become martyrs and I am very worried. All of them are my children.''

But she said she supported the war. ''Of course, I want to see peace. I don't want people to die, but of course it is worth it.''

Along an underground passage, another refugee, eager to talk, opened the door to a cramped single room where his wife and two sons have lived for two decades. Ceyhun Seymur Khudiyev is from the city of Agdam, a ghost town today, that remains under Armenian control. But he was fired with confidence.

''I believe that we are going to get our lands back,'' he said. ''Justice is taking its place.''

Even refugees who have been able to build businesses and buy property have started plans to return to their homes, said Eldar Hamzali, 26, whose family comes from Fizuli.

He pulled up a page from Google maps to show his family house and land. Although the government has said it has secured much of Fizuli, the village where Mr. Hamzali's family comes from is apparently not yet under Azerbaijani control. Nonetheless, he said his uncles had already decided where each would rebuild their homes. Mr. Hamzali has even been asked to calculate the costs of transporting the remains of relatives who died in exile for reburial in the village, he added.

''The feeling that you are temporarily here never left us,'' he said of his life growing up in Baku. ''I think I could find some peace of mind. Here I'm a guest, but there it's my village. I think I would feel much more secure.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/21/world/europe/azerbaijan-armenia-nagorno-karabakh-refugees.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/21/world/europe/azerbaijan-armenia-nagorno-karabakh-refugees.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The funeral of Eldar Aliyev in Baku, Azerbaijan. He died in the renewed fighting with Armenia. (PHOTOGRAPH BY IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1)

Yasemen Abasova, 12, above, cooked lunch for her family in the basement of an unfinished school in Baku, Azerbaijan, where many refugee families have been living for decades. Refugees also live in cramped hovels, far left. The Martyrs' Alley cemetery and memorial, near left, honors thousands.

Mourners of Eldar Aliyev, a volunteer soldier, on Sunday. ''Long live the nation,'' his father said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

**Load-Date:** October 22, 2020

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[***With Nod to Labor Rights, Biden Could Make Inroads For Democrats in Alabama***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625V-BB51-DXY4-X4TC-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

The president's support for the rights of unionizing Amazon workers delighted political organizers in Alabama who are hoping to build long-term Democratic momentum in a reliably red state.

BESSEMER, Ala. -- The first time Darryl Richardson tried to start a union, he was 23 years old and virtually alone in the effort. It failed, he lost his job, and he remembers the lasting fears of other employees who worried they would suffer a similar fate.

Nearly 30 years later, Mr. Richardson's penchant for agitation has not faded. He's one of the workers seeking to unionize an Amazon warehouse outside Birmingham, Ala., in a campaign that has targeted one of the world's most profitable companies and its billionaire chief executive, and that has been invigorated by a wave of support from prominent politicians, including President Biden.

''I couldn't believe he said something,'' Mr. Richardson said of Mr. Biden's video message last week in which he affirmed workers' rights and warned against corporate intimidation. ''It matters. It eased minds that might be worried about losing their job.''

Mike Foster, one of the lead organizers for the union, was less surprised. ''We've been waiting on him,'' he said.

When Mr. Biden weighed in on the contentious union debate in Alabama -- which has pitted company against worker and neighbor against neighbor as a potentially broader labor push brews at a corporation that has long resisted similar efforts -- he showed a new side of his nascent presidency.

His words demonstrated a willingness to use his bully pulpit on behalf of communities that have often fallen outside the Democratic Party's governing focus: ***working-class*** voters in Republican states, many of whom are Black. The message also elevated the national debate about the future of labor and unions, a cross-ideological issue on which Mr. Biden can uniquely find common cause with the progressive wing of his party even as many Democrats continue to shy away.

Mr. Biden's statement did not mention Amazon specifically and carefully avoided backing the union, calling instead for a fair election that followed federal labor guidelines. Still, for union supporters in Alabama, a state used to being on the back burner of national and Democratic politics, Mr. Biden's video was taken as a sign that his pledges to pursue racial equity and curb corporate power were more than just campaign catchphrases.

What's more, the presidential nod to Alabama supercharged the Democratic arms race to find the next Georgia, a Southern state where the party capitalized on decades of organizing and demographic change to break Republicans' grip on statewide elections.

The task will be tougher in Alabama: The state is much more firmly Republican than its Southern neighbor, having ousted Senator Doug Jones, a Democratic incumbent, by a healthy margin in 2020. The state has also not experienced the rapid demographic change that has made Georgia's political transformation possible, and does not have its considerable numbers of college-educated suburban moderates.

Still, Alabama Democrats see the growth of unions -- and the vote in Bessemer -- as a crucial first step. In that way, the blue banners hanging on the warehouse's walls that read ''vote'' are about much more than a union, even if the larger effort faces greater odds.

''Watching what happened in Georgia has given people a lot of hope,'' said Kathleen Kirkpatrick, the political director of Hometown Action, a statewide activist group. ''What Stacey Abrams did started a decade ago and took a lot of help. So let's think about where we are on that path.''

Faiz Shakir, a close ally of labor leaders who served as the campaign manager for Senator Bernie Sanders's 2020 presidential bid, called Mr. Biden's video ''very impactful.'' Mr. Shakir said he recalled how, on the campaign trail, he had often felt that labor issues were where there was the least amount of daylight between the progressive Mr. Sanders and the moderate Mr. Biden.

Mr. Shakir said he had privately lobbied Ron Klain, the White House chief of staff, to persuade Mr. Biden to speak out. And in a sign of the potential kinship between Mr. Klain and the left on labor, Mr. Shakir said he believed the president would have chosen Mr. Sanders as labor secretary if the Senate had not been split 50-50, making confirmations more difficult.

''We have disagreed with him on health care and maybe climate and some other pieces, but there's some good ideological overlap on this one,'' Mr. Shakir said, noting that Mr. Biden's general-election platform had been more progressive than his stances were in the primary race. Mr. Biden has, to this point, ignored progressive calls to embrace breaking up big technology companies like Amazon.

''I can understand people were dubious about whether that was sincere or not, but our track record with Ron, with Joe Biden, and with the whole team is that when they say they're going to do something, they will contemplate whether they want to make that commitment,'' Mr. Shakir said. ''And if they do make the commitment, that's where they stand. They're straightforward.''

Although labor leaders, local union activists and national progressive politicians uniformly support an Amazon union in Alabama, that feeling does not reflect the mood inside the warehouse itself. With less than a month to go in the union vote, the 5,800-worker warehouse is split among supporters of the union, strong dissenters and an apathetic center that is growing sick of the national attention.

Outside the plant -- where some workers clock 12-hour shifts -- union activists and journalists are likely to experience a string of exasperated rejections when asking to speak with employees. Some workers wear ''Vote No'' pins, while others talk of anti-union literature in the common areas and bathrooms. And on social media, employees post about longing for March 29, when the election will conclude.

Amazon has aggressively countered the unionization effort, highlighting the company's benefit package and its $15 minimum wage, as well as the job growth it has prompted in an economically stagnant area of the South.

Last week, in a media round table of anti-union warehouse workers hosted by Amazon, some said that Mr. Biden's message had been unnecessary, and that they did not feel intimidated by the company. A spokeswoman for Amazon declined to directly comment on the president's remarks.

''I know the president weighed in,'' said J.C. Thompson, a process assistant at the warehouse. ''And I can't imagine the pressure our leadership is feeling because there's a few people -- a minority -- who are disgruntled.''

Carla Johnson, an employee in the warehouse, said she was voting not to unionize.

''I can speak for myself,'' she said. ''I don't need someone from the outside coming in and saying this or that.''

The range of opinions hinted at why Mr. Biden's message was so calibrated -- supporting the workers' right to a fair election but not supporting the union itself. And some observers, including employees at the Amazon warehouse, believe the president's words will have little bearing on the outcome of the union vote.

Catherine Highsmith, 24, said she would wager that some employees were not aware that the president had said anything. She sees his support for the workers as less important than parts of his agenda that remain unfulfilled, including raising the federal minimum wage and sending robust stimulus checks to Americans.

''It's a words versus actions thing,'' Ms. Highsmith said. ''It's doesn't feel right for me to say 'thanks for helping me' when you still have to help others.''

Outsiders may see Bessemer as an unlikely place for a union showdown, but many residents disagree. This southwestern Birmingham suburb of about 25,000 people has a history of unionized iron and limestone workers. As jobs moved out the area in the 1950s, however, the city fell into poverty and despair, ranking sixth on a list in 2019 of the worst places to live in America.

Last year, when Amazon opened the warehouse to the praises of local elected officials, the company hailed its arrival as a sign of economic revival in a predominantly Black area. With the coronavirus pandemic raging, Amazon offered thousands of jobs at a minimum wage of at least $15 an hour, more than double the state's minimum. Some hailed it as a godsend.

But by the fall, Mr. Richardson and others had already contacted the regional chapter of the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union with complaints of poor working conditions, inflexible hours and a lack of coordinated representation in management.

Liberal organizations seeking to make inroads in local politics have latched on to the union fight. The Alabama Coalition for Community Benefits, a collective of labor groups, progressive grass-roots organizations and civil rights stalwarts like the N.A.A.C.P., has supported the pro-unionization workers in Bessemer, and is also organizing employees at a nearby plant for the bus maker New Flyer.

Mr. Foster, one of the R.W.D.S.U. organizers in Bessemer, who works as a poultry processor at another company's plant, said the efforts were indicative of a growing labor movement in the South, even in states that have passed strict right-to-work laws that ban mandatory union membership as a condition of employment.

The political groups see something more, an outgrowth of the organizing that exploded during Donald J. Trump's presidency. Millions of dollars poured into Alabama during the 2017 special election for the Senate in which Mr. Jones became the first Democrat to hold one of the state's seats in the chamber since 1997. He lost his re-election bid last year, but Ms. Kirkpatrick argued that the union efforts were proof that the organizing infrastructure had lived on.

''The legacy of union sensibilities in Alabama maybe don't follow along partisan lines,'' she said. ''So regardless of the outcome, one of the things that we really did see over the course of the last three to four years was Democrats and progressive Democrats coming out of the woodwork. Waking up and realizing they weren't the only person on the block in the retail workplace who has a progressive mind-set.''

On Friday, several congressional Democrats traveled to Bessemer to support the Amazon workers. Representative Andy Levin of Michigan, a former union organizer, said it was ''the most important election for the working people of this country in my lifetime.''

''There is nothing I have done in Congress that is more important than standing here today and giving a little solidarity to these workers and their struggle for justice,'' Mr. Levin said.

But the national political implications matter less to people like Mr. Richardson and Ms. Highsmith, who believe a union is necessary to improve their daily working conditions. When thousands of Twitter users started a #BoycottAmazon campaign last week in solidarity with the union efforts, the R.W.D.S.U. and local union organizers distanced themselves from the campaign, choosing to keep their focus on Bessemer.

While liberal activists in Alabama see an opportunity to reshape the state's politics, and national progressives seize on a shared priority with Mr. Biden's administration, Mr. Richardson just wants to be able to take a long bathroom break without the fear of having his pay docked.

''We're taking on Goliath,'' he said. ''And the president has our back.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/09/us/politics/amazon-union-alabama-biden.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/09/us/politics/amazon-union-alabama-biden.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Darryl Richardson, above, is one of the workers seeking to unionize an Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Ala., outside Birmingham. He said he had been heartened by President Biden's message of support for the workers' rights. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LYNSEY WEATHERSPOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***10 Great Movies on HBO Max***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:602R-MW11-JBG3-60GG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 6, 2020 Saturday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk

**Length:** 1352 words

**Byline:** By Jason Bailey

**Body**

Getting started on the new streaming service? Here's a guide to some of the best film offerings, from classics to contemporary hits.

The landing was a bit rougher than expected, but HBO Max has arrived, offering up an all-you-can-eat buffet of HBO programming, hit sitcoms and streaming originals. And, of course, there are movies -- thousands of them, pulled from a wide array of blockbuster franchises and canon classics. It's a lot of programming to choose from (10,000 hours, we're told), so here's a quick tour through some of the highlights and entry points:

'Citizen Kane'

Stream it here.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

When AT&T shuttered the movie-buff-friendly FilmStruck streaming service in 2018, the company promised an extensive classics library for what eventually became HBO Max. And they weren't kidding; the Turner Classic Movies-branded tab of the Max interface boasts such all-time favorites as ''Singin' in the Rain,'' ''Casablanca,'' ''Gone With the Wind'' and ''Ben-Hur.'' But if you're looking to dive into Hollywood's Golden Age, why not start with the film routinely singled out as the best of them all? HBO Max is the exclusive streaming service home of Orson Welles's 1941 masterpiece, the fast-paced and funny chronicle of the rise and fall of an American media tycoon -- a picture as delightfully entertaining as it was technically and structurally innovative.

'City Lights'

Stream it here.

The TCM tab is currently spotlighting the work of one of the greatest filmmakers and performers of all time, Charlie Chaplin, and it's an excellent representation of his filmography. It's tough to say where to start, but you can't go wrong with ''City Lights,'' the tender story of Chaplin's Little Tramp and the blind flower girl (Virginia Cherrill) he befriends and helps to see again. Their heart-rending reunion makes for one of the most moving conclusions in all of movies, and this remarkable picture -- which Chaplin released as a silent film with music and sound effects in 1931, well after the age of talkies began -- serves as a potent reminder of the power of cinematic pantomime.

'Bicycle Thieves'

Stream it here.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The carefully curated Criterion Collection was one of the highlights of the FilmStruck platform, and its subsequent spinoff service, The Criterion Channel, remains the gold standard for cinephile streaming. But the 200 or so Criterion titles included with HBO Max are an excellent introductory film studies course, with generous helpings of the essentials: Bergman, Fellini, Kurosawa ... and Godzilla. But Vittorio De Sica's 1948 masterpiece may be the best place to start. A key entry in the neorealist movement that defined postwar Italian cinema, it concerns a ***working-class*** father whose bicycle -- crucial to his work and thus his ability to feed his family -- is stolen. But it's much more than a simple story of lost and found; De Sica and his cast (none of them trained actors) beautifully capture the fear and desperation of living on the brink of poverty.

'My Neighbor Totoro'

Stream it here.

HBO Max grabbed headlines with its pricey acquisitions of series like ''Friends'' and ''The Big Bang Theory,'' but film fans were delighted that the service landed the great white whale of the digital age: streaming rights to the Studio Ghibli catalog. HBO Max's 21-film selection represents the bulk of the feature output from the Japanese animation studio, and while the best of the bunch is up for debate, Hayao Miyazaki's 1988 feature is easily the best introduction to the studio's distinctive style, a delightful combination of animated exaggeration and detail-oriented, character-driven realism. ''Totoro,'' the story of two young girls and the wood spirits they befriend, is vivacious and warmhearted, trafficking in the everyday magic and fertile imagination of childhood.

'Wonder Woman'

Stream it here.

The service's DC-branded tab is very much a work in progress -- presumably because of the complexities of licensing deals, it's missing such beloved comic book-inspired properties as the original ''Superman'' movies and the Christopher Nolan-directed ''Dark Knight'' trilogy. But the tab does include Tim Burton's Batman films, last year's Oscar-winning ''Joker'' origin story, and Patty Jenkins's smash 2017 big-screen take on the iconic superheroine, with Gal Gadot charismatically deflecting bullets and swinging her Lasso of Truth as the Amazonian princess who saves humanity from evil during World War I.

'Behind the Candelabra'

Stream it here.

Since the 1983 broadcast of ''The Terry Fox Story,'' the first made-for-HBO movie, the network has attracted numerous marquee directors -- including Mike Nichols, Barry Levinson, Dee Rees and Steven Soderbergh, who won widespread acclaim for this 2013 snapshot of Liberace's later years. Michael Douglas is pitch-perfect as the flamboyant yet closeted entertainer, capturing the charisma and charm of his public persona while ably downshifting in his tender moments with Scott Thorson (Matt Damon), the young lover who tells the story.

'At the Heart of Gold: Inside the USA Gymnastics Scandal'

Stream it here.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

HBO's documentaries have celebrated cultural figures, revisited historical events and addressed social ills. One of the most affecting is Erin Lee Carr's exposé of Dr. Larry Nassar, the notorious abuser of hundreds of young gymnasts. Carr addresses the crimes (in all their explicit and sickening detail), the psychology of their perpetrator, and the power structures that allowed him to get away with it for so long. But her focus is on the victims, and the heavy burden of guilt and shame they carried for so long (and still carry). It's a piercing documentary and an upsetting experience, but most of all, it's a film about believing women -- before it's too late.

'Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban'

Stream it here.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The streaming exclusivity of the eight filmed adaptations of J.K. Rowling's best-selling book series is another of HBO Max's big selling points, and all of the movies have their fine qualities -- yes, even the first two entries. But the first great film in the franchise (and, arguably, still its best) was the third, in which the future Oscar winner Alfonso Cuarón (of ''Roma'' and ''Gravity'') took the wheel, augmenting the familiar characters and iconography with a dash of his own moral complexity and subtle pathos.

'Her Smell'

Stream it here.

Thankfully, the service's contemporary offerings aren't just limited to blockbusters. Many a memorable indie picture is nestled in the Max catalog, including Ryan Fleck and Anna Boden's ''Half Nelson,'' Debra Granik's ''Winter's Bone,'' Gerardo Naranjo's ''Miss Bala'' and this scorching musical drama from the writer and director Alex Ross Perry. Elisabeth Moss comes on like a hurricane as Becky Something, a Courtney Love-esque punk rock star whose inner demons and self-destructive behavior threaten to collapse her career -- a descent and resurrection captured in a series of unnervingly claustrophobic backstage meltdowns and recording studio encounters.

'Us'

Stream it here.

Lest we forget, for years upon years, the primary draw of HBO was right there in the name: Home Box Office, i.e., going to the movies without leaving your home. In those distant, pre-''Sopranos,'' pre-''Sex and the City'' days, people mostly watched HBO to see big Hollywood movies, a year or so after their theatrical runs. And there are plenty of those too: Charlize Theron and Seth Rogen in ''Long Shot,'' the Bradley Cooper and Lady Gaga-fronted ''A Star Is Born'' or Jordan Peele's mind-bending horror thriller ''Us.'' It may well be the best of the bunch, not only for its inventive screenplay, goosebump-raising suspense, and terrific performances (particularly a chilling, double-edged turn by Lupita Nyong'o), but also for sheer nostalgia: it's exactly the kind of nightmare-fueled horror picture that us children of the '80s loved to tiptoe out of our bedrooms in the middle of the night to sneak-watch on HBO.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/05/movies/best-movies-hbo-max.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/05/movies/best-movies-hbo-max.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Lupita Nyong'o in ''Us,'' from the director Jordan Peele. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Claudette Barius/Universal Pictures FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 6, 2020

**End of Document**



[***'I Want People to Know That We're Not OK'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6140-5R41-DXY4-X2WR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 21, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 1424 words

**Byline:** By Rick Rojas

**Body**

LAKE CHARLES, La. -- That first drive through Lake Charles after Hurricane Laura had been a gut punch. Trinette Thomas felt a barrage of surprise and despair as she strained to absorb the destruction surrounding her and imagine the lengths it would take to stagger back. Then, another storm hit.

The shock subsided quickly, replaced by the tedium and exasperation that accompany the slog toward recovery. She is haggling with her insurance company, which reimbursed her for 14 of the 26 days her family stayed in a hotel. She is replacing the car tire that was sliced by metal debris on the road. And she is doing some rough math: Neither insurance money nor federal aid is enough to keep Ms. Thomas, 56, from having to dip into retirement accounts to pay for home repairs. Her plan to retire at 59½, as refinery workers often do, has been torn up along with her roof and the trees in her yard.

''We're not getting the help that we need,'' Ms. Thomas said of her hometown, and she is worried that the help will not come. ''I want to say we're tough, but I don't know right now.''

Lake Charles, a ***working-class*** city of roughly 78,000 people, has been eviscerated by a direct assault from this season's hurricanes -- Laura, one of the most powerful storms to hit Louisiana, followed six weeks later by Delta. Thousands of residents remain displaced. But as many see it, the city was also the victim of an extraordinary year of misfortune, one that has subjected the nation to a carousel of calamity -- record storm and wildfire seasons on top of a pandemic. The dire needs of Lake Charles have been all but erased.

The mayor, Nic Hunter, has struggled to shine a spotlight on his city, appearing on CNN, Fox News and NPR, where he told listeners, ''I am begging, I am pleading for Americans not to forget about Lake Charles.''

Charitable organizations said that donations have been a small fraction of what they took in after Hurricane Rita hit the region in 2005, and that they have not been able to attract enough volunteers to clear the mountains of debris crowding streets and to clean the muck out of homes flooded by Delta.

''Our story has just gotten very quickly put aside, and I really think the devastation is so huge we should remain on the front page,'' said Denise Durel, the president and chief executive of the United Way of Southwest Louisiana. ''The magnitude of our destruction is so huge we cannot come back as a community on our own. We cannot restore our homes on our own. We need the help of the American public, if we can get it.''

The circumstances have prodded a tender nerve for this part of the Gulf Coast, which has long harbored a sensitivity about being overlooked as a workaday stretch identifiable to outsiders by oil refineries, casinos and the interstate connecting Houston and New Orleans.

The region has been haunted by memories of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Rita but also an uncomfortable notion that its hardship was overshadowed by the death and destruction generated by Hurricane Katrina, the monster storm that hit Louisiana weeks earlier.

But that sense of being ignored had taken hold even before then. Some trace it as far back as the Louisiana Purchase, when the would-be state was incorporated into the United States except for the parcel including Lake Charles that was officially declared a ''no man's land,'' drawing renegades and escaped slaves who sought a place where their captors were unlikely to chase them. ''It's always been a land of refugees and outcasts,'' said Adley Cormier, a longtime resident who wrote a book called ''Lost Lake Charles.''

It is a legacy that has forged a level of self-reliance, an attitude that those who were clever enough or willing to invest the sweat equity were capable of unlocking the city's promise. But the undertow of that history has been a fear that help may not come when needed -- a fear that has been realized for some as they watch their city claw its way back.

And as an onslaught of disaster, social unrest and campaign developments dominate the news, residents have been left to wonder if that torrent of headlines has eclipsed their misfortune and stymied efforts to help. ''I can't say if it's got something to do with it,'' said Gary Hanney, a 56-year-old construction worker. ''I can't say if the president has something to do with it. I just know it's not there.''

Hurricane Laura made landfall on Aug. 27 in Cameron Parish, south of Lake Charles, as a Category 4 storm with 150-mile-per-hour winds. More than two dozen people died in its aftermath. Trees were shredded and houses cracked open like eggs. Entire blocks of homes sustained so much damage they will almost certainly have to be razed.

Then, this month, Hurricane Delta hit the coast not even 20 miles from where Laura made landfall, unleashing floods that besieged neighborhoods and heavy rainfall that swamped homes with already damaged roofs. It was virtually impossible to discern where the destruction from one storm ended and that of the other began.

Many residents' homes were uninsured, and some said they had deductibles over $20,000, a sum so unaffordable their insurance policies were rendered useless.

''I want people to know that we're not OK, we're not back to normal,'' said Mr. Hunter, who has been mayor since 2017. ''We're going to do our part. We're not just sitting on our butts with our hands out, saying, 'Come do this for me.' The extent of this catastrophe rises to a level where if it's going to fall only on locals to help locals, we're going to be in the thick of recovery much longer than we need to be.''

For many residents, life is now consumed by discomfort and distress. Days are spent negotiating bureaucracies for insurance help and government aid, cleaning ravaged homes and businesses and wading through the traffic jams of displaced residents.

''This has been the eight weeks of hell,'' Mr. Cormier said, pausing a conversation as he noticed a fan's blades slowly turn, a long-awaited indication that his electricity had been restored. ''Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!''

Making the situation even more stressful is the realization that it reflects a new reality created by climate change. Rita marked a dividing line for many on the coast between a time when a storm of such intensity seemed to hit once in a generation and a new era where such catastrophic hurricanes had an unsettling frequency.

Now, some estimates place the damage caused by the recent hurricanes at $12 billion or more. Federal emergency officials have already approved more than $170 million in individual aid for Hurricane Laura's victims, and members of Louisiana's congressional delegation have pushed to increase federal support. The region's economy has also been hobbled by the coronavirus pandemic and the collapse of the oil and gas industry, with refineries laying off dozens of workers in recent months.

Uncertainty about the city's future has stoked residents' fears about being disregarded and has underscored a distance that extends beyond the miles it sits from the state's political and cultural centers of gravity.

''It lacks the panache of New Orleans, the political power of Baton Rouge and the personality of Lafayette's Cajun and Creole culture,'' The Advocate newspaper of Baton Rouge said in an editorial making an impassioned plea to save a city it described as ''amiable.''

Still, for Priscilla Sam, Lake Charles is home. ''Everything I know is here,'' she said. She conceded that she had been tempted to leave. Her house was so badly damaged she cannot live in it.

For weeks, she had been sleeping on an air mattress in a back room of her beauty salon, Royal Treatment, surrounded by clothes, comforters and some of the other possessions she could salvage.

Now, after Delta, she is facing displacement again: The second storm had damaged the roof and soaked the walls. The smell of mold filled the salon. Her customers called for appointments. ''But I'm not going to subject them to this for any amount of money,'' she said even as a regular planted herself in the waiting area, hoping Ms. Sam would style her hair anyway.

''I started out complaining,'' Ms. Sam, 52, said, standing beside her unmade mattress, tears welling in her eyes. ''I was never able to imagine myself in a situation like this.''

Yet as she prayed for guidance, she realized she was one of the lucky ones. ''They don't have anything to come back to,'' she said. ''A lot of them aren't going to come back and they don't know where they're going.''

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Blue tarps covered many roofs in Lake Charles, La., this month, after the city was devastated by its second hurricane in the span of a few weeks. ''We're not getting the help we need,'' a resident said.

Frank Harrison, left, and Dave Dixon traveled from Miami to help after Hurricane Laura hit. They stayed to assist with cleanup from Hurricane Delta. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM WIDMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Priscilla Sam moved into her salon after Hurricane Laura destroyed her home, only to have that building damaged as well by Hurricane Delta. (PHOTOGRAPH BY OCTAVIO JONES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

The storms upended Lake Charles, a city of roughly 80,000 people. (PHOTOGRAPH BY OCTAVIO JONES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***In Azerbaijan, Pain and Loss Drive War Fever***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6141-0P21-DXY4-X3T6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 21, 2020 Wednesday 14:22 EST

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**Byline:** Carlotta Gall and Ivor Prickett

**Highlight:** As the country’s soldiers advance in the conflict with Armenia, every “liberated” territory is celebrated and tens of thousands of refugees plan their return to lost lands.

**Body**

As the country’s soldiers advance in the conflict with Armenia, every “liberated” territory is celebrated and tens of thousands of refugees plan their return to lost lands.

BAKU, Azerbaijan — As dusk fell, the sound of wailing carried on the soft evening breeze. Women filled the courtyard of a small house, keening over a coffin draped in the national flag. Men clustered in hushed groups in the narrow alley outside.

The ***working-class*** neighborhood of Ahmedli, in the Azerbaijani capital, Baku, was mourning its first martyred son since war broke out anew between [*Azerbaijan and Armenia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/15/world/europe/azerbaijan-armenia-nagorno-karabakh.html) in the southern Caucasus three weeks ago. Eldar Aliyev, 26, a manager in one of [*Azerbaijan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/15/world/europe/azerbaijan-armenia-nagorno-karabakh.html)’s biggest finance companies and a volunteer soldier, had spent barely two weeks at the front before returning home in a coffin.

Azerbaijan has not released numbers of military casualties, but funerals are underway, bringing the war home to its people. As well as Mr. Aliyev, a colonel of the army was also buried in Baku on Sunday.

“If the nation calls, he has to go,” said Mr. Aliyev’s father, Suleyman Eldar Aliyev, standing against a wall and leaning on a crutch. His face deeply lined, he had few words. “Long live the nation,” he said.

Azerbaijan is in full war mode as it engages in the heaviest fighting since [*the original conflict with Armenia in the early 1990s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/15/world/europe/azerbaijan-armenia-nagorno-karabakh.html) over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnic Armenian district inside Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan suffered a bitter defeat then, losing about 13 percent of its territory, with as many as 26,000 dead and around 800,000 displaced.

That’s where matters stood for 26 years of a frozen truce, interrupted periodically by spasms of violence that were quickly tamped down by outside powers. But Azerbaijan, an oil-and-gas-rich former Soviet republic, has been quietly rearming for years. When clashes broke out three weeks ago, the country plunged into an all-out war to reclaim the lands it lost.

Around the capital of Baku, signs of war fever are not hard to spot. The country’s bright three-colored flag hangs from every public building, while giant screens along the main streets downtown play horrifying video footage of precision drone strikes on Armenian soldiers. Every few days, President Ilham Aliyev, who has ruled the country since [*inheriting the office from his father in 2003*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/15/world/europe/azerbaijan-armenia-nagorno-karabakh.html), speaks to the nation and announces the names of villages and towns that have been newly “liberated.”

Anar Mamedov, 36, a cousin of the volunteer soldier who was buried in Baku on Sunday, said, “The Azerbaijani Army has shown its power.”

“This will continue until we liberate the last piece of our land, and at the end I would like to note that everyone will finally understand Azerbaijan,” added Mr. Mamedov, himself a war veteran who lost an arm.

“We were all waiting for this,” he said. “We were waiting for Ilham Aliyev to give the order.”

Azerbaijan is a tightly controlled society where dissent is quickly quashed. Criticism of the war, where it exists, is muted. Yet the general mood is overwhelmingly supportive. In numerous interviews, Azerbaijanis expressed their frustration that peace efforts led by France, Russia and the United States have never brought a resolution, despite repeated United Nations resolutions in Azerbaijan’s favor.

“This is not Aliyev’s war,” said Zaur Shiriyev, the South Caucasus analyst for the International Crisis Group, in reference to the president. “It is all of the people’s war.”

Mr. Shiriyev said that many Armenians, and Western officials working in the region, had never fully understood how important the losses of both life and territory were to Azerbaijanis.

An award-winning investigative journalist, [*Khadija Ismayilova*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/15/world/europe/azerbaijan-armenia-nagorno-karabakh.html), who was jailed by the Aliyev government for her work in 2015, said that she and other activists were keeping a moratorium on dissent while the war raged. “You keep it down because soldiers are dying there,” she said.

But she said she could feel popular anger building in recent months as the Armenian side adopted an increasingly aggressive stance. “I am usually cool about politics,” she said, “but I was angry.”

In a dilapidated, half-built school building in a northern suburb of Baku, more than 1,000 refugees still live in cramped, unsanitary conditions where they first found refuge from the war decades ago. Their rooms are divided by flimsy plywood walls and residents cook and hang washing along a narrow underground corridor.

“Everyone lost hope with the peace discussions,” said Ulriya Suleymanova, 34, who lives with an extended family of eight in a damp set of rooms that smelled of the sewers below. “Our president offered peace for years, but nothing changed.”

But now she has reason to celebrate. Both her family and that of her husband are refugees from Jabrail, a district near the Iranian border. She pulled out her cellphone and played a video of Azerbaijani soldiers celebrating a day earlier as they raised the national flag at a bridge near her village.

“From 1993, we were called refugees, but now our lands have been liberated, we are no longer refugees,” she said. “We have proof. We saw the bridge and the flags in Jabrail. Of course we are very happy when we see these things. I was 7 when we left.”

For Ms. Suleymanova, there is no doubt they will return home. In Baku, she works cleaning houses and her husband sells security cameras. But work has dried up with the coronavirus, and they are struggling, she said.

“My grandfather had lands, we had fruit and vegetable farms,” she noted wistfully. “It was not like now, this poor life.”

Many of the Azerbaijani refugees come from agricultural villages and towns in seven districts, including Jabrail, that surround Nagorno-Karabakh, which was populated mainly by ethnic Armenians and was always the focus of the dispute between the two countries.

The districts now lie largely abandoned except for military defenses. The withdrawal of occupying Armenian troops and the return of the Azerbaijani refugees have long been considered first steps in any negotiated settlement.

The Azerbaijani Army has sought to push back the Armenian troops by force, focusing on three of the southernmost districts, Fizuli, Jabrail and Zengilan, that border Iran. On Tuesday, the president, Mr. Aliyev, announced that troops had secured Zengilan, the third district, though an Armenian government spokesman said that heavy fighting was continuing.

The declared capture of some of their home districts has fired the refugees with excitement but also brought painful emotions flooding back.

“We were crying and smiling at the same time,” said Ulker Allahverdiyev, 78, a refugee at the derelict school building who lost her husband and a son in the war. A widow with five children, she worked as a cleaner in a school, but lost two more daughters in the years as a refugee. “I was working day and night,” she said. “I was scared of my own shadow.”

A teenager lay asleep under covers on the sofa beside her. “Her uncle and her neighbor went to the war and we cannot reach them and we are worried about them, so we are taking care of her,” she said.

Her memories from the earlier conflict were crowding in. “It makes it harder,” she said. “Our children become martyrs and I am very worried. All of them are my children.”

But she said she supported the war. “Of course, I want to see peace. I don’t want people to die, but of course it is worth it.”

Along an underground passage, another refugee, eager to talk, opened the door to a cramped single room where his wife and two sons have lived for two decades. Ceyhun Seymur Khudiyev is from the city of Agdam, a ghost town today, that remains under Armenian control. But he was fired with confidence.

“I believe that we are going to get our lands back,” he said. “Justice is taking its place.”

Even refugees who have been able to build businesses and buy property have started plans to return to their homes, said Eldar Hamzali, 26, whose family comes from Fizuli.

He pulled up a page from Google maps to show his family house and land. Although the government has said it has secured much of Fizuli, the village where Mr. Hamzali’s family comes from is apparently not yet under Azerbaijani control. Nonetheless, he said his uncles had already decided where each would rebuild their homes. Mr. Hamzali has even been asked to calculate the costs of transporting the remains of relatives who died in exile for reburial in the village, he added.

“The feeling that you are temporarily here never left us,” he said of his life growing up in Baku. “I think I could find some peace of mind. Here I’m a guest, but there it’s my village. I think I would feel much more secure.”

PHOTOS: The funeral of Eldar Aliyev in Baku, Azerbaijan. He died in the renewed fighting with Armenia. (PHOTOGRAPH BY IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1); Yasemen Abasova, 12, above, cooked lunch for her family in the basement of an unfinished school in Baku, Azerbaijan, where many refugee families have been living for decades. Refugees also live in cramped hovels, far left. The Martyrs’ Alley cemetery and memorial, near left, honors thousands.; Mourners of Eldar Aliyev, a volunteer soldier, on Sunday. “Long live the nation,” his father said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY IVOR PRICKETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A10)

**Load-Date:** November 15, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Dissenters Trying To Save Evangelicalism***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PV-X621-JBG3-6504-00000-00&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. 4; DAVID BROOKS

**Length:** 4529 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

Think of your 12 closest friends. These are the people you vacation with, talk about your problems with, do life with in the most intimate and meaningful ways. Now imagine if six of those people suddenly took a political or public position you found utterly vile. Now imagine learning that those six people think that your position is utterly vile. You would suddenly realize that the people you thought you knew best and cared about most had actually been total strangers all along. You would feel disoriented, disturbed, unmoored. Your life would change.

This is what has happened over the past six years to millions of American Christians, especially evangelicals. There have been three big issues that have profoundly divided them: the white evangelical embrace of Donald Trump, sex abuse scandals in evangelical churches and parachurch organizations, and attitudes about race relations, especially after the killing of George Floyd.

Thabiti Anyabwile pastors the largely Black Anacostia River Church in Washington, D.C. ''It's been at times agonizing and bewildering,'' he says. ''My entire relationship landscape has been rearranged. I've lost 20-year friendships. I've had great distance inserted into relationships that were once close and I thought would be close for life. I've grieved.''

Tim Dalrymple is president of the prominent evangelical magazine Christianity Today, which called for Trump's removal from office after his first impeachment. ''As an evangelical, I've found the last five years to be shocking, disorienting and deeply disheartening,'' he says. ''One of the most surprising elements is that I've realized that the people who I used to stand shoulder to shoulder with on almost every issue, I now realize that we are separated by a yawning chasm of mutual incomprehension. I would never have thought that could have happened so quickly.''

Kristin Kobes Du Mez is a professor of history at Calvin University, a Christian school in Michigan, and is the author of ''Jesus and John Wayne,'' about how rugged masculinity pervades the evangelical world. ''I've had so many moms I don't know come up to me in the playground,'' she tells me, ''and whisper, 'Are you the author of that book?' They pour out their hearts: 'This is not my faith. This is not what I was raised to believe in.' These are 30-something white Christian women. They are in deep crisis, questioning everything.''

Of course there is a lot of division across many parts of American society. But for evangelicals, who have dedicated their lives to Jesus, the problem is deeper. Christians are supposed to believe in the spiritual unity of the church. While differing over politics and other secondary matters, they are in theory supposed to be unified by their shared first love -- as brothers and sisters in Christ. Their common devotion is supposed to bring out the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

''We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,'' say the opening lines of a famous Christian song commonly known as ''By Our Love.'' In its chorus it proclaims, ''And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love.'' The world envisioned by that song seems very far away right now. The bitter recriminations have caused some believers to wonder if the whole religion is a crock.

Russell Moore resigned from his leadership position in the Southern Baptist Convention last spring over the denomination's resistance to addressing the racism and sexual abuse scandals in its ranks. He tells me that every day he has conversations with Christians who are losing their faith because of what they see in their churches. He made a haunting point last summer when I saw him speak in New York State at a conference at a Bruderhof community, which has roots in the Anabaptist tradition. ''We now see young evangelicals walking away from evangelicalism not because they do not believe what the church teaches,'' he said, ''but because they believe that the church itself does not believe what the church teaches.''

The proximate cause of all this disruption is Trump. But that is not the deepest cause. Trump is merely the embodiment of many of the raw wounds that already existed in parts of the white evangelical world: misogyny, racism, racial obliviousness, celebrity worship, resentment and the willingness to sacrifice principle for power.

Over the past decade or so, many of the country's most celebrated Christian institutions were rocked by a series of horrific scandals. If you're not evangelical, you may not know names like Willow Creek Community Church, Ravi Zacharias or Kanakuk Kamps. But if you're evangelical, these are large presences on your mental landscape, and all have been destroyed or tarnished in recent years by sexual abuse allegations. The former leader of another prominent congregation, Mars Hill Church, has been accused of abuses of power.

Power is the core problem here. First, the corruptions of personal power. Evangelicalism is a populist movement. It has no hierarchy or central authority, so you might think it would have avoided the abuses of power that have afflicted the Roman Catholic Church. But the paradox of decentralization is that it has often led to the concentration of power in the hands of highly charismatic men, who can attract enthusiastic followings. A certain percentage of these macho celebrities inflict their power on the vulnerable and especially on young women. ''Obedience to God was defined by obedience to the leader,'' Du Mez says. ''It's been incredibly hard for people within that system to confront abuses of power.''

Then there is the way partisan politics has swamped what is supposed to be a religious movement. Over the past couple of decades evangelical pastors have found that their 20-minute Sunday sermons could not outshine the hours and hours of Fox News their parishioners were mainlining every week. It wasn't only that the klieg light of Fox was so bright, but also that the flickering candle of Christian formation was so dim.

In 2020, roughly 40 percent of the people who called themselves evangelical attended church once a year or less, according to research by the political scientist Ryan Burge. It's just a political label for them. This politicization is one reason people have cited to explain why so many are leaving the faith.

In 2006, 23 percent of Americans were white evangelical Protestants, according to the Public Religion Research Institute. By 2020, that share was down to 14.5 percent. In 2020, 22 percent of Americans 65 and older were white evangelical Protestants. Among adults 18 to 29, only 7 percent were.

The turmoil in evangelicalism has not just ruptured relationships; it's dissolving the structures of many evangelical institutions. Many families, churches, parachurch organizations and even denominations are coming apart. I asked many evangelical leaders who are wary of Trump if they thought their movement would fracture. Most said it already has.

Over the past few years, the atmosphere within many Christian organizations has grown more tense and bitter. As an evangelical friend of mine noted, what used to be open fields are now minefields. If you invite such and such a speaker to your Christian college, it means you've surrendered to the woke brigades. If you use this word in your sermon, you're guilty of critical race theory. Pastors across the political spectrum are exhausted -- partly because of Covid but partly because every word they use is scrutinized to see if it passes this or that ideological litmus test.

Roughly 80 percent of white evangelical voters supported Trump in 2020. But it is often a minority of this group who spark bitter conflicts and want their church to be on war footing all the time.

''The healthiest people spiritually tend to be the least engaged in these struggles,'' Russell Moore says. ''The unhealthiest tend to be the most engaged in spiritual life and politics. It doesn't matter what the numbers are. The people who care the most are going to set the agenda.''

World magazine is a microcosm of what's happening. World is a Christian news organization that had been run by a team of strong journalists, like Marvin Olasky, who was its editor, and Mindy Belz, one of the bravest and best foreign correspondents in the country. It has long scrutinized the Christian world, reporting on Christian leaders who have gone astray. It editorialized that Trump was ''unfit for power'' after the ''Access Hollywood'' tape.

But the culture at World deteriorated over the past few years. Tensions mounted over its reporting on Covid protocols and race, and over disagreements about whether the 2020 election was stolen. Young reporters learned not to pitch stories that might offend Trumpist editors. Last fall, World's board introduced an opinion section focusing on conservative commentary without fully consulting Olasky. Albert Mohler, who is president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and endorsed Trump in 2020, was hired to run it. Olasky, Belz and five other journalists submitted their resignations, unwilling to see their journalism become more partisan.

Part of what's happening amid this turmoil is that people are sorting themselves into like-minded political tribes. ''If you had told me that people would switch churches because of masks, I would have been like, 'That's ridiculous,''' says David Bailey, whose group Arrabon does reconciliation work across a series of divides.

But it's happening, and it's not just normal bickering. What Mindy Belz notices is that there is now a common desire to pummel, shame and ostracize other Christians over disagreements. That suggests to me something more fundamental is going on than a fight over just Donald Trump.

Institutional rot has been exposed. Many old relationships have been severed. This is a profound moment of turmoil, pain, change and, while it's too early to be sure, possible transformation.

Amid the storm, new coalitions are gradually forming, across many different kinds of Christians, among those whose eyes have been opened, who are rethinking old convictions, who are meeting and mobilizing in the hopes of renewing the evangelical presence in America. ''As someone who struggled for three years with hopelessness and despair,'' Anyabwile tells me, ''these last couple of years have been a rekindling of hope.''

I think he's right. Hints of Christian renewal are becoming visible.

When I was young, I had a weird obsession with people who adopted and then broke with communism around the middle of the 20th century -- Arthur Koestler, Stephen Spender, Richard Wright, Andre Gide and Whittaker Chambers. Breaking ranks was brutal for many of this set; they were ostracized and condemned.

They were also liberated. They began to think new things, find new allies and sometimes embark on new causes. Some of them contributed to an anthology describing their experiences called ''The God That Failed.''

I've watched a lot of evangelical Christians endure similar experiences. They've broken from the community they thought they were wed to for life. Except for them it wasn't God that failed, but the human institutions built in his name. This experience of breaking, rethinking and reorienting a life could be the first stage in renewal.

Karen Swallow Prior is from a poor, rural family. ''I'm old enough so I grew up before the culture wars,'' she says. ''I grew up in a family in which I could read whatever I wanted.'' But then the culture wars ramped up in the 1980s and with it a pervasive warrior mentality. For a time, she joined in, protesting outside of abortion clinics and getting arrested several times, and taught at Jerry Falwell's Liberty University. In the past she defended his son and university president over accusations of sexual impropriety. ''I was one of those who was very naïve, and I guess rationalized the support of Trump by Jerry Falwell Jr. I had all kinds of generous charitable reasons for that.''

She didn't blame evangelicals for voting for Trump in 2016, but their enthusiastic embrace of him and their ability to rationalize his sins were eye opening, she says. Then she saw how rampant the sexual scandals were. She realized that one of the reasons Jerry Falwell Jr. supported Trump was that they both had loose morals.

''I think this culture war mentality, that we've been developing, that I was raised in and am a product of, and I don't reject all of it, yet, anyway, I think we are seeing the logical conclusion of so many years of a culture war mentality that polarizes us and them,'' she says. Prior is still on a journey, but she has become an outspoken critic of the evangelical establishment's toleration of abuse and an advocate of change.

I've seen this same sort of journey among many of my friends who at least at one time identified as evangelicals. Over the past several years I watched fellow journalists Peter Wehner, Michael Gerson and David French earnestly and in good faith engage with Trump-backing Christians, trying to understand what was going on. Now they are courageously and passionately opposing the Trumpification of American Christianity. They've become leading spokesmen for reform and participants in the discussions that are now happening over what needs to be done.

French is a white evangelical who lives in Tennessee, served in Iraq and spent much of the first part of his career as a lawyer defending religious liberties. He came out early and loudly against Trump. Many assaults on him were from the alt-right. A photoshopped image floated around the internet presenting his adopted daughter, who is Black, in a gas chamber, with Donald Trump in a Nazi uniform preparing to press the button. ''I've seen and been exposed to more hatred than I've ever seen at home in my entire life,'' he says.

The most sobering encounters came from his fellow Christians, who shunned or confronted him at church. ''It's made me more introspective,'' French says. ''It's made me think hard about my view of the world before 2015 and 2016. It's made me understand that there are a lot of things in our country that I thought we had made more progress on, that we had not.''

If breaking ranks and rethinking is the first stage of renewal, bearing witness is the next. There are now many, many people who refused to be silent about abuses of power. When Rachael Denhollander, who was the first to publicly accuse the U.S.A. Gymnastics team doctor Larry Nassar of abuse, raised concerns with church leaders over allegations of sexual abuse and cover-ups in another church network, she got no support. She has emerged as a leading advocate for survivors of sexual abuse in churches and Christian organizations.

To narrow things down, let me just mention a few witnesses whose last name is Moore, but they are not related. When he was 19, Russell Moore had a dream of running the policy arm of the Southern Baptist Convention. ''I was thinking this would fit everything I think God has called me to do,'' Moore says. He realized his dream and loved the job.

But he felt compelled to call out his church's lamentable record on race, to publicly criticize Trump and to denounce the cover-up of the sexual abuse scandals. He stood up privately and publicly, got viciously attacked by white supremacists and others, and eventually resigned from his job.

Beth Moore is one of the most prominent Bible teachers in the evangelical world. She was stunned when her fellow Southern Baptists did not reject Trump after the ''Access Hollywood'' tape, and she became more vocal in denouncing Christian nationalism and misogyny before breaking with the Southern Baptist Convention last year. ''There comes a time when you have to say, this is not who I am,'' she told the Religion News Service.

Lecrae Moore is a Black Christian hip-hop artist. ''Four or five years ago, I began to speak very publicly about racial injustice,'' he told The Washington Post in 2020. ''And I was met with silence or discord by white evangelicals. A lot of my shows were canceled, and people just refused to support me. I was kind of flabbergasted.''

The next stage in the renewal is what you might call the social reorganization of American Christianity. Denominational differences are becoming less important. People who used to be in different silos have been prompted by the turmoil to find one another and seek common cause. ''One of the sweetest blessings is that I now count persons like Beth Moore as a friend,'' Anyabwile says. ''Prior to six years ago we would have been in different circles.'' These kinds of new connections constitute an important form of social capital that may turn out to be very powerful in the years ahead.

Many of these dissenters have put racial justice and reconciliation activities at the center of what needs to be done. There are reconciliation conferences, trips to Selma and Birmingham, Ala., study groups reading Martin Luther King Jr. and Howard Thurman. Evangelicals played important roles in the abolitionist movement; these Christians are trying to connect with that legacy.

Eugene Rivers is a prominent Black Pentecostal who has been working to bring white and Black Pentecostals together. This would seem like an unlikely undertaking because white Pentecostals are often among the most conservative of the lot. But Rivers says their meetings have been compelling. For example, Rivers helped organize a prayer vigil for the nation in Washington on Jan. 6 of this year and ***working-class*** white Pentecostals came. ''They're on the floor crying,'' Rivers says. ''There is no artifice with them. These guys are the most amazing, loving people.''

Rivers says the churches are the key to racial reconciliation and racial justice. He observes, ''You cannot have a rational discussion of evil outside of agape love'' -- the kind of self-surrendering love for others that is supposed to be at the heart of the Christian life. ''Without love, the accused are defensive because they feel guilty, because they are, and the accuser only ends up alienating the people who he is reaching out to.''

David Bailey has been doing racial and other reconciliation work with church and other groups since 2008. He says that 70 percent of evangelicals are open to this work, but that the 15 percent on either end are less so. ''The extremes are getting more entrenched, but I don't think they're growing,'' he observes, before continuing: ''We remind people that peacemaking and healing are core to the Christian identity. There is no way to do spiritual formation unless you practice healing and reconciliation.''

He says race is not always the most intractable difference. His church in Richmond, Va., is ''racially diverse and socioeconomically diverse, and it's the economic differences that are the hardest to heal,'' he says.

One source of division could be a force for renewal: generational differences. Christians who are millennial and younger have different views on things like L.G.B.T.Q. issues and are just used to mixing with much more diverse demographics.

Mark Labberton is the president of Fuller Theological Seminary, which engages with students from 110 denominations and 90 nations. He says the average student at Fuller is about 31. Many Fuller students, Labberton says, believe in the central creed of Christianity, but not the institutional shroud it has come wrapped in. That is to say, they love Jesus, but they have had it with many of the institutions their elders have built in his name.

The future of the Christian church is not going to look like the past. Today many of the most dynamic sectors of the faith are in immigrant communities -- in Korean, African and Hispanic churches, for example. In the decades ahead the American church is going to look more like the global church.

At the Fuller seminary that future is already here. That changes a lot. For example, after ISIS launched a series of deadly attacks against Egyptian Christians, some Americans at Fuller wanted to hold a memorial service. The Egyptian students said, in effect: ''What are you talking about? This is a cause for a celebration. This is about acknowledging what it means to live as a Christian in a context in which you have the privilege of martyrdom.'' That idea is foreign to most American Christians, but the Egyptians led a celebratory service, which was followed by communion in the form of a Japanese tea ceremony. This is not your grandfather's evangelicalism.

There can probably be no evangelical renewal if the movement does not divorce itself from the lust for partisan political power. Over more than a century, Catholics have established a doctrine of social teaching that helps them understand how the church can be active in civic life without being corrupted by partisan politics. Protestants do not have this kind of doctrine.

Those who are leading the evangelical renewal know they need one.

In 2019 the board of the National Association of Evangelicals, which represents 40 evangelical denominations, had the bright idea of hiring Walter Kim to be its next leader. Kim grew up in the Korean American church. His organization spans the ideological chasms but has miraculously and through hard work been able to stay together. I ask him to describe his priorities as head of the N.A.E.

His first priority is ''grappling with the issue of racial justice and reconciliation.'' His next priority is ''public discipleship.'' ''Evangelical churches know how to do premarital counseling and how to do marital counseling,'' he explains. ''I'd love to see similar programs for the church's ability to equip people in their public and civic engagement.'' It would certainly be a vast improvement if evangelicals were better equipped to separate truth from propaganda, if they had more refined criteria for what a responsible leader looks like, if they had better training for how to be involved in their communities.

These two priorities are related. ''We have a lot of things to learn from the Black church,'' Kim adds. ''They understood their church couldn't just address personal transformation but also their place in society.''

Many of the Protestants who have been most active in promoting social repair are often young African Americans, like Justin Giboney and the AND Campaign. As Thabiti Anyabwile puts it: ''I think a lot of people are discovering that the Bible holds together things they were taught were enemies. You can be a faithful Christian and also believe in justice.'' It's important for outsiders to not impose secular left/right categories here. It's too simplistic to say these people are moving left. They are quite conservative on many things. But they more readily incorporate justice work into the lifelong process of Christian formation -- the renovation of the heart that is at the center of the Christian life, the daily effort to grow in grace and lead a more Christ-like life.

Over the past few years, I've joined and observed a few of the conferences and gatherings organized by Christians who are trying to figure out how to start this renewal. Inevitably there were a few sessions diagnosing the problems, then a final one in which people were supposed to suggest solutions. I would summarize the final sessions this way: ''Mumble, mumble, mumble. Well, it was nice to see y'all!''

But lately a much clearer understanding of what needs to happen is emerging. The most detailed agenda I've seen has been produced by Tim Keller, the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City. Tim is a friend of mine, but a lot of other people would agree that he has one of the most impressive and important minds in the evangelical world. Tim laid out for me an ambitious agenda to renew this community. I'll just give you the bullet points:

The Christian Mind Project. Expand by a factor of 10 the number of evangelicals in graduate schools and the professoriate in order to make the community more intellectually robust.

A renewed church planting effort. Old churches merely attract pre-existing Christians. New churches attract new believers. Keller says Christians need to plant 6,000 new churches a year. He has already had a ton of success on this front.

New campus ministries. Decades ago, many young people found faith via dynamic evangelical organizations for students, such as InterVarsity and Young Life. That field has been allowed to stagnate.

Protestant social teaching. Catholics have a public theology that dates back at least to Pope Leo XIII's encyclical Rerum Novarum. Protestant versions might share 75 percent of its ideas, while being perhaps less hierarchical and more individualistic.

Faith and work. Faith is not just for Sundays. Keller suggests there should be more education programs on how Christians should show up at work and in the world.

Racial justice. Keller argues that this is one of the most explosive divides between the Trumpian and the non-Trumpian wings of the movement.

A strategy for post-Christian world -- how you evangelize among people who have never had any contact with faith and don't share the same mental concepts.

Spiritual formation. As Keller puts it: ''We need to really redo Christian education. Completely.''

That's a concrete and ambitious strategy for change. Is it too late to put it into action? Quite possibly. The evangelical community might have so spoiled its own appeal that many members of younger generations will continue to reject it.

But evangelicalism has survived division before. It has historically had a Christian nationalist current and also a more justice-oriented current, which was powerful as recently as the 1970s. Both of these currents ebb and flow over the decades.

And young believers are a powerful force. Mark Labberton says that many of the seminarians at Fuller are moving away from church as we normally conceive it. They want to build communities that are smaller, intimate, authentic, which can often fit in a living room. They see faith as inseparably linked to community service with the poor and marginalized. There's a general interest in getting away from all the bitterness that has devoured the elders and just diving back into the Bible.

Finally, Karen Swallow Prior said something that rings in my ears: ''Modernity has peaked.'' The age of the autonomous individual, the age of the narcissistic self, the age of consumerism and moral drift has left us with bitterness and division, a surging mental health crisis and people just being nasty to one another. Millions are looking for something else, some system of belief that is communal, that gives life transcendent meaning.

Christianity is a potential answer for that search, and therein lies its hope, and the great possibility of renewing its call.

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From far left, Thabiti Anyabwile of Anacostia River Church in Washington

Walter Kim, president of the National Association of Evangelicals

David Bailey, whose nonprofit promotes reconciliation in Christian communities

and Karen Swallow Prior, who taught at Liberty University before becoming disillusioned with its president's morality. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JASON ANDREW FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

PARKER MICHELS-BOYCE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

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[***Your Subway Was Delayed by 1930s Signals. A Fix Is Finally Coming.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5X44-KJ71-DXY4-X3YY-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** To upgrade signals, the M.T.A. plans to spend $7 billion. But the much-needed repairs could mean fewer trains on nights and weekends.

**Body**

To upgrade signals, the M.T.A. plans to spend $7 billion. But the much-needed repairs could mean fewer trains on nights and weekends.

New Yorkers have grown unhappily accustomed to hearing that their trains are delayed by “signal problems.” But most riders probably have no idea what that means.

The signal system is the invisible, unglamorous backbone of the subway, controlling when trains can move down the tracks. But the demands of a 21st-century ridership are being borne by [*archaic signal equipment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/nyregion/new-york-subway-signals.html), some of which dates to when Franklin D. Roosevelt was president.

Installing modern signals is fundamental to [*restoring the subway to a level of reliabilit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/nyregion/new-york-subway-signals.html)y that is vital to New York’s economic future.

The aging system’s importance was underscored last week when the Metropolitan Transportation Authority said that it wanted to spend $7 billion to greatly expand the number of subway lines slated to get new signals.

It was a major moment for subway signals, and a remarkable shift from neglected piece of anonymous infrastructure to urgent priority for elected officials.

“Making signals a priority is a sea change for New York because it’s a shift from politicians wanting to do the big, shiny thing they can put their name on, to focusing on the things that actually matter most,” said Nick Sifuentes, the executive director of Tri-State Transportation Campaign, an advocacy group.

One of the six routes chosen for signal upgrades desperately needs them: the A line in Brooklyn, which has an on-time rate of 65 percent, one of the worst in New York. A few miles away, the L train has modern signals and a sterling 93 percent on-time rate.

“I definitely think they need to upgrade it,” said Enosh Svoray, 34, an airline worker and A train rider who lives in Brooklyn. “It’s just going to be difficult in the meantime. I need to get to work. I need to have a life.”

Subway signals are the centerpiece of the agency’s next capital plan, which calls for [*a $54 billion investment in the region’s transit network*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/nyregion/new-york-subway-signals.html) over the next five years. It is the authority’s largest spending plan ever, and signals were among the largest budget items.

Modern signals allow more trains to run closer together and make them less prone to the failures that can produce a cascade of delays. For now, only two of the subway’s 22 routes — the L and the No. 7 — have upgraded signals and they have the highest on-time rates.

Signal problems are typically among the top reasons for train delays. In July, signal failures caused nearly 33 percent of major incidents, those that delay 50 or more trains, [*according to the transit agency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/nyregion/new-york-subway-signals.html).

The subway’s leader, Andy Byford, who has talked about the need for modern signals for months, said he was “ecstatically happy” that they were a top priority in the capital plan.

But Mr. Byford also cautioned that the repairs would require extensive [*station closings on nights and weekends*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/nyregion/new-york-subway-signals.html).

“Let’s be clear, re-signalling the subway is going to take the patience of New Yorkers,” he said at a news conference.

The capital plan is a wish list of the agency’s priorities and it is mostly unfunded. Transit leaders are urging state, city and federal leaders to provide billions of dollars to make it a reality.

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, who controls the subway, supports the plan, and he convinced state lawmakers to [*approve congestion pricing tolls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/nyregion/new-york-subway-signals.html) in Manhattan to help pay for it. But it is not clear whether Mayor Bill de Blasio or the Trump administration will make major contributions.

There is also the question of how best to install modern signals. The transit agency has previously used a technology known as communications-based train control, or C.B.T.C. Mr. Byford favors that method and says he can put it into effect more quickly than his predecessors, but Mr. Cuomo has pressed the agency to look at other methods, including a [*technology called ultra-wideband*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/nyregion/new-york-subway-signals.html) that has not been used on major transit systems.

If the capital plan moves forward, the [*routes set for signal upgrades*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/nyregion/new-york-subway-signals.html) are the busy Lexington Avenue line in Manhattan, including the 4, 5 and 6 trains; the A and C lines in Brooklyn; the N and W lines in Queens; the E and F lines in Queens; and the G line in Brooklyn and Queens.

Many of the neighborhoods served by those trains, from Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn to Jamaica in Queens, are ***working-class*** or middle-income areas that have longed for better subway service. And while the subway has started to recover from a deep crisis, [*some lines are still worse than others*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/nyregion/new-york-subway-signals.html).

Gerson Amaya, 42, a carpenter who lives in Brooklyn, said that his commute to Inwood on the A train was long — “long enough for a nap.”

“Any delays on top of it just makes it worse,” Mr. Amaya said as he rode the A on a recent morning. “There’s always a signal down or some issue.”

Susan Roy, 45, a wine buyer who lives in Richmond Hill in Queens, said that the A train had not received the attention it deserved.

“The A is the longest line, but it seems like it’s always been an afterthought,” she said. “It’s definitely neglected.”

Ms. Roy said she welcomed the prospect of upgrades. “It will affect me, but if it’s going to improve, then I don’t mind changing my route,” she said.

Still, some subway riders are skeptical that the transit agency can make the necessary fixes. Jasmine Chang, 23, a film editor who lives in Bedford-Stuyvesant, said she was so frustrated with the subway that she had considered buying a car.

“I’m glad they’re working on the A, but I feel like it’s just hopeless,” she said. “How much difference can it really make when every line is messed up?”

When the No. 7 train was upgraded this year after months of painful station closings and project delays, the line added four trains per hour, Mr. Byford said. That increased the number of trains running each hour to 29 from 25, allowing more riders to use the line.

Subway leaders say they will continue to test the ultra-wideband technology to determine whether it can be part of the signal overhaul. At a technology conference on Friday, Mr. Cuomo maintained his position: that the cost estimate for installing new signals on the 12-mile-long piece of the Lexington Avenue line, at $3 billion, was far too high.

“We cannot succeed long-term without new technology,” Mr. Cuomo said.

Transit leaders are not planning to build new subway lines as part of the capital plan, except for three new stations on the Second Avenue subway in East Harlem — a project that has been in the works for nearly a century. But they made the argument that installing modern signals was an expansion of the subway because it would open the system to more people.

“Re-signalling is an expansion strategy,” said Janno Lieber, the authority’s head of capital construction. “It takes your existing infrastructure and allows you to run a lot more trains faster and safely.”

But the prospect of stations being closed on nights and weekends to achieve that goal worried some riders.

Rosa Martinez, 43, a cleaner who also lives in Cypress Hills, said that she often worked at night and was concerned that walking to another station might be dangerous at late hours.

“It should be upgraded because you never know what’s going to happen,” she said. “I don’t want to have old signals because it should be safety first.”

“But,” she said, “it’s going to be really tough for me.”

PHOTO: A proposed $7 billion project would upgrade old train signals, some of which date to the 1930s. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***In Biden’s Hometown, Trump Says He’s Ready to Face Off Against Him***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC3-GR91-DXY4-X36X-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The president, at an event hosted by Fox News, ridiculed the former vice president and said he was shifting his focus from Bernie Sanders.

**Body**

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SCRANTON, Pa. — President Trump came to Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s hometown on Thursday and said he was prepared to run against the former Democratic vice president in November, changing gears after being “mentally” ready to take on Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont.

“I was all set for Bernie because I thought it was going to happen,” he said. “And then we have this crazy thing that happened, right?”

[Read: [*As Bernie Sanders pushed for closer ties, the Soviet Union spotted opportunity*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html).]

Mr. Trump, speaking at a televised town hall event hosted by Fox News, was referring to Mr. Biden’s [*unexpected resurgence*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html) in the Democratic primaries on Tuesday, just as his campaign seemed at risk of collapsing.

In a venue where two Trump supporters questioned whether the president’s slash-and-burn tone was necessary, Mr. Trump, 73, ridiculed Mr. Biden, 77, for a series of recent gaffes and insinuated that his rival’s mental acuity was slipping.

The president referred to the votes “on Tuesday, which he thought was Thursday” — a reference to Mr. Biden’s use of the erroneous phrase “Super Thursday.” Mr. Trump also mocked his potential November rival for mistakenly saying in late February that he was “running for Senate” and for wildly overstating the number of gun deaths in the United States.

“There’s something going on there,” Mr. Trump said, to laughter from the crowd of a few hundred local supporters.

The setting, in which he took questions from the audience prescreened by Fox News, was an unusual one for the president, who regularly delivers hour-plus monologues before thousands at campaign rallies in large arenas. His quiet exchanges with polite questioners was a far cry from the shouted slogans and bawdy call-and-response of his typical “Keep America Great” events.

In a city chosen by the White House, the event was part of a series that Fox News has staged with several Democratic candidates, including Mr. Sanders, who continues to battle Mr. Biden for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Mr. Trump said he had prepared his attacks on Mr. Sanders. “So, mentally, I’m all set for Bernie — communist, I had everything down, I was all set,” he said.

One Trump supporter told the president that he was concerned about nasty messaging in American politics, while another said her family members would not speak to her because of her support for him. She asked Mr. Trump how he would unite the country.

In each case, the president blamed his opponents for incivility. “When they hit us, we have to hit back,” he said. “I wouldn’t be sitting up here if I turned my cheek.”

Mr. Trump defended his handling of the spreading coronavirus, and deflected a question about why he did not act sooner to change [*Obama-era regulations that he has blamed*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html) for delaying testing kits. He said he was “thinking about a lot of other things, too, like trade and millions of other things.”

“As soon as we found out it was a problem,” he added, “we did it.”

Asked whether he would stop shaking hands because of the outbreak, Mr. Trump, a [*self-described germophobe*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html) who has said he envies the Japanese custom of bowing, called it a practical impossibility.

“I love the people of this country, and you can’t be a politician and not shake hands,” the president said. He cast aside the advice of [*public health officials*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html) who have urged Americans to avoid contact, which can spread the coronavirus.

“Now the concept of shaking hands since this — you’re hearing a lot of stuff about trying not to shake hands, and that has not stopped me at all,” he said.

After the event, Mr. Trump stayed for several minutes and shook dozens of hands with no evident distress.

The president’s hourlong appearance, moderated by the Fox News hosts Bret Baier and Martha MacCallum, was peppered with factual inaccuracies and misleading statements.

Reminded by Mr. Baier that he has presided over a flood of red ink, Mr. Trump insisted that he cared about the national debt and would make tackling it a priority in a second term.

As a candidate, Mr. Trump once boasted that in eight years he would eliminate not just the annual deficit but the entire national debt. Instead, the debt has increased by about $3.5 trillion since he took office, despite a healthy economy. The president attributed that largely to his spending increases on the military, disregarding his tax cuts or domestic spending increases.

His insistence contradicted his own acting chief of staff, Mick Mulvaney, who [*told an audience last month in Britain*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html) that Republicans cared about the deficit when a Democrat was president. “Then Donald Trump became president, and we’re a lot less interested as a party,” Mr. Mulvaney said.

Mr. Trump repeated a claim that President Barack Obama tried to meet with North Korea’s leader, Kim Jong-un, only to be rebuffed, an unsubstantiated assertion that [*he has previously aired*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html) and that seems to have been pulled out of thin air. The president said that he maintained a “good relationship” with Mr. Kim, though he did not claim new progress toward coaxing the North’s leader to relinquish his nuclear program.

The president also falsely claimed that Scranton now has “the lowest and best unemployment numbers” ever. Its [*unemployment rate*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html) for April 2019, 4 percent, was the lowest since 1990, the earliest year for which data is available. But the rate has since increased to 5.6 percent in December, which was higher than the 5.4 percent recorded in December 2016.

Mr. Trump appears regularly on Fox News, but despite coverage that heavily favors him over all, he has also expressed irritation with the network for occasional critical segments and unfavorable polling.

Last week, after a [*survey conducted by the network*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html) showed five Democratic candidates defeating Mr. Trump in head-to-head matchups, the president lashed out in frustration.

“Why doesn’t Fox finally get a competent Polling Company?” [*Mr. Trump posted on Twitter*](https://stela.nyt.net/url?url=http:%2F%2Fwww.nytimes.com%2F2020%2F03%2F05%2Fworld%2Feurope%2Fbernie-sanders-soviet-russia.html).

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“They want to be politically correct,” he said, adding, “I don’t know what’s going on with Fox.”

Mr. Trump narrowly carried Pennsylvania in 2016, by 44,000 votes. He said he would “win it again very easily,” but recent polling in the state has shown him tied with or trailing both Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders.

Mr. Biden, who now lives in Wilmington, Del., takes great pride in his roots in Scranton, a ***working-class*** city of 76,000 in northeastern Pennsylvania.

“Everything my sister, Valerie, and I learned was in Scranton,” he said during an appearance in October at the same venue, the Scranton Cultural Center. “Scranton creeps into your heart and never leaves you.”

Peter Baker and Linda Qiu contributed from Washington.

PHOTO: President Trump, at a town-hall event Thursday, said he was shifting his focus from Bernie Sanders. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

**End of Document**



[***After 2 Hurricanes, Lake Charles Fears Its Cries for Help Have Gone Unheard***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:613S-0T21-DXY4-X0VP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 20, 2020 Tuesday 16:43 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1521 words

**Byline:** Rick RojasRick Rojas is the Atlanta bureau chief for The Times, leading coverage of the South.

**Highlight:** The city was shredded by Hurricanes Laura and Delta. But the needs of Lake Charles have been overlooked in a year of disaster and unrest.

**Body**

LAKE CHARLES, La. — That first drive through Lake Charles [*after Hurricane Laura*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html) had been a gut punch. Trinette Thomas felt a barrage of surprise and despair as she strained to absorb the destruction surrounding her and imagine the lengths it would take to stagger back. Then, [*another storm hit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html).

The shock subsided quickly, replaced by the tedium and exasperation that accompany the slog toward recovery. She is haggling with her insurance company, which reimbursed her for 14 of the 26 days her family stayed in a hotel. She is replacing the car tire that was sliced by metal debris on the road. And she is doing some rough math: Neither insurance money nor federal aid is enough to keep Ms. Thomas, 56, from having to dip into retirement accounts to pay for home repairs. Her plan to retire at 59\xC2, as refinery workers often do, has been torn up along with her roof and the trees in her yard.

“We’re not getting the help that we need,” Ms. Thomas said of her hometown, and she is worried that the help will not come. “I want to say we’re tough, but I don’t know right now.”

Lake Charles, a ***working-class*** city of roughly 78,000 people, has been eviscerated by a direct assault from this season’s hurricanes — Laura, one of the most powerful storms to hit Louisiana, followed six weeks later by Delta. Thousands of residents remain displaced. But as many see it, the city was also the victim of an extraordinary year of misfortune, one that has subjected the nation to a carousel of calamity — record storm and wildfire seasons on top of a pandemic. The dire needs of Lake Charles have been all but erased.

The mayor, Nic Hunter, has struggled to shine a spotlight on his city, appearing on CNN, Fox News and NPR, [*where he told listeners*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html), “I am begging, I am pleading for Americans not to forget about Lake Charles.”

Charitable organizations said that donations have been a small fraction of what they took in after [*Hurricane Rita hit the region*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html) in 2005, and that they have not been able to attract enough volunteers to clear the mountains of debris crowding streets and to clean the muck out of homes flooded by Delta.

“Our story has just gotten very quickly put aside, and I really think the devastation is so huge we should remain on the front page,” said Denise Durel, the president and chief executive of the United Way of Southwest Louisiana. “The magnitude of our destruction is so huge we cannot come back as a community on our own. We cannot restore our homes on our own. We need the help of the American public, if we can get it.”

The circumstances have prodded a tender nerve for this part of the Gulf Coast, which has long harbored a sensitivity about being overlooked as a workaday stretch identifiable to outsiders by oil refineries, casinos and the interstate connecting Houston and New Orleans.

The region has been haunted by memories of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Rita but also an uncomfortable notion that its hardship was overshadowed by the death and destruction generated by [*Hurricane Katrina*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html), the monster storm that hit Louisiana weeks earlier.

But that sense of being ignored had taken hold even before then. Some trace it as far back as the Louisiana Purchase, when the would-be state was incorporated into the United States except for the parcel including Lake Charles that was officially [*declared a “no man’s land,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html) drawing renegades and escaped slaves who sought a place where their captors were unlikely to chase them. “It’s always been a land of refugees and outcasts,” said Adley Cormier, a longtime resident who wrote a book called “Lost Lake Charles.”

It is a legacy that has forged a level of self-reliance, an attitude that those who were clever enough or willing to invest the sweat equity were capable of unlocking the city’s promise. But the undertow of that history has been a fear that help may not come when needed — a fear that has been realized for some as they watch their city claw its way back.

And as an onslaught of disaster, social unrest and campaign developments dominate the news, residents have been left to wonder if that torrent of headlines has eclipsed their misfortune and stymied efforts to help. “I can’t say if it’s got something to do with it,” said Gary Hanney, a 56-year-old construction worker. “I can’t say if the president has something to do with it. I just know it’s not there.”

Hurricane Laura made landfall on Aug. 27 in Cameron Parish, south of Lake Charles, as a Category 4 storm with 150-mile-per-hour winds. [*More than two dozen people died*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html) in its aftermath. Trees were shredded and houses cracked open like eggs. Entire blocks of homes sustained so much damage they will almost certainly have to be razed.

Then, this month, Hurricane Delta [*hit the coast not even 20 miles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html) from where Laura made landfall, unleashing floods that besieged neighborhoods and heavy rainfall that swamped homes with already damaged roofs. It was virtually impossible to discern where the destruction from one storm ended and that of the other began.

Many residents’ homes were uninsured, and some said they had deductibles over $20,000, a sum so unaffordable their insurance policies were rendered useless.

“I want people to know that we’re not OK, we’re not back to normal,” said Mr. Hunter, who has been mayor since 2017. “We’re going to do our part. We’re not just sitting on our butts with our hands out, saying, ‘Come do this for me.’ The extent of this catastrophe rises to a level where if it’s going to fall only on locals to help locals, we’re going to be in the thick of recovery much longer than we need to be.”

For many residents, life is now consumed by discomfort and distress. Days are spent negotiating bureaucracies for insurance help and government aid, cleaning ravaged homes and businesses and wading through the traffic jams of displaced residents.

“This has been the eight weeks of hell,” Mr. Cormier said, pausing a conversation as he noticed a fan’s blades slowly turn, a long-awaited indication that his electricity had been restored. “Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!”

Making the situation even more stressful is the realization that it [*reflects a new reality created by climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html). Rita marked a dividing line for many on the coast between a time when a storm of such intensity seemed to hit once in a generation and a new era where such catastrophic hurricanes had an unsettling frequency.

Now, some estimates place the damage caused by the recent hurricanes at $12 billion or more. Federal emergency officials have already approved more than $170 million in individual aid for Hurricane Laura’s victims, and members of Louisiana’s congressional delegation have [*pushed to increase federal support*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html). The region’s economy has also been hobbled by the coronavirus pandemic and the collapse of the oil and gas industry, with refineries laying off dozens of workers in recent months.

Uncertainty about the city’s future has stoked residents’ fears about being disregarded and has underscored a distance that extends beyond the miles it sits from the state’s political and cultural centers of gravity.

“It lacks the panache of New Orleans, the political power of Baton Rouge and the personality of Lafayette’s Cajun and Creole culture,” The Advocate newspaper of Baton Rouge said in [*an editorial making an impassioned plea*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/27/us/hurricane-laura-damage.html) to save a city it described as “amiable.”

Still, for Priscilla Sam, Lake Charles is home. “Everything I know is here,” she said. She conceded that she had been tempted to leave. Her house was so badly damaged she cannot live in it.

For weeks, she had been sleeping on an air mattress in a back room of her beauty salon, Royal Treatment, surrounded by clothes, comforters and some of the other possessions she could salvage.

Now, after Delta, she is facing displacement again: The second storm had damaged the roof and soaked the walls. The smell of mold filled the salon. Her customers called for appointments. “But I’m not going to subject them to this for any amount of money,” she said even as a regular planted herself in the waiting area, hoping Ms. Sam would style her hair anyway.

“I started out complaining,” Ms. Sam, 52, said, standing beside her unmade mattress, tears welling in her eyes. “I was never able to imagine myself in a situation like this.”

Yet as she prayed for guidance, she realized she was one of the lucky ones. “They don’t have anything to come back to,” she said. “A lot of them aren’t going to come back and they don’t know where they’re going.”

PHOTOS: Blue tarps covered many roofs in Lake Charles, La., this month, after the city was devastated by its second hurricane in the span of a few weeks. “We’re not getting the help we need,” a resident said.; Frank Harrison, left, and Dave Dixon traveled from Miami to help after Hurricane Laura hit. They stayed to assist with cleanup from Hurricane Delta. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM WIDMER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Priscilla Sam moved into her salon after Hurricane Laura destroyed her home, only to have that building damaged as well by Hurricane Delta.; The storms upended Lake Charles, a city of roughly 80,000 people. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY OCTAVIO JONES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 2, 2025

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[***In Biden's Hometown, Trump Says He's Ready to Face Him***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC4-YMR1-JBG3-604K-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. 15

**Length:** 1140 words

**Byline:** By Michael Crowley

**Body**

The president, at an event hosted by Fox News, ridiculed the former vice president and said he was shifting his focus from Bernie Sanders.

SCRANTON, Pa. -- President Trump came to Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s hometown on Thursday and said he was prepared to run against the former Democratic vice president in November, changing gears after being ''mentally'' ready to take on Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont.

''I was all set for Bernie because I thought it was going to happen,'' he said. ''And then we have this crazy thing that happened, right?''

Mr. Trump, speaking at a televised town hall event hosted by Fox News, was referring to Mr. Biden's unexpected resurgence in the Democratic primaries on Tuesday, just as his campaign seemed at risk of collapsing.

In a venue where two Trump supporters questioned whether the president's slash-and-burn tone was necessary, Mr. Trump, 73, ridiculed Mr. Biden, 77, for a series of recent gaffes and insinuated that his rival's mental acuity was slipping.

The president referred to the votes ''on Tuesday, which he thought was Thursday'' -- a reference to Mr. Biden's use of the erroneous phrase ''Super Thursday.'' Mr. Trump also mocked his potential November rival for mistakenly saying in late February that he was ''running for Senate'' and for wildly overstating the number of gun deaths in the United States.

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The setting, in which he took questions from the audience prescreened by Fox News, was an unusual one for the president, who regularly delivers hour-plus monologues before thousands at campaign rallies in large arenas. His quiet exchanges with polite questioners was a far cry from the shouted slogans and bawdy call-and-response of his typical ''Keep America Great'' events.

In a city chosen by the White House, the event was part of a series that Fox News has staged with several Democratic candidates, including Mr. Sanders, who continues to battle Mr. Biden for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Mr. Trump said he had prepared his attacks on Mr. Sanders. ''So, mentally, I'm all set for Bernie -- communist, I had everything down, I was all set,'' he said.

One Trump supporter told the president that he was concerned about nasty messaging in American politics, while another said her family members would not speak to her because of her support for him. She asked Mr. Trump how he would unite the country.

In each case, the president blamed his opponents for incivility. ''When they hit us, we have to hit back,'' he said. ''I wouldn't be sitting up here if I turned my cheek.''

Mr. Trump defended his handling of the spreading coronavirus, and deflected a question about why he did not act sooner to change Obama-era regulations that he has blamed for delaying testing kits. He said he was ''thinking about a lot of other things, too, like trade and millions of other things.''

''As soon as we found out it was a problem,'' he added, ''we did it.''

Asked whether he would stop shaking hands because of the outbreak, Mr. Trump, a self-described germophobe who has said he envies the Japanese custom of bowing, called it a practical impossibility.

''I love the people of this country, and you can't be a politician and not shake hands,'' the president said. He cast aside the advice of public health officials who have urged Americans to avoid contact, which can spread the coronavirus.

''Now the concept of shaking hands since this -- you're hearing a lot of stuff about trying not to shake hands, and that has not stopped me at all,'' he said.

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Reminded by Mr. Baier that he has presided over a flood of red ink, Mr. Trump insisted that he cared about the national debt and would make tackling it a priority in a second term.

As a candidate, Mr. Trump once boasted that in eight years he would eliminate not just the annual deficit but the entire national debt. Instead, the debt has increased by about $3.5 trillion since he took office, despite a healthy economy. The president attributed that largely to his spending increases on the military, disregarding his tax cuts or domestic spending increases.

His insistence contradicted his own acting chief of staff, Mick Mulvaney, who told an audience last month in Britain that Republicans cared about the deficit when a Democrat was president. ''Then Donald Trump became president, and we're a lot less interested as a party,'' Mr. Mulvaney said.

Mr. Trump repeated a claim that President Barack Obama tried to meet with North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, only to be rebuffed, an unsubstantiated assertion that he has previously aired and that seems to have been pulled out of thin air. The president said that he maintained a ''good relationship'' with Mr. Kim, though he did not claim new progress toward coaxing the North's leader to relinquish his nuclear program.

The president also falsely claimed that Scranton now has ''the lowest and best unemployment numbers'' ever. Its unemployment rate for April 2019, 4 percent, was the lowest since 1990, the earliest year for which data is available. But the rate has since increased to 5.6 percent in December, which was higher than the 5.4 percent recorded in December 2016.

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Last week, after a survey conducted by the network showed five Democratic candidates defeating Mr. Trump in head-to-head matchups, the president lashed out in frustration.

''Why doesn't Fox finally get a competent Polling Company?'' Mr. Trump posted on Twitter.

He also groused about the network on Monday at a rally in Charlotte, N.C.

''They want to be politically correct,'' he said, adding, ''I don't know what's going on with Fox.''

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Peter Baker and Linda Qiu contributed from Washington.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/us/politics/trump-biden-fox-news-town-hall.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/us/politics/trump-biden-fox-news-town-hall.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Trump, at a town-hall event Thursday, said he was shifting his focus from Bernie Sanders. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

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[***Sandra Cisneros***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63J1-7BS1-JBG3-602K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 5, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 8; BY THE BOOK

**Length:** 2815 words

**Body**

''These are not your typical war stories,'' says the writer Sandra Cisneros, whose new book is ''Martita, I Remember You.''

What books are on your night stand?

I have a New Mexican writing desk on one side of my bed and an antique Mexican trunk on the other. Because of this, there are too many books stacked in precarious towers waiting to collapse whenever I reach for anything, the newer books burying the older. When I have to search for a book, it's like excavating Tenochtitlán. Thanks to this interview, I've finally done some housecleaning. Here are some of the titles I found:

''You Don't Have to Say You Love Me,'' memoir, Sherman Alexie

''The Women Who Hate Me: Poetry 1980-1990,'' Dorothy Allison

''Afterlife,'' novel, Julia Alvarez

''Light in the Dark/Luz en lo Oscuro,'' nonfiction, Gloria Anzaldúa and AnaLouise Keating

''Until We Are Level Again,'' poetry, José Angel Araguz

''How to Love a Jamaican,'' story collection, Alexia Arthurs

''Jackknife: New and Selected Poems,'' Jan Beatty

''Letters From Cuba,'' middle-grade novel, Ruth Behar

''Siete noches'' and its translation, ''Seven Nights,'' essays, Jorge Luis Borges (Always within reach on my night stand)

''Weedee Peepo,'' essays, Jose Antonio Burciaga

''Otherwise, My Life Is Ordinary,'' poetry, Bobby Byrd

''Perras,'' poetry, Zel Cabrera

''Piñata Theory,'' poetry, Alan Chazaro

''The Compassion Book,'' essays, Pema Chödrön

''Long Distance,'' poetry, Steven Cordova

''Tracing the Horse,'' poetry, Diana Marie Delgado

''Create Dangerously,'' essays, Edwidge Danticat (Always on my night stand)

''The Inheritance of Loss,'' novel, Kiran Desai

''Homeland Security Ate My Speech,'' nonfiction, Ariel Dorfman

''The Date Fruit Elegies,'' poetry, John Olivares Espinoza

''Ten Plays by Euripides,'' translated by Paul Roche

''Head Off & Split,'' poetry, Nikky Finney

''The Penguin Book of the Modern American Short Story,'' edited by John Freeman

''When Living Was a Labor Camp,'' poetry, Diana Garcia

''The Book of Ruin,'' poetry, Rigoberto González

''Tangle,'' poetry, Pauletta Hansel

''Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings,'' poetry, Joy Harjo (Another one I keep on my night stand all the time)

''The Spring of My Life,'' poetry, Kobayashi Issa, translated by Sam Hamill

''Rattlesnake Allegory,'' poetry, Joe Jimenez

''Selected Works,'' poetry, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

''I Wrote Stone: The Selected Poetry of Ryszard Kapuscinski''

''Recovering the Sacred,'' nonfiction, Winona LaDuke

''Grace Notes,'' poetry, Lisa Lopez Smith

''Cervantes Street,'' novel, Jaime Manrique

''Caring for a House,'' poetry, Victor Martinez

''Temporada de huracánes,'' and its English translation, ''Hurricane Season,'' novel, Fernanda Melchor

''Born in the Cavity of Sunsets,'' poetry, Michael Luis Medrano

''Suspect Freedoms: The Racial and Sexual Politics of Cubanidad in New York, 1823-1957,'' history, Nancy Raquel Mirabal

''Native Country of the Heart,'' nonfiction, Cherríe Moraga

A manuscript of ''The Consequences,'' Manuel Munoz's forthcoming collection of stories

''The Collected Poems of Chika Sagawa,'' translated by Sawako Nakayasu

''Bone,'' a novel, Fae Myenne Ng (Rereading this again after decades because I love it)

''Piedra de Sol,'' poem, Octavio Paz

''With the River on Our Face,'' poetry, Emmy Pérez

''Grieving: Dispatches From a Wounded Country,'' nonfiction, Cristina Rivera-Garza, translated by Sarah Booker

''Libro Centroamericano de los Muertos,'' poetry, Balam Rodrigo

''This American Autopsy,'' poetry, José Antonio Rodríguez

''From Our Land to Our Land,'' essays, Luis J. Rodriguez

''Brooklyn Antediluvian,'' poetry, Patrick Rosal

''Hermosa,'' poetry, Yesika Salgado

''Black Wings,'' Sehba Sarwar

''Blood Sugar Canto,'' poetry, ire'ne lara silva

''Teresa of Avila: Ecstasy and Common Sense,'' by Tessa Bielecki

''VirginX,'' poetry, Natalia Treviño

''The Architecture of Language,'' poetry, Quincy Troupe

''Codex of Love: Bendita Ternura,'' poetry, Liliana Valenzuela (I'm rereading this)

''Their Dogs Came With Them,'' novel, Helena María Viramontes (Rereading this too)

What's the last great book you read?

The one I'm reading now; ''Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment,'' by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, a history of how the United States evolved to where we are as a nation besieged by gun violence. This is not the kind of book I'd usually read, but I loved her earlier book, ''An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States''; reading it was like going back to school and gaining a new perspective of the Americas, one that retrieved the lost history of my ancestors. I'm on a mission to make up for the huge gaps in my miseducation as a woman of color.

Are there any classic novels that you only recently read for the first time?

''The Nine Guardians,'' by Rosario Castellanos, a beautiful novel about a village on the Mexico-Guatemala border during the turbulent power shifts of the 1930s. Castellanos is one of the most brilliant writers of the last century, but when the Latin American boom in literature resounded in the United States, it was only the male voices that were heard. At this point in my life, I want to read the classics from the Americas, from Mexico, from women, from the ***working class***, from the Indigenous communities, from everyone who hasn't been allowed to the podium before.

Describe your ideal reading experience (when, where, what, how).

I prefer reading lying down propped by a sea of pillows, like a famous grand horizontale, in bed or on the terrace, on a chaise or in a hammock, or simply on the couch; preferably on a day when no one rings the doorbell, which is almost impossible, because in Mexico, everyone rings the bell. The flower seller, the doughnut man, the water man, the sweet potato man, the knife sharpener, the woman asking to sweep your driveway, the man who was laid off his job and is looking for work as a gardener, the nice couple from the countryside with fresh tortillas and prickly pear paddles, the man who sells wool snakes to keep out the doorway drafts. I am lucky to be able to work from home and not have to ring doorbells, so I have no right to complain.

What's your favorite book no one else has heard of?

My favorites are Gwendolyn Brooks's ''Maud Martha'' and Mercé Rodoreda's ''The Time of the Doves,'' both books that deal with war, though the former only at the finale. Come to think of it, many of my favorite books are about women surviving or waging war -- Elena Poniatowska's ''Here's to You, Jesusa!,'' a melding of fiction and nonfiction about a Mexican woman warrior; ''Cartucho'' and ''My Mother's Hands,'' both memoiristic accounts by Nellie Campobello that witness war from a child's point of view; ''Recollections of Things to Come,'' a novel by Elena Garro, which documents Mexico's Cristero War of the 1920s; ''Tempest Over Mexico,'' a memoir by Rosa King, a foreigner who witnessed the key players of the Mexican Revolution; and ''A Woman in Berlin,'' a brutal memoir of the sacking of Berlin by a writer too afraid to publish under any other name but Anonymous. Except for ''Maud Martha'' and ''Tempest Over Mexico,'' they were all written in a foreign language, with some translations faring better than others. These are not your typical war stories.

What book should everybody read before the age of 21?

Books are medicine. What heals me may not be the right prescription for anyone else. This makes me reluctant to make recommendations. But, if I were obliged to guide younger readers, I would feel compelled to give them a wide choice of books in different genres so they could find something, at least one thing that might be transformational, including graphic novels, mythologies, oral tales and cosmologies from across the globe. It's important that young people find the right books that speak to them at the right time, otherwise you might be encouraging them to dislike reading.

What book should nobody read until the age of 40?

Again, I don't believe in ''should read,'' but I think many would enjoy and savor the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen much better as adults. I recommend the miraculous translations by Tiina Nunnally.

Which writers -- novelists, playwrights, critics, journalists, poets -- working today do you admire most?

Luis Rodriguez, Edwidge Danticat, Natalie Diaz, Rigoberto González, Virginia Grise, Joy Harjo, Helena Maria Viramontes, Lois-Ann Yamanaka, Denise Chávez, Manuel Muñoz, Dorothy Allison, Levi Romero, John Phillip Santos, Charles M. Blow, Jorge Ramos, Carmen Aristegui, Elena Poniatowska, Luis Alfaro and every Mexican journalist who puts their life in danger by writing the truth. And, I hear a chavalo named Lin-Manuel in New York is pretty good.

You're a dual citizen of America and Mexico, and your new novella is being published in a bilingual English-Spanish edition. What Mexican books deserve greater attention in the United States?

I read Spanish too slowly to have any expertise here. But I do love and admire the works of Elena Garro, Elena Poniatowska and Rosario Castellanos, and, most recently, Fernanda Melchor and Cristina Rivera Garza. I speed read them in English first, then reread them in Spanish. Sometimes I'm forced to read them in their original language because the translations aren't available yet or aren't satisfactory.

What's the last book you read that made you laugh?

Jaime Cortez's ''Gordo,'' Fernando A. Flores's ''Death to the Bullshit Artists of South Texas'' and Christine Granados' ''Fight Like a Man.''

The last book you read that made you cry?

Jasmon Drain's ''Stateway's Garden.'' It's a book about the people who live in the projects of Chicago, my hometown. The author writes about them with such love, respect and generosity it broke my heart.

The last book you read that made you furious?

Nabokov's lecture on Jane Austen documented in ''Vladimir Nabokov: Lectures on Literature,'' edited by Fredson Bowers. In a letter to Edmund Wilson, Nabokov wrote: ''I dislike Jane, and am prejudiced, in fact, against all women writers. They are in another class.'' There's pride and prejudice for you!

Has a book ever brought you closer to another person, or come between you?

''A Tree Grows in Brooklyn'' was my mother's favorite movie, but I never bothered to watch it or read the book because I had watched the beginning of the film with her and thought it too sentimental. On the day of my mother's funeral, after we all regrouped at her house, I felt too exhausted and sick to do anything but take in a movie. I found the cassette in my mother's video library and popped it into the VCR. Then I realized the film is the story of a girl who wants to be a writer. My mother had always wanted to make something artistic of her life, and this testimony to that hunger just made me weep. I read the book by Betty Smith soon after, and I've loved it ever since.

What's the most interesting thing you learned from a book recently?

Rereading Robert Graves's ''The White Goddess'' after decades made me realize I didn't pay attention to the same things I had when I first read this book as a young woman. This time around I'm fascinated with the lineage of oral literatures. The book got me thinking about Homer and his connection to the Irish bards, and then to the oral literatures of the Americas and spoken poetry today, how each builds on what came before. Even if a language disappears, I believe a worldview, a syntax, a cadence survives from which the conquering language builds upon, like the stones the Spanish conquistadores gathered from the Indigenous temples to build their Catholic churches. Something like that is happening in our poetic inheritance. Something old and ancient and sacred survives in the spoken word, which is fascinating for those of us who are word-workers.

Which subjects do you wish more authors would write about?

For me the great shame and dolor of our times is the story of immigrant children. There are a lot of great books out there on the subject, but I especially admire those written by the writers who were immigrant kids themselves. These include Rene Colato Lainez's ''My Shoes and I,'' a children's picture book; Reyna Grande's memoir ''The Distance Between Us''; and Javier Zamora's poetry, ''Unaccompanied,'' as well as his forthcoming memoir, ''Solito, Solita,'' which I'm currently reading. I also love the graphic memoir ''Diary of a Reluctant Dreamer: Undocumented Vignettes From a Pre-American Life,'' by Alberto Ledesma. But lest we think child migration is new, there's Ruth Behar's young adult novel ''Letters From Cuba,'' about a girl who emigrates solo from Poland to Cuba during World War II.

What moves you most in a work of literature?

I'm not yet the writer I aspire to be, but at my age, great books written by women over 60 give me hope. Diana Athill, Colette, Harriett Doerr, Marguerite Duras, Grace Paley, Elena Poniatowska, Jean Rhys, Mercé Rodoreda, to name but a few.

Which genres do you especially enjoy reading?

Poetry, biographies of artists or activists, fiction, essays, spirituality, art history, including books on textile, design and fashion, and especially books on houses.

And which do you avoid?

Mysteries, cookbooks, sci-fi, fantasy, romance novels and biographies of U.S. presidents.

How do you organize your books?

The ones I love passionately live intimately with me in my bedroom shelved in no special order. And the ones I want to read next or again are stacked in towers next to my bed, on chairs or on the floor. The magical books (fairy tales, children's literature, Eduardo Galeano's vignettes which defy genre, Elena Poniatowska's fiction and nonfiction) reside in the hall just outside my bedroom door. The rest are downstairs on bookshelves or stacked on tables and benches everywhere in my home, wallflowers hoping to be invited to dance.

What book might people be surprised to find on your shelves?

Cyndi Lauper's memoir, which I absolutely adore, and a whole shelf devoted to Maria Callas biographies. Oh, and Alan Cumming's memoir ''Not My Father's Son.''

What's the best book you've ever received as a gift?

A cheap paperback copy of ''Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'' when I was in the fifth grade. It was the first book I ever owned. I found it in the Sears Roebuck bargain basement for 50 cents. I begged my father to buy it, and, lucky for me, it was payday. I had no idea people could actually buy books; I'd never seen a bookstore. I thought books were so valuable they were only dispensed to schools and libraries.

What kind of reader were you as a child?

Unsociable, strange, rude. Or so my family said, because I hated abandoning a book when relatives came to visit. I had to be scolded and shamed into civility. Yet my mother would exempt me from helping her in the kitchen if I had a book in my hand, even if I was reading a novel instead of doing homework! Since I'm the only girl in a large family, I felt guilty about this at the time, but not enough to put down my book.

Which childhood books and authors stick with you most?

Lewis Carroll, Hans Christian Andersen, Beatrix Potter and Virginia Lee Burton get better each time I read them. I keep their books and biographies near for inspiration and admire them even more now that I'm older.

How have your reading tastes changed over time?

I read books about Native spirituality, about shamans and healers and mystics, to try to better understand the border between the living and the dead and my own gifts regarding same. Living in Mexico helps me with this journey because the dead don't abandon us but live alongside us daily. What I was taught to dismiss as superstition when I lived in the States is now a spiritual awakening. I'm grateful to be living in Mexico, which is one of the first-world nations, in my opinion, when it comes to awareness of the divine.

You're organizing a literary dinner party. Which three writers, dead or alive, do you invite?

Emily Dickinson, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Jane Austen. (In case Miss Emily is a no-show, and that's very likely, it's a tossup between Mae West or Rumi as an alternate.)

Disappointing, overrated, just not good: What book did you feel as if you were supposed to like, and didn't? Do you remember the last book you put down without finishing?

I would never want to offend any writer by publicly admitting which books I've put down; it's not the writer's fault we didn't click. Maybe the book arrived too early or too late in my life. If I sense a book isn't likely to make me a better writer or a better human being, I release it. I have to. At 66 I haven't got a lot of time left before I transmogrify into a maguey.

What do you plan to read next?

Poetry. I am going to revisit the Elizabethan poets and the beautiful chants of the Mazatec healer Maria Sabina, both for inspiration.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/02/books/review/sandra-cisneros-by-the-book-interview.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/02/books/review/sandra-cisneros-by-the-book-interview.html)

**Graphic**

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**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Michelle Goldberg. 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.”

I think it’s important to say here at the beginning that the Dobbs decision doesn’t reflect the pro-choice side losing the argument. The Republican court majority that overturned Roe was appointed mostly by presidents who lost the popular vote but took the White House anyway. The Dobbs decision itself is really unpopular. Poll after poll shows Americans oppose it.

A recent YouGov survey went further and offered 11 choices, some positive, some negative, so people could describe how they felt. Disgusted led the pack, followed by sad, angry, and then outraged. Conservatives overturn Roe by winning power, not by winning hearts and minds.

Even so, feminism as a political movement is in fraught shape. This is an era of backlash, from polling showing that nearly half of Democratic men under 50 think feminism has done more harm than good, to the Republican Party’s embrace of Donald Trump as their standard-bearer and leader, to the abuse heaped, heaped on Amber Heard during the Heard-Depp trial.

And even if Roe didn’t fall because of persuasion, its restoration will require persuasion, and not just persuasion, but organizing and the attainment of a lot of political power. My colleague Michelle Goldberg has written a series of columns exploring these issues that I found provocative in the best way.

They raise really hard and uncomfortable questions, and they don’t pretend to find easy answers or that there’s any black and white here. And in particular, Goldberg has been asking, where did the women’s rights movement go wrong? How did it lose so much power, and what does it need to get it back?

As always, my email is at [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

Michelle Goldberg, welcome to the show.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Thank you for having me.

EZRA KLEIN: So you’ve covered reproductive rights and thought about feminism and feminist political power for decades now. I found that were writing about abortion in your student newspaper in the ’90s. So what has the last week or months felt like to you?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: I mean, it’s just it’s been so incredibly bleak, and the fact that we all saw it coming, that we all knew this moment was coming, and people have been warning about it for decades now, I mean, it really felt inevitable, the night Donald Trump was elected, and women all over this country were kind of sobbing and bracing themselves. And so it’s been this slow-motion inevitability.

But there is a difference between knowing something bad is going to happen and having it happen. And now we’re in just like a fundamentally new world. I think it’s really shocking, because most people alive — I mean, maybe there’s an example that I’m missing in sort of my blinkered privileged state, but I’m reaching for an example of people who are alive now who’ve kind of lost a right that was so fundamental to the way they conceived of their life trajectory.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to go back a bit, then, before the Dobbs decision, to this broader feminist backlash that you’ve been tracing in your pieces. I want to say, this isn’t why Roe was overturned, but it is part of the context in which the fight to revive it is now going to have to play out. So you brought a poll to my attention that I found genuinely startling.

The Southern Poverty Law Center asked whether feminism has done more harm than good, and 46 percent of Democratic men under 50 said that it had. So 46 percent of Democratic men under 50 say feminism has done more harm than good, and almost a quarter of Democratic women under 50 said the same. How do you understand those results?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Well, like you, I mean, I found them pretty flabbergasting. And I didn’t just want to use them in the piece without calling up the people who did the poll to help me understand it, right. I mean, like anyone else, I thought it could be an outlier. And it still could be an outlier. You don’t have a lot of people polling on this question.

But when the Southern Poverty Law Center — the reason that they asked that question in the first place is because they were picking up a lot of misogyny in online spaces. And I’ve written about this a bunch for the Times. One of the most striking examples of that was the reaction to the Amber Heard-Johnny Depp trial, you know, billions of views for this kind of outpouring of crowdsourced vitriol and mockery.

And so I can’t exactly explain it. It’s pretty well known that the kind of interests of younger women and younger men are diverging in a lot of ways. and there’s like a lot of polling that picks that up more generally, although not like among just Democrats.

Look, I think men and women, young people are having a really hard time connecting with each other. There’s a lot of resentment more generally. There’s a lot of depression and anxiety about sex and gender and kind of mutual disappointment among young heterosexuals. You know, some theorists have called this heteropessimism.

And at the same time, there’s been even, among people I think, who probably agree with feminist precepts, who are pro-choice, who believe in women’s equality, there’s been a reaction against the word “feminism” or against what’s seen as this kind of neoliberal, Sheryl Sandberg, throw yourself into work — it’s often derided as the quote unquote, “girlboss.”

And so it’s hard to say if the poll is picking some of that up as well. I think for older women, feminism has a pretty clear meaning, right? They went from a place where they didn’t have many rights, including the right to abortion, the right to open your own credit card — spousal rape was criminalized pretty late, relatively recently. And for younger people who maybe have not had the experience of not having all these rights, it can be less clear what feminism actually stands for.

EZRA KLEIN: When you said a moment ago, that there’s pretty clear evidence that the interests of young men and young women are diverging, tell me more about that.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: So I know about this more from the young women’s side, right. I mean, I think there’s other people to talk to about young men doing badly, and being alienated and not being able to form relationships. But there is a lot of evidence, I think, that young people in general are having hard times forming relationships for all sorts of reasons.

The way that this manifests among some of the young writers that I’ve been reading recently, heterosexual women writers, is as just the kind of profound despair, a profound lowering of standards. And in some cases, in Christine Emba, a young “Washington Post” columnist, has a new book called “Rethinking Sex.” There’s a new British book that’s going to be released in the United States relatively soon called “The Case Against the Sexual Revolution.” There is Nona Willis Aronovitz’s book called “Bad Sex.”

They all come at it from slightly different angles and have quite different politics, but for each of them, there’s a sense that there’s a framework of, quote unquote, “liberated sexuality” that has been really unsatisfying, and I think for some of these writers, not all of them, has been kind of dangerous and led women to feel like they have to participate in their own exploitation.

EZRA KLEIN: One of the other things that struck me about that poll that you had mentioned in the column was the amazing generational gap. So I’d mentioned that 46 percent of Democratic men under 50 and about a quarter of Democratic women under 50 said feminism had done more harm than good. But over 50, only 4 percent of Democratic men said that. Over 50, only 10 percent of Democratic women said that.

And that brings up a question that sounds basic, but I think is actually pretty slippery and fundamental, which is when we say the word feminism, when we ask somebody has “feminism” done more harm than good, what do you think that word is referring to to most people?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Well, it’s a good question. I think it’s probably referring to something really different for different people, which might explain these really strange and counterintuitive poll results. Look, at its most basic, feminism is the belief in women’s equality. It is the belief that women deserve social and material equality with men, that they don’t yet have it, and that changes should be made in the social system and the economic system to effect it.

I mean, there used to be a stereotype, right, that it meant hating men. I don’t know how often people still think that it means that. But I do think that it’s probably associated with a certain sort of ruthless ambition for some people, or a rejection of marriage and family. And it can be that, but that’s by no means an essential part of feminism.

You know, and some of them are rejecting the idea that women don’t already have equality, right, because there’s plenty of men who believe that it’s women at this point who are unduly privileged, and that it’s men who are kind of constantly on the defensive.

EZRA KLEIN: So I have a hypothesis about this, and I’m curious how it sounds to you, which is, I think one potential reason for that generational gap is that the two groups are referring to different things, and that to older people, feminism is/was a political movement, a recognizable organized political movement. It had and has an agenda. There have been fights around it.

And I think to a lot of younger people, people under 50, it is disproportionately something that the writer Elisa Gonzalez, who you quoted in that piece, calls a “discourse feminism.”

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Yeah, no, I think that’s right.

EZRA KLEIN: Which is the more rhetorical, like media representations, you see people write about Beyoncé performing with the word “feminism” behind her. People talk about “girlboss.” but I don’t want to call it a vibe. That’s getting a little too on the nose for the moment.

But I do think there’s something about a transition from a definable political movement, where you could trace its organizational tendrils and what it wants, to a kind of hyperobject that exists in the media, an identity that some people claim and other people don’t claim, but something that is fundamentally politicized, but not in a more classical sense of the word “political.”

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Right. That’s a kind of rhetorical style that some people find grating, and there’s a kind of ouroboros quality to it, right, because one thing that is part of this discourse is endlessly debating what is and isn’t feminist, even if it sort of has nothing to do with people’s real-life conditions.

You know, and part of what happened is that — and this is not the first time that this has happened, but part of what happened in the period of time that we’re talking about is that, you know, you spoke about Beyoncé dancing in front of the big screen with the word “feminist” on it, and sampling the speech, “We Should All Be Feminists” in one of her songs.

And that was a sign of, that was a part of a bigger moment when feminism became really, really fashionable. It was something that kind of all sorts of stars and celebrities wanted a piece of. It was associated with self-actualization and glamour and ambition.

And you know, you could argue that it was defanged, right, because it became, as you said, this like pop cultural object, although for people who grew up, as I did, at a time when feminism was either considered laughable or marginal, there was something thrilling about that moment. The problem is that if something becomes fashionable, it’s just kind of inevitable that it’s then going to become unfashionable.

EZRA KLEIN: One possibility that raises is that feminism is to some degree a victim of its own success, that enough of its core ideas have become mainstream that now, what people think of when they think of feminism, is more its brand than its arguments. Maybe many of the people — I think it’s quite possible — who would agree with a lot of ideas that we would understand to be feminist might say they don’t like feminism, sort of an analog to the endless polls that people didn’t like Obamacare but like the individual policies within it.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: And so you have this detachment of what the movement wants from what the brand is to people. And you might even see that in this moment. I mean, we’re talking about these poll numbers for feminism in general, but the Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision is very, very unpopular. It’s extraordinarily unpopular among Democrats in particular, extraordinarily unpopular among women in particular, young people in particular. And so there is at least some evidence that ideas or agenda items we might think of as feminist are nevertheless still quite potent.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Well, I think that’s right, although I mean, it feels weird for me to say feminism is a victim of its own success at this moment of maximum regression, right, at this moment when we’re going far — I keep catching myself saying backwards, and it’s not the right thing to say, because we’re actually kind of hurtling into this unthinkable future that’s going to not be at all like the past. But nevertheless, I mean, it’s not as if women won the major battles and now are just fighting about trivialities, right. They just lost one of the major battles.

But at the same time, I definitely understand what you’re saying in that they’ve succeeded in getting at least a lot of their assumptions broadly accepted. I mean, and even the anti-abortion movement now at least parrots a lot of the assumptions of the feminist movement, right. They’ll say, well, it’s no longer true that women need abortions to be able to succeed in the corporate world. They don’t say that women should be home raising babies anymore. They almost kind of lean into this superwoman image that feminists had lionized in the past, but have since discarded.

EZRA KLEIN: Let’s shift from discourse feminism to the actual political movement. How is feminism as a political movement today organized, if indeed you would say that it is?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: No, I don’t think it is. I mean, as soon as you said, let’s shift to the political movement, I sort of felt like, what political movement? I mean, I’m relatively dialed in, and if I wanted to say, join a feminist group, I wouldn’t really know where to start, I mean, besides sending a check to NARAL or something, right.

There is no kind of organized feminist movement. I don’t think that this is something that’s really unique to feminism. It’s a problem on the left more generally, and a lot of people have written about this, the way a bunch of nonprofits kind of stand in for the grassroots. And then you have a lot of people who can be mobilized very quickly because of social media, but there’s nothing lasting there, right. They come together for huge events, and then they sort of melt away.

The exception to this was Indivisible and some of the groups that formed right after Trump’s election and after the Women’s March, and that was such an exciting time, because it seemed as if — I mean, these weren’t explicitly feminist movements, but they were a lot of women who were really outraged by the results of that election and had been galvanized, and were actually doing what the Christian right has always done, which is form local organizations, take over your precinct committee, run for the most local offices, sort of become the party rather than petitioning the party.

And so you have that, and it’s, I guess, maybe feminist adjacent. But in terms of what you would join if you just wanted to join an organization devoted to enhancing women’s rights, I’m not sure what that would be.

EZRA KLEIN: Historically, how is that different? When feminism was more of a political movement, what was the substance? What were the social connections, the groups around which it organized?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Well, you had a whole bunch of different organizations. Obviously, one kind of basic unit of feminism, at least second-wave feminism, was the consciousness raising group. So people would go to these groups, and they would talk about problems in their personal lives that maybe they didn’t realize were part of kind of bigger political problems until they started sharing them with other women — things like abortion, things like sexual harassment, things like domestic violence.

And a lot of those groups, they stayed together for a long time. I mentioned in that piece I wrote that Ellen Willis, who’s one of my absolute favorite second-wave writers, was in the same group for 15 years. And then you had kind of larger lobbying groups like the National Organization for Women. Now, the National Organization for Women still exists, but I certainly never kind of hear about what they’re doing, or hear them spoken about as a group that various politicians feel beholden to or feel like they have to listen to.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: You mentioned a couple of minutes ago the way, there are a lot of nonprofits that don’t have a lot of members but have a lot of centrality, I guess, in — if you’re a member of Congress and you want to ask the question of, well, what would the feminists think, there are organizations you call and they get consulted on bills.

But they’ve been in a pretty rough state, and in your big article here, you write about an article that Ryan Grim published in The Intercept about how a lot of progressive organizations, not just feminist ones, have quote — this is you here — “essentially ceased to function because they’re caught up in internal turmoil, often blending labor disputes with fights over identity.”

I’ve been really struck myself talking to people inside the reproductive rights world who will, off the record, just tell you the entire, entire sector is in shambles, that the movement is completely consumed with internal politics in a way that has really deformed its external politics. And so I’m curious how you assess it. What has gone wrong there? And has what has gone wrong there actually mattered, or is that just kind of another problem somewhere else?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Well, I think it’s complicated. And it’s something that I think people have to keep in mind, is that there are employment grievances that are really valid, right. There are kind of racial grievances. There are Black women saying that they haven’t been promoted or that they haven’t been paid equally, people who made really credible accusations against discriminatory behavior by Planned Parenthood — I mean internally.

And so those have to be taken seriously. I don’t think that it’s all just kind of oversensitive millennials and members of Gen Z who have ridiculous demands. I think you have a problem on the left in general of a kind of ossified leadership, young people who are both frustrated and in some cases feel sort of hopeless. They feel like the opportunities or the possibilities for change in the world are being shut down.

And so you sort of turn inward, and you start trying to make change within or seek justice within your own organization. And it just doesn’t work. I mean, Joe Freeman wrote about this back in the ’70s in this great essay called “The Tyranny of Structurelessness” that wrote about how the feminist movement was kind of allergic to hierarchy. But in the effort to get rid of hierarchy, you just ended up empowering a lot of clique-iness and passive aggression disguised as politics, right.

You need, especially in a nonprofit organization, you need a degree of hierarchy and authority to function. And there needs to be a sense, the kind of legitimacy around the leadership. So at the same time, you know, look, I’m a person in my 40s. I probably would see it differently if I was 20 years younger.

There were demands that kind of younger people make, both about how organizations are supposed to function internally that are, I think, a little bit stupefying for older people who kind of aren’t used to thinking of the workplace for good or ill as being a place that is supposed to provide people with a whole bunch of emotional support and validations.

And then there are kind of, I think, substantive differences, especially around language. I mean, I can tell you that most women I know over 40 seethe at the word “women” being taken out of reproductive rights activism. I mean, I can’t tell you how many conversations I have with people about this who are just so angry about it, because it feels to them like feminism has become another place where cisgender women are supposed to defer and kind of back off and be self-effacing, and worry about other people’s problems. It drives people really crazy.

And these aren’t people — I mean, I’m not going to say whether or not they’re transphobic. That’s not my determination to make. But I can say that these are people who definitely would oppose bathroom bills, right, would oppose laws that try to stop young people from transitioning, that would probably support their own kids transitioning under some circumstances, and that would take a sort of more watchful waiting attitude under other circumstances, you know, but definitely believe that it has a place.

Everybody I know kind of know knows people who have kids who are either transitioning or nonbinary, and maybe they’re confused by that. But they’re not hostile to it. But there is a sense, I think, among a lot of older women that if you can’t explain the way that abortion bans are rooted in misogyny, that they’re rooted in the kind of fundamental desire to control women’s reproduction, then it becomes very difficult to organize, right.

Like, ‘some people oppress other people on the basis of their reproduction’ is just not really an accurate way, I think, of describing centuries of patriarchy.

EZRA KLEIN: Something that makes me think a bit about is, I think there’s a difference between seeing your output as an organization, as a staffer at an organization, as being built around organizing, and the various goals and measures you might look at to see if your organizing is successful, and being about purity, organizational communications, organizational stance, right.

I think there’s a difference between seeing your success inside an organization, being how many people have you added to it, versus how much have you made it a bolder, more thoroughly liberal or radical, or however you might define it, organization.

And one thing I have seen across a lot of dimensions of the left in the past couple of years is that for all that people on the left get attacked for wanting safe spaces, actual left organizing spaces feel incredibly unsafe to the people in them. And the number of people who are going to persevere through that, who are going to go and sit in on a bunch of meetings, and be part of an organization where they’re terrified they’re going to say the wrong thing; where they feel like they’re going to get jumped on; where they feel like if they have some disagreements — if they’re there for one reason and they have disagreements with people on another, that they’re going to be made into the enemy in the room.

I think people don’t always love talking about this, but there’s also just an ongoing howl from within these movements of people who feel very turned off within them. And I almost never meet anybody who really denies this. It’s more just considered unhelpful to talk about too much publicly. But there is this tension between organizing for purity and organizing for numbers.

And one thing that seems to me to have happened to a lot of groups is either they’re not really organizing at all, or to the extent they are, they’re organizing for purity under a theory that will create enthusiasm that gets them numbers. And that theory is just not bearing out.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Well, this thing you’re talking about on the left is so old. And there must be a study out there kind of tracing this tendency back to the French Revolution, because you just see it over and over again. And I don’t know that anybody has actually diagnosed, like, psychologically what it is that keeps happening, right. It’s the oldest cliché in the world, that — I believe it was Michael Kinsley who said some version of this — that the right makes converts and the left hunts heretics.

But it’s something that you see over and over again. I mean, the feminist version of this is Ti-Grace Atkinson’s maxim, “Sisterhood is powerful. It kills. Mostly sisters.” So this is obviously something we saw in the Students for Democratic Societies’ devolution into the Weathermen. You saw it in the kind of collapse of a lot of feminist organizing in the 1970s.

And somehow, we can’t learn those lessons, because you see so many of these dynamics being replayed over and over again. And what’s so frustrating to me is that it’s so different than the way the right organizes. There’s a documentary I wrote about recently called “Battleground,” which is a pro-choice filmmaker following around — most of it is her following around three different women leaders of the anti-abortion movement. There’s other people in it as well, but that’s the bulk of it.

And I wrote about this, and people were like, I can’t believe that you’re amazed by this. It’s so basic. But there was this one scene where these members of Students for Life are in a training to learn how to try to persuade people in comments sections on Facebook, right. So Students for Life took out ads that were targeted at young pro-choice people with the idea of drawing them into comment section debates that would, if not change their minds, at least kind of sow some doubt.

And so just — there is no emphasis on the left on persuasion. There’s often a kind of contempt for any discourse about persuasion, because it’s either, I shouldn’t have to argue with you; I shouldn’t have to defend my fundamental rights. And trust me, I believe that it’s frustrating to have to defend your fundamental rights. Unfortunately, we do have to do that.

Or if somebody is going to be kind of turned off by my rhetorical style, then they were already a sexist or a racist — which again, I think, might be true, but the world is what it is. And you kind of have to approach people where they are. It’s about trying to get people to join a coalition or take political action, not kind of be your friend or show themselves worthy of entry into a club.

EZRA KLEIN: I do always wonder how different the left and the right really are on this. And I wish there was some way to gather data on it or polling or something. I think there are very, very distinctive pathologies that have been true in left organizations for the past couple of years. And yet, it feels to me like when you bounce around different areas, you see different things here.

So for instance, I always think that after 2016, it’s very notable how much energy the Democratic coalition put into thinking about Trump voters, Obama-to-Trump voters, white ***working-class*** Midwesterners, et cetera, right. There’s this huge ongoing endless discourse about how to win them back, whereas the right is like, if you live in a city, well —

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Right, well they don’t need us.

EZRA KLEIN: So much the worse for you. We’re done with you. Donald Trump, I would not say a hugely inclusive figure. Like the Republican Party and Congress seems very narrow. But what’s interesting is, I do think you’re right specifically. I do think there’s a distinction here specifically around abortion. And I’ve always wondered if that’s because a lot of the anti-abortion movement is not first and foremost organized around the political issue. It’s first and foremost organized around the separate social infrastructure of churches.

And in that way, it’s more like Democratic organizing that is first and foremost organized around organized labor, which has long been much more inclusive in the way they do organizing when they then sort of move on to economic and other political issues than the sort of single-issue groups, because organized labor by nature has so many people in it with so many different views. They have to be more open, right. You can’t be on your own shop floor telling people they’re not part of the coalition. And so it’s this kind of weakening or this asymmetry around civil infrastructure on this issue that makes a big difference.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Right. And the asymmetry isn’t just on this issue. It’s the right and the left in general that maybe used to have some equivalency between churches and unions, but as unions have declined, you really don’t. And so there it just is very little real-world community infrastructure for the left, I mean, maybe outside of Black churches in the South. And you know, those ties are just much thicker and more sustaining.

There’s a book by a sociologist named Ziad Munson called “The Making of Pro-Life Activists: How Social Movement Mobilization Works.” And one of the things that he finds that I think is really interesting is that people who join pro-life organizations, or get involved in pro-life activism or anti-abortion activism, what sets them apart is not that they’re particularly ideological. And oftentimes, they’re not even particularly anti-abortion when they go to their first event. It’s going to the event that sort of makes them anti-abortion.

So what sets them apart is usually having some kind of social connection with someone who’s somehow involved in anti-abortion activism, being at a point in their life when they’re open to kind of changes or meeting new people or doing something new, maybe being in college or moving to a new city or something like that.

And they get kind of invited into this organization, and then in the process of doing the activism — going to the march, going to the protest — they become politicized. And I mean, I feel like it intuitively makes sense. If you think about what would make you go to a meeting, right, it’s intimidating or weird to show up in a meeting where you don’t know anyone. I think people are just more likely to be invited along to something.

And so it’s hard to see what the equivalent thing, especially on the feminist side, that you would be sort of invited along to, and then be like, oh, this is great. This is a community that I want to be a part of. We just don’t really have that anymore.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to note something we’ve done in the conversation, which is as we’ve been talking about feminism as a political movement — and there are obvious reasons why we would go in this direction this week, but I think we would have gone in it a year ago too — we’ve moved very quickly to questions of reproductive rights. And again, not for no reason given everything that is going on. But I do think it raises this question of what is feminism about beyond reproductive rights? Where is the energy in the movement there?

I mean, so far, the things we’ve tagged are reproductive rights and transgender issues. You have a great quote from Gonzales in that piece where she’s describing her mother, who’s a home health aide and a special-education teacher. And she writes, quote, “My mother’s life is hard, much harder than it needs to be, and when I take stock of feminism’s current offerings, I see little that would actually ease it.”

Tell me a bit about that. What does feminism want or organize on behalf of, for women who already have kids, already have a family, or want to have kids, right, and need something different in order for the choices they’re making to work out for their lives?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: I mean I think there are obvious political demands, and definitely, there’s, you know, Ai-jen Poo and the National Domestic Workers Alliance. There are people organizing on behalf of caregivers and on behalf of nonelite women.

There were people inside Democratic circles, certainly, mostly women, Patty Murray and others, who were organizing to try to get Joe Biden to include what was sometimes called the care agenda in Build Back Better before Build Back Better’s demise — or at least for now, its demise.

And they were demanding things that exist in most other developed countries, or almost all other developed countries, paid family leave, child care. Child care is a huge one. I mean, child care, we talked about reproductive rights as being the right not to have kids, but for a lot of women, having kids feels like it’s out of reach because of just how shatteringly expensive it is, and how little social supports there are.

So there’s definitely feminist demands for those things, but like in terms of what are the organized groups that are fighting for them, I mean, they’re there, but they’re not really visible. And they’re definitely not as visible as the pro-choice groups, in part because the long assault on abortion has made abortion just the flashpoint of feminist politics for almost 50 years. And it’ll probably be the flashpoint of feminist politics far into the future.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to dig in on something you just said a minute ago that I’ve heard from some people in the reproductive rights world who are trying to think about what the research and strategy looks like, what they should be fighting for over the next 30 years, and how to make it more than just the resuscitation of Roe.

And you talked about the idea that choice should really truly be about either choice, right, the choice to be able to not have children or not have another child, or not have children right now, but also the choice to have children and be able to have them economically, be able to also work and make sure they’re well cared for.

And I’ve really heard people beginning to talk about these frames that would put that much more at the center, that would really try to have that kind of economic justice, that ability to maximize the number of choices somebody can make in their life to make that the North Star, as they put it, of the movement. Do you see much around that? Do you think that has organizing potential?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Well, I certainly think that a lot of people are trying to do that. I mean, that’s what the whole idea of reproductive justice is all about. Reproductive justice has been sort of the watchword among committed activists for a long time. It was a kind of approach to reproductive rights and feminism that was pioneered by a lot of Black activists, including Loretta Ross.

And so I don’t know how much people out there in America hear the word “feminism” and associate it with a demand for the supports that would make raising a family possible if you wanted to. And I think Democrats have a real opportunity here, and I have — we can talk about this if you want — I have some disagreements with both the way the big reproductive rights organizations are approaching the post-Roe environment, but also how the Democratic Party is.

And enough smart people disagree with me that I think maybe I’m wrong, but I can’t help but think that it would be really smart for Democrats to say, yeah — actually, I don’t think there’s a lot of disagreement with me on this next part. But I think it would be smart for Democrats to kind of call the kind of, quote unquote, “national conservatives’” bluff and bring a family subsidy up for a vote, right.

All these people who are saying, well, now Republicans are going to have to figure out how to support women and girls who are having children that they would have in an environment where abortion was legal that they wouldn’t have had. They’re saying that they’re open to policies to support these women and girls, to support families. Why don’t we try to vote on some, right? Vote on some version of the thing that Mitt Romney has proposed. And either we pass it and make people’s lives better, or they filibuster it and show the kind of lie behind their pro-family rhetoric.

EZRA KLEIN: Tell me, then, if that part is not so controversial, what are your disagreements about how the Democratic Party or the reproductive rights movement have been approaching in the postwar world?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: This is something I’ve heard but haven’t done enough reporting on to substantiate. I wouldn’t want to say that all of the groups have this position, but it is what I’m hearing, both from some of the groups themselves and from some politicians, is that there’s a lot of resistance to putting forth anything short of the Women’s Health Protection Act, which is an act that the House passed which both codifies Roe and goes a little bit beyond Roe, you know.

And it couldn’t even get 50 votes in the Senate. It’s obviously not going to pass. But Nancy Pelosi and her “Dear Colleague” letter after Roe was overturned suggested that they might bring it up for a vote again, and again, sort of show people the contrast, make clear the contrast.

There’s a real reluctance to get behind anything that’s seen as a retreat, and so people don’t really want to vote on anything that falls short of Roe. But from where I sit, again, and I can be talked out of this, but I just think that we lost. And so you do kind of have to regroup, and in some cases, retreat after you lost.

When you look at the way the anti-abortion movement organized legally over the last 50 years, I mean, there were certainly people who tried to bring up personhood bills in the states. And there was a referendum in Mississippi that actually failed in Mississippi, which shows you how unpopular that approach is.

But they also passed a lot of laws that were far short of what they really wanted to do. There was the quote unquote “partial birth” abortion ban. And part of what that was meant to do was it outlawed a very specific abortion procedure. I mean, partial birth abortion doesn’t have a real scientific meaning, but in practice, it outlawed this pretty specific procedure.

And Democrats voted against it, because by outlawing that procedure, it meant that in some late-term abortions, including late-term abortions where there was really severe fetal abnormalities, you had to use a more dangerous technique. But what it ended up doing was making Democrats defend a late-term abortion procedure that sounds kind of really gruesome in practice, and that most people can be convinced to oppose. And it made them seem extreme.

And when you look at what is happening now already in the post-Roe landscape, a lot of states that have banned abortion, they either have no exemption. They have exemptions for the life of the mother, which is itself usually a pretty poorly defined concept. And they have no exemptions for rape and incest.

Now, rape and incest exemptions are not actually that meaningful in practice, because if you don’t have any abortion clinics, you don’t have anywhere to go to get an abortion when you’ve been raped. And abortion clinics aren’t going to stay open to serve the few people who need abortions in those circumstances. Those people are still going to have to go across state lines.

Nevertheless, both because a bunch of states are now trying to criminalize interstate travel, and because just the concept of it is so outrageous, and because there are private doctors that will perform abortions, I think that there is a lot of reason to try to codify rape, incest, life and health of the mother exemptions, both because right now, there’s all kinds of confusion about, can doctors prescribe methotrexate, which is a drug that treats lupus and rheumatoid arthritis and is used for some sorts of cancers, but is also an abortifacient.

There’s some question if a woman is probably or maybe going to die, does that count as saving her life. And so I think that Democrats, there’s both substantive reasons to try to do this. But also rape and health exemptions are very controversial among Republicans. They’re not controversial among the public. And so I would like to see Republican senators have to take a vote on them.

EZRA KLEIN: It’s funny, because I agree that I don’t know if I think the advice is controversial, but I definitely think it’s not being followed, even though from any standard political playbook, on any issue I’m familiar with, what you want to do when you’re down, when you have gains to make, is begin to split the other coalition.

And so like you, I thought it was very strange when Democrats after the Alito leak, I think, primarily brought forward a bill that they didn’t have unanimity on, right, a bill they couldn’t even get the votes in the Senate for. There’s been this talk that you can’t pass an abortion bill in the Senate because of filibuster, and that might be true. But you couldn’t have passed that one even if you didn’t have the filibuster, because you were losing Democrats on it, because it was significantly more liberal than Roe — or expansive, I should say, actually, than Roe.

And in a way, I think that this sort of unites both of the things you’re saying, which is that it seems to me that there are two pretty profound ways that you could build a bigger tent here and split the right, which is, one, sort of beginning to pick off the many, many, many, many, many, many, many unpopular positions the right holds on choice. But also, the right has a rhetoric around family that is not at all matched by its practice or its policies. I did, on the podcast over the past couple of months, a series on the rising right.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Yeah, no, I’ve heard it.

EZRA KLEIN: I spoke to a couple of people, Patrick Deneen and Erika Bachiochi in particular, who really focus on the idea of the family, right. They’re very, very pro-life. They’re very intent on making the argument that the left is hostile to or has abandoned the family. And one of the things I came away from those conversations thinking is that there’s a funny asymmetry right here, where I think the right knows how to talk about families but doesn’t know how to support them. It doesn’t have, within its own coalition, support for supporting them.

And the left has a lot of very good family policies, but it doesn’t know how to talk about them, because it’s worried about seeming to pass judgment on nontraditional families. It is coming out of the legacy of concerns about the family being weaponized in a very racist way against Black communities. And so you have, I think, a lot of good policies. I mean, Biden’s Build Back Better agenda had more pro-family policy than any Democratic agenda I can think of.

But in terms of the way it was framed, it was framed as infrastructure, of all things. And there just is not a focus on trying to capture, I think, rhetorically, some of the highest ground in American politics, some of the ground that I think is most important to people in their everyday lived lives, and ground that the left actually has a good agenda on, which is the family.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Right. And sometimes, this debate is kind of framed as like a popularist debate. You know, should you try more to appeal to the median American voter, who’s maybe more conservative than you would like? I know that one reason there’s resistance to bringing up rape, incest, health of the mother exemptions is because they don’t want to imply that there are good abortions and bad abortions.

And I actually understand that combating the stigma around abortion is something that’s really important. That’s been an important feminist gain. But I think if you kind of have to constantly check all these rhetorical boxes and make sure that you don’t kind of run afoul of any rhetorical land mines, it can just really curtail your ability to create wedge issues. It can really curtail your ability to speak to people who don’t already share all your presuppositions.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that’s a really very, very well said point. I want to go to something you wrote here, which has been on my mind, which is, quote, “a backlash isn’t just a political formation. It’s also a new structure of feeling that makes utopian social projects seem ridiculous.”

And I wanted to ask about both sides of that. One is whether or not there is still a utopian social project here, even one to be made to sound ridiculous. And then the other is to ask you about how you understand the backlash that is formed, and the ways it is the same or different than the backlash we saw in the ’80s. But let me start with a utopian question. Is there still utopian feminist thinking that you can see that has a political constituency?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: You know, I’m not sure that there is. I do think that there’s utopian thinking around gender, and this is probably a generational division. And I’m in some ways the wrong person to speak to. There’s someone I interviewed for the piece that I didn’t end up quoting for that bigger piece that we were talking about. I didn’t end up being able to work it in, where she was saying that the thing that really excites her now is the movement for trans rights and these new ways of thinking about and talking about gender.

And it’s not feminism per se, but the idea of making the gender binary, kind of irrelevant as a social organizing principle, I mean, that’s pretty utopian. We’ve never seen anything like that in, as far as I can tell, the history of the world. I mean, this is something that Margaret Mead the anthropologist wrote about, that every society organizes gender differently, assigns different roles to male and female. So those roles, there’s nothing really natural about them. And there’s also a ton of societies that have different iterations of like a third gender, or that allows some sort of flexibility.

Nevertheless basically every society is organized in some sense around the gender binary. You know, so I think there are younger people that have a vision of a society in which that is not true. And it might just be my own lack of vision or creativity that I find it hard to even envision. So I think that is where a lot of the utopian energy on the kind of part of the left that is really concerned about gender.

I think that if you look at the consciousness raising groups in the ’70s, as they became more radical, there were certainly some of them that rejected heterosexuality. There was lesbian separatism. There was people who decided that you can’t sleep with the enemies. There was a sense among a lot of women that feminism was going to give them like more fulfilling, egalitarian, sexually healthy, sexually expressive relationships, that it was going to allow for kind of romantic love without sadism.

I don’t mean sadism in the like kink sense. I just mean kind of naturalized dominance and cruelty. People really thought that that’s where they were going. And this is why I think the concept of heteropessimism, it’s both a sort of expression of despair about the current state of male-female relations, but it’s also an expression of despair about even a vision in which people are relating to each other in a kinder and less oppressive way.

EZRA KLEIN: Oh, I think this is so rich. I’m going to come back to the backlash question in a minute because I want to stay here for a little bit. I want to key in on a word you used, which is excitement, which is the idea of exploding the gender binary is a vision that particularly, I think a lot of younger activists find exciting.

And I think there is something exciting about it. I mean, I always think it’s good for there to be political movements that are imagining things, a little bit like you, I have trouble actually imagining. I think that if people are not pushing the frontiers of the imagination of old people like me, then there’s an actual political problem. You want ideas you don’t understand. You want that kind of ferment.

And I also think at the same time, that a real failure mode for movements is that what is exciting becomes the only thing that there really is versus what people are living through. There’s another thing in one of your essays that I think relates to this, which is, you had mentioned the series of pieces in the journal Drift about what’s wrong with feminism. And you noted that a lot of them talk about how feminism has become, the word is “cringe,” cringe.

And I think there is an argument — I will make the argument. I’m not going to passive voice it — that leftism in general has become really weakened by its distaste for its fear of being cringe. It’s like, it has this withering contempt sometimes for things that are popular, earnest, mainstream, liked by uncool people or simply by too many people.

I think the backlash to “Hamilton,” where at one hand, it’s this unbelievable cultural phenomenon and the most popular thing on Disney Plus, and also, I mean, all the kids in Brooklyn know “Hamilton” is super cringe. And there’s something of that here, where there’s the exciting, very non-cringe work of exploding the gender binary, which I think has real reason to it. I mean, there are a lot of people who don’t fit the binary, and trying to build a world in which they are free to have their choices in their life is a genuine, I think, central political challenge.

And at the same time, to the conversation we are having a couple of minutes ago you could very much have imagined a utopian project that’s simply around care, right, a utopian project that embeds choice, right, the choice to have or not have a child in a broader effort.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: I guess is that utopian or is that Scandinavia?

EZRA KLEIN: Well, maybe it’s Scandinavian, but sometimes Scandinavia, given where we are now, it feels a little bit utopian. And I’m not even sure Scandinavia has it, right. It’s still — I mean, there’s a motherhood penalty in most Scandinavian states as well. The wage gap often resolves down to, did you choose to have a child. And so we do hurt people economically for continuing life, human life on this planet, which is, I think weird. I think you could imagine utopian political agendas that would make that no longer the case.

And I do wonder if there’s not a — there’s a lack of excitement, it sometimes seems to me, about focusing on the more boring work of what is it like to have a family when you make $75,000 a year and work in a city?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: So I think these are a couple of things that need to be disentangled, right. There’s this attitudinal thing, where yes, I mean, in a democracy, a kind of winning coalition is normie by definition, right. Like the avant-garde is not the majoritarian position by definition. And so as long as you make kind of acceptance of the avant-garde the litmus test, right, the avant-garde is important, but the avant-garde can’t be all that there is. And it’s not even something that you necessarily want your politicians to embrace if you want them to build a kind of majoritarian coalition.

I also think there’s something specific to feminism that’s matricidal, right, where sort of every generation reacts against the generation before it. But part of what happened with the backlash in the 1980s was just embarrassment over the giddy hopes and kind of over-the-top earnestness of the feminists of the 1970s.

And there’s contempt for aging in our society, but there’s a very special contempt for aging women. And so kind of middle-age and aging women were kind of always the marker of something that’s uncool, at least if they get to a certain — it’s possible, I guess, to kind of transcend that and get to icon status. But in general, if you’re kind of always trying to distance yourself from the middle age, you’re both distancing yourself often from the people who are the sort of people who make a lot of local politics run, because who keeps your local Democratic committee alive in many places. Who are the people after 2016 who poured into Democratic organizing?

In many cases, it was cringe wine moms. And in many cases, those women are still there. So that’s part of it. And then I think the other part of it is maybe just about like geographic concentration or geographic polarization, where it’s really easy to live in a place where the kind of questions that you’re talking about, how you raise kids on $75,000 a year, are just — you just don’t encounter those people. And certainly, you don’t encounter them maybe until you have kids yourself.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: So then let’s go to the question of backlash and the different kinds of backlashes we’ve seen. How does the critique that you hear in this moment, or the backlash you see in this moment, seem similar to you or different from the backlash you saw in the ’80s or even before that?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: So there are obvious differences, although when I went back and reread “Backlash,” and I’ve gone back to that book many times, I was like marking up my pages like crazy. There is so much in that book that it’s just happening over again.

And so when I was corresponding with Susan Faludi, you know, to her, part of the difference is that this backlash in general doesn’t frame itself as being about protecting women or saving women from feminism, right. The earlier backlash was like, feminism made women miserable, and now they’re single and they’re these kind of dried-up old career women, and their biological clock is ticking, and it’s too late for them to have kids.

I think there’s some of that, but there’s also just much more kind of like raw misogyny, right. We’re not doing this for your own good. We’re just doing this to you for our own good. So I think it’s much more aggressive, often. There’s a backlash against the #MeToo movement that I think is based in something real and legitimate, and I have a piece coming out of it, that it was, I think, a real mistake for feminists — and I include myself in this — to be cavalier about ideas of due process.

And sometimes there would be an argument when somebody was accused of something that, well, due process doesn’t apply to the workplace. Or due process is a legal term. You don’t have the presumption of innocence in a social world, right. These terms aren’t necessarily portable.

That’s true to a point, but there’s also a kind of colloquial way that you use the term due process to mean a sense of fairness, a sense that there was a process to go through. So if we take Al Franken, and this is something that there’s a huge amount of embittered moment among Democrats about what happened to Al Franken.

And so I had heard, long before any of this broke with Al Franken, a friend had told me that this had happened to his friend, that Al Franken had grabbed her butt once at a political event. And I didn’t really know what to make of it. It seemed so weird and anomalous.

But because of that, when Al Franken was accused, I really panicked and thought like, he has to resign. More is going to come out, and feminists shouldn’t have to defend this, and it’s going to make the campaign against Roy Moore, the Senate candidate in Alabama, it’s going to make that more difficult.

And since somebody is going to have to pay the price for it, because female Democratic senators were being asked constantly, should Al Franken resign — so even if it was unfair, if it was going to be unfair to someone, it should be unfair to him, not to them, right. If somebody kind of had to take the hit for this, it should be him.

And where I was really, really wrong, I think, was both in thinking that there was a way that they weren’t going to take the hit for it, because they ended up, right — I mean, this ended up, the only person whose career was derailed as much as Al Franken’s was Kirsten Gillibrand. Who knows if her presidential campaign would have gone anywhere anyway. But it certainly was kind of a nonstarter, because there was so much anger about her being seen as the one who had led the call for Al Franken’s resignation.

But I also think that there was all these women who came forward and said that Al Franken pinched their butts or tried to kiss them. I to this day don’t know what to — I mean, I believe all those women, whether it was kind of sexually aggressive or whether it was just kind of clownish, kind of prankish, is still hard for me to sort out. And whether Al Franken needed to leave the Senate, or whether there was some other way for him to make amends, I’m still ambivalent about.

I actually think if there had been a process to go through, he might have had to leave at the end of it. But if there was a process, the process itself would have been important, that there was a perception that people aren’t just being jettisoned. And I think this applies not just to Al Franken, but more generally, that there was a sense that people were just being kind of written off, and that many different crimes of many different degrees were being collapsed together.

So all that’s like a big windup way of saying that I understand why sort of #MeToo, why people felt like it needed a correction or a recalibration. But what you have instead is just this ferocious backlash, which to return to Amber Heard, it was really symbolized. I don’t think there’s been any single figure in the entire cultural universe of #MeToo, men or women, who has been demonized the way she is. And I think that tells you something about the kind of subterranean energy that was just kind of seething in opposition to this movement.

EZRA KLEIN: You can correct my recollection of this. One thing I remember about the Al Franken period was that Franken had asked for an investigation, and that had not fully carried out. And then there was this organizing around him led by Gillibrand and some others, and the Roy Moore set of concerns, and he sort of got pushed out before that had a chance to go forward or at least complete itself.

And it gets to something that — this is one of my kind of ongoing arguments about a bunch of things, about a lot of the debates around wokeness. now some of the debates around looking back at #MeToo. But a lot of people seem to me to have taken the view that the underlying ideas of a lot of these movements were wrong, not their application. They still love Twitter and everything.

And to me, what I see in a lot of this is that a lot of the ideas were right, but the communication environment, the place where this organizing happens, where these conversations are had, where process has, in the absence of agreed-upon process, migrated, is terrible.

A lot of it just happens on social media. I think this was really the true story in that Ryan Grim piece. He talks about it for a minute, where he says, Twitter may not be real life, but inside an organization, Slack certainly is. Definitely what I’ve seen. But it’s the interaction to some degree of Slack and Twitter, and then administrators or leaders of organizations feeling like they have to respond, as opposed to they have time to think to run a process. I think that happened a little bit in the Franken case. I think goes in the other direction too. I mean, I think the social media dynamics around Amber Heard made that look even worse than it probably was.

But in all these different directions, I think that one place where I seem to have a slightly different view than a lot of people I otherwise agree with is that I see less of a case that the underlying ideas of a lot of these movements were wrong, but much more of a case that social media, Slack organizing, all these things that people really, really quickly took as tools of justice, took as a belief that the underlying communications environment, was becoming friendlier to marginalized people, was making the unheard heard, that that was going to pan out, that that was really proven wrong.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Yes.

EZRA KLEIN: And when you simply orient a society around people having to respond to whatever is generating the most intense engagement and whatever people are bandwagoning around, you sometimes get outcomes from that you like, but you very often get ones you don’t. You very much incentivize a cycle of the arising of an idea, then the huge backlash the idea, then the resurgence of the idea. We’re really in this oscillating thing depending on engagement in a way that I think we have trouble separating from the underlying ideas, arguments, policies that are being proposed.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: No, I think that that’s right. I mean, look, obviously the problem that #MeToo identified, that there was a huge amount of sexual victimization of women, that they were routinely disbelieved, that there was an expectation of impunity for powerful men, that was true then, and it’s still really true now.

You know, part of the reason that so many of the people defenestrated by #MeToo were famous men or men in the media were because those are the sort of people who can be most affected by a social media campaign, right. Like, nobody’s going to wage a social media campaign about some asshole bank manager who’s making life hell for his subordinates, and it’s an open secret in their professional circles. It’s kind of only a tool that’s really optimized for high-profile people. And so you have a movement that ends up disproportionately being about high-profile people.

And then there’s just the general mercilessness of internet dynamics. And I guess, this is, I think, just a fundamental tension or contradiction on the left, is that the left, at its best, is about mercy, right. It’s about an alternative to a culture that’s like excessively punitive and excessively punishing. But its internal culture is so rarely able to reflect that.

EZRA KLEIN: One thing that I think is interesting about the cycle of the idea coming up, and then the backlash and then the resurgence, is they’re often very literal. So when you look at the ’80s backlash, a lot of it actually revolves around this idea that it would be very uncool to be a feminist. You’d be no fun. You wouldn’t laugh at anything. No man would ever like you.

And I understand the peak, I guess, of call it “cringe” feminism, that is now seen that way, as a very literal response to that, right, all these people like wearing feminist shirts and putting “feminist” onstage, and saying, I am a feminist, right, I mean, to the extent that a core critique was, well, you would never adopt this label, because look what it would say about you. Then everybody adopts it, and then, of course, the label to some degree becomes unfashionable.

But I wonder here, if there isn’t another sort of literal path forward, which is what is undoing feminist gains right now is not really the popularity of the opponents. It’s the Supreme Court nominated by presidents who lost the popular vote. It’s a decision that is highly unpopular. But what it is a group, a movement, that has relentlessly organized for decades. And you can really trace it as an organizing phenomenon.

And the question, I think, that this raises, is whether or not in response, the feminist movement can become much more of an organized movement. Is there this capacity to organize in this moment? And you wrote in a piece that there had been a desperate hope among reproductive rights activists and Democratic strategists alike that the end of Roe v. Wade would lead to an explosive feminist mobilization, that people committed to women’s equality would take to the streets and recommit themselves to politics. So now we’re there. Roe v. Wade has been overturned. Casey has been overturned. Are you seeing that?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: I mean, I’m seeing some of it. You know, I mean, I don’t think you’re seeing anything on the scale that you saw after Donald Trump’s election. Writing about this backlash, I mean, there’s some sort of explicit anti-feminism. But then there’s also just a lot of disaffection. It’s not necessarily people being converted to the right. It’s just people kind of dropping out of politics, tuning out politics, becoming really cynical about politics.

I mean, people feel as if every avenue of change is being closed off. How do you organize to win the next election when the elections are so tilted by gerrymandering, and the structures of our institutions, and the fact that you have a Supreme Court whose direction was changed by the loser of the popular vote? This is all like a very old story about minority rule.

But people have to feel like there is some avenue in which change is possible. And I think there is. And this is, again, I keep coming back to this idea that we can find some lessons in what the right has done, because in some ways, they were in a worse position when Roe came down. The decision wasn’t nearly as controversial as Dobbs has been, and the path to undoing it was extremely long and required a real long game of this march through the institutions.

The advantage that they had was what we talked about before, that people were embedded in a community that made kind of going out and fighting this long, long, long war of attrition feel rewarding as opposed to depleting.

EZRA KLEIN: I do agree with you that this is where the pro-life movement should be understood, including on the left, as genuinely inspirational, because it isn’t just that they lose on Roe. And they lose on Roe in a really big way, right. The right to abortion, to a certain point, at least, isn’t written into the Constitution and isn’t just a law somebody can overturn.

But then they get a more Republican court later on, and Casey comes down, and it leaves most of Roe standing. So Roe now is an affirmed, for the most part, decision. And the “abortion is murder” position is an unpopular position in American life, and they just keep going. And I don’t want to say that it’s inspiring to imagine you could have a multi-decade effort to get Roe back. I think that there are things that can happen, particularly through legislation, quicker than that.

But particularly if you end up with a bigger vision of what you want in a 20 or 30 or 40-year period, I think you have to look at what they did as showing that much more as possible in American politics than people often give it credit for. There’s a line elsewhere that people always overestimate what they can do in a year and underestimate what they can do in ten. And I think politically, that’s very true.

You know, I’ve been getting the question a lot of, well, you know, what now, right. The court is 6-3 Republican court. Like, what are you going to do now? And the answer in the next year or two is, aside from win elections, there isn’t a tremendous amount of reversal power. But over 10 years, I mean, who knows, right? Who knows what is possible? Who knows what can be done? I mean, there’s a lot you can do to the court. Vacancies that could open up. There’s a lot of ways to organize. There are whole new political identities that could be formed.

I think that people are very despairing, correctly, about the immediate future. I’m frankly feeling a lot more despair over the immediate future than I tend to feel. But that doesn’t really tell you anything about the 10, 15, 20-year future. I mean, 10 years ago in 2012, Democrats were riding high on demographic triumphalism, right. They believed that the demographics of the country were all turning in their favor.

I mean we hadn’t even had Obama’s re-election win yet. And then after that, you have Republicans trying to capitulate on immigration reform. And then, of course, after that, everything changes again. But I think people way overestimate political stability. The next year is typically pretty predictable, but in my experience in American politics, five years isn’t, and 10 years really isn’t. And 15 years, you’re almost better off not trying.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: There’s a real problem, and I don’t know how to solve it, of left-wing infrastructure building. I mean, maybe part of it is because the right, if you have this of chiliastic vision of redemption, then you really can keep going without immediate, tangible rewards.

But, and this is a very old complaint, right, that the right invests in and builds organizations for the long term, and the left, including left-wing funders, kind of run around like a chicken with their head cut off. And there’s been efforts.

The Democracy Alliance was initially an effort to get big funders together to think more strategically and invest in the long term, and they did that with some organizations. I mean, I think Media Matters has been a really important organization in the kind of progressive firmament, but there’s also just not nearly as much stability and long-term planning on the left.

EZRA KLEIN: I think there’s a lot to that. And I think that rather than try to solve it here, it’s a good place to think a little bit more broadly. So always our final question, which is, what are three books you’d recommend to the audience?

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Well, obviously, you should go out and reread “Backlash,” or read it if you haven’t read it yet. There are some things that are specific to its time, but there are a lot of things that I think feel like shockingly relevant to today. I spoke before about Ellen Willis. She’s a writer that I always return to, either when I’m feeling confused or despairing, because she’s just such a clear thinker. And so I’ve been rereading a book called “No More Nice Girls,” which is essays that were written in the ’80s, in another time of kind of feminist disappointment and retrenchment.

I’m also going to recommend a book that is coming out, I think, in a couple of months. It’s by W. David Marx, and it’s called, “Status and Culture: How our Desire for Social Rank Creates Taste, Identity, Art, Fashion, and Constant Change.” And it is one of those books that I kept reading it, and I kept thinking — like I would be like, wait, is that a mind-blowing insight, or something that’s so obvious that I’ve always known it?

But it’s this book about how kind of internal status struggles lead to cultural evolution, kind of in a good way. I mean, the point is that this is an engine of dynamism. And it really gave me a new way to think, I mean, a lot of it is about art and taste as opposed to politics. But it still really gave me a new way to think both about sort of these hidden forces of the zeitgeist and also about this feeling that I think a lot of people have of stuckness with where we are now and the particular role of the internet in kind of creating that feeling.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: Michelle Goldberg, thank you very much.

MICHELLE GOLDBERG: Thank you so much.

EZRA KLEIN: “The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Annie Galvin and Rogé Karma. Fact-checking by Michelle Harris and Kate Sinclair. Original music by Isaac Jones. Mixing by Isaac Jones and Sonia Herrero. Audience strategy by Shannon Busta. Our executive producer is Irene Noguchi. Special thanks to Kristin Lin and Kristina Samulewski.

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[***Toxic Clash Over the City's Future***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62DN-HH41-DXY4-X0C8-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

When the barges finally began carrying loads of toxic sludge out of Brooklyn's Gowanus Canal last year, the long-awaited cleanup effort was heralded as a milestone for one of the most polluted waterways in America, and for the industrial neighborhood, Gowanus, that grew around it.

Then one day in January, one of the barges sprang a leak and started to sink.

Apparently, little if any of the ship's toxic cargo spilled back into the harbor, and work resumed. But the symbolism was hard to miss: Gowanus would not be wrested of its confounding identity so easily.

Gowanus, where aromas of sewage and sulfur and burning rubber waft across streets lined with low-slung warehouses, is now at the center of a fight over the future of New York City.

The administration of Mayor Bill de Blasio, in its waning months, is pushing one of the most ambitious neighborhood plans of his more than seven years in office. The enormous project would eventually transform a federally designated toxic Superfund site into acres of parks and shops and some 8,000 housing units -- about twice as many as Hudson Yards, a high-end development on the Far West Side of Manhattan.

The proposed development would, if approved by the City Council, make good on developers' decades-long desire to turn the industrial neighborhood -- filled with vacant lots, artists' studios and eclectic businesses that make things like candles and caskets -- into a huge real estate opportunity sandwiched between wealthy Park Slope and Carroll Gardens.

But the proposal arrives as emboldened progressives, dubious about projects that stand to significantly benefit private interests, have helped upend other major development dreams, including the construction of an Amazon headquarters in Long Island City and a commercial and office space expansion in Industry City.

And a group of Gowanus residents fear the plan could erase the neighborhood's identity and place thousands of New Yorkers in a flood-prone area filled with toxic contaminants. The group has filed a lawsuit that has, for now, stalled the project, arguing that virtual public hearings, a result of the pandemic, are insufficient for neighborhood input.

The plan will test the city's appetite for big development, even as a housing crisis has increasingly pushed out lower-income residents and the pandemic has further exposed the city's deep inequalities.

Along with a proposal in SoHo, officials with the de Blasio administration argue that the rezoning would help diversify neighborhoods that have already gentrified and that are relatively white and wealthy compared with the city as a whole, setting the foundation for equitable growth out of the city's economic crisis. And it would be in line with Mr. de Blasio's goal of making New York more affordable: More than a third of the new housing in Gowanus would be aimed at lower-income New Yorkers.

''We are finally really at a point where we can clean up the canal, we can bring open space, we can bring 3,000 units of affordable housing,'' said Vicki Been, the deputy mayor for housing and economic development. ''The time is right to bring this neighborhood up to the modern day.''

The plans have been a long time coming. It was in the mid-1800s when development first began to transform the meadows, creeks and marshland of the Gowanus area. A natural creek was converted into the canal in the late 1800s, and until the mid-1900s, coal and manufactured gas plants, paper mills and other industrial businesses casually filled the waterway with pollutants and sewage.

From the very beginning, the canal would be seen as both a driver and a deterrent of development. For more than 50 years, city officials dreamed of new apartments and businesses in the industrial zone, but the Bloomberg administration was among the first with a concrete plan: In 2009 it proposed rezoning 25 blocks of industrial land to allow for residential and commercial development, earmarking $175 million to mitigate odors and prevent sewage discharges into the canal.

But after the canal was designated a Superfund site in 2010, those plans were dropped. City officials predicted the label -- made famous by the Love Canal catastrophe in upstate New York and more than 1,300 polluted sites around the country -- would dissuade development.

Those predictions proved false.

The neighborhood, which is between some of Brooklyn's most expensive real estate, became one of the hottest neighborhoods in the city. A Whole Foods grocery store opened in 2013. That same year the Environmental Protection Agency finalized a plan to clean up the canal, spurring a series of discussions in the community and the city about more parks, housing and infrastructure. The prospect of a federally mandated cleanup drove a spike in real estate speculation, with developers eager to capitalize on a neighborhood transformation.

After years of planning, the ambitious cleanup of the waterway began late last year. But deciding what will happen at the water's edge has proved to be a thornier question.

Michelle de la Uz, the executive director of the Fifth Avenue Committee, a nonprofit that advocates for low-income housing, has come out in favor of the rezoning, and her group is involved in the plans for a project in Gowanus. She pointed out that development pressures had changed the composition of the neighborhood long before the canal cleanup began.

A report from the Pratt Center for Community Development, a Brooklyn-based nonprofit, found that the proportion of Latino people living in the Gowanus area dropped to 25 percent from 35 percent between 2000 and 2015 as housing prices rose. The rezoning could preserve or even bolster some economic and racial diversity, according to Ms. Uz, a former member of the city planning commission who was appointed by Mr. de Blasio when he was the city's public advocate.

''If we were talking about rezoning the Gowanus of 20 years ago, then I would be extremely concerned about gentrification and displacement,'' she said. ''But we're not. A lot of gentrification and displacement has already happened.''

At the base level, the plan targets about 82 blocks around the canal, making way for a huge influx of new housing, shops and businesses by rezoning many low-density light-manufacturing and commercial areas to higher density mixed-use areas. Many of the plots have dangerous pollutants in the ground, and the plan would require new development to clean out the sites before building.

A new waterfront esplanade would border the canal, connecting waterfront parks and apartments, shops and restaurants.

The plan includes construction of a new affordable complex called Gowanus Green on the site of a former manufactured gas plant. The complex would have 950 units, with at least half geared toward to those who earn up to $56,850 for a family of four.

''Instead of displacing low-income families and people of color, this has the possibility of making the neighborhood more inclusive, of having more low-income and ***working-class*** families be a higher percentage of the neighborhood after the rezoning,'' said Brad Lander, a councilman who represents the area and who is running for city comptroller this November.

But Debbie Stoller, who is part of a group of neighborhood activists called Voice of Gowanus who are opposed to the rezoning, calls the affordable housing argument a ''Trojan horse.''

Ms. Stoller noted that a vast majority of new housing would be at market rate, and that many of the developments, under a set of separate city rules, would get years of property tax breaks.

''You really have to ask,'' Ms. Stoller said, ''what are we getting for all that loss? Are we getting what we should be getting for all that expense? I think the answer is no.''

But it is the environmental legacy of a manufactured gas plant near the corner of Fifth Street and Smith Street -- operated by Citizens Gas Company and Brooklyn Union Gas for nearly a century until the site was sold in the 1960s -- that is the focus of many neighborhood activists.

Some residents maintain that coal tar pooling under the surface of the Gowanus Green site would put future tenants at risk, and they are calling for no big towers on that land, and perhaps no housing at all without better remediation.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation said it had a plan to allow for development on the site of Gowanus Green while protecting future inhabitants and the environs, in part by excavating soil to a depth of 22 feet in the most heavily polluted area and replacing two feet of dirt across the remainder of the site.

But neighborhood activists are dubious. The state's original cleanup plan from the early 2000s was scaled back in 2019 after state officials said they determined the coal tar -- the main ingredient in what has become known among dredgers as ''black mayonnaise'' -- was concentrated only in certain areas.

The activists' suspicions were then bolstered when, at a community meeting in December, the E.P.A. official managing the cleanup of the canal, Christos Tsiamis, said he would not want to live there himself unless more was done to remediate the site and keep the coal tar vapors underground.

''Personally, if I were to live in a building like this, I wouldn't feel comfortable with venting,'' Mr. Tsiamis said at the meeting. ''I would feel comfortable with preventing, preventing the vapors from entering the building.''

After his comments were met with some blowback, Mr. Tsiamis spoke again at a meeting in late March. Citing similar projects in other parts of the city, he acknowledged that successful cleanup of the site is possible. But, he added, he had seen nothing to change the assessment he had shared in December.

Asked about those fears while appearing on The Brian Lehrer Show on WNYC, Mr. de Blasio said that he was ''concerned'' but that he would ''make sure we get it right.''

''I really have believed for a long time there was a way to do development in the Gowanus area safely,'' Mr. de Blasio said. ''I think for so many people who need affordable housing, they want to know, of course, that the foundation of it all will be safe.''

A spokesman for the Gowanus Green development team, James Yolles, said that city, state and federal agencies would need to approve the site's cleanup plan. In a March 22 joint letter, the E.P.A. and New York's environmental conservation department noted that the two agencies would work together to ensure that the site would be safe.

''To question whether the site can and will be cleaned to a standard that's safe for its planned residential and school uses is deeply misleading,'' he said.

The opponents of the rezoning also draw strength from an emboldened progressive strain in local politics. Brad Vogel, another member of Voice of Gowanus, said the group had joined an alliance with other groups in neighborhoods like Flushing, Inwood and Sunset Park that have fought rezoning plans.

He said the downfall of Amazon's rezoning for its new headquarters in Long Island City, Queens, and of the commercial rezoning by private developers in Industry City, about a mile south of Gowanus, ''have given us some hope that we are not alone in our concerns about just how unfair this process can be to a neighborhood.''

Even the strongest supporters of the Gowanus rezoning express some apprehension about the city's plans.

Mr. Lander, for example, said he would not support the rezoning if the city did not also make hundreds of millions of dollars of investments in three public housing complexes in Gowanus.

Kate Brennan, 29, who has lived a block west of the canal for three years, opposes the rezoning, which she fears could bring the same shiny high-rise apartment buildings that she has seen pop up elsewhere in Brooklyn in recent years. She said that the planning process had felt opaque and that she had been unable to grasp fully the particulars of the plan or how she might be able to influence its outcome.

But still, she has noticed how the neighborhood's population is ''exceptionally white,'' and how small local businesses like neighborhood corner stores seem to be disappearing.

''I don't think we would be better off with doing nothing,'' she said.

This article was reported with The Hatch Institute, a nonprofit newsroom based in New York City.This article was reported with The Hatch Institute, a nonprofit newsroom based in New York City.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/09/nyregion/gowanus-canal-brooklyn-development.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/09/nyregion/gowanus-canal-brooklyn-development.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Gowanus, top and left, would be completely transformed by a new development proposal. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB1)

Top, a dredging barge on the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn, which is a federally designated Superfund site. Clockwise from above left: industrial traffic on the canal in 1952

the site of construction of a new affordable housing complex nearby

and a coffee shop in a new luxury apartment complex. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

ALFRED EISENSTAEDT/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (MB6)

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[***The Women Who Fought Against the Vote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KX-FS81-JBG3-62FC-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jennifer Schuessler

**Body**

To understand the suffragists, and why their battle took so long, you also have to understand the anti-suffragists.

The sinking of the Titanic in 1912 inspired a flood of articles on seemingly every aspect of the disaster. One of the oddest appeared in The Woman's Protest, a journal dedicated to opposing women's suffrage.

In ''The Lesson that Came from the Sea,'' Josephine Jewell Dodge, a leading anti-suffragist, noted that when the ship started going down, the cry that went up was not ''Voters first!'' but ''Women first!''

''In acquiescing to that cry the women admitted that they were not fitted for men's tasks,'' Dodge wrote. ''They did not think of the boasted 'equality' in all things.''

This was not to say, she emphasized, that women were ''inferior.'' But the disaster, she wrote, ''tends in its terribly grim way to point out the everlasting 'difference' of the sexes.''

Women at the polls (and on the ballot) are such an ordinary sight today that it can be hard to remember how long and hard women fought for the vote and the powerful forces arrayed against them, including business interests, religious organizations and the political parties, which feared an influx of unpredictable new voters.

But one opposition group has long inspired puzzled reactions, if not outright disbelief: women themselves.

As the suffrage movement picked up steam in the late 19th century, it was increasingly countered by an organized, women-led anti-suffrage movement, which mirrored its arguments, tactics and public relations strategies, including cartoons, buttons, pennants and other swag.

It's tempting to dismiss the Antis, as they were sometimes called, as a bizarre footnote, or a joke. But historians argue that you can't really understand the suffrage movement -- and today's unfinished debates about what true equality for women means -- without them.

''You might ask, 'How could a woman be opposed to her own rights?''' said Susan Goodier, a historian at the State University of New York, Oneonta, and the author of ''No Votes for Women,'' a study of the Antis. ''But you have to understand what the suffrage movement was up against, which wasn't just men.''

In the 19th century, when women first articulated the demand for the vote, the idea that politics and government were the sole province of men, who would represent the interests of their families, was the default position of just about everyone.

The idea of women's suffrage was seen as radical unto absurd, even to some early feminists. When a group sat down before the Seneca Falls, N.Y., women's rights convention of 1848 to draft a document calling for equality, Lucretia Mott, a Quaker feminist, warned against including a call for the vote, lest it ''make us look ridiculous.''

And almost as soon as suffragists began formalizing their demand for the vote, other women moved to counter it. In 1871, in response to a proposed 16th Amendment that would enfranchise women (after the 15th enfranchised only Black men), 19 wives of Republican senators, Civil War generals and cabinet members published a petition against it.

In the following decades, other ''remonstrants,'' as anti-suffragists were known, also pressed the case against the vote, even as they strove not to draw too much attention to themselves, in keeping with the common belief that women should stay in the domestic sphere.

''Unlike suffragists, who wanted everyone to know names and recognize their images, the Antis didn't want to be known,'' said Allison K. Lange, the author of ''Picturing Political Power: Images in the Women's Suffrage Movement.''

That changed as anti-suffragists started to get organized, and politicized. The first organized group was founded in Massachusetts in 1895, in response to a campaign to extend municipal voting rights to women in Boston. Later, the movement was based in New York, with national offices, at one point, in the Waldorf Hotel.

While a range of women opposed women's suffrage (including the anarchist Emma Goldman, who saw the electoral system as a tool of the powerful), the organized anti-suffrage movement consisted mainly of elite white women, often married to prominent men. (Goodier has written that there is ''virtually no evidence'' of any Black women in the organized anti-suffrage movement.)

Still, they were not all mere ''butterflies of fashion,'' as one suffragist publication put it. Many were active reformers, sometimes pushing for the same causes -- child welfare, workplace safety, access to education -- that suffragists championed.

The anti-suffragists (who received admiring coverage in The New York Times) included women like Helena de Kay Gilder, a trained artist and future founder of the Art Students League of New York. In a widely reprinted 1894 essay, written in response to a proposal to remove the word ''male'' from the New York state constitution, she laid out her case.

Women ''are men's equal, and almost as well educated, as good and as intelligent in ordinary matters,'' she wrote. But the ballot was a burden that would corrupt and ''unsex'' them, and take away their ''liberty.''

Dodge, the author of the Titanic polemic (and the daughter of a pro-suffrage governor of Connecticut and a suffragist mother), worked to establish nurseries for poor African-American children in Harlem.

And then there was Annie Nathan Meyer, a founder of Barnard College, whose debates with her sister Maud, a leading suffragist, drew attention in the press, which called them ''the fighting Nathan sisters.''

The Antis, scholars note, were not simply saying that women should just stay home. Instead, many believed that participating in the grubby world of party politics would undermine women's distinct strength: their nonpartisan, politically disinterested commitment to the public good.

''These women have a whole idea of what women should be doing in public life,'' said Susan Ware, the editor of a new Library of America anthology about the suffrage movement. ''They just don't think women need or want the vote.''

Toward the middle of the 1910s, as the battle over the proposed 19th Amendment heated up, men came to dominate the anti-suffrage movement. In 1913, a group of prominent men formed the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Women, which became more commonly known by the even more Monty Python-esque name of the Man Suffrage Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage.

After World War I broke out, anti-suffrage women shifted their focus to war preparedness and support for the Red Cross. As men took control, the Antis increasingly made states' rights arguments. Anti-socialist rhetoric also rose, with suffragists increasingly denounced as enemies of the state.

After the 19th Amendment became law in 1920, anti-suffrage women went in varying directions. Some, like Meyer, became active in the nonpartisan League of Women Voters. Others became active in the Republican Party, helping push it to the right. By the 1920s, the scholar Rebecca Rix has written, the Antis shed their elitism in an effort ''to make anti-Progressivism appealing to a conservative ***working-class*** and middle-class electorate,'' including the women whose voting rights they had opposed.

And some Antis got caught up in the first Red Scare. In 1918, The Woman's Protest had been renamed The Woman Patriot and dedicated itself to''the Defense of Womanhood, Motherhood, the Family and the State AGAINST Suffragism, Feminism and Socialism.''

Some scholars draw a line from the Antis to post-World War II conservative women activists like Phyllis Schlafly, who mobilized a political army against both Communism and feminism.

Ware, no fan of the anti-suffragists, said they became ''more interesting'' when seen as forerunners of later conservative women. But she said there are also differences between the Antis, who saw the vote as a ''burden,'' and Schlafly, who warned of the loss of feminine ''privileges.''

In a recent article in The Los Angeles Times, Gloria Steinem and Eleanor Smeal criticized ''Mrs. America,'' the FX series about the battle over the Equal Rights Amendment, for presenting a ''catfight theory of American history.'' The series, they argue, also exaggerates the importance of Schlafly and her group STOP ERA, which they maintain was less crucial in defeating the amendment than the insurance industry and other corporate interests.

Some historians have made similar arguments about the Antis, whose opposition, they say, was far less important than business interests, the political parties and men in general -- who, after all, were the ones who decided whether women would be allowed to vote.

But still, they argue against being too quick to write the Antis off simply as history's losers.

''It's not what we would think today,'' Goodier said of their arguments. ''But they have their points. Can we be so liberal-minded that we can see equality with nuances of difference?''Jennifer Schuessler is a culture reporter covering intellectual life and the world of ideas.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/14/us/anti-suffrage-movement-vote.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/14/us/anti-suffrage-movement-vote.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: An anti-suffrage card from 1915. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEN FLOREY SUFFRAGE COLLECTION/GADO/GETTY IMAGES) (TW28)

Like the suffrage movement, the organized anti-suffrage movement used posters and other paraphernalia to promote the cause. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES) (TW29)

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[***The Dissenters Trying to Save Evangelicalism From Itself; David Brooks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PD-D2F1-DXY4-X0GH-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 4570 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** Heartbroken by the path their church has taken, they seek a renewal.

**Body**

Think of your 12 closest friends. These are the people you vacation with, talk about your problems with, do life with in the most intimate and meaningful ways. Now imagine if six of those people suddenly took a political or public position you found utterly vile. Now imagine learning that those six people think that your position is utterly vile. You would suddenly realize that the people you thought you knew best and cared about most had actually been total strangers all along. You would feel disoriented, disturbed, unmoored. Your life would change.

This is what has happened over the past six years to millions of American Christians, especially [*evangelicals*](https://www.nae.org/what-is-an-evangelical/). There have been three big issues that have profoundly divided them: the white evangelical embrace of Donald Trump, sex abuse scandals in evangelical churches and parachurch organizations, and attitudes about race relations, especially after the killing of George Floyd.

Thabiti Anyabwile pastors the largely Black [*Anacostia River Church*](https://anacostiariverchurch.org/about-us/) in Washington, D.C. “It’s been at times agonizing and bewildering,” he says. “My entire relationship landscape has been rearranged. I’ve lost 20-year friendships. I’ve had great distance inserted into relationships that were once close and I thought would be close for life. I’ve grieved.”

Tim Dalrymple is president of the prominent evangelical magazine Christianity Today, which [*called for*](https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2019/december-web-only/trump-should-be-removed-from-office.html) Trump’s removal from office after his first impeachment. “As an evangelical, I’ve found the last five years to be shocking, disorienting and deeply disheartening,” he says. “One of the most surprising elements is that I’ve realized that the people who I used to stand shoulder to shoulder with on almost every issue, I now realize that we are separated by a yawning chasm of mutual incomprehension. I would never have thought that could have happened so quickly.”

Kristin Kobes Du Mez is a professor of history at Calvin University, a Christian school in Michigan, and is the author of “Jesus and John Wayne,” about how rugged masculinity pervades the evangelical world. “I’ve had so many moms I don’t know come up to me in the playground,” she tells me, “and whisper, ‘Are you the author of that book?’ They pour out their hearts: ‘This is not my faith. This is not what I was raised to believe in.’ These are 30-something white Christian women. They are in deep crisis, questioning everything.”

Of course there is a lot of division across many parts of American society. But for evangelicals, who have dedicated their lives to Jesus, the problem is deeper. Christians are supposed to believe in the spiritual unity of the church. While differing over politics and other secondary matters, they are in theory supposed to be unified by their shared first love — as brothers and sisters in Christ. Their common devotion is supposed to bring out the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

“We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,” say the opening lines of a famous Christian song commonly known as “By Our Love.” In its chorus it proclaims, “And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love.” The world envisioned by that song seems very far away right now. The bitter recriminations have caused some believers to wonder if the whole religion is a crock.

Russell Moore resigned from his leadership position in the Southern Baptist Convention last spring over the denomination’s resistance to addressing the racism and sexual abuse scandals in its ranks. He tells me that every day he has conversations with Christians who are losing their faith because of what they see in their churches. He made a haunting point last summer when I saw him speak in New York State at a conference at a Bruderhof community, which has roots in the Anabaptist tradition. “We now see young evangelicals walking away from evangelicalism not because they do not believe what the church teaches,” he said, “but because they believe that the church itself does not believe what the church teaches.”

The proximate cause of all this disruption is Trump. But that is not the deepest cause. Trump is merely the embodiment of many of the raw wounds that already existed in parts of the white evangelical world: misogyny, racism, racial obliviousness, celebrity worship, resentment and the willingness to sacrifice principle for power.

Over the past decade or so, many of the country’s most celebrated Christian institutions were rocked by a series of horrific scandals. If you’re not evangelical, you may not know names like Willow Creek Community Church, Ravi Zacharias or Kanakuk Kamps. But if you’re evangelical, these are large presences on your mental landscape, and all have been destroyed or tarnished in recent years by sexual abuse allegations. The former leader of another prominent congregation, Mars Hill Church, has been accused of abuses of power.

Power is the core problem here. First, the corruptions of personal power. Evangelicalism is a populist movement. It has no hierarchy or central authority, so you might think it would have avoided the abuses of power that have afflicted the Roman Catholic Church. But the paradox of decentralization is that it has often led to the concentration of power in the hands of highly charismatic men, who can attract enthusiastic followings. A certain percentage of these macho celebrities inflict their power on the vulnerable and especially on young women. “Obedience to God was defined by obedience to the leader,” Du Mez says. “It’s been incredibly hard for people within that system to confront abuses of power.”

Then there is the way partisan politics has swamped what is supposed to be a religious movement. Over the past couple of decades evangelical pastors have found that their 20-minute Sunday sermons could not outshine the hours and hours of Fox News their parishioners were mainlining every week. It wasn’t only that the klieg light of Fox was so bright, but also that the flickering candle of Christian formation was so dim.

In 2020, roughly [*40 percent*](https://twitter.com/ryanburge/status/1380184604066332673) of the people who called themselves evangelical attended church once a year or less, according to research by the political scientist Ryan Burge. It’s just a political label for them. This politicization is one reason people have cited to explain why so many are leaving the faith.

In 2006, 23 percent of Americans were white evangelical Protestants, according to the Public Religion Research Institute. By 2020, that share was down to [*14.5 percent*](https://www.prri.org/research/2020-census-of-american-religion/). In 2020, 22 percent of Americans 65 and older were white evangelical Protestants. Among adults 18 to 29, only 7 percent were.

The turmoil in evangelicalism has not just ruptured relationships; it’s dissolving the structures of many evangelical institutions. Many families, churches, parachurch organizations and even denominations are coming apart. I asked many evangelical leaders who are wary of Trump if they thought their movement would fracture. Most said it already has.

Over the past few years, the atmosphere within many Christian organizations has grown more tense and bitter. As an evangelical friend of mine noted, what used to be open fields are now minefields. If you invite such and such a speaker to your Christian college, it means you’ve surrendered to the woke brigades. If you use this word in your sermon, you’re guilty of critical race theory. Pastors across the political spectrum are exhausted — partly because of Covid but partly because every word they use is scrutinized to see if it passes this or that ideological litmus test.

Roughly 80 percent of white evangelical voters supported Trump in 2020. But it is often a minority of this group who spark bitter conflicts and want their church to be on war footing all the time.

“The healthiest people spiritually tend to be the least engaged in these struggles,” Russell Moore says. “The unhealthiest tend to be the most engaged in spiritual life and politics. It doesn’t matter what the numbers are. The people who care the most are going to set the agenda.”

World magazine is a microcosm of what’s happening. World is a Christian news organization that had been run by a team of strong journalists, like Marvin Olasky, who was its editor, and Mindy Belz, one of the bravest and best foreign correspondents in the country. It has long scrutinized the Christian world, reporting on Christian leaders who have gone astray. It editorialized that Trump was “unfit for power” after the “Access Hollywood” tape.

But the culture at World deteriorated over the past few years. Tensions mounted over its reporting on Covid protocols and race, and over disagreements about whether the 2020 election was stolen. Young reporters learned not to pitch stories that might offend Trumpist editors. Last fall, World’s board introduced an opinion section focusing on conservative commentary without fully consulting Olasky. Albert Mohler, who is president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and endorsed Trump in 2020, was hired to run it. Olasky, Belz and five other journalists submitted their resignations, unwilling to see their journalism become more partisan.

Part of what’s happening amid this turmoil is that people are sorting themselves into like-minded political tribes. “If you had told me that people would switch churches because of masks, I would have been like, ‘That’s ridiculous,’” says David Bailey, whose group [*Arrabon*](https://arrabon.com/) does reconciliation work across a series of divides.

But it’s happening, and it’s not just normal bickering. What Mindy Belz notices is that there is now a common desire to pummel, shame and ostracize other Christians over disagreements. That suggests to me something more fundamental is going on than a fight over just Donald Trump.

Institutional rot has been exposed. Many old relationships have been severed. This is a profound moment of turmoil, pain, change and, while it’s too early to be sure, possible transformation.

Amid the storm, new coalitions are gradually forming, across many different kinds of Christians, among those whose eyes have been opened, who are rethinking old convictions, who are meeting and mobilizing in the hopes of renewing the evangelical presence in America. “As someone who struggled for three years with hopelessness and despair,” Anyabwile tells me, “these last couple of years have been a rekindling of hope.”

I think he’s right. Hints of Christian renewal are becoming visible.

When I was young, I had a weird obsession with people who adopted and then broke with communism around the middle of the 20th century — Arthur Koestler, Stephen Spender, Richard Wright, Andre Gide and Whittaker Chambers. Breaking ranks was brutal for many of this set; they were ostracized and condemned.

They were also liberated. They began to think new things, find new allies and sometimes embark on new causes. Some of them contributed to an anthology describing their experiences called “The God That Failed.”

I’ve watched a lot of evangelical Christians endure similar experiences. They’ve broken from the community they thought they were wed to for life. Except for them it wasn’t God that failed, but the human institutions built in his name. This experience of breaking, rethinking and reorienting a life could be the first stage in renewal.

Karen Swallow Prior is from a poor, rural family. “I’m old enough so I grew up before the culture wars,” she says. “I grew up in a family in which I could read whatever I wanted.” But then the culture wars ramped up in the 1980s and with it a pervasive warrior mentality. For a time, she joined in, protesting outside abortion clinics and getting arrested several times, and taught at Jerry Falwell’s Liberty University. In the past she defended his son and university president over accusations of sexual impropriety. “I was one of those who was very naïve, and I guess rationalized the support of Trump by Jerry Falwell Jr. I had all kinds of generous charitable reasons for that.”

She didn’t blame evangelicals for voting for Trump in 2016, but their enthusiastic embrace of him and their ability to rationalize his sins were eye opening, she says. Then she saw how rampant the sexual scandals were. She realized that one of the reasons Jerry Falwell Jr. supported Trump was that they both had loose morals.

“I think this culture war mentality that we’ve been developing, that I was raised in and am a product of, and I don’t reject all of it, yet, anyway — I think we are seeing the logical conclusion of so many years of a culture war mentality that polarizes us and them,” she says. Prior is still on a journey, but she has become an outspoken critic of the evangelical establishment’s toleration of abuse and an advocate of change.

I’ve seen this same sort of journey among many of my friends who at least at one time identified as evangelicals. Over the past several years I watched my fellow journalists Peter Wehner, Michael Gerson and David French earnestly and in good faith engage with Trump-backing Christians, trying to understand what was going on. Now they are courageously and passionately opposing the Trumpification of American Christianity. They’ve become leading spokesmen for reform and participants in the discussions that are now happening over what needs to be done.

French is a white evangelical who lives in Tennessee, served in Iraq and spent much of the first part of his career as a lawyer defending religious liberties. He came out early and loudly against Trump. Many assaults on him were from the alt-right. A photoshopped image floated around the internet presenting his adopted daughter, who is Black, in a gas chamber, with Donald Trump in a Nazi uniform preparing to press the button. “I’ve seen and been exposed to more hatred than I’ve ever seen at home in my entire life,” he says.

The most sobering encounters came from his fellow Christians, who shunned or confronted him at church. “It’s made me more introspective,” French says. “It’s made me think hard about my view of the world before 2015 and 2016. It’s made me understand that there are a lot of things in our country that I thought we had made more progress on, that we had not.”

If breaking ranks and rethinking is the first stage of renewal, bearing witness is the next. There are now many, many people who refused to be silent about abuses of power. When Rachael Denhollander, who was the first to publicly accuse the U.S.A. Gymnastics team doctor Larry Nassar of abuse, raised concerns with church leaders over allegations of sexual abuse and cover-ups in another church network, [*she got no support*](https://immanuelky.org/articles/we-were-rachaels-church/). She has emerged as a leading advocate for survivors of sexual abuse in churches and Christian organizations.

To narrow things down, let me just mention a few witnesses whose last name is Moore, but they are not related. When he was 19, Russell Moore had a dream of running the policy arm of the Southern Baptist Convention. “I was thinking this would fit everything I think God has called me to do,” Moore says. He realized his dream and loved the job.

But he felt compelled to call out his church’s lamentable record on race, to publicly criticize Trump and to denounce the cover-up of the sexual abuse scandals. He stood up privately and publicly, got viciously attacked by white supremacists and others, and eventually resigned from his job.

Beth Moore is one of the most prominent Bible teachers in the evangelical world. She was stunned when her fellow Southern Baptists did not reject Trump after the “Access Hollywood” tape, and she became more vocal in denouncing Christian nationalism and misogyny before breaking with the Southern Baptist Convention last year. “There comes a time when you have to say, this is not who I am,” she told the Religion News Service.

Lecrae Moore is a Black Christian hip-hop artist. “Four or five years ago, I began to speak very publicly about racial injustice,” he [*told*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2020/06/16/qa-rapper-lecrae-his-discomfort-with-hearing-slavery-described-white-blessing/) The Washington Post in 2020. “And I was met with silence or discord by white evangelicals. A lot of my shows were canceled, and people just refused to support me. I was kind of flabbergasted.”

The next stage in the renewal is what you might call the social reorganization of American Christianity. Denominational differences are becoming less important. People who used to be in different silos have been prompted by the turmoil to find one another and seek common cause. “One of the sweetest blessings is that I now count persons like Beth Moore as a friend,” Anyabwile says. “Prior to six years ago we would have been in different circles.” These kinds of new connections constitute an important form of social capital that may turn out to be very powerful in the years ahead.

Many of these dissenters have put racial justice and reconciliation activities at the center of what needs to be done. There are reconciliation conferences, trips to Selma and Birmingham, Ala., study groups reading Martin Luther King Jr. and Howard Thurman. Evangelicals played important roles in the abolitionist movement; these Christians are trying to connect with that legacy.

Eugene Rivers is a prominent Black Pentecostal who has been working to bring white and Black Pentecostals together. This would seem like an unlikely undertaking because white Pentecostals are often among the most conservative of the lot. But Rivers says their meetings have been compelling. For example, Rivers helped organize a prayer vigil for the nation in Washington on Jan. 6 of this year and ***working-class*** white Pentecostals came. “They’re on the floor crying,” Rivers says. “There is no artifice with them. These guys are the most amazing, loving people.”

Rivers says the churches are the key to racial reconciliation and racial justice. He observes, “You cannot have a rational discussion of evil outside of agape love” — the kind of self-surrendering love for others that is supposed to be at the heart of the Christian life. “Without love, the accused are defensive because they feel guilty, because they are, and the accuser only ends up alienating the people who he is reaching out to.”

David Bailey has been doing racial and other reconciliation work with church and other groups since 2008. He says that 70 percent of evangelicals are open to this work, but that the 15 percent on either end are less so. “The extremes are getting more entrenched, but I don’t think they’re growing,” he observes, before continuing: “We remind people that peacemaking and healing are core to the Christian identity. There is no way to do spiritual formation unless you practice healing and reconciliation.”

He says race is not always the most intractable difference. His church in Richmond, Va., is “racially diverse and socioeconomically diverse, and it’s the economic differences that are the hardest to heal,” he says.

One source of division could be a force for renewal: generational differences. Christians who are millennial and younger have different views on things like L.G.B.T.Q. issues and are just used to mixing with much more diverse demographics.

Mark Labberton is the president of Fuller Theological Seminary, which engages with students from 110 denominations and 90 nations. He says the average student at Fuller is about 31. Many Fuller students, Labberton says, believe in the central creed of Christianity, but not the institutional shroud it has come wrapped in. That is to say, they love Jesus, but they have had it with many of the institutions their elders have built in his name.

The future of the Christian church is not going to look like the past. Today many of the most dynamic sectors of the faith are in immigrant communities — in Korean, African and Hispanic churches, for example. In the decades ahead the American church is going to look more like the global church.

At the Fuller seminary that future is already here. That changes a lot. For example, after ISIS launched a series of deadly attacks against Egyptian Christians, some Americans at Fuller wanted to hold a memorial service. The Egyptian students said, in effect: “What are you talking about? This is a cause for a celebration. This is about acknowledging what it means to live as a Christian in a context in which you have the privilege of martyrdom.” That idea is foreign to most American Christians, but the Egyptians led a celebratory service, which was followed by communion in the form of a Japanese tea ceremony. This is not your grandfather’s evangelicalism.

There can probably be no evangelical renewal if the movement does not divorce itself from the lust for partisan political power. Over more than a century, Catholics have established a doctrine of social teaching that helps them understand how the church can be active in civic life without being corrupted by partisan politics. Protestants do not have this kind of doctrine.

Those who are leading the evangelical renewal know they need one.

In 2019 the board of the National Association of Evangelicals, which represents 40 evangelical denominations, had the bright idea of hiring Walter Kim to be its next leader. Kim grew up in the Korean American church. His organization spans the ideological chasms but has miraculously and through hard work been able to stay together. I ask him to describe his priorities as head of the N.A.E.

His first priority is “grappling with the issue of racial justice and reconciliation.” His next priority is “public discipleship.” “Evangelical churches know how to do premarital counseling and how to do marital counseling,” he explains. “I’d love to see similar programs for the church’s ability to equip people in their public and civic engagement.” It would certainly be a vast improvement if evangelicals were better equipped to separate truth from propaganda, if they had more refined criteria for what a responsible leader looks like, if they had better training for how to be involved in their communities.

These two priorities are related. “We have a lot of things to learn from the Black church,” Kim adds. “They understood their church couldn’t just address personal transformation but also their place in society.”

Many of the Protestants who have been most active in promoting social repair are often young African Americans, like Justin Giboney and the AND Campaign. As Thabiti Anyabwile puts it: “I think a lot of people are discovering that the Bible holds together things they were taught were enemies. You can be a faithful Christian and also believe in justice.” It’s important for outsiders to not impose secular left/right categories here. It’s too simplistic to say these people are moving left. They are quite conservative on many things. But they more readily incorporate justice work into the lifelong process of Christian formation — the renovation of the heart that is at the center of the Christian life, the daily effort to grow in grace and lead a more Christ-like life.

Over the past few years, I’ve joined and observed a few of the conferences and gatherings organized by Christians who are trying to figure out how to start this renewal. Inevitably there were a few sessions diagnosing the problems, then a final one in which people were supposed to suggest solutions. I would summarize the final sessions this way: “Mumble, mumble, mumble. Well, it was nice to see y’all!”

But lately a much clearer understanding of what needs to happen is emerging. The most detailed agenda I’ve seen has been produced by Tim Keller, the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City. Tim is a friend of mine, but a lot of other people would agree that he has one of the most impressive and important minds in the evangelical world. Tim laid out for me an ambitious agenda to renew this community. I’ll just give you the bullet points:

* The Christian Mind Project. Expand by a factor of 10 the number of evangelicals in graduate schools and the professoriate in order to make the community more intellectually robust.

1. A renewed church planting effort. Old churches merely attract pre-existing Christians. New churches attract new believers. Keller says Christians need to plant 6,000 new churches a year. He has already had a ton of success on this front.
2. New campus ministries. Decades ago, many young people found faith via dynamic evangelical organizations for students, such as InterVarsity and Young Life. That field has been allowed to stagnate.
3. Protestant social teaching. Catholics have a public theology that dates back at least to Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical Rerum Novarum. Protestant versions might share 75 percent of its ideas, while being perhaps less hierarchical and more individualistic.
4. Faith and work. Faith is not just for Sundays. Keller suggests there should be more education programs on how Christians should show up at work and in the world.
5. Racial justice. Keller argues that this is one of the most explosive divides between the Trumpian and the non-Trumpian wings of the movement.
6. A strategy for post-Christian world — how you evangelize among people who have never had any contact with faith and don’t share the same mental concepts.
7. Spiritual formation. As Keller puts it: “We need to really redo Christian education. Completely.”

That’s a concrete and ambitious strategy for change. Is it too late to put it into action? Quite possibly. The evangelical community might have so spoiled its own appeal that many members of younger generations will continue to reject it.

But evangelicalism has survived division before. It has historically had a Christian nationalist current and also a more justice-oriented current, which was powerful as recently as the 1970s. Both of these currents ebb and flow over the decades.

And young believers are a powerful force. Mark Labberton says that many of the seminarians at Fuller are moving away from church as we normally conceive it. They want to build communities that are smaller, intimate, authentic, which can often fit in a living room. They see faith as inseparably linked to community service with the poor and marginalized. There’s a general interest in getting away from all the bitterness that has devoured the elders and just diving back into the Bible.

Finally, Karen Swallow Prior said something that rings in my ears: “Modernity has peaked.” The age of the autonomous individual, the age of the narcissistic self, the age of consumerism and moral drift has left us with bitterness and division, a surging mental health crisis and people just being nasty to one another. Millions are looking for something else, some system of belief that is communal, that gives life transcendent meaning.

Christianity is a potential answer for that search, and therein lies its hope, and the great possibility of renewing its call.

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PHOTOS: From far left, Thabiti Anyabwile of Anacostia River Church in Washington; Walter Kim, president of the National Association of Evangelicals; David Bailey, whose nonprofit promotes reconciliation in Christian communities; and Karen Swallow Prior, who taught at Liberty University before becoming disillusioned with its president’s morality. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JASON ANDREW FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; PARKER MICHELS-BOYCE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DAMON CASAREZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (SR4-SR5)

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[***Disruption From a Different Corner of a Divided Capital***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:601W-RPH1-JBG3-6392-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Washington's elite has long bemoaned the ''shattered norms'' of the Trump presidency. But it has felt beside the point -- like privilege talking -- in the angry crowds of the last few nights.

WASHINGTON -- One of the recurring themes of the last three and a half years is that President Trump has disrupted Washington, just as his voters demanded. This is true in a certain sense: The Trump White House has been a chaotic drama, a procession of scandals, leaks, investigations, feuding protagonists and trampled norms.

But one of the overlooked realities of the reality show is that the day-to-day existence of so-called official Washington has felt anything but disrupted. This gilded capital has actually been a serene and lovely place to live, work and visit, at least for those who can afford it. The trend has only accelerated through what until recently was the booming economy of the Trump presidency.

These last months, though, have been something else entirely. The reality has relegated the TV maestro in the White House to something of a sideshow.

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''I think most of us are numb to presidents who come in and talk about 'change,''' Ms. Campbell said. ''Nothing really changes if you're black in America.''

As with many metropolitan areas ravaged by the coronavirus and the nation's economic crisis, Washington's victims have been overwhelmingly ***working class***, black and brown -- inhabitants of the so-called real Washington who were priced out of the city years ago and forced to live outside its borders. Hospital workers and Metro drivers have gotten sick. Uber drivers and bus boys have lost their jobs.

They would not, as a general rule, include the patrons of the Oval Room, a landmark expense account restaurant around the corner from the White House that was vandalized over the weekend, its front window tagged in red paint with a message of ''The Rich Aren't Safe Anymore.''

''Run, run, they're coming,'' one young woman yelled late Saturday night to a group of her fellow demonstrators on H Street NW, in response to a loud crack that went off about 200 yards from the White House, just after 10:30 p.m. It was never exactly clear who ''they'' were, or what people were fleeing or running toward. There were competing chants drowning out each other, masked participants who could have been anyone, a swirling fog of agendas. It was like Twitter in the streets.

One thing was certain: No one was bemoaning the ''shattered norms'' perpetrated by the Trump administration or celebrating the ''peaceful transfer of power'' that may or may not occur in a few months. Television pundits have labeled the upcoming election as ''existential'' to the importance to the country's direction. But it also felt beside the point -- like privilege talking -- in the crowds of the last few nights. This chaotic tableau felt so much more urgent, and close to home.

''Say his name'' was the most common chant of the protests, a call and response answered with a corresponding ''George Floyd,'' who died while under arrest last week after a police officer kept his knee on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

During the weekend protests, there were recurrent cries of ''I can't breathe,'' a visceral tribute to the last desperate words Mr. Floyd uttered before he lost consciousness. Mr. Trump's name could be heard in a few chants, generally modified by an expletive. But again, he felt somewhere else, even as he was physically just a few hundred yards away, inside a darkened and barricaded White House.

One block away, on 16th Street NW, the national headquarters of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. were set ablaze during protests Sunday night. TV commentators described the conflagration as a strike against one of the fortresses of the American labor movement, a theoretical ally of the protesters in the struggle for a fairer power structure. Next door, flames engulfed St. John's Episcopal Church, where two decades of presidents have come to worship -- the so-called Church of the Presidents.

Suddenly, though, these monuments to American progress and history felt like quaint abstractions, cherished by official Washington but just another thing to burn down for the Washington disrupters of 2020.

On Monday on a sidewalk across Farragut Square, in front of the boarded up Oval Room restaurant, a protester named Athena Kapsides, a Washington public-school teacher, said that Mr. Trump had in fact inspired a great deal of activism in opposition to his own actions. In that sense, she said, he has been a catalyst for change.

''President Trump himself has tried to present himself as a fighter, but really he only fights for himself,'' said Ms. Kapsides, who grew up in the Washington suburbs and wore a T-shirt bearing the likeness of Colin Kaepernick, the former National Football League quarterback who protested police violence against African-Americans by kneeling during pregame renditions of ''The Star-Spangled Banner.'' Many believe that his statement resulted in his blacklisting from the N.F.L., where he has not played since 2017.

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Mr. Austin represents a different inhabitant of ''permanent Washington,'' a phrase that gets tossed around in the higher echelons of the federal government and its adjoining private sectors of lobbying, consulting and assorted other white-collar dependents. Few such inhabitants were actually born and raised in Washington, and few of them seem to ever leave once they settle into the warm bath of what Mr. Trump has branded ''the swamp.''

Mr. Austin works for the city water department, and said he had seen firsthand how privileged, predominantly white neighborhoods like Georgetown received better service than poorer areas east of the Anacostia River.

''It doesn't matter if there is a Democrat or Republican in the White House, this is our reality here,'' Mr. Austin said. ''It does not tend to change. That also feels permanent.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/01/us/politics/trump-washington-protests-riots.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/01/us/politics/trump-washington-protests-riots.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: In recent nights, the streets around the White House have been clogged with thousands of protesters demonstrating against the police killing last week in Minneapolis of George Floyd. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Protesters in Lafayette Park, top, and a flag burning. Landmark restaurants, offices and a historic church have been burned and vandalized. By Monday, Mayor Muriel E. Bowser had set a curfew of 7 p.m. and activated the National Guard. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNA MONEYMAKER/THE NEW YORK TIMES

ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Macron Bears Air of Mystery, Even to French***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6250-D2V1-DXY4-X512-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 6, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1881 words

**Byline:** By Roger Cohen

**Body**

The French president wants to change Europe, redefine his country and win re-election. But first he needs to overcome the biggest economic and social crisis since World War II.

PARIS -- In a recent meeting with a handful of foreign correspondents, President Emmanuel Macron of France philosophized for 100 minutes on the record, without notes. He dotted his conversation with Americanisms -- ''game-changer,'' ''honest brokers'' -- that must have had de Gaulle turning in his grave. He dissected French ''universalism.'' He mused on colonial history. He identified hatred, turbocharged by social media, as ''a threat to democracy itself.''

The performance was typical of Mr. Macron, and unusual for any head of state, the equivalent of tightrope walking without a net. Yet, the many words revealed little of the man himself. Four years into an often tumultuous term, facing an election next year, Mr. Macron remains an enigma to even his own country.

Backed by the left in 2017, Mr. Macron now has more support on the right. Once a free-market reformer, he now extols the role of the state and protection ''at any cost'' in the age of Covid-19. Once the leader of a freewheeling movement that swept away old political hierarchies, he now sits comfortably at the pinnacle of power, his authority accentuated by terrorism and pandemic.

''With Macron we have gone to the limit of presidential domination in the Fifth Republic,'' said Alain Duhamel, a political commentator.

The question now is to what end Mr. Macron, 43, will use that power as Europe faces a treacherous passage and the ability of the continent to bring Covid-19 under control remains in question. He is determined to steer his country and Europe on an independent course from China and the United States. ''The day cooperation equals dependence, you have become a vassal and you disappear,'' he said at the meeting with the correspondents.

With the era of Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, drawing to a close this year, Mr. Macron is in a position to shape the ''sovereign'' Europe he has extolled, as well as a new French identity at a time of violent flux. He could even win a second term next year, something no president has done since 2002.

Or, with his country facing its biggest economic, social and health crisis since World War II, its economy shrinking 8.3 percent last year, millions furloughed from shuttered businesses, and more than 87,000 dead from the coronavirus, the funambulist could fall. The French urge to topple a leader is never far below the surface.

''Anything can happen between now and our presidential election next year, given the national fragmentation,'' Chloé Morin, a political scientist, said. ''There is a lot of resignation, but also a lot of anger. The hyper-concentration of power in Mr. Macron is part of the problem.''

Macronism, as it's known here, is still a mystery, an elastic and disruptive political doctrine depending less on content than the charisma of a risk-taker. Lockdown or no lockdown? One man decides (no lockdown for now, despite pressure from some ministers). The Parliament and political parties feel marginal, even irrelevant.

A country so unsettled could lurch right next year toward the xenophobic Marine Le Pen, the far-right candidate now working hard to look electable in May 2022. One recent poll gave her 48 percent of the vote in a runoff with Mr. Macron. Or France could do what it did in 2017 with Mr. Macron: embrace an unknown.

Regional elections in June seem certain to batter Mr. Macron's hodgepodge centrist political party, La République en Marche. Power has worn on Europe's wunderkind. He has already survived the Yellow Vest movement, a revolt of the downtrodden against the privileged. In the pandemic's pall France is sullen. A recent survey found one in five adults depressed.

''Initially, he inspired me,'' said Paula Forteza, 34, a lawmaker who quit the president's party last year. ''He was our way to modernize the left. But I learned that he was above all a tactician and that we will never know what he really believes.''

Still, Mr. Macron appears better placed than either François Hollande or Nicolas Sarkozy, his predecessors, to gain re-election. His approval rating hovers just above 40 percent, high for a French president. The master of the center ground, he unsettles his opponents, even if they sense the president may be vulnerable.

Mr. Macron's support has persisted despite a mixed pandemic performance -- France has far more Covid deaths than Germany with its bigger population -- and European mismanagement of vaccine procurement. The French rollout of shots has been slow.

''He faces a right in difficulty and a disunited left,'' said Frédéric Dabi, the deputy director-general of IFOP, a polling institute. ''One in two people on the right appear to support him, and one in three on the left.''

This breadth of support reflects Mr. Macron's mastery of a post-ideological world. He came to power announcing the end of left and right; he has lived by that credo. Once the apostle of balanced budgets, he now waves away the ballooning debt in the age of the virus as a problem for another day.

The new buzzword of Macronism is solidarity. One Macron slogan contemplated for 2022 is ''Nous, Français,'' or roughly ''We, The French.''

''I believe in continental sovereignty, and I believe in nation states, and I do not believe in neo-nationalism,'' the president said in the meeting, a startling attempt to comfort the pro-European center-left, the patriotic center-right, and the never-Le-Pen crowd in a single phrase.

No wonder he has been called the ''on-the-other-hand'' president. In trying to overcome the bitter legacy of the Algerian war, he has pursued truth with courage, but declined repentance. He often tries to reconcile the irreconcilable.

Mr. Macron swept to power in revolutionary style in 2017. He demolished the traditional parties of left and right, the Socialist Party and the Republicans as he absorbed them into his own movement. They have not recovered.

Reform followed, of the rigid 3,324-page French labor code, of the heavily subsidized French rail system, of the tax code. Unemployment, over 10 percent in 2016, fell sharply until the virus struck. Foreign investment boomed. He got a stubborn country to budge.

But strikes blocked proposed changes to the generous French pension system. Mr. Macron earned an unwanted sobriquet: ''President of the Rich.'' Because he had been all things to all people, he had to disappoint some.

''When you talk to him you are the only person in the world,'' Ms. Forteza said. ''He has the habit of winking at people in a crowd, in a friendly not inappropriate way, to generate complicity. He did it to me several times. But later, I realized he did it to everyone! I was not as unique as I thought. And he was not the man of the left he seemed.''

Perhaps that is unsurprising. Mr. Macron is a product of the National School of Administration, which turns out presidents with metronomic regularity.

The school, closer to McKinsey than the masses, is not designed to foster revolutionary change. It's an elite establishment; one percent of the current graduating class of 80 has a ***working-class*** parent.

Mr. Macron vowed to abolish it after a humility-inducing post-Yellow-Vest listening tour in 2019. He has since retreated, instead opening up a few places at the school for students from the projects that surround big French cities.

''On immigration, on security, he turned to the right,'' Ms. Forteza said. ''We on the left feel a little used.''

But the left has no unifying figure in a country that pandemic-related insecurity and Islamist terrorists attacks have pushed rightward. Anne Hidalgo, the socialist mayor of Paris, may run and galvanize the left into a serious challenger.

But for now, Mr. Macron's political calculus seems to be that he has most to gain picking up votes on the right.

Hence his attempt to extirpate through legislation the roots of what he calls ''Islamist separatism,'' which Mr. Macron believes undergirds recurrent domestic terrorism.

At a time when identity politics and the anger of some marginalized Muslim immigrants have raised questions about France's ability to embrace the diversity of its society, Mr. Macron wants to preserve and broaden a French universalism much criticized for disguising forms of exclusion, particularly for Muslims.

''Our universalism is not in my view a doctrine of assimilation,'' he told the foreign correspondents. ''It is not the negation of differences. I believe in pluralism within our universalism.''

In its subtle parsing, its attempted reconciliation of the irreconcilable, the finesse was very Macron. France has tended to view its model as assimilationist in opposition to American multiculturalism. So, this was a departure. But if pluralism ''is not multiculturalism,'' what does it look like?

Mr. Macron went on to speak of the millions of French people who are descended from migrants, whose identity and dreams are ''totally France'' but whose families may have ''other languages or other dreams.''

All this, he said, ''must be recognized as an opportunity''; and France must understand that in recent years ''our integration policies have not worked'' and that this failure has been felt most acutely by those who have ''a different first name or a different skin color.'' Those, he added, who ''are different from the majority -- I do not like the word minority.''

Like ''multiculturalism,'' ''minority'' is a no-no in France, because in its self-image this is a nation of undifferentiated citizens drawn to an ennobling, universal idea. If Mr. Macron can indeed reinvigorate this idea through celebration of diversity, he will have broadened the meaning of Frenchness.

On one subject, Mr. Macron has never wavered: the defense of Europe's great postwar push for integration to assure peace. He will carry the banner of Europe into his election campaign, at a time when France will have the rotating presidency of the European Union for the first time since 2008.

His priority will be the pursuit of a ''sovereign'' Europe, with the technology and military capacity to stand up for the values -- liberty, pluralism, the rule of law -- that he believes define it.

That was courageous in 2017, with the fervor of Brexit and former President Donald Trump's anti-Europe rhetoric raging; and perhaps, faced by Ms. Le Pen, it is no less so today.

In a time of rising authoritarianism, the French president, like Ms. Merkel, has been a significant democratic counterweight, a strong supporter of multilateralism and free societies.

Mr. Duhamel, the political commentator, identified Macronism as ''a civil and democratic Bonapartism, where everything goes up to the leader, and there is a quest for disruption and reform, through the whip.''

And does France, at once a conservative and revolutionary society, like this style enough to give the mystery man five more years?

''The election will be decided between two negative emotions, hate and fear,'' Mr. Duhamel sighed. ''If hate prevails in May next year, Mr. Macron will be defeated. If it's fear, after a convulsive period, faced by an uncertain future, then he will win.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/05/world/europe/france-emmanuel-macron.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/05/world/europe/france-emmanuel-macron.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Closed restaurants in Paris. President Emmanuel Macron faces France's biggest economic and social crisis since World War II.

Receiving a Covid vaccination in Versailles. The country's rollout has been slow. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

FRÉDÉRIC DABI, the deputy director-general of IFOP, a polling institute, about Mr. Macron, above. (PHOTOGRAPH BY THOMAS COEX/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

A labor rally in Paris. Mr. Macron was politically bruised during the Yellow Vest movement. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A11)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2021

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[***Trump Vowed to Disrupt Washington. Now He Faces Disruption in the Streets.; Washington Memo***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:601S-HJX1-JBG3-62B9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 2, 2020 Tuesday 11:11 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1298 words

**Byline:** Mark Leibovich

**Highlight:** Washington’s elite has long bemoaned the “shattered norms” of the Trump presidency. But it has felt beside the point — like privilege talking — in the angry crowds of the last few nights.

**Body**

Washington’s elite has long bemoaned the “shattered norms” of the Trump presidency. But it has felt beside the point — like privilege talking — in the angry crowds of the last few nights.

WASHINGTON — One of the recurring themes of the last three and a half years is that President Trump has disrupted Washington, just as his voters demanded. This is true in a certain sense: The Trump White House has been a chaotic drama, a procession of scandals, leaks, investigations, feuding protagonists and trampled norms.

But one of the overlooked realities of the reality show is that the day-to-day existence of so-called official Washington has felt anything but disrupted. This gilded capital has actually been a serene and lovely place to live, work and visit, at least for those who can afford it. The trend has only accelerated through what until recently was the booming economy of the Trump presidency.

These last months, though, have been something else entirely. The reality has relegated the TV maestro in the White House to something of a sideshow.

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As with many metropolitan areas ravaged by the coronavirus and the nation’s economic crisis, Washington’s victims have been overwhelmingly ***working class***, black and brown — inhabitants of the so-called real Washington who were priced out of the city years ago and forced to live outside its borders. Hospital workers and Metro drivers have gotten sick. Uber drivers and bus boys have lost their jobs.

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“Say his name” was the most common chant of the protests, a call and response answered with a corresponding “George Floyd,” who died while under arrest last week after a police officer kept his knee on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

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Suddenly, though, these monuments to American progress and history felt like quaint abstractions, cherished by official Washington but just another thing to burn down for the Washington disrupters of 2020.

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PHOTOS: In recent nights, the streets around the White House have been clogged with thousands of protesters demonstrating against the police killing last week in Minneapolis of George Floyd. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA MONEYMAKER/THE NEW YORK TIMES); Protesters in Lafayette Park, top, and a flag burning. Landmark restaurants, offices and a historic church have been burned and vandalized. By Monday, Mayor Muriel E. Bowser had set a curfew of 7 p.m. and activated the National Guard. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNA MONEYMAKER/THE NEW YORK TIMES; ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***The Women Who Fought Against the Vote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KF-YG01-DXY4-X1CM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 14, 2020 Friday 10:17 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1528 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Schuessler

**Highlight:** To understand the suffragists, and why their battle took so long, you also have to understand the anti-suffragists.

**Body**

To understand the suffragists, and why their battle took so long, you also have to understand the anti-suffragists.

The sinking of the Titanic in 1912 inspired a flood of articles on seemingly every aspect of the disaster. One of the oddest appeared in [*The Woman’s Protest,*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/) a journal dedicated to opposing women’s suffrage.

In “The Lesson that Came from the Sea,” Josephine Jewell Dodge, a leading anti-suffragist, noted that when the ship started going down, the cry that went up was not “Voters first!” but “Women first!”

“In acquiescing to that cry the women admitted that they were not fitted for men’s tasks,” Dodge wrote. “They did not think of the boasted ‘equality’ in all things.”

This was not to say, she emphasized, that women were “inferior.” But the disaster, she wrote, “tends in its terribly grim way to point out the everlasting ‘difference’ of the sexes.”

Women at the polls (and on the ballot) are such an ordinary sight today that it can be hard to remember how long and hard women fought for the vote and the powerful forces arrayed against them, including business interests, religious organizations and the political parties, which feared an influx of unpredictable new voters.

But one opposition group has long inspired puzzled reactions, if not outright disbelief: women themselves.

As the suffrage movement picked up steam in the late 19th century, it was increasingly countered by an organized, women-led anti-suffrage movement, which mirrored its arguments, tactics and public relations strategies, including cartoons, buttons, pennants and other swag.

It’s tempting to dismiss the Antis, as they were sometimes called, as a bizarre footnote, or a joke. But historians argue that you can’t really understand the suffrage movement — and today’s unfinished debates about what true equality for women means — without them.

“You might ask, ‘How could a woman be opposed to her own rights?’” said Susan Goodier, a historian at the State University of New York, Oneonta, and the author of [*“No Votes for Women,”*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/) a study of the Antis. “But you have to understand what the suffrage movement was up against, which wasn’t just men.”

In the 19th century, when women first articulated the demand for the vote, the idea that politics and government were the sole province of men, who would represent the interests of their families, was the default position of just about everyone.

The idea of women’s suffrage was [*seen as radical unto absurd*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/), even to some early feminists. When a group sat down before the Seneca Falls, N.Y., women’s rights convention of 1848 to draft [*a document*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/) calling for equality, Lucretia Mott, a Quaker feminist, warned against including a call for the vote, lest it “make us look ridiculous.”

And almost as soon as suffragists began formalizing their demand for the vote, other women moved to counter it. In 1871, in response to a proposed 16th Amendment that would enfranchise women (after the 15th enfranchised only Black men), 19 wives of Republican senators, Civil War generals and cabinet members published a petition against it.

In the following decades, other “remonstrants,” as anti-suffragists were known, also pressed the case against the vote, even as they strove not to draw too much attention to themselves, in keeping with the common belief that women should stay in the domestic sphere.

“Unlike suffragists, who wanted everyone to know names and recognize their images, the Antis didn’t want to be known,” said Allison K. Lange, the author of [*“Picturing Political Power: Images in the Women’s Suffrage Movement.”*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/)

That changed as anti-suffragists started to get organized, and politicized. The first organized group was founded in Massachusetts in 1895, in response to a campaign to extend municipal voting rights to women in Boston. Later, the movement was based in New York, with national offices, at one point, in the Waldorf Hotel.

While a range of women opposed women’s suffrage (including [*the anarchist Emma Goldman*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/), who saw the electoral system as a tool of the powerful), the organized anti-suffrage movement consisted mainly of elite white women, often married to prominent men. (Goodier has written that there is “virtually no evidence” of any Black women in the organized anti-suffrage movement.)

Still, they were not all mere “butterflies of fashion,” as one suffragist publication put it. Many were active reformers, sometimes pushing for the same causes — child welfare, workplace safety, access to education — that suffragists championed.

The anti-suffragists (who received [*admiring coverage*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/) in The New York Times) included women like Helena de Kay Gilder, a trained artist and future founder of the Art Students League of New York. In a widely reprinted 1894 essay, written in response to a proposal to remove the word “male” from the New York state constitution, she laid out her case.

Women “are men’s equal, and almost as well educated, as good and as intelligent in ordinary matters,” she wrote. But the ballot was a burden that would corrupt and “unsex” them, and take away their “liberty.”

Dodge, the author of the Titanic polemic (and the daughter of a pro-suffrage governor of Connecticut and a suffragist mother), worked to establish nurseries for poor African-American children in Harlem.

And then there was Annie Nathan Meyer, a founder of Barnard College, whose debates with her sister Maud, a leading suffragist, drew attention in the press, which called them “the fighting Nathan sisters.”

The Antis, scholars note, were not simply saying that women should just stay home. Instead, many believed that participating in the grubby world of party politics would undermine women’s distinct strength: their nonpartisan, politically disinterested commitment to the public good.

“These women have a whole idea of what women should be doing in public life,” said Susan Ware, the editor of [*a new Library of America anthology*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/) about the suffrage movement. “They just don’t think women need or want the vote.”

Toward the middle of the 1910s, as the battle over the proposed 19th Amendment heated up, men came to dominate the anti-suffrage movement. In 1913, a group of prominent men formed the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Women, which became more commonly known by the even more Monty Python-esque name of the Man Suffrage Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage.

After World War I broke out, anti-suffrage women shifted their focus to war preparedness and support for the Red Cross. As men took control, the Antis increasingly made states’ rights arguments. Anti-socialist rhetoric also rose, with suffragists increasingly denounced as enemies of the state.

After the 19th Amendment became law in 1920, anti-suffrage women went in varying directions. Some, like Meyer, became active in the nonpartisan League of Women Voters. Others became active in the Republican Party, helping push it to the right. By the 1920s, the scholar Rebecca Rix [*has written*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/), the Antis shed their elitism in an effort “to make anti-Progressivism appealing to a conservative ***working-class*** and middle-class electorate,” including the women whose voting rights they had opposed.

And some Antis got caught up in the first Red Scare. In 1918, The Woman’s Protest had been renamed [*The Woman Patriot*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/) and dedicated itself to“the Defense of Womanhood, Motherhood, the Family and the State AGAINST Suffragism, Feminism and Socialism.”

Some scholars draw a line from the Antis to post-World War II conservative women activists like Phyllis Schlafly, who mobilized a political army against both Communism and feminism.

Ware, no fan of the anti-suffragists, said they became “more interesting” when seen as forerunners of later conservative women. But she said there are also differences between the Antis, who saw the vote as a “burden,” and Schlafly, who warned of the loss of feminine “privileges.”

In a recent article in The Los Angeles Times, Gloria Steinem and Eleanor Smeal [*criticized “Mrs. America,”*](http://womansuffragememorabilia.com/woman-suffrage-memorabilia/suffrage-journals/) the FX series about the battle over the Equal Rights Amendment, for presenting a “catfight theory of American history.” The series, they argue, also exaggerates the importance of Schlafly and her group STOP ERA, which they maintain was less crucial in defeating the amendment than the insurance industry and other corporate interests.

Some historians have made similar arguments about the Antis, whose opposition, they say, was far less important than business interests, the political parties and men in general — who, after all, were the ones who decided whether women would be allowed to vote.

But still, they argue against being too quick to write the Antis off simply as history’s losers.

“It’s not what we would think today,” Goodier said of their arguments. “But they have their points. Can we be so liberal-minded that we can see equality with nuances of difference?”

Jennifer Schuessler is a culture reporter covering intellectual life and the world of ideas.

PHOTOS: An anti-suffrage card from 1915. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEN FLOREY SUFFRAGE COLLECTION/GADO/GETTY IMAGES) (TW28); Like the suffrage movement, the organized anti-suffrage movement used posters and other paraphernalia to promote the cause. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES) (TW29)

**Load-Date:** August 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Eyeing Re-election, Macron Walks a Tightrope Above Swirling Crises in France***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:624T-J7R1-DXY4-X4HB-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

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**Byline:** Roger Cohen

**Highlight:** The French president wants to change Europe, redefine his country and win re-election. But first he needs to overcome the biggest economic and social crisis since World War II.

**Body**

The French president wants to change Europe, redefine his country and win re-election. But first he needs to overcome the biggest economic and social crisis since World War II.

PARIS — In a recent meeting with a handful of foreign correspondents, President Emmanuel [*Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/08/world/europe/macron-slap.html) of [*France*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/20/world/europe/france-regional-elections.html) philosophized for 100 minutes on the record, without notes. He dotted his conversation with Americanisms — “game-changer,” “honest brokers” — that must have had de Gaulle turning in his grave. He dissected French “universalism.” He mused on colonial history. He identified hatred, turbocharged by social media, as “a threat to democracy itself.”

The performance was typical of Mr. [*Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/24/world/europe/macron-merkel-europe.html), and unusual for any head of state, the equivalent of tightrope walking without a net. Yet, the many words revealed little of the man himself. Four years into an often tumultuous term, facing an election next year, Mr. Macron remains an enigma to even his own country.

Backed by the left in 2017, Mr. Macron now has more support on the right. Once a free-market reformer, he now extols the role of the state and protection “at any cost” in the age of Covid-19. Once the leader of a freewheeling movement that swept away old political hierarchies, he now sits comfortably at the pinnacle of power, his authority accentuated by terrorism and pandemic.

“With Macron we have gone to the limit of presidential domination in the Fifth Republic,” said Alain Duhamel, a political commentator.

The question now is to what end Mr. Macron, 43, will use that power as Europe faces a treacherous passage and the ability of the continent to bring Covid-19 under control remains in question. He is determined to steer his country and Europe on an independent course from China and the United States. “The day cooperation equals dependence, you have become a vassal and you disappear,” he said at the meeting with the correspondents.

With the era of Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, drawing to a close this year, Mr. Macron is in a position to shape the “sovereign” Europe he has extolled, as well as a new French identity at a time of violent flux. He could even win a second term next year, something no president has done since 2002.

Or, with his country facing its biggest economic, social and health crisis since World War II, its economy shrinking 8.3 percent last year, millions furloughed from shuttered businesses, and more than 87,000 dead from the coronavirus, the funambulist could fall. The French urge to topple a leader is never far below the surface.

“Anything can happen between now and our presidential election next year, given the national fragmentation,” Chloé Morin, a political scientist, said. “There is a lot of resignation, but also a lot of anger. The hyper-concentration of power in Mr. Macron is part of the problem.”

Macronism, as it’s known here, is still a mystery, an elastic and disruptive political doctrine depending less on content than the charisma of a risk-taker. Lockdown or no lockdown? One man decides (no lockdown for now, despite pressure from some ministers). The Parliament and political parties feel marginal, even irrelevant.

A country so unsettled could lurch right next year toward the xenophobic Marine Le Pen, the far-right candidate now working hard to look electable in May 2022. One recent poll gave her 48 percent of the vote in a runoff with Mr. Macron. Or France could do what it did in 2017 with Mr. Macron: embrace an unknown.

Regional elections in June seem certain to batter Mr. Macron’s hodgepodge centrist political party, La République en Marche. Power has worn on Europe’s wunderkind. He has already survived the Yellow Vest movement, a revolt of the downtrodden against the privileged. In the pandemic’s pall France is sullen. A recent survey found one in five adults depressed.

“Initially, he inspired me,” said Paula Forteza, 34, a lawmaker who quit the president’s party last year. “He was our way to modernize the left. But I learned that he was above all a tactician and that we will never know what he really believes.”

Still, Mr. Macron appears better placed than either François Hollande or Nicolas Sarkozy, his predecessors, to gain re-election. His approval rating hovers just above 40 percent, high for a French president. The master of the center ground, he unsettles his opponents, even if they sense the president may be vulnerable.

Mr. Macron’s support has persisted despite a mixed pandemic performance — France has far more Covid deaths than Germany with its bigger population — and European mismanagement of vaccine procurement. The French rollout of shots has been slow.

“He faces a right in difficulty and a disunited left,” said Frédéric Dabi, the deputy director-general of IFOP, a polling institute. “One in two people on the right appear to support him, and one in three on the left.”

This breadth of support reflects Mr. Macron’s mastery of a post-ideological world. He came to power announcing the end of left and right; he has lived by that credo. Once the apostle of balanced budgets, he now waves away the ballooning debt in the age of the virus as a problem for another day.

The new buzzword of Macronism is solidarity. One Macron slogan contemplated for 2022 is “Nous, Français,” or roughly “We, The French.”

“I believe in continental sovereignty, and I believe in nation states, and I do not believe in neo-nationalism,” the president said in the meeting, a startling attempt to comfort the pro-European center-left, the patriotic center-right, and the never-Le-Pen crowd in a single phrase.

No wonder he has been called the “on-the-other-hand” president. In trying to overcome the bitter legacy of the Algerian war, he has pursued truth with courage, but declined repentance. He often tries to reconcile the irreconcilable.

Mr. Macron swept to power in revolutionary style in 2017. He demolished the traditional parties of left and right, the Socialist Party and the Republicans as he absorbed them into his own movement. They have not recovered.

Reform followed, of the rigid 3,324-page French labor code, of the heavily subsidized French rail system, of the tax code. Unemployment, over 10 percent in 2016, fell sharply until the virus struck. Foreign investment boomed. He got a stubborn country to budge.

But strikes blocked proposed changes to the generous French pension system. Mr. Macron earned an unwanted sobriquet: “President of the Rich.” Because he had been all things to all people, he had to disappoint some.

“When you talk to him you are the only person in the world,” Ms. Forteza said. “He has the habit of winking at people in a crowd, in a friendly not inappropriate way, to generate complicity. He did it to me several times. But later, I realized he did it to everyone! I was not as unique as I thought. And he was not the man of the left he seemed.”

Perhaps that is unsurprising. Mr. Macron is a product of the National School of Administration, which turns out presidents with metronomic regularity.

The school, closer to McKinsey than the masses, is not designed to foster revolutionary change. It’s an elite establishment; one percent of the current graduating class of 80 has a ***working-class*** parent.

Mr. Macron vowed to abolish it after a humility-inducing post-Yellow-Vest listening tour in 2019. He has since retreated, instead opening up a few places at the school for students from the projects that surround big French cities.

“On immigration, on security, he turned to the right,” Ms. Forteza said. “We on the left feel a little used.”

But the left has no unifying figure in a country that pandemic-related insecurity and Islamist terrorists attacks have pushed rightward. Anne Hidalgo, the socialist mayor of Paris, may run and galvanize the left into a serious challenger.

But for now, Mr. Macron’s political calculus seems to be that he has most to gain picking up votes on the right.

Hence his attempt to extirpate through legislation the roots of what he calls “[*Islamist separatism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/16/world/europe/france-law-islamist-extremism.html?searchResultPosition=2),” which Mr. Macron believes undergirds recurrent domestic terrorism.

At a time when identity politics and the anger of some marginalized Muslim immigrants have raised questions about France’s ability to embrace the diversity of its society, Mr. Macron wants to preserve and broaden a French universalism much criticized for disguising forms of exclusion, particularly for Muslims.

“Our universalism is not in my view a doctrine of assimilation,” he told the foreign correspondents. “It is not the negation of differences. I believe in pluralism within our universalism.”

In its subtle parsing, its attempted reconciliation of the irreconcilable, the finesse was very Macron. France has tended to view its model as assimilationist in opposition to American multiculturalism. So, this was a departure. But if pluralism “is not multiculturalism,” what does it look like?

Mr. Macron went on to speak of the millions of French people who are descended from migrants, whose identity and dreams are “totally France” but whose families may have “other languages or other dreams.”

All this, he said, “must be recognized as an opportunity”; and France must understand that in recent years “our integration policies have not worked” and that this failure has been felt most acutely by those who have “a different first name or a different skin color.” Those, he added, who “are different from the majority — I do not like the word minority.”

Like “multiculturalism,” “minority” is a no-no in France, because in its self-image this is a nation of undifferentiated citizens drawn to an ennobling, universal idea. If Mr. Macron can indeed reinvigorate this idea through celebration of diversity, he will have broadened the meaning of Frenchness.

On one subject, Mr. Macron has never wavered: the defense of Europe’s great postwar push for integration to assure peace. He will carry the banner of Europe into his election campaign, at a time when France will have the rotating presidency of the European Union for the first time since 2008.

His priority will be the pursuit of a “sovereign” Europe, with the technology and military capacity to stand up for the values — liberty, pluralism, the rule of law — that he believes define it.

That was courageous in 2017, with the fervor of Brexit and former President Donald Trump’s anti-Europe rhetoric raging; and perhaps, faced by Ms. Le Pen, it is no less so today.

In a time of rising authoritarianism, the French president, like Ms. Merkel, has been a significant democratic counterweight, a strong supporter of multilateralism and free societies.

Mr. Duhamel, the political commentator, identified Macronism as “a civil and democratic Bonapartism, where everything goes up to the leader, and there is a quest for disruption and reform, through the whip.”

And does France, at once a conservative and revolutionary society, like this style enough to give the mystery man five more years?

“The election will be decided between two negative emotions, hate and fear,” Mr. Duhamel sighed. “If hate prevails in May next year, Mr. Macron will be defeated. If it’s fear, after a convulsive period, faced by an uncertain future, then he will win.”

PHOTOS: Closed restaurants in Paris. President Emmanuel Macron faces France’s biggest economic and social crisis since World War II.; Receiving a Covid vaccination in Versailles. The country’s rollout has been slow. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); FRÉDÉRIC DABI, the deputy director-general of IFOP, a polling institute, about Mr. Macron, above. (PHOTOGRAPH BY THOMAS COEX/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES); A labor rally in Paris. Mr. Macron was politically bruised during the Yellow Vest movement. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A11)

**Load-Date:** September 24, 2021

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[***Is America on the Way to a Caste System?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YB3-HJS1-JBG3-610F-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 1256 words

**Byline:** By Nelson D. Schwartz

**Body**

America has always known haves and have-nots. But what was a tiered system is morphing into a caste system.

A $1,000 seat at Yankee Stadium, in the first few rows along the baseline, is known as a Legends ticket. Holders bypass the long lines of fans waiting to enter the park by conventional means, whisked in by security guards who greet them like family. They enjoy a private dining room and concierge access, and they are separated from lesser fans by a concrete moat.

It has been a long time since sporting events were essentially communal experiences, and it's no secret that the industry caters to the wealthy. But what struck me about the Legends experience, when I shelled out for a pair of seats one autumn Sunday, was something called the Harman Lounge.

It's a club within the Legends club, and there's nothing particularly unique about it -- just more gray suede couches, another bar and some TVs. The only thing that makes the Harman Lounge special is that it is restricted to fans sitting in the first row and only the first row. It exists solely to exclude fans who are not at the absolute top.

I had gone to Yankee Stadium in search of what I call the Velvet Rope Economy, and in the Harman Lounge I found something like its apotheosis. Whatever the arena -- health care, education, work, leisure -- on one side of the velvet rope is a friction-free existence. Red tape is cut, appointments are secured, doors are opened. On the other side, friction is practically the defining characteristic, with middle- and ***working-class*** Americans facing an increasingly zero-sum fight for a decent seat on the plane, a college scholarship, even a doctor's appointment.

There has always been a gap between the haves and have-nots, but what was a tiered system in America is morphing into a caste system. As the rich get richer and more businesses focus exclusively on serving them, there is less attention and shabbier service for everybody who's not at the pinnacle.

[This article is adapted from Nelson D. Schwartz's new book, ''The Velvet Rope Economy: How Inequality Became Big Business,'' published by Doubleday.]

This trend doesn't merely delight the wealthy -- it also exacerbates the isolation and abandonment of everyone else. Anger and resentment are hardening into permanent features of our politics. President Trump regularly inveighs against the elite, and the Democratic front-runner, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, makes attacks on ''millionaires and billionaires'' a hallmark of his campaign. Consumer dissatisfaction is high despite low unemployment and steady hiring gains.

Among the purveyors of elite experiences, however, business has never been better. The creation of products like Yankee Stadium's Harman Lounge is driven by straightforward economics: As more money accumulates in fewer hands, attracting this contingent is essential if profits are to grow.

''By definition, the 1 percent is always just 1 percent, but that group has gotten much wealthier and their purchasing power is bigger,'' said Geoff Yang, a co-founder of Redpoint Ventures and one of Silicon Valley's most successful venture capitalists.

Meanwhile, ordinary experiences deteriorate in quality, and the motivation to pay more for an upgrade and better treatment becomes more urgent, even for Americans who don't consider themselves part of the elite.

The political and social repercussions go beyond symbolism -- they have a real impact on government policies and fiscal priorities. For instance, when corporate decision makers, members of Congress and especially the political donor class routinely bypass traffic jams and deteriorating trains and buses and get to the airport via a luxury helicopter service like Blade, the political impetus to improve public transit fades.

The ease of catching a commercial flight at the deluxe new private terminal at Los Angeles International Airport -- the first of its kind in the country, with a $4,500 annual membership plus a $3,000 fee per trip -- makes it that much easier for those who can afford it to forget about the decrepit main terminal, with its claustrophobic hallways and overcrowded waiting areas.

Similarly, if wealthier consumers can hack the hospital game and see specialists before everyone else, or employ high-priced counselors to gain special access to the Ivy League, health care and education reform become much less pressing.

Nowhere is the segmentation worse, or anger more evident, than up in the air. With nine different groups to board a plane, flying has explicitly become an exercise in class distinction. The frustration isn't confined to rhetoric. A 2016 study on air rage by Katherine A. DeCelles of the University of Toronto and Michael I. Norton of Harvard Business School found a surprisingly robust link between onboard incidents and what they call ''physical and situational inequality.''

What the researchers discovered as they sifted through the data was remarkable. When passengers boarded at the front of the aircraft and had to walk through the premium cabin to get to coach, the odds of an outburst in economy doubled. Nor was the anger limited to the back of the plane. On those flights where coach passengers traipsed their way through first class upon boarding, unruly behavior among elite passengers was nearly 12 times as likely.

The extremely rich don't see even first-class fliers, let alone those in coach. Take Nick Hanauer, a Seattle entrepreneur worth hundreds of millions of dollars. As an early investor in Amazon, Mr. Hanauer gets around in his personal Dassault Falcon 900LX jet, which retails for $43 million. Money provides him with a kind of all-encompassing E-ZPass, enabling him to zip past the everyday obstacles the rest of us have to contend with.

''This is my life -- I see it everywhere,'' Mr. Hanauer said. ''I haven't waited in a line in 10 years.''

But for all his wealth, Mr. Hanauer said, he has a gnawing fear that the widening gulf between economic winners like himself and ordinary Americans is unsustainable. ''If you're not genuinely concerned about the future of the United States, you are not paying attention,'' he said.

In some cases, money can mean the difference between life and death. In California, private firefighters sent by insurers saved the vineyards and estates of a fortunate few during the recent spate of wildfires, even as neighboring homes were reduced to ashes. For $50,000, private health care consultants can steer cancer patients into potentially lifesaving clinical trials.

The evidence of this trend isn't merely anecdotal, either. The richest 1 percent of Americans live nearly 15 years longer on average than the poorest 1 percent, according to a 2016 study in JAMA. And that disparity is increasing.

It's getting impossible to imagine that we're all in it together as a society. Because the hard truth is we're not. On the other side of the velvet rope, millions of Americans are going about their daily lives, paying their taxes and trying to make ends meet, even as they wait longer to see a doctor or to get through security at the airport because richer Americans are jumping the line.

''If this continues unabated, we're done,'' said Mr. Hanauer, who in 2013 started Civic Ventures, a think tank aimed at creating a more level playing field. ''This won't be a capitalist system -- it'll be a feudal system. You can't shred the norms of reciprocity that make social cohesion possible and expect to have a functioning democracy. It's just not going to work.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/28/business/velvet-rope-economy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/28/business/velvet-rope-economy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Taylor Callery FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2020

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[***Why This Toxic Canal Zone Is a Litmus Test for N.Y.C. Development***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62D7-14K1-JBG3-654R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 2148 words

**Byline:** Mihir Zaveri, Brad Hamilton and Jo Corona

**Highlight:** The Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn is notorious for its century-old filth. Now that the cleanup of the waterway has begun, a thorny question emerges. Who gets to live there?

**Body**

When the barges finally began carrying loads of toxic sludge out of Brooklyn’s Gowanus Canal last year, the long-awaited cleanup effort was heralded as a milestone for one of the most polluted waterways in America, and for the industrial neighborhood, Gowanus, that grew around it.

Then one day in January, one of the barges sprang a leak and started to sink.

Apparently, little if any of the ship’s toxic cargo spilled back into the harbor, and work resumed. But the symbolism was hard to miss: Gowanus would not be wrested of its confounding identity so easily.

Gowanus, where aromas of sewage and sulfur and burning rubber waft across streets lined with low-slung warehouses, is now at the center of a fight over the future of New York City.

The administration of Mayor Bill de Blasio, in its waning months, is pushing one of the most ambitious neighborhood plans of his more than seven years in office. The enormous project would eventually transform a federally designated toxic Superfund site into acres of parks and shops and some 8,000 housing units — about twice as many as Hudson Yards, a high-end development on the Far West Side of Manhattan.

The proposed development would, if approved by the City Council, make good on developers’ decades-long desire to turn the industrial neighborhood — filled with vacant lots, artists’ studios and eclectic businesses that make things like candles and caskets — into a huge real estate opportunity sandwiched between wealthy Park Slope and Carroll Gardens.

But the proposal arrives as emboldened progressives, dubious about projects that stand to significantly benefit private interests, have helped upend other major development dreams, including the construction of an Amazon headquarters in Long Island City and [*a commercial and office space expansion in Industry City*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/nyregion/industry-city-rezoning-nyc.html).

And a group of Gowanus residents fear the plan could erase the neighborhood’s identity and place thousands of New Yorkers in a flood-prone area filled with toxic contaminants. The group has filed a lawsuit that has, for now, stalled the project, arguing that virtual public hearings, a result of the pandemic, are insufficient for neighborhood input.

The plan will test the city’s appetite for big development, even as a housing crisis has increasingly pushed out lower-income residents and the pandemic has further exposed the city’s deep inequalities.

[*Along with a proposal in SoHo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/nyregion/industry-city-rezoning-nyc.html), officials with the de Blasio administration argue that the rezoning would help diversify neighborhoods that have already gentrified and that are relatively white and wealthy compared with the city as a whole, setting the foundation for equitable growth out of the city’s economic crisis. And it would be in line with Mr. de Blasio’s goal of making New York more affordable: More than a third of the new housing in Gowanus would be aimed at lower-income New Yorkers.

“We are finally really at a point where we can clean up the canal, we can bring open space, we can bring 3,000 units of affordable housing,” said Vicki Been, the deputy mayor for housing and economic development. “The time is right to bring this neighborhood up to the modern day.”

The plans have been a long time coming. It was in the mid-1800s when development first began to transform the meadows, creeks and marshland of the Gowanus area. A natural creek was converted into the canal in the late 1800s, and until the mid-1900s, coal and manufactured gas plants, paper mills and other industrial businesses casually filled the waterway with pollutants and sewage.

From the very beginning, the canal would be seen as both a driver and a deterrent of development. For more than 50 years, city officials dreamed of new apartments and businesses in the industrial zone, but the Bloomberg administration was among the first with a concrete plan: In 2009 it proposed rezoning 25 blocks of industrial land to allow for residential and commercial development, earmarking $175 million to mitigate odors and prevent sewage discharges into the canal.

But after the canal was designated a Superfund site in 2010, those plans were dropped. City officials predicted the label — made famous by [*the Love Canal catastrophe in upstate New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/nyregion/industry-city-rezoning-nyc.html) and more than 1,300 polluted sites around the country — would dissuade development.

Those predictions proved false.

The neighborhood, which is between some of Brooklyn’s most expensive real estate, became one of the hottest neighborhoods in the city. A Whole Foods grocery [*store opened*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/nyregion/industry-city-rezoning-nyc.html) in 2013. That same year the Environmental Protection Agency finalized a plan to clean up the canal, spurring a series of discussions in the community and the city about more parks, housing and infrastructure. The prospect of a federally mandated cleanup drove a spike in real estate speculation, with developers eager to capitalize on a neighborhood transformation.

After years of planning, the ambitious cleanup of the waterway began late last year. But deciding what will happen at the water’s edge has proved to be a thornier question.

Michelle de la Uz, the executive director of the Fifth Avenue Committee, a nonprofit that advocates for low-income housing, has come out in favor of the rezoning, and her group is involved in the plans for a project in Gowanus. She pointed out that development pressures had changed the composition of the neighborhood long before the canal cleanup began.

A [*report from the Pratt Center for Community Development*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/nyregion/industry-city-rezoning-nyc.html), a Brooklyn-based nonprofit, found that the proportion of Latino people living in the Gowanus area dropped to 25 percent from 35 percent between 2000 and 2015 as housing prices rose. The rezoning could preserve or even bolster some economic and racial diversity, according to Ms. Uz, a former member of the city planning commission who was appointed by Mr. de Blasio when he was the city’s public advocate.

“If we were talking about rezoning the Gowanus of 20 years ago, then I would be extremely concerned about gentrification and displacement,” she said. “But we’re not. A lot of gentrification and displacement has already happened.”

At the base level, the plan targets about 82 blocks around the canal, making way for a huge influx of new housing, shops and businesses by rezoning many low-density light-manufacturing and commercial areas to higher density mixed-use areas. Many of the plots have dangerous pollutants in the ground, and the plan would require new development to clean out the sites before building.

A new waterfront esplanade would border the canal, connecting waterfront parks and apartments, shops and restaurants.

The plan includes construction of a new affordable complex called Gowanus Green on the site of a former manufactured gas plant. The complex would have 950 units, with at least half geared toward to those who earn up to $56,850 for a family of four.

“Instead of displacing low-income families and people of color, this has the possibility of making the neighborhood more inclusive, of having more low-income and ***working-class*** families be a higher percentage of the neighborhood after the rezoning,” said Brad Lander, a councilman who represents the area and who is [*running for city comptroller this November*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/nyregion/industry-city-rezoning-nyc.html).

But Debbie Stoller, who is part of a group of neighborhood activists called Voice of Gowanus who are opposed to the rezoning, calls the affordable housing argument a “Trojan horse.”

Ms. Stoller noted that a vast majority of new housing would be at market rate, and that many of the developments, under a set of separate city rules, would get years of property tax breaks.

“You really have to ask,” Ms. Stoller said, “what are we getting for all that loss? Are we getting what we should be getting for all that expense? I think the answer is no.”

But it is the environmental legacy of a manufactured gas plant near the corner of Fifth Street and Smith Street — operated by Citizens Gas Company and Brooklyn Union Gas for nearly a century until the site was sold in the 1960s — that is the focus of many neighborhood activists.

Some residents maintain that coal tar pooling under the surface of the Gowanus Green site would put future tenants at risk, and they are calling for no big towers on that land, and perhaps no housing at all without better remediation.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation said it had a plan to allow for development on the site of Gowanus Green while protecting future inhabitants and the environs, in part by excavating soil to a depth of 22 feet in the most heavily polluted area and replacing two feet of dirt across the remainder of the site.

But neighborhood activists are dubious. The state’s original cleanup plan from the early 2000s was scaled back in 2019 after state officials said they determined the coal tar — the main ingredient in what has become known among dredgers as “black mayonnaise” — was concentrated only in certain areas.

The activists’ suspicions were then bolstered when, at a community meeting in December, the E.P.A. official managing the cleanup of the canal, Christos Tsiamis, said he would not want to live there himself unless more was done to remediate the site and keep the coal tar vapors underground.

“Personally, if I were to live in a building like this, I wouldn’t feel comfortable with venting,” Mr. Tsiamis said at the meeting. “I would feel comfortable with preventing, preventing the vapors from entering the building.”

After his comments were met with some blowback, [*Mr. Tsiamis spoke again at a meeting in late March.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/nyregion/industry-city-rezoning-nyc.html) Citing similar projects in other parts of the city, he acknowledged that successful cleanup of the site is possible. But, he added, he had seen nothing to change the assessment he had shared in December.

Asked about those fears while appearing on The Brian Lehrer Show on WNYC, Mr. de Blasio said that he was “concerned” but that he would “make sure we get it right.”

“I really have believed for a long time there was a way to do development in the Gowanus area safely,” Mr. de Blasio said. “I think for so many people who need affordable housing, they want to know, of course, that the foundation of it all will be safe.”

A spokesman for the Gowanus Green development team, James Yolles, said that city, state and federal agencies would need to approve the site’s cleanup plan. In a March 22 joint letter, the E.P.A. and New York’s environmental conservation department noted that the two agencies would work together to ensure that the site would be safe.

“To question whether the site can and will be cleaned to a standard that’s safe for its planned residential and school uses is deeply misleading,” he said.

The opponents of the rezoning also draw strength from an emboldened progressive strain in local politics. Brad Vogel, another member of Voice of Gowanus, said the group had joined an alliance with other groups in neighborhoods like Flushing, Inwood and Sunset Park that have fought rezoning plans.

He said the downfall of Amazon’s rezoning for its new headquarters in Long Island City, Queens, and of the commercial rezoning by private developers in Industry City, about a mile south of Gowanus, “have given us some hope that we are not alone in our concerns about just how unfair this process can be to a neighborhood.”

Even the strongest supporters of the Gowanus rezoning express some apprehension about the city’s plans.

Mr. Lander, for example, said he would not support the rezoning if the city did not also make hundreds of millions of dollars of investments in three public housing complexes in Gowanus.

Kate Brennan, 29, who has lived a block west of the canal for three years, opposes the rezoning, which she fears could bring the same shiny high-rise apartment buildings that she has seen pop up elsewhere in Brooklyn in recent years. She said that the planning process had felt opaque and that she had been unable to grasp fully the particulars of the plan or how she might be able to influence its outcome.

But still, she has noticed how the neighborhood’s population is “exceptionally white,” and how small local businesses like neighborhood corner stores seem to be disappearing.

“I don’t think we would be better off with doing nothing,” she said.

This article was reported with The Hatch Institute, a nonprofit newsroom based in New York City.

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PHOTOS: Gowanus, top and left, would be completely transformed by a new development proposal. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB1); Top, a dredging barge on the Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn, which is a federally designated Superfund site. Clockwise from above left: industrial traffic on the canal in 1952; the site of construction of a new affordable housing complex nearby; and a coffee shop in a new luxury apartment complex. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES; ALFRED EISENSTAEDT/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (MB6)

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[***How Queer Women Powered the Suffrage Movement***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KF-YG01-DXY4-X1CY-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Maya Salam

**Highlight:** For many suffragists, scholars have found, the freedom to choose whom and how they loved was tied deeply to the idea of voting rights.

**Body**

For many suffragists, scholars have found, the freedom to choose whom and how they loved was tied deeply to the idea of voting rights.

In 1920, the suffragist Molly Dewson sat down to write a letter of congratulations to Maud Wood Park, who had just been chosen as the first president of the [*League of Women Voters*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), formed in anticipation of the passage of the 19th Amendment to help millions of women carry out their newfound right as voters.

“Partner and I have been bursting with pride and satisfaction,” [*she wrote*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history). Dewson didn’t need to specify who “partner” was. Park already knew that Dewson was in a committed relationship with Polly Porter, whom she had met a decade earlier. The couple then settled down at a farm in Massachusetts (where they named their bulls after men they disliked).

Dewson “made every political decision, career decision based on how it would affect her relationship with Polly Porter,” Susan Ware, a historian and the author of [*“Partner and I”*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history) and “[*Why They Marched: Untold Stories of the Women Who Fought for the Right to Vote*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history),” said in a phone interview.

Dewson was far from the only suffragist who had romantic relationships with women. Many of the [*women who fought for representation were rebels*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history) living nonnormative, queer lives.

“These kinds of non-heteronormative relationships were just part and parcel of the suffrage movement,” Ware said. “It’s not like we are having to dig and turn up like two or three women. They’re everywhere.” Including among the highest echelons of the movement.

[*In her diary*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), Alice Dunbar-Nelson, an African-American writer and a suffrage field organizer, described “a thriving lesbian and bisexual subculture among Black suffragists and clubwomen,” [*Wendy Rouse*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), a historian and associate professor at San Jose State University, wrote in an [*article*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history) published on [*the website of the*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history) [*Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history). In those entries, Dunbar-Nelson wrote about the romantic and sexual experiences she had with men and women both while she was single and while she was married.

[*Carrie Chapman Catt*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), a president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), settled down with Mary Garrett Hay, a prominent suffragist in New York, after the death of Catt’s second husband. Catt asked [*that she be buried*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history) alongside Hay (instead of either of her husbands), which she was, at Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx.

And Dr. Anna Howard Shaw, [*another NAWSA*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history)president, had a decades-long relationship with Lucy Anthony, the niece of Susan B. Anthony. Though the elder Anthony was concerned about her niece’s long-term well-being, given more than a decade difference in their ages, she understood the kind of relationship she was in, said [*Lillian Faderman*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), a scholar of L.G.B.T.Q. history, who wrote the book [*“To Believe in Women: What Lesbians Have Done for America — A History.”*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history) Shaw “assured Susan that she would take care of Lucy forever,” Faderman said in a phone interview, “and she did indeed do that.”

Susan B. Anthony herself had relationships with women, Faderman said. Anthony wrote romantic letters to the suffragist Anna Elizabeth Dickinson and [*had a long relationship*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history) with Emily Gross. Faderman found letters — one to a relative, another to a close friend — in which Anthony refers to Gross as her lover. Lover was a term used for an admirer, but not in Anthony’s vocabulary, Faderman said.

Today, we have many terms for romantic relationships between women: lesbian, bisexual, same-sex and queer, among others. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, they were sometimes called “romantic friendships” or [*Boston marriages*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), which Faderman described as “long-term domestic relationships between two women who were financially independent thinkers.”

When the history of the 19th Amendment is taught in classrooms, suffragists are often depicted as boring, chaste and dowdy, and their campaign is rarely framed as a major social and political movement. But as greater attention is starting to be paid to suffrage history, and to [*the roles of Black and brown women*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), the narrative that is emerging is much more varied. This broader, more accurate picture is also increasing our understanding of queerness in the movement. Rouse, [*who is among scholars working*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history) to “queer the suffrage movement” — which she described as “deconstructing the dominant narrative that has focused on the stories of elite, white, upper-class suffragists” — uses “queer” as an umbrella term to describe suffragists who challenged gender and sexual norms in their everyday lives.

They did this by choosing not to marry, for example, or by living a life outside the rigid expectations placed on women in other ways. The suffragist [*Gail Laughlin demanded*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history) that pockets be sewn into her dresses, a radical request at the time.

Belle Squire, a suffragist from Illinois, “not only wanted the vote, she wanted to smash what we now call ‘the patriarchy,’” Rouse wrote in her article. In 1910, inspired by Squire and her [*No Vote, No Tax League*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), thousands of women [*refused to pay their taxes until women were granted the right to vote*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history). Squire also publicly declared her refusal to marry, “a bold statement against the oppression of women,” Rouse wrote. And, demanding the same respect as married women, she insisted on being called [*Mrs. Squire*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), not Miss Squire.

Of course, the reality of living as an outlier wasn’t exactly rosy, especially for women in the ***working class*** or women with a more masculine presentation. In her research, Faderman found several instances in which a sex toy was found in the possession of women, a discovery that she said was “certainly frowned upon.” Those women, especially if they were of a lower social status, “were sentenced to jail” or “sentenced to be publicly whipped.”

The societal expectation that middle- and upper-class white women would marry men created a smoke screen of sorts. “I think that the world outside didn’t speculate about the possibilities of a sexual relationship between” women, Faderman said, adding that parents were probably relieved to learn that their daughter had an intense relationship with a female friend, and not a man, before marriage.

In a way, this smoke screen extended to [*detractors of the movement*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), known as anti-suffragists. Anti-suffragists already viewed suffragists as abnormal for wanting equal rights, and they pointed to gender-nonconforming suffragists as evidence that the movement was deviant. They argued that these women would reject marriage, family and the home, and they feared women would adopt men’s clothes and assume male privileges, Rouse said in an email. But somehow they didn’t latch onto the fact that many of these women were having romantic relationships with each other.

This oversight was in part because same-sex relationships didn’t start to be pathologized [*until the early 20th century*](https://www.lwv.org/league-women-voters-through-decades-founding-and-early-history), and because, as Ware put it, “Women are kind of invisible, period.” But maybe most of all, it was because the suffrage movement itself downplayed the queerness within it, Rouse said, a defensive strategy that contributed to the erasure of queer suffragists.

Leaders of the movement (including Shaw and Catt) opted instead to present a version “palatable to the mainstream,” Rouse said, by emphasizing normalcy. So suffragists who were seemingly happily married wives and mothers — or young, beautiful and affluent, a.k.a. marriage material — became the faces of the movement.

Despite this internal friction and these fraught side effects, it ultimately made practical sense that queer women would be at the forefront of the movement. Married women of the day often had children, and mothers didn’t have time to lead a movement, Faderman said. “But the women who didn’t have kids, they did have time to lead.”

For these queer women, the freedom to choose whom and how they loved was tied deeply to the idea of voting rights.

“They knew they would have no man to represent them,” Faderman said, echoing a common refrain among married women who were not suffragists: “My husband votes for me. He votes for the family.” But unmarried or gay women knew that would not be the case for them, she said, and so, “they needed to get the vote for themselves.”

Maya Salam is a senior staff editor on the Culture desk at The New York Times.

PHOTO: Molly Dewson, left, with Polly Porter in 1925. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CASTINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY) (TW17)

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[***Left Behind***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YGJ-RWK1-JBG3-640G-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

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On the afternoon of Saturday, March 7, Bernie Sanders stood in an empty conference room in a hotel in downtown Chicago, looking quietly agitated, like a man trying to figure out how to be in seven places at once. A couple of blocks away in Grant Park, where Barack Obama gave his soaring victory speech in November 2008, thousands of supporters awaited him as the sound system blasted a medley of songs with a familiar lyrical theme: ''talkin' 'bout a revolution'' (by Tracy Chapman), ''the revolution starts now'' (Steve Earle), ''burn, baby, burn'' (the Trammps) ''so let the revolution begin'' (Flogging Molly). In a few minutes, one of his warm-up acts, a local teachers' ­union organizer named Stacy Davis Gates, would be pointedly warning the crowd, ''See, moderation is a dream ­killer.'' And then, ''Moderation is inhumane.''

At the park and in the conference room, the air was charged with a state of urgency that did not yet approach panic but was not so distant from it. After Joe Biden's incredible string of victories on Super Tuesday, just four days earlier, a new phase of the Democratic primary campaign -- one that greatly disfavored Sanders's once-unstoppable candidacy -- was now underway. Former opponents and media pundits were coalescing around Biden, the newly restored front-runner, all but demanding closure to the horse race -- essentially, for Sanders to pack up and go back to Vermont. Sanders had a different view of the situation: In so swiftly closing ranks, his detractors were inadvertently proving the case he had been making all along.

[Read a recap of Sunday night's debate between Sanders and Biden.]

''Look,'' he told me, ''we are taking on the establishment. Wall Street is now opening up their checkbooks for Biden, because we are a threat to them. The pharmaceutical industry strongly supports Biden. Health care stocks went up after Super Tuesday. So, no, I'm not shocked by this.''

I suggested to Sanders that while his candidacy was demanding soul-searching on the part of the Democratic Party, it was his failure to persuade its most reliable constituents -- African-American voters -- that had led him to this precarious moment. But the candidate remained fixated on his adversaries. ''Look, what we're trying to do is take on the entire political establishment,'' he repeated. ''We're taking on the entire corporate establishment, the entire media establishment. The real question,'' he continued as he edged toward the doorway, ''is: A year ago, would somebody have believed that a grass-roots coalition would be where we are today, a few points behind the establishment candidate? That is the real question. We're taking on everybody! That's something that has not been done in American history!''

The campaign was nonetheless scrambling to at least slow if not reverse Biden's momentum. Sanders had in effect conceded the South to his opponent, canceling a long-planned rally in Mississippi while furiously concentrating his efforts on the Midwest. Several appearances were added in Michigan, which would host its delegate-rich primary in three days. A victory there might change the narrative once more. Instead, as we now know, Sanders's defeat in Michigan seemed to many to be the moment his campaign ended.

He stepped toward his waiting entourage out in the hallway, then turned back. ''Do you understand what I'm saying? It's like saying, you know, 'We're surprised you didn't defeat the heavyweight champion of the world!'''

Less than three weeks earlier, members of the Democratic establishment had all but resigned themselves to Sanders as the party's nominee. What could they do? He was playing by their rules, was dominating the early states and had the resources -- starting with $18.2 million cash on hand at the beginning of the year, more than double Biden's amount, and then receiving a whopping $46 million in donations in February alone -- to outlast every challenger. This state of affairs seemed astounding even to Sanders himself. ''Coming from where I've come from in my life,'' he told me one afternoon in late February, ''from the first time I ran for office and won 2 percent of the vote, and then the next time 1 percent of the vote, then 4 percent, then 6 percent -- is the idea that, according to some polls, I'm leading the Democratic primary process for president of the United States, is that a little bit strange? Yes, it is.''

Sanders was sitting in a backstage holding room in Bakersfield, Calif., where he would soon be addressing a noisy crowd of mostly young white and Latino supporters. His voice was somewhat hoarse, and he would need to reserve what lung power he had left for when he would be yelling about ''the whole damn 1 percent'' a few minutes later, so Sanders asked me to sit in the heavy chair directly beside his. The 78-year-old candidate wore neither jacket nor tie, just a baggy and wrinkled light blue dress shirt with the sleeves rolled up to the elbows like a 1960s union boss.

He seemed relaxed, even good-humored, beneath his eternally dyspeptic veneer as he reflected on the improbable arc that began with his tenure as a small-city mayor 39 years earlier. ''What we accomplished in Burlington is very much on my mind as I think about the presidency,'' he said. He ticked off some of those accomplishments: Most of them reflected liberal priorities, like fighting greedy landlords and ''recognizing the gay community in a way that was never done before,'' but a few were nonideological triumphs, like bringing a minor-league baseball team to Burlington and rebuilding the city's wastewater plant. A few days earlier, his wife and confidante, Jane Sanders, told me that they had been discussing potential members of a Sanders cabinet. The media was ''crazy, totally wrong'' in its speculation about what his administration would look like, she insisted, adding that his choices ''will not be coming from the corporate world for the F.D.A. and E.P.A.'' She declined to offer further details, explaining, ''The way politics is now, if you float a name, that person will be destroyed.''

As the candidate and I talked, the chants outside -- ''Ber-NIE! Ber-NIE!'' -- threatened to drown out our conversation. Sanders ended it with a handshake and 10 minutes later took the stage, eventually tugging a generic blue baseball cap over his bald scalp to ward off the California sun.

Pacing and forcefully gesticulating, he delivered an only slightly updated version of the 30-­minute speech he has been delivering since 2015, when the political world suffered its first rude awakening to the septuagenarian socialist and his youth-driven insurgent campaign. A great deal had changed since then, but Sanders's blunt-instrument oratory had not. ''The Republican establishment is getting nervous!'' he bellowed. ''The Democratic establishment is getting nervous! And they're going a little bit nuts! 'How can we stop Bernie? How can we stop the movement of millions of people who are standing up for justice?' So I've got news for the Republican establishment, I've got news for the Democratic establishment: THEY CAN'T STOP US!''

To the ears of many in the party establishment, such ranting stood as proof that Sanders -- belligerently iconoclastic, stoking populist fury over a rigged system and vowing to carry on regardless of what damage it did to other Democratic office­ seekers -- was a left-wing version of Donald Trump: No matter how many voters Sanders brought along with him, his revolution had the edgy makings of what some were calling a hostile takeover.

The next day, Sanders scored a decisive victory in the Nevada caucuses, in large measure because of Latino voters. Having long demonstrated his appeal among the under-40 electorate, Sanders now seemed to have a viable Democratic coalition in his grasp -- something that none of his opponents had, to that point, been able to demonstrate. The unthinkable was starting to seem inevitable as the Democratic establishment somberly contemplated the implications of an avowed socialist at the top of the 2020 ticket. Would Sanders cost them the chance to pick up Senate seats in Arizona and Colorado? Would it cost them their House majority?

Fueling their anxieties was an apparently bottomless trove of provocative videos. Sanders in Moscow during the Cold War, praising the Soviet Union's mass-transit system. Sanders proposing a cap on individual wealth. Sanders expressing admiration for the literacy program introduced by Fidel Castro. When we talked in February, he pointed out to me that most if not all of these statements dated to before he was elected to Congress, back when he was ''a reasonably young man.'' (In the case of Castro's literacy program, however, Sanders doubled down on the compliment last month, telling ''60 Minutes'': ''He had a massive literacy program. Is that a bad thing? Even though Fidel Castro did it?'') I asked if it was fair to say that he had undergone a philosophical evolution since then. ''Of course I have,'' he said. ''Look, what human being doesn't undergo changes?'' He added, ''If you're not a moron, you learn.''

Sanders spoke as if this were a given. At the same time, the man so often described by his campaign ads and senior staff members as ''authentic'' and ''consistent'' seemed content to live and die by his reputation for being as immutable as gravity. Nearly all his current and former aides have perfected an impersonation of his thudding Brooklynese. He is understood to be a loner, a constant if not deep thinker with a resting glower and restless hair and an incapacity for niceties. He is an avid non­presence on the Washington social circuit, has little time for the Beltway media (with its frequent comparisons of Sanders and Trump) and has even less time for the Vermont media (which has offended him by raising questions about his family's activities, including Jane Sanders's troubled tenure as president of Burlington College, when her decision to buy waterfront land for the campus sent the institution into financial insolvency).

Sanders the socialist does indeed have three houses: a Washington apartment that one former aide called ''ratty''; a Burlington home so modest that in 2015 his presidential campaign advisers wanted to hold an open house so reporters could see for themselves what a skinflint Sanders was; and, yes, a lake house in North Hero, Vt., that Sanders bought with royalties from his memoir but seldom visits because he is not fond of vacationing. Nor is he a fan of sharing personal details. After considerable urging from his staff, Sanders now tells audiences that he is the son of a Polish émigré who arrived in Brooklyn penniless and unable to speak English. But while a Barack Obama or a Marco Rubio might draw from such material an uplifting only-in-America parable, the narrative Sanders quickly shifts to is how America has abjectly failed those of his ***working-class*** pedigree.

Never mind his biography, he seems to be saying. ''You want to know how Bernie Sanders will govern?'' Sanders asked me in Bakersfield. ''He was elected mayor in 1981. Check out his record. He was elected to Congress in 1990. Check out his record. Elected to the U.S. Senate in 2006. Check out his record. Now people want to go back and look at something I said or did in the 1970s -- fine, it's there. If you really want to know what I'd do as president, you might want to check on what I did as an elected official.''

It's indeed a curious fact that those who despise Sanders and those who worship him all tend to base their appraisals almost entirely on his words, past and present, rather than on his deeds -- to see him as a bomb-throwing outsider even though he has held elected office for 39 years, about half his life. Then again, Sanders himself says little about his moments of governance, apart from his vote against the Iraq war in 2002.

The early chapters of Sanders's political evolution are a familiar-enough story by now: the odyssey of the Brooklyn-bred lefty writer and documentary filmmaker who moved to the Vermont-Canada border during the Vietnam draft, ran for U.S. senator and Vermont governor in the 1970s on the socialist Liberty Union party ticket and made national headlines in 1981 as the socialist who beat the incumbent mayor of Burlington by 10 votes. Jane Sanders told me: ''Somebody asked him, 'What do you consider yourself?' And he said, you know, 'Democratic socialist.' And of course then they make a big deal out of it. The New York Times, when he was elected mayor of Burlington, pushed it: 'Socialist Elected Mayor in Burlington, Vt.''' (The actual headline was ''Vermont Socialist Plans Mayoralty With Bias Toward Poor.'') She continued: ''They did a bigger story on that than when he announced for president, which they put on A19.'' Sanders characterizes his mayoral triumph as a victory for movement politics, noting to me the support he received from ''people in the low-income housing projects, women, police unions and neighborhood organizations -- a ***working-class*** coalition that was very dissatisfied with the status quo.''

But what's more notable about Sanders's eight-year tenure as mayor was how ably he governed from the center-left. Though the establishment-minded local paper, The Burlington Free Press, had initially opposed his candidacy, ''by the third term, we were endorsing him,'' recalled Jim Welch, who was the paper's executive editor at the time. ''And it was justified. It's true that he talked a lot about Reagan's policies toward Central America and nuclear arms. But mainly he was focused on things like keeping the streets plowed and supporting the arts scene. He worked closely with the business community to revitalize the waterfront and preserve the downtown pedestrian mall. I think by the end of it, the business leaders found themselves saying, 'Boy, I think we made that work.''

In 1990, three years after U.S. News & World Report named Sanders one of America's best mayors, he defeated the Republican incumbent for Vermont's at-large congressional seat. He found no hero's welcome in Washington, however. Referring to the centrist Democratic coalition, Jane Sanders recalled, ''The Blue Dogs didn't want Bernie in the caucus: 'He's an independent; let him go be an independent.''

[As mayor, Bernie Sanders was more pragmatist than socialist.]

Feeling snubbed, Sanders reverted to fringe leftist, a loner who vocally criticized Democrats and Republicans in more or less equal measure and was safely ignorable by both. ''We didn't have much contact with him, either on bills or on votes,'' former Representative John Tanner, a Tennessee Democrat who led the Blue Dog caucus during Sanders's House tenure, told me. A senior House Democrat (who spoke on the condition of anonymity so as not to be seen as stoking intraparty tensions) unfavorably compared Sanders's 16-year legacy with that of one of his most vigorous supporters today, Representative Pramila Jayapal of Washington State: ''She's equally liberal, and she's made a very big impression in her first three years in Congress. That was not Bernie.''

In 2005, Jim Jeffords, the Republican-turned-independent senator from Vermont, announced his retirement. Within days, Sanders declared his intention to run for the seat. Recognizing that Sanders was probably popular enough to beat any Democratic candidate, the party's Senate leaders, Harry Reid and Chuck Schumer (who attended the same Brooklyn high school as Sanders), opted instead to pre-emptively welcome him to their caucus with open arms. ''It was night and day,'' Jane Sanders recalled. ''Harry asked Bernie, 'What do you want?' And he got five committee assignments.''

In return, Reid got the Burlington-mayor version of Bernie Sanders. As a senator, he worked to move whatever legislation was in front of him to the left: expanding Social Security benefits, restricting loopholes for pharmaceutical companies, demanding that the bank-reform bill include an audit of the Federal Reserve. But he also voted reliably with the Democratic caucus. He worked successfully with some Republicans, including John McCain, on a 2014 bill to improve medical access for military veterans. In 2018, he worked with Mike Lee, a Utah Republican, on a war-powers resolution seeking to end America's role in Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen (which Trump subsequently vetoed).

Sanders was no more immune to pork-barrel politics than any other senator, setting aside his dovish proclivities to support basing ­F-35 jets at the Vermont Air National Guard base in Burlington. And he could be diplomatic in his pursuit of his big-picture ambitions. When Reid asked for his support for the Affordable Care Act in late 2009, Sanders agreed in exchange for two concessions: a $10 billion addition in the bill for community health centers and a floor vote on Sanders's preferred health care measure, a single-payer system. Reid agreed to both. When Republicans tried a parliamentary measure on the single-payer-amendment vote that would delay and perhaps scuttle the A.C.A. altogether, Sanders, rather than standing on principle, withdrew the amendment.

Sanders even attended a few Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee events with wealthy donors as a favor to Schumer -- a fact that Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign would use against him, leaking a photo of Sanders sunbathing at a committee retreat. Tad Devine, Sanders's strategist in 2016, who had worked for Al Gore and John Kerry's presidential campaigns, recalls Sanders's telling him during the campaign, ''Tad, you're my link to the Democratic establishment.'' Somewhat taken aback, Devine replied: ''Bernie, you're a U.S. senator. What's more establishment than that?''

By allying himself with the Democratic Party in the Senate instead of heckling from the fringe, Sanders did sporadically succeed at pushing the party to the left. And his decision to mount a Democratic primary campaign in the 2016 presidential election, instead of a third-party one, had profound consequences for him and for the party. In March 2015, according to Gallup, 76 percent of Americans had either not heard of or had no opinion of Sanders. By the end of 2016, he was one of the most famous politicians in the country, with a higher favorability rating than either Hillary Clinton or Trump. As he won enough early primaries to forestall Clinton's easy victory, she was forced to move left on Social Security and trade agreements; practically overnight, Sanders's pet issues like Medicare for All and universal higher education went from fringe positions to the center of Democratic policy debates.

Even before Sanders quit the race early in the summer of 2016, the river of bad blood between his insurgent campaign and the Democratic establishment seemed impossible to bridge. When Devine advised his client to voice his support for Hillary Clinton, Devine recalls Sanders's replying: ''Listen, Tad, you don't know what it's like to go in front of 20,000 people. As soon as I mention her name, they'll scream. I'm going to bring them along; it's going to have to be a process. Let's start with the Democratic platform.''

An ugly platform fight then ensued, beginning with squabbles over which members of Sanders's camp would be allowed on the platform committee and extending into fights over language about fracking, health care and Israel. And though Sanders made more than 30 campaign stops for Clinton during the final weeks of the campaign, an internal analysis of Cooperative Congressional Election Study data conducted by the Sanders pollster Ben Tulchin found that a distinct cohort of Sanders's electorate had migrated into Trump's column.

Still, Sanders and the Democratic establishment were not quite finished with each other. Schumer created a Senate leadership post for Sanders, putting him in charge of ''outreach'' -- that is to say, developing grass-roots support for the party on key issues. The party had come to recognize, however grudgingly, that Sanders had proved himself as more than just an agitator. He had galvanized young voters in a way no candidate from either party had done since Obama, building a millions-strong grass-roots army and small-donor database at a time when the party -- cast entirely out of power in Washington, fighting the dismantling of Obama's policy legacy and looking ahead to the 2018 midterm elections -- needed all the help it could get.

As Sanders began staffing up for his 2020 presidential campaign, he recruited three alumni of Reid's staff: Josh Orton became his national policy director, Faiz Shakir joined as his campaign manager and Ari Rabin-Havt was named Shakir's deputy. In an unusual move, Sanders also hired Hillary Clinton's former opposition researcher, Tyson Brody, who had spent several months in the previous cycle digging up dirt on the man who would now be his boss. The 2020 campaign would outraise the competition by a two-to-one margin in the first three contests and deploy superior technological tools -- among them peer-to-peer texting, the Bern app (which proved to be a key organizing resource for the Sanders operation in Iowa) and the live-streaming of every single campaign event. It also advertised heavily in Latino communities on Sanders's economic message, steadily gaining support from that group in early states like Nevada and California while Biden's Latino numbers remained static, as entrance and exit polls in those states would later reveal.

In the meantime, Sanders decided early in the race -- against the advice of several of his top aides -- to go easy on the front-runner Biden, an establishment figure who had always treated him with kindness and respect. It's difficult to imagine what else the party would have wanted out of a top-tier campaign -- except to have someone besides Sanders at the head of it.

The high point of the Sanders campaign occurred on Feb. 22, the date of the Nevada caucuses. No team was better prepared for that event. Sanders had a paid staff of more than 200 in Nevada, an astonishing commitment that reflected a strategic determination to dominate the early states. From the moment I entered the East Las Vegas Community Center, a caucus site serving a densely Latino part of the city, it was apparent who was going to win that day. Sanders regalia dominated the panorama, his volunteers outnumbering those for all the other candidates combined -- Biden, Elizabeth Warren, Pete Buttigieg, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Steyer -- by perhaps three to one. The volunteers were well prepared and, in almost all cases, unfailingly courteous to the others in attendance.

But then I happened to notice a lanky, bearded young man in a burgundy cap that read ''Bernie.'' He was tailing Julián Castro, the former housing secretary and presidential candidate now stumping for Warren at this site -- walking inches behind Castro and asking mocking questions about his tenure in the Obama administration that the secretary studiously ignored. Then off to my left, I heard a male voice shout: ''That's an absolute lie! You're a liar! Show me your studies!'' It was a stocky young white man in a blue T-shirt that identified him as a ''captain'' among Sanders's Nevada volunteers. He was yelling at a black man who had been telling another caucus­goer that Sanders's Medicare for All plan would double his taxes.

A middle-aged white woman who was a more senior volunteer than the captain rushed over. Apologizing to the black man, she said: ''We all come from the same place. We all want a future for our children.'' Pulling the captain aside, I could hear her quietly admonish him as his face reddened: ''When you start yelling at someone instead of trying to persuade them, do you know what happens? They call you a Bernie Bro.''

Over and over, Sanders insisted that his coalition amounted to a ''unity campaign.'' An early sign that Democratic voters did not necessarily see it that way, however, was visible in the Iowa caucuses. The caucus rules allow voters whose preferred candidates fall short on the first ballot to switch their support to another candidate on the second. But while Sanders performed strongly on the first ballot, he attracted notably few additional caucus­goers on the second and came up just short of Buttigieg, who won, in the final delegate tally.

When it came to broadening its coalition, the Sanders campaign offered few gestures of conciliation: no intimations that he would govern as he did in Burlington and in the Senate; no across-the-board denunciations of Bernie Bro harassment; no evocation of an America under a Sanders presidency in which it was possible to see anything other than round-the-clock class warfare.

''What separates Bernie's team,'' said Brian Fallon, the press secretary for the 2016 Clinton campaign and a veteran of Democratic politics, ''is that they're movement people. A lot of people in the operative class who do this for a living are highly skilled but also a little bit functionary: They move from one cycle to the next, very malleable with platforms and agendas.'' He went on: ''The people Bernie attracts, and I mean this as a compliment, are people who wouldn't sign up for just anything. If they weren't with him, they'd be grinding away at an advocacy organization or laboring with a House primary challenger. They're driven by the cause.'' Indeed, many of the campaign's most important state directors -- among them Misty Rebik in Iowa and Rafael Navar in California -- were veteran progressive activists, not barnacled campaign itinerants. They were believers recruiting other believers from a universe that in many cases had become alienated from the Democratic Party.

At times, Sanders's top staff members appeared to wear alienation as a badge of honor. Jeff Weaver, the campaign's chief strategist, who began his association with Sanders as his campaign driver in 1986, informed reporters in the spin room after the Feb. 26 debate that the very idea of Sanders as the Democratic nominee accepting the billion dollars that Mike Bloomberg has pledged to defeat Trump was ''a hard no.'' When I asked Rabin-Havt, the deputy campaign manager, whether Bernie's Democratic detractors simply feared that a socialist was unelectable, he replied: ''I think they have laughed at us and ignored us for two years now. And I would link the establishment forces, in a broad sense, to the media, the people who attend cocktail parties and give $2,800 to candidates while eating canapés, the people who were at the Alfalfa Club after-party at Jeff Bezos's house. I was talking to someone from that set the other day. They said: 'Just who are your donors? I don't think I've ever met a Bernie donor.' Exactly! Our world is your server at Starbucks, the guy who packs and sends your books from Amazon. That is our world.''

That sense of embattlement has bred solidarity within the Sanders ranks, but also a view that every conceivable force is arrayed against them. Sanders aides privately expressed to me their belief that the party deliberately chose not to schedule a debate between Super Tuesday and the Michigan primary so as to disadvantage Sanders; that leading data analysts like Nate Silver, Nate Cohn and David Wasserman were willfully ''anti-Bernie''; that news organizations, including this one, had a conscious bias against Sanders. The candidate himself wondered aloud to reporters whether The Washington Post, which is owned by the mega­billionaire Jeff Bezos, had possibly conspired with intelligence officials to leak a classified briefing in which Sanders was told that President Vladimir Putin of Russia was trying to aid his candidacy.

Above all, they resent the charge that Sanders is an ''all or nothing'' absolutist. One top Sanders aide reminded me that it was, after all, Sanders, the supposed Medicare for All zealot, who in the weeks before Trump's inauguration headed rallies in an effort to save Obama's imperiled Affordable Care Act. ''The fundamental point of the attack,'' the aide then said, ''is to show that Bernie really doesn't care about the people he's fighting for and cares more about the purity of his ideology. That's [expletive] and has been disproven by what he's done.''

So why wouldn't Sanders make these points? Why wouldn't the aide say them on the record? ''We didn't come into politics yesterday,'' he replied dryly. ''So, no, especially in a primary campaign, you're not going to see us compromise with ourselves on the trademark issues.''

The case for Sanders as the superior Democratic nominee was simple and not without logic. As the party's pre-eminent progressive, he could assemble a solid liberal coalition: young voters, as he had already demonstrated in 2016; Latinos, who had not been particularly animated by Clinton's immigration-centric appeals; and, as the fruit of relentless lobbying since his disappointing performance the previous cycle, a sizable following of African-Americans. Sanders also maintained that he alone could appeal to the blue-collar workers who, going back to his days governing Burlington, had been his original base.

''I was born into the white ***working class***, all right?'' Sanders told me. ''And one of the very sad things that has happened, and this has been statistically demonstrated, is, unbelievably, that the Democratic Party has become the party of the more affluent people, while the Republican Party has become the party of the white ***working class***.''

But Sanders wasn't simply a by­stander to those shifting allegiances. During his time as mayor, demonstrators threatened to shut down Burlington's G.E. plant, which manufactured Gatling-style guns being shipped by the U.S. to fight leftists in Central America. But the plant also employed hundreds of union workers. Sanders sided with the workers. Today, Sanders was calling for a ban on fracking as a crucial plank in his Green New Deal. Tens of thousands of jobs would be lost -- many of which happened to be in the western part of Pennsylvania, a swing state that was vital for a Democratic victory in November.

''Anytime you're honest and have to make difficult decisions, you're going to lose some support,'' he said. ''I understand that. But on the issue of climate change, it's totally irresponsible for any candidate to deny the reality of what we're facing.'' Sanders added that he had seven grandchildren and that workers in the fossil-fuel industry had kids, too. Besides, he maintained, the union workers knew full well that they ''are not my enemy'' -- and that by providing them with five years of paid retraining, as well as free education and health care, ''we'll protect them.''

But the conundrum Sanders now found himself in with blue-collar voters was of his own making. In 2016, he attracted many of them with a relentless message of economic reform. For this cycle, the candidate chose to run on an all-encompassing ''movement'' platform with key components -- gun control, liberalization of immigration policy and that ban on fracking -- that risked raising questions among the white ***working class*** as to whether Sanders would, in fact, ''protect them.''

This proved to be the first crack to appear in what Sanders saw as his wall. In Iowa, the rural counties went for Buttigieg. The low overall turnout in that overwhelmingly white state was, as Shakir put it, ''worrisome for the entire field'' -- but especially so for Sanders, who had vowed that young people would turn out in ''unprecedented'' numbers. A week later in New Hampshire, the voting tallies were more reassuring, but Sanders could not credibly boast that he was chiefly responsible for them, because he won by a little more than one percentage point. Even in Nevada, where Sanders took 53 percent of the Latino vote, there was reason to question whether history really was being made by his campaign: Overall Democratic turnout reached 100,000 with the help of a new early-voting provision that did not exist in the Obama-Clinton face-off of 2008, when turnout nonetheless hit 116,000.

Sanders allowed that he had failed to connect with voters of color in 2016. ''My state has a very small African-American community,'' he told me in Bakersfield. ''We have a very small Latino population in Vermont. So, you learn.'' In fact, the Sanders campaign learned very little about how to win over black voters in South Carolina. His team would insist that they had never expected to win there -- too conservative, too small a youth population -- but early on, they believed they could cut into Biden's margin. Doing so, however, would have required a yearlong effort to recast Biden as an antibusing and pro-incarceration senator who had previously advocated cuts in Social Security -- and to target this message to African-Americans who might not be aware of the vice president's record. But Sanders, ever skeptical of pollsters and reluctant to go on the attack, would not approve a research budget for such an effort.

One of Sanders's black surrogates in South Carolina, Ivory Thigpen, a pastor and state representative, told me 10 days after the primary that Biden had vulnerabilities. ''I remember having conversations with many of my congregants who would say, 'I don't know, the vice president seems kind of shaky,'' Thigpen said. But, he added, the Sanders campaign did not exploit those concerns with ads focusing on Biden's record on, for example, Social Security. ''I don't think that was ever a topic of discussion,'' he said. ''I do think it could've moved the needle some.''

Instead, African-American voters were left to focus on Sanders's sweeping agenda. ''One of the things you have to take into consideration with the older generation is that they don't want things to change,'' Thigpen said. ''I remember one individual who literally said to me: 'My Medicare isn't for all. I worked for it; it's mine. And now you want to give it away to someone else who hadn't earned it.''

Biden took 61 percent of South Carolina's black vote, won in a landslide and seized the momentum from Sanders. Over the next two days, Buttigieg and Klobuchar -- nearly out of cash, with no support of their own from voters of color and now seeing Biden as a viable moderate for the first time -- quit the race and threw their support to him on the eve of Super Tuesday. Their withdrawal from the campaign exposed Sanders's underlying weakness: His electoral floor and his ceiling were essentially one and the same. As a result, he could prosper only in a field that was overcrowded with moderate candidates. ''Had they not dropped out,'' Ben Tulchin, his pollster, told me, ''we would've continued to win with a 30 percent share of the vote. We would've won Minnesota, Maine, Massachusetts and probably Texas. That's seven primaries we would've taken. The story would have been totally different.''

Instead, the story of Super Tuesday was that the party was rallying around Biden as the likeliest Democrat to defeat Trump. Many of his victories on March 3 occurred with far less ad spending and field organizing than Sanders had devoted. For Sanders, the problem wasn't a mismatch in resources owing to the dark-hearted connivances of the 1 percent. The problem was the 99 percent. A majority of them had turned away from their leftmost option, just as they did in the 2018 midterms, when a wave of Democratic voters rejected progressives running in battleground districts. Replacing Trump, it seemed, was all the revolution most Democrats wanted.

Just after Klobuchar and Buttigieg suspended their presidential campaigns and, along with the former candidate Beto O'Rourke, announced their support of Biden in early March, Shakir valiantly spun the news to me as a sign of Sanders's strength. ''Quite frankly, I see fear and panic in the establishment,'' the campaign manager said. ''They wouldn't be doing this if they didn't think Bernie Sanders was on a path to winning the nomination and in fact the presidency. And I think those who are accustomed to having and enjoying power might see this as a threat to them.''

Shakir did not seem to think these developments represented honest concerns about having a democratic socialist at the top of the ticket. Like his boss, the campaign manager believed that this was solely about the establishment's determination to install a protector of the status quo. He insisted to me that Team Bernie was in fact delighted to see it come down to their boss versus Biden -- ''a perfect foil,'' he maintained. ''Because they lived through the same moments together, saw the same information, saw the Iraq war, the bankruptcy bill, the balanced-budget bill that tried to cut Social Security, the same trade deals. And one person voted the right side of history and the other the wrong side. And when you vote, judgment is the most important factor.''

But now the Sanders campaign was confronting the judgment of voters: Biden had a center-left coalition (including the allegiance of the party's crucial black constituency) that seemed capable of prevailing in a general election, while the Sanders movement relied on young voters who weren't coming out all that abundantly in February and March and therefore couldn't be counted on to produce a record turnout in November. Precisely because he had come so far -- from ''Who the hell is Bernie?'' to ''How the hell do we stop Bernie?''-- the gale force of the post-Super Tuesday ''Stop Bernie'' movement felt, to Bernie and Jane Sanders, far more brutal than it did during the previous cycle. This was not really about wanting to unseat Trump, in the Sanderses' view. This was about shutting down Sanders's anti-establishment critique. Little seemed to have changed since the spring of 2015, when Hillary Clinton's upstart challenger was told by his aides that he might not be able to get on the ballot for the New Hampshire primary because of an obscure provision stating that only registered party members could do so. His muttered reply to a campaign aide then could apply now: ''[Expletive] Democrats.''

''The only reason Bernie's in this race,'' Jane Sanders told me in early February, ''is because we think he's the best chance to defeat Trump.'' Sanders himself acknowledged this foremost priority the day after his electoral firewall collapsed in Michigan -- and then added, with a degree of candor that was remarkable even for him, that millions of Democratic voters across the nation happened to disagree that he represented the best chance of doing so.

Sanders concluded his brief remarks to the press that Wednesday afternoon by enumerating questions he intended to ask ''my friend Joe Biden'' at their first and only one-on-one debate four days later. It was a signal that Sanders intended for his legacy to be not a kamikaze mission but instead something more fruitful for the party that was never his. In 2016, Sanders proved he could energize a new generation of voters. During this cycle, he found a way to organize and communicate effectively with Latinos -- evidenced not only in Nevada and California but also along the border in Texas, where his delegate share came to just nine shy of Biden's. That accomplishment is no cheap trick. Should Biden, the probable nominee, combine his gains in the Dallas and Houston suburbs with his former rival's organizational superiority near the Mexican border, Texas could flip to the Democrats for the first time since 1976.

In defeat, Sanders has prompted a reckoning within the Democratic Party. He has forced upon it an airing of ideological differences, compelling progressives and moderates to choose their leader and then make the case in public. Since the rise of the Tea Party, self-described ''principled conservatives'' like Senators Ted Cruz and Tom Cotton have claimed that they, too, yearn for such a debate with the Republican Party's center-right establishment, only to opt for Trumpism instead. Even as the two-man race has taken a more pugilistic turn while the economy reels and a pandemic sweeps the globe, Sanders has remained steadfast in his willingness to let the Democratic voters judge him by his democratic-socialist vision of what America should be. And so, it would seem, they have.

''It's never been about only winning the election,'' Jane Sanders told me in February, back when victory was a distinct possibility. ''I mean, if you won just because you were the one with the superior campaign strategies, that would not be terribly satisfying in the end. It's much more satisfying to pick up the paper, go online or watch TV and see town halls of people questioning their senators about Medicare for All from a more informed point of view, using facts rather than vitriol. That's been so moving to see, really. So gratifying.''

The notion that political change and electoral victory were often two different things -- that the former could and did occur without the latter -- has been an essential tenet of Sanders's underdog career. On the day after Elizabeth Warren announced that she was suspending her campaign, the Vermont senator held a news conference. He wore his navy blazer and a matching tie, an implicit show of respect for the vanquished; and though he took handwritten notes to the lectern, he barely glanced at them, instead gazing reflectively at no one in particular. He observed that many politicians ''fade away'' as their losing campaigns do. This would not be Warren's fate, he said. Then he explained why: ''She has changed political consciousness in America -- which, at the end of the day, is the most important thing that any candidate could do.''Robert Draper is a writer at large for the magazine. He last wrote about how Medicare for All went mainstream.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/16/magazine/bernie-sanders-campaign.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/16/magazine/bernie-sanders-campaign.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The stage after his March 7 rally in Grant Park in Chicago. (MM29)

A Bernie Sanders rally in San Antonio on Feb. 22. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELI DURST FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM31)

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**End of Document**



[***Josh Thomas Has Lots to Watch, in Between Work***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YB3-HJS1-JBG3-60TW-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Eleanor Stanford

**Body**

The Australian comedian shares what he watched and listened to over a couple of days.

After hopping around his native Australia last fall with his first stand-up show in six years, the comedian Josh Thomas returned home to Los Angeles. Now he's taking his show on a U.S. tour through March 11, as well as preparing for a potential second season of ''Everything's Gonna Be Okay,'' his Freeform show, which debuted in January and is available on Hulu.

Working on these projects meant not leaving his house for days at a time, as he read scripts and rewrote jokes, a process he describes as being like ''trying to put on a wet bathing suit''

Distraction was never far away, though: ''Cheer'' distracted him from an Oscar party the night of Feb. 9; RuPaul hosting ''Saturday Night Live'' distracted him from his work; and Twitter distracted him from everything (''Twitter has been a real problem to me,'' Thomas explained).

Over the course of two housebound days, Thomas tracked his cultural diary. These are edited excerpts from a conversation.

Monday Morning

On Sunday night I went to an Oscars party, not an interesting party. You know those nights where you're out, but you just want to get home to finish your show? Well, I had one of those nights with ''Cheer.'' So I got home at about 1 a.m. and then I watched the final episode of ''Cheer,'' just alone, eating leftover curry. I was very drunk and I did cry -- when La'Darius's brother sheds a single tear? That was the end of me.

Then when I woke up in the morning, hung over, I watched Seth Meyers's ''A Closer Look'' segment from his show the night before. At the moment I'm just addicted to American politics, so I'll watch pretty much all the late-night show monologues the next morning. I really love Seth Meyers, and his ''Closer Look'' is great because it gets me in deep a little bit. I like ''The Late Show With Stephen Colbert'' because he's really funny and ''Full Frontal With Samantha Bee'' is probably my favorite, but she's only weekly.

Then my producing partner Stephanie [Swedlove] called me, because I've got to read new writer scripts. Her ringtone is ''Work Bitch'' by Britney Spears, which always just makes me laugh. On Stephanie's phone I set it so that when I ring her, ''Beautiful Boy'' by John Lennon plays.

I watched a lot of YouTube and then I washed my dog (we sit in the bath together) and I listened to Lizzo. All I really do is listen to Lizzo.

And I read the scripts. I like reading new writers' scripts because you get to see what writers think new shows should be, before they get churned through the industry. And generally their scripts are not about rich people, but a lot of shows on TV, including mine, are about rich people, which I think is interesting.

Monday Afternoon

And then I looked at Twitter. At the moment, I find it really hard to look away from what's happening in the world. I was off Twitter for four months last year but now I'm back in and it's just hell, actually. Because Twitter is always telling you what's wrong with everything and then someone else is like, ''Actually that is not the real thing that is wrong with that, the real thing that is wrong with that is this'' and it's suffocating. And then occasionally there's porn and occasionally something quite whimsical and funny. In many ways, it plays into my ADHD really well.

My day was a real hodgepodge: I'll watch a little something and then I'll get mad at myself for not working and then I'll do some work for my stand-up tour and then I'll decide that it's very important to catch up on RuPaul Charles hosting ''Saturday Night Live.'' I mean, if someone gay does someone, then I'll watch it. And I love RuPaul, obviously.

Monday Evening

So I worked more on my standup tour, and then I thought I should watch the Oscars movies. I'm not on the cutting edge of new entertainment. I'm not one of those people that's going out trying to find the hot new things. So I usually haven't seen anything until very late.

I was going to watch ''Parasite,'' obviously, but I was watching on my laptop in my bed and I thought maybe that wasn't the best situation to watch ''Parasite'' in, so I decided to watch ''Judy'' because I thought it was going to be fun. It was fine.

I'm single, you know, so I watch a lot in the evenings. From 6 p.m. to midnight I'm just watching so much TV. So after ''Judy'' I watched Conan, and then I watched a new episode of ''Curb Your Enthusiasm,'' which is a show that I really like, and then I watched ''McMillions,'' which is this new HBO thing about McDonald's. And then I went to bed, finally, around 1 a.m.

Tuesday Morning

The next day I did a lot more work. I watched Seth's new ''Closer Look'' again. Then I listened to this podcast I was supposed to be a guest on that it turns out I'm obsessed with, called ''Off Menu.'' It's about your dream meal and it's really lovely.

And I listened to my Spotify playlist. I only want music that I've heard before, I don't want new music. So I've been playing this 24 song playlist on a loop since October. It's comforting. The theme of this playlist is songs that my ex-boyfriend used to play. There's no men, only female singers. One of my favorites is ''Let's Go to the Beach'' by this Australian band Banoffee. There's also some Des'ree and ''I Try'' by Macy Gray.

Tuesday Evening

Then finally I watched ''Parasite,'' and the subtitles stopped me looking at my phone for two hours, which was a real thrill. Subtitled movies are going to be my new thing, I think.

I also watched the documentary ''American Factory,'' which is very much about the American ***working class***. I watched the films while the [New Hampshire] primary was happening and so I was watching that via Twitter too. And I watched a bit of Elizabeth Warren's speech, and read everyone's opinions. This was interesting because both films have themes of class, which I feel like Americans don't really talk about much, but in this Democratic primary is really a big deal.

So it was a lot of subtitles, and then a lot of ideas about our society and where it's going, which I really like. I don't watch a lot of scripted stuff; I like things that feel real. My scripted stuff is as realistic as possible and pretty issues-focused.

I watched Julia Louis-Dreyfus on ''The Late Show With Stephen Colbert.'' If she's on TV I'll have a look, of course. And then I went to bed around 1 a.m. again.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/27/arts/television/josh-thomas-cheer.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/27/arts/television/josh-thomas-cheer.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Josh Thomas in Los Angeles. He is back in California after touring his native Australia with his stand-up show. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NATHANIEL WOOD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Melding of Boricua Art and Activism***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:612X-FSP1-JBG3-61XT-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Holland Cotter

**Body**

El Museo del Barrio celebrates its own electric history, and present, in a show about the Puerto Rican workshop Taller Boricua.

The marketing of modern and contemporary art from Latin America is one of the cultural success stories of the globalist decades. What was once a niche interest has gradually been gaining a solid, if still limited, presence in some of our big North American museums.

Exactly the opposite is true of Latino art, now often referred to by the gender-neutral name Latinx in the cultural world, and loosely defined as work made by artists of Latin American birth or descent but who live primarily in the United States. Apart from the work of a few stars -- notably Jean-Michel Basquiat -- Latinx art has scant institutional support or auction clout.

Such lack of attention is dictated by the politics of class, economics and race. And resistance to this reality is always percolating somewhere, which is the basic story told at El Museo del Barrio by the impassioned archival exhibition, ''Taller Boricua: A Political Print Shop in New York.''

El Taller Boricua, which also officially called itself the Puerto Rican Workshop, opened in the barrio of East Harlem 50 years ago, in 1970, a year after El Museo debuted in the same neighborhood. Both were artist-run, community-serving initiatives housed in low-rent quarters. With overlapping membership, and inspired by the example of the Black Power movement, both were responses to the experiences faced by brown-skinned, ***working-class*** immigrants to the United States.

The workshop's original members -- Marcos Dimas, Adrián García, Manuel ''Neco'' Otero, Martín Rubio and Armando Soto -- were art-school-trained Puerto Rican artists living in New York City.

Their goals in organizing the workshop were both idealistic and pragmatic. They wanted to establish a collectively run center for art production and teaching in a city that excluded artists of color from its elite institutions. And they wanted to make art shaped by the cultural traditions -- including African, Hispanic, Indigenous Caribbean -- that contributed to Latinx identities.

In short, they approached art as politically instrumental and found ways to put it into popular circulation. They took the role of artist and activist to be inseparable. Although the range of subjects Taller artists tackled was broad, revolution was the common theme.

That theme is detailed, loud and clear, at the start of the show in a 1973 painting by Carlos Osorio that embeds the word ''Revolución'' in a visual conflagration of red and yellow pigment. Mr. Osorio (1927-1984) was one of the earliest and oldest artists to join Taller Boricua and El Museo in their start-up years; Rafael Tufiño (1922-2008) was another.

Born in Brooklyn, he grew up in Puerto Rico and studied art in Mexico, returning to New York in the 1960s. Like Mr. Osorio, he was a painter, but it was his fine-grained, socialist realist-style prints of laborers and peasants that became influential within the East Harlem art community.

Prints were an ideal communicative tool. Cheap to produce in unlimited numbers, easy to distribute, and available to everyone in the form of posters, fliers and newsletters, they were adaptable to a wide range of ideological persuasion and promotion, as the show suggests.

Heroes are commemorated, as in Mr. Tufiño's 1970 linocut portrait of Pedro Albizu Campos (1891-1965), the visionary president of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, who served repeated prison terms battling United States control of the island. Mr. Dimas contributes a striking quadruple image of another independence fighter, Lolita Lebrón, who spent 25 years in a federal prison after participating in a 1954 armed attack on the Capitol building in Washington.

And from Fernando Salicrup (1946-2015) -- an early Taller Boricua artist and eventually, with Mr. Dimas, the workshop's director -- comes a tender, luminous lithographic image of Julia de Burgos, a Puerto Rican-born poet and activist who died an alcoholic in an East Harlem hospital in 1953. (El Taller continues to maintain an exhibition gallery in Barrio art center named for her.)

If these prints package politics in a language of praise, others give a voice to protest. When, in 1970, Julio Roldan, a member of the militant Young Lords -- the Latino equivalent of the Black Panthers -- was found hanged in his cell in the Tombs, described by the police as a suicide, the Puerto Rican community hit the streets and artists papered the city with accusatory broadsides. They would do so again four years later when a Taller Boricua artist, Martín Pérez, known as Tito, died in police custody, also allegedly by his own hand.

Prints were a way to call a community together for militant action, but also for festivities. And it is promised pleasures we find in a group of event posters designed by the New York-born artist Manuel Vega, known as Manny. Rich in color, rococo in detail, they advertise outdoor spectacles like the Three Kings Day parade, still presented annually by El Museo, and smaller, semipublic ones like the rooftop ''under the stars'' dances organized to benefit El Taller.

Interaction between the two institutions in the early years, though not without conflicts, was close, and this made practical sense. Few members of Taller Boricua were exclusively printmakers; most were primarily painters and sculptors. Even if they weren't gearing their nonprint work to display in conventional museums, a museum was the logical place for it. The exhibition's final gallery, with its installation of large-scale objects by three originating Taller members -- Nitza Tufiño, Jorge Soto Sánchez, and Mr. Dimas -- makes this clear.

Ms. Tufiño, the daughter of Rafael Tufiño, extends traditional printmaking in a beautiful 1979 series of abstract silk-screens sewn with panels of colored thread. She is also a painter and muralist who makes imaginative use of themes from ancient Indigenous Caribbean culture, as in a large 1972 picture done in acrylic and charcoal called ''Pareja Taina'' (''Taino Couple'').

This painting, like much of the work in the show, is now in El Museo's permanent collection. So are several large-scale assemblage reliefs by Mr. Dimas and Mr. Soto Sánchez (1947-1987), objects that more or less reverse the trajectory of popular prints. Where prints were often made for display in the street, the reliefs brought the street -- barrio street refuse, that is -- into the studio, where the artists attached it to canvases. In both cases, in different ways, the divide between art and life was breached.

It was smart of the show's organizers -- Rodrigo Moura, El Museo's chief curator, and Noel Valentin, its permanent collection manager -- to have added these highly personal mix-media objects -- Mr. Soto Sánchez calls one of his reliefs ''Self-Portrait'' -- and take the show beyond its ''political print shop'' title.

No doubt one reason Latinx art remains, as a category, unalluring to the market is that it is perceived as being both too narrow and too broad. On the one hand it is identified with a specific politics, defined by ''the street,'' ''the people,'' in which the mainstream art world has little sustained interest.

But at the same time, Latinx art is hard to pin down. It crosses national borders, mixes social histories, and spans the color range, encompassing Black, brown, red, yellow, white, and mixtures of all of those. (A 2020 book, ''Latinx Art: Artists, Markets, Politics'' by the cultural anthropologist Arlene Dávila, lays out all these contradictions.) To an art world reliant on pitch-ready hooks and slots, it feels unexotically diffuse and ignorable.

This dismissive perspective is racist, and classist, and just plain wrong. It is the necessary job of El Museo del Barrio, a formative Latinx institution, to correct it. The museum has announced that the present show will be the first in a series of three, spread over as many years, to explore its own early history. That history is, of course, a quintessentially Latinx history, and the subject is immense. If El Museo did nothing more, from this time forward, than focus its attention on Latinx art and its complex past and electric present, it would have its hands, and its galleries, more than full.

Taller Boricua: A Political Print Shop in New York

Through Jan. 17 at El Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan; 212-831-7272, elmuseo.org.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/15/arts/design/latinx-art-el-museo-del-barrio.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/15/arts/design/latinx-art-el-museo-del-barrio.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Far right, an untitled 1973 painting by Carlos Osorio that embeds the word ''Revolución'' in the exhibition ''Taller Boricua: A Political Print Shop in New York'' at El Museo del Barrio. Near right, a poster by Manuel Vega for a dance organized by Taller Boricua. Middle row from left: Marcos Dimas's portrait of the independence fighter Lolita Lebrón (circa 1971), and Nitza Tufiño's ''Pareja Taina'' (''Taino Couple''), a 1972 picture done in acrylic and charcoal, makes imaginative use of themes from ancient Indigenous Caribbean culture. Bottom right, Rafael Tufiño's ''Don Pedro,'' a 1970 linocut portrait of Pedro Albizu Campos, the visionary president of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARLOS OSORIO AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO

MANUEL VEGA AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO

MARCOS DIMAS AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO

NITZA TUFIÑO AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO

RAFAEL TUFIÑO AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO)

**Load-Date:** October 16, 2020

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[***Sandra Cisneros Loves to Read About Women Waging Battle; By the Book***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63HB-S0N1-DXY4-X3K9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 2, 2021 Thursday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 2759 words

**Highlight:** “These are not your typical war stories.”

**Body**

“These are not your typical war stories,” says the writer Sandra Cisneros, whose new book is “Martita, I Remember You.”

What books are on your night stand?

I have a New Mexican writing desk on one side of my bed and an antique Mexican trunk on the other. Because of this, there are too many books stacked in precarious towers waiting to collapse whenever I reach for anything, the newer books burying the older. When I have to search for a book, it’s like excavating Tenochtitlán. Thanks to this interview, I’ve finally done some housecleaning. Here are some of the titles I found:

“You Don’t Have to Say You Love Me,” memoir, Sherman Alexie

“The Women Who Hate Me: Poetry 1980-1990,” Dorothy Allison

“Afterlife,” novel, Julia Alvarez

“Light in the Dark/Luz en lo Oscuro,” nonfiction, Gloria Anzaldúa and AnaLouise Keating

“Until We Are Level Again,” poetry, José Angel Araguz

“How to Love a Jamaican,” story collection, Alexia Arthurs

“Jackknife: New and Selected Poems,” Jan Beatty

“Letters From Cuba,” middle-grade novel, Ruth Behar

“Siete noches” and its translation, “Seven Nights,” essays, Jorge Luis Borges (Always within reach on my night stand)

“Weedee Peepo,” essays, Jose Antonio Burciaga

“Otherwise, My Life Is Ordinary,” poetry, Bobby Byrd

“Perras,” poetry, Zel Cabrera

“Piñata Theory,” poetry, Alan Chazaro

“The Compassion Book,” essays, Pema Chödrön

“Long Distance,” poetry, Steven Cordova

“Tracing the Horse,” poetry, Diana Marie Delgado

“Create Dangerously,” essays, Edwidge Danticat (Always on my night stand)

“The Inheritance of Loss,” novel, Kiran Desai

“Homeland Security Ate My Speech,” nonfiction, Ariel Dorfman

“The Date Fruit Elegies,” poetry, John Olivares Espinoza

“Ten Plays by Euripides,” translated by Paul Roche

“Head Off &amp; Split,” poetry, Nikky Finney

“The Penguin Book of the Modern American Short Story,” edited by John Freeman

“When Living Was a Labor Camp,” poetry, Diana Garcia

“The Book of Ruin,” poetry, Rigoberto González

“Tangle,” poetry, Pauletta Hansel

“Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings,” poetry, Joy Harjo (Another one I keep on my night stand all the time)

“The Spring of My Life,” poetry, Kobayashi Issa, translated by Sam Hamill

“Rattlesnake Allegory,” poetry, Joe Jimenez

“Selected Works,” poetry, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

“I Wrote Stone: The Selected Poetry of Ryszard Kapuscinski”

“Recovering the Sacred,” nonfiction, Winona LaDuke

“Grace Notes,” poetry, Lisa Lopez Smith

“Cervantes Street,” novel, Jaime Manrique

“Caring for a House,” poetry, Victor Martinez

“Temporada de huracánes,” and its English translation, “Hurricane Season,” novel, Fernanda Melchor

“Born in the Cavity of Sunsets,” poetry, Michael Luis Medrano

“Suspect Freedoms: The Racial and Sexual Politics of Cubanidad in New York, 1823-1957,” history, Nancy Raquel Mirabal

“Native Country of the Heart,” nonfiction, Cherríe Moraga

A manuscript of “The Consequences,” Manuel Munoz’s forthcoming collection of stories

“The Collected Poems of Chika Sagawa,” translated by Sawako Nakayasu

“Bone,” a novel, Fae Myenne Ng (Rereading this again after decades because I love it)

“Piedra de Sol,” poem, Octavio Paz

“With the River on Our Face,” poetry, Emmy Pérez

“Grieving: Dispatches From a Wounded Country,” nonfiction, Cristina Rivera-Garza, translated by Sarah Booker

“Libro Centroamericano de los Muertos,” poetry, Balam Rodrigo

“This American Autopsy,” poetry, José Antonio Rodríguez

“From Our Land to Our Land,” essays, Luis J. Rodriguez

“Brooklyn Antediluvian,” poetry, Patrick Rosal

“Hermosa,” poetry, Yesika Salgado

“Black Wings,” Sehba Sarwar

“Blood Sugar Canto,” poetry, ire’ne lara silva

“Teresa of Avila: Ecstasy and Common Sense,” by Tessa Bielecki

“VirginX,” poetry, Natalia Treviño

“The Architecture of Language,” poetry, Quincy Troupe

“Codex of Love: Bendita Ternura,” poetry, Liliana Valenzuela (I’m rereading this)

“Their Dogs Came With Them,” novel, Helena María Viramontes (Rereading this too)

What’s the last great book you read?

The one I’m reading now; “Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment,” by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, a history of how the United States evolved to where we are as a nation besieged by gun violence. This is not the kind of book I’d usually read, but I loved her earlier book, “An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States”; reading it was like going back to school and gaining a new perspective of the Americas, one that retrieved the lost history of my ancestors. I’m on a mission to make up for the huge gaps in my miseducation as a woman of color.

Are there any classic novels that you only recently read for the first time?

“The Nine Guardians,” by Rosario Castellanos, a beautiful novel about a village on the Mexico-Guatemala border during the turbulent power shifts of the 1930s. Castellanos is one of the most brilliant writers of the last century, but when the Latin American boom in literature resounded in the United States, it was only the male voices that were heard. At this point in my life, I want to read the classics from the Americas, from Mexico, from women, from the ***working class***, from the Indigenous communities, from everyone who hasn’t been allowed to the podium before.

Describe your ideal reading experience (when, where, what, how).

I prefer reading lying down propped by a sea of pillows, like a famous grand horizontale, in bed or on the terrace, on a chaise or in a hammock, or simply on the couch; preferably on a day when no one rings the doorbell, which is almost impossible, because in Mexico, everyone rings the bell. The flower seller, the doughnut man, the water man, the sweet potato man, the knife sharpener, the woman asking to sweep your driveway, the man who was laid off his job and is looking for work as a gardener, the nice couple from the countryside with fresh tortillas and prickly pear paddles, the man who sells wool snakes to keep out the doorway drafts. I am lucky to be able to work from home and not have to ring doorbells, so I have no right to complain.

What’s your favorite book no one else has heard of?

My favorites are Gwendolyn Brooks’s “Maud Martha” and Mercé Rodoreda’s “The Time of the Doves,” both books that deal with war, though the former only at the finale. Come to think of it, many of my favorite books are about women surviving or waging war — Elena Poniatowska’s “Here’s to You, Jesusa!,” a melding of fiction and nonfiction about a Mexican woman warrior; “Cartucho” and “My Mother’s Hands,” both memoiristic accounts by Nellie Campobello that witness war from a child’s point of view; “Recollections of Things to Come,” a novel by Elena Garro, which documents Mexico’s Cristero War of the 1920s; “Tempest Over Mexico,” a memoir by Rosa King, a foreigner who witnessed the key players of the Mexican Revolution; and “A Woman in Berlin,” a brutal memoir of the sacking of Berlin by a writer too afraid to publish under any other name but Anonymous. Except for “Maud Martha” and “Tempest Over Mexico,” they were all written in a foreign language, with some translations faring better than others. These are not your typical war stories.

What book should everybody read before the age of 21?

Books are medicine. What heals me may not be the right prescription for anyone else. This makes me reluctant to make recommendations. But, if I were obliged to guide younger readers, I would feel compelled to give them a wide choice of books in different genres so they could find something, at least one thing that might be transformational, including graphic novels, mythologies, oral tales and cosmologies from across the globe. It’s important that young people find the right books that speak to them at the right time, otherwise you might be encouraging them to dislike reading.

What book should nobody read until the age of 40?

Again, I don’t believe in “should read,” but I think many would enjoy and savor the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen much better as adults. I recommend the miraculous translations by Tiina Nunnally.

Which writers — novelists, playwrights, critics, journalists, poets — working today do you admire most?

Luis Rodriguez, Edwidge Danticat, Natalie Diaz, Rigoberto González, Virginia Grise, Joy Harjo, Helena Maria Viramontes, Lois-Ann Yamanaka, Denise Chávez, Manuel Muñoz, Dorothy Allison, Levi Romero, John Phillip Santos, Charles M. Blow, Jorge Ramos, Carmen Aristegui, Elena Poniatowska, Luis Alfaro and every Mexican journalist who puts their life in danger by writing the truth. And, I hear a chavalo named Lin-Manuel in New York is pretty good.

You’re a dual citizen of America and Mexico, and your new novella is being published in a bilingual English-Spanish edition. What Mexican books deserve greater attention in the United States?

I read Spanish too slowly to have any expertise here. But I do love and admire the works of Elena Garro, Elena Poniatowska and Rosario Castellanos, and, most recently, Fernanda Melchor and Cristina Rivera Garza. I speed read them in English first, then reread them in Spanish. Sometimes I’m forced to read them in their original language because the translations aren’t available yet or aren’t satisfactory.

What’s the last book you read that made you laugh?

Jaime Cortez’s “Gordo,” Fernando A. Flores’s “Death to the Bullshit Artists of South Texas” and Christine Granados’ “Fight Like a Man.”

The last book you read that made you cry?

Jasmon Drain’s “Stateway’s Garden.” It’s a book about the people who live in the projects of Chicago, my hometown. The author writes about them with such love, respect and generosity it broke my heart.

The last book you read that made you furious?

Nabokov’s lecture on Jane Austen documented in “Vladimir Nabokov: Lectures on Literature,” edited by Fredson Bowers. In a letter to Edmund Wilson, Nabokov wrote: “I dislike Jane, and am prejudiced, in fact, against all women writers. They are in another class.” There’s pride and prejudice for you!

Has a book ever brought you closer to another person, or come between you?

“A Tree Grows in Brooklyn” was my mother’s favorite movie, but I never bothered to watch it or read the book because I had watched the beginning of the film with her and thought it too sentimental. On the day of my mother’s funeral, after we all regrouped at her house, I felt too exhausted and sick to do anything but take in a movie. I found the cassette in my mother’s video library and popped it into the VCR. Then I realized the film is the story of a girl who wants to be a writer. My mother had always wanted to make something artistic of her life, and this testimony to that hunger just made me weep. I read the book by Betty Smith soon after, and I’ve loved it ever since.

What’s the most interesting thing you learned from a book recently?

Rereading Robert Graves’s “The White Goddess” after decades made me realize I didn’t pay attention to the same things I had when I first read this book as a young woman. This time around I’m fascinated with the lineage of oral literatures. The book got me thinking about Homer and his connection to the Irish bards, and then to the oral literatures of the Americas and spoken poetry today, how each builds on what came before. Even if a language disappears, I believe a worldview, a syntax, a cadence survives from which the conquering language builds upon, like the stones the Spanish conquistadores gathered from the Indigenous temples to build their Catholic churches. Something like that is happening in our poetic inheritance. Something old and ancient and sacred survives in the spoken word, which is fascinating for those of us who are word-workers.

Which subjects do you wish more authors would write about?

For me the great shame and dolor of our times is the story of immigrant children. There are a lot of great books out there on the subject, but I especially admire those written by the writers who were immigrant kids themselves. These include Rene Colato Lainez’s “My Shoes and I,” a children’s picture book; Reyna Grande’s memoir “The Distance Between Us”; and Javier Zamora’s poetry, “Unaccompanied,” as well as his forthcoming memoir, “Solito, Solita,” which I’m currently reading. I also love the graphic memoir “Diary of a Reluctant Dreamer: Undocumented Vignettes From a Pre-American Life,” by Alberto Ledesma. But lest we think child migration is new, there’s Ruth Behar’s young adult novel “Letters From Cuba,” about a girl who emigrates solo from Poland to Cuba during World War II.

What moves you most in a work of literature?

I’m not yet the writer I aspire to be, but at my age, great books written by women over 60 give me hope. Diana Athill, Colette, Harriett Doerr, Marguerite Duras, Grace Paley, Elena Poniatowska, Jean Rhys, Mercé Rodoreda, to name but a few.

Which genres do you especially enjoy reading?

Poetry, biographies of artists or activists, fiction, essays, spirituality, art history, including books on textile, design and fashion, and especially books on houses.

And which do you avoid?

Mysteries, cookbooks, sci-fi, fantasy, romance novels and biographies of U.S. presidents.

How do you organize your books?

The ones I love passionately live intimately with me in my bedroom shelved in no special order. And the ones I want to read next or again are stacked in towers next to my bed, on chairs or on the floor. The magical books (fairy tales, children’s literature, Eduardo Galeano’s vignettes which defy genre, Elena Poniatowska’s fiction and nonfiction) reside in the hall just outside my bedroom door. The rest are downstairs on bookshelves or stacked on tables and benches everywhere in my home, wallflowers hoping to be invited to dance.

What book might people be surprised to find on your shelves?

Cyndi Lauper’s memoir, which I absolutely adore, and a whole shelf devoted to Maria Callas biographies. Oh, and Alan Cumming’s memoir “Not My Father’s Son.”

What’s the best book you’ve ever received as a gift?

A cheap paperback copy of “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland” when I was in the fifth grade. It was the first book I ever owned. I found it in the Sears Roebuck bargain basement for 50 cents. I begged my father to buy it, and, lucky for me, it was payday. I had no idea people could actually buy books; I’d never seen a bookstore. I thought books were so valuable they were only dispensed to schools and libraries.

What kind of reader were you as a child?

Unsociable, strange, rude. Or so my family said, because I hated abandoning a book when relatives came to visit. I had to be scolded and shamed into civility. Yet my mother would exempt me from helping her in the kitchen if I had a book in my hand, even if I was reading a novel instead of doing homework! Since I’m the only girl in a large family, I felt guilty about this at the time, but not enough to put down my book.

Which childhood books and authors stick with you most?

Lewis Carroll, Hans Christian Andersen, Beatrix Potter and Virginia Lee Burton get better each time I read them. I keep their books and biographies near for inspiration and admire them even more now that I’m older.

How have your reading tastes changed over time?

I read books about Native spirituality, about shamans and healers and mystics, to try to better understand the border between the living and the dead and my own gifts regarding same. Living in Mexico helps me with this journey because the dead don’t abandon us but live alongside us daily. What I was taught to dismiss as superstition when I lived in the States is now a spiritual awakening. I’m grateful to be living in Mexico, which is one of the first-world nations, in my opinion, when it comes to awareness of the divine.

You’re organizing a literary dinner party. Which three writers, dead or alive, do you invite?

Emily Dickinson, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Jane Austen. (In case Miss Emily is a no-show, and that’s very likely, it’s a tossup between Mae West or Rumi as an alternate.)

Disappointing, overrated, just not good: What book did you feel as if you were supposed to like, and didn’t? Do you remember the last book you put down without finishing?

I would never want to offend any writer by publicly admitting which books I’ve put down; it’s not the writer’s fault we didn’t click. Maybe the book arrived too early or too late in my life. If I sense a book isn’t likely to make me a better writer or a better human being, I release it. I have to. At 66 I haven’t got a lot of time left before I transmogrify into a maguey.

What do you plan to read next?

Poetry. I am going to revisit the Elizabethan poets and the beautiful chants of the Mazatec healer Maria Sabina, both for inspiration.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Rebecca Clarke FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 2, 2021

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[***Honoring Latinx Art, Personal and Political; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:612R-HVC1-JBG3-604B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1544 words

**Byline:** Holland Cotter

**Highlight:** El Museo del Barrio celebrates its own electric history, and present, in a show about the Puerto Rican workshop Taller Boricua.

**Body**

El Museo del Barrio celebrates its own electric history, and present, in a show about the Puerto Rican workshop Taller Boricua.

The marketing of modern and contemporary art from Latin America is one of the cultural success stories of the globalist decades. What was once a niche interest has gradually been gaining a solid, if still limited, presence in some of our big North American museums.

Exactly the opposite is true of Latino art, now often referred to by the gender-neutral name Latinx in the cultural world, and loosely defined as work made by artists of Latin American birth or descent but who live primarily in the United States. Apart from the work of a few stars — notably Jean-Michel Basquiat — Latinx art has scant institutional support or auction clout.

Such lack of attention is dictated by the politics of class, economics and race. And resistance to this reality is always percolating somewhere, which is the basic story told at El Museo del Barrio by the impassioned archival exhibition, [*“Taller Boricua: A Political Print Shop in New York.”*](https://www.elmuseo.org/taller-boricua/)

El Taller Boricua, which also officially called itself the Puerto Rican Workshop, opened in the barrio of East Harlem 50 years ago, in 1970, a year after El Museo debuted in the same neighborhood. Both were artist-run, community-serving initiatives housed in low-rent quarters. With overlapping membership, and inspired by the example of the Black Power movement, both were responses to the experiences faced by brown-skinned, ***working-class*** immigrants to the United States.

The workshop’s original members — Marcos Dimas, [*Adrián García*](https://www.elmuseo.org/taller-boricua/), Manuel “Neco” Otero, Mart[*í*](https://www.elmuseo.org/taller-boricua/)n Rubio and Armando Soto — were art-school-trained Puerto Rican artists living in New York City.

Their goals in organizing the workshop were both idealistic and pragmatic. They wanted to establish a collectively run center for art production and teaching in a city that excluded artists of color from its elite institutions. And they wanted to make art shaped by the cultural traditions — including African, Hispanic, Indigenous Caribbean — that contributed to Latinx identities.

In short, they approached art as politically instrumental and found ways to put it into popular circulation. They took the role of artist and activist to be inseparable. Although the range of subjects Taller artists tackled was broad, revolution was the common theme.

That theme is detailed, loud and clear, at the start of the show in a 1973 painting by Carlos Osorio that embeds the word “Revolución” in a visual conflagration of red and yellow pigment. Mr. Osorio (1927-1984) was one of the earliest and oldest artists to join Taller Boricua and El Museo in their start-up years; Rafael Tufiño (1922-2008) was another.

Born in Brooklyn, he grew up in Puerto Rico and studied art in Mexico, returning to New York in the 1960s. Like Mr. Osorio, he was a painter, but it was his fine-grained, socialist realist-style prints of laborers and peasants that became influential within the East Harlem art community.

Prints were an ideal communicative tool. Cheap to produce in unlimited numbers, easy to distribute, and available to everyone in the form of posters, fliers and newsletters, they were adaptable to a wide range of ideological persuasion and promotion, as the show suggests.

Heroes are commemorated, as in Mr. Tufiño’s 1970 linocut portrait of Pedro Albizu Campos (1891-1965), the visionary president of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, who served repeated prison terms battling United States control of the island. Mr. Dimas contributes a striking quadruple image of another independence fighter, Lolita Lebrón, who spent 25 years in a federal prison after participating in a 1954 armed attack on the Capitol building in Washington.

And from Fernando Salicrup (1946-2015) — an early Taller Boricua artist and eventually, with Mr. Dimas, the workshop’s director — comes a tender, luminous lithographic image of [*Julia de Burgos*](https://www.elmuseo.org/taller-boricua/), a Puerto Rican-born poet and activist who died an alcoholic in an East Harlem hospital in 1953. (El Taller continues to maintain an exhibition gallery in Barrio art center named for her.)

If these prints package politics in a language of praise, others give a voice to protest. When, in 1970, [*Julio Roldan*](https://www.elmuseo.org/taller-boricua/), a member of the militant Young Lords — the Latino equivalent of the Black Panthers — was found hanged in his cell in the Tombs, described by the police as a suicide, the Puerto Rican community hit the streets and artists papered the city with accusatory broadsides. They would do so again four years later when a Taller Boricua artist, Mart[*í*](https://www.elmuseo.org/taller-boricua/)n Pérez, known as Tito, died in police custody, also allegedly by his own hand.

Prints were a way to call a community together for militant action, but also for festivities. And it is promised pleasures we find in a group of event posters designed by the New York-born artist Manuel Vega, known as Manny. Rich in color, rococo in detail, they advertise outdoor spectacles like the Three Kings Day parade, still presented annually by El Museo, and smaller, semipublic ones like the rooftop “under the stars” dances organized to benefit El Taller.

Interaction between the two institutions in the early years, though not without conflicts, was close, and this made practical sense. Few members of Taller Boricua were exclusively printmakers; most were primarily painters and sculptors. Even if they weren’t gearing their nonprint work to display in conventional museums, a museum was the logical place for it. The exhibition’s final gallery, with its installation of large-scale objects by three originating Taller members — Nitza Tufiño, Jorge Soto Sánchez, and Mr. Dimas — makes this clear.

Ms. Tufiño, the daughter of Rafael Tufiño, extends traditional printmaking in a beautiful 1979 series of abstract silk-screens sewn with panels of colored thread. [*She is also a painter and muralist*](https://www.elmuseo.org/taller-boricua/) who makes imaginative use of themes from ancient Indigenous Caribbean culture, as in a large 1972 picture done in acrylic and charcoal called “Pareja Taina” (“Taino Couple”).

This painting, like much of the work in the show, is now in El Museo’s permanent collection. So are several large-scale assemblage reliefs by Mr. Dimas and Mr. Soto Sánchez (1947-1987), objects that more or less reverse the trajectory of popular prints. Where prints were often made for display in the street, the reliefs brought the street — barrio street refuse, that is — into the studio, where the artists attached it to canvases. In both cases, in different ways, the divide between art and life was breached.

It was smart of the show’s organizers — Rodrigo Moura, El Museo’s chief curator, and Noel Valentin, its permanent collection manager — to have added these highly personal mix-media objects — Mr. Soto Sánchez calls one of his reliefs “Self-Portrait” — and take the show beyond its “political print shop” title.

No doubt one reason Latinx art remains, as a category, unalluring to the market is that it is perceived as being both too narrow and too broad. On the one hand it is identified with a specific politics, defined by “the street,” “the people,” in which the mainstream art world has little sustained interest.

But at the same time, Latinx art is hard to pin down. It crosses national borders, mixes social histories, and spans the color range, encompassing Black, brown, red, yellow, white, and mixtures of all of those. (A 2020 book, “Latinx Art: Artists, Markets, Politics” by the cultural anthropologist Arlene Dávila, lays out all these contradictions.) To an art world reliant on pitch-ready hooks and slots, it feels unexotically diffuse and ignorable.

This dismissive perspective is racist, and classist, and just plain wrong. It is the necessary job of El Museo del Barrio, a formative Latinx institution, to correct it. The museum has announced that the present show will be the first in a series of three, spread over as many years, to explore its own early history. That history is, of course, a quintessentially Latinx history, and the subject is immense. If El Museo did nothing more, from this time forward, than focus its attention on Latinx art and its complex past and electric present, it would have its hands, and its galleries, more than full.

Taller Boricua: A Political Print Shop in New York

Through Jan. 17 at El Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Avenue, Manhattan; 212-831-7272, [*elmuseo.org*](https://www.elmuseo.org/taller-boricua/).

PHOTOS: Far right, an untitled 1973 painting by Carlos Osorio that embeds the word “Revolución” in the exhibition “Taller Boricua: A Political Print Shop in New York” at El Museo del Barrio. Near right, a poster by Manuel Vega for a dance organized by Taller Boricua. Middle row from left: Marcos Dimas’s portrait of the independence fighter Lolita Lebrón (circa 1971), and Nitza Tufiño’s “Pareja Taina” (“Taino Couple”), a 1972 picture done in acrylic and charcoal, makes imaginative use of themes from ancient Indigenous Caribbean culture. Bottom right, Rafael Tufiño’s “Don Pedro,” a 1970 linocut portrait of Pedro Albizu Campos, the visionary president of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARLOS OSORIO AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO; MANUEL VEGA AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO; MARCOS DIMAS AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO; NITZA TUFIÑO AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO; RAFAEL TUFIÑO AND EL MUSEO DEL BARRIO)

**Load-Date:** October 17, 2020

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[***Virus Ravages Cramped Homes in Los Angeles***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61V7-XTD1-DXY4-X044-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Perhaps nowhere else in America can the unequal toll of the virus be felt more dramatically. Suburban sprawl and freeways demarcate the neighborhoods of the haves and the have-nots.

LOS ANGELES -- Betty Rivera was the first in her household to fall sick, early last month. To protect her family, she locked herself in the bedroom she shares with her grandson. Her daughter left chicken soup and herbal remedies of ginger and garlic and rosemary outside her door.

But it was impossible to stop the spread, not with three generations crammed into a one-bedroom apartment in one of Los Angeles's most overcrowded communities.

Her three-story brick building is wedged between Koreatown and Pico-Union, neighborhoods filled with immigrants who stock groceries and drive buses and where the streets are dotted with businesses that serve the underprivileged -- 99-cent stores, check cashing outfits that dole out payday loans, pawnshops. These days, the wail of ambulance sirens never seems to fall silent.

''It's all day long,'' Ms. Rivera, 69, said in a recent interview in her living room, where her family sleeps and where the fireplace is jammed with toys.

Ms. Rivera's daughter was the next to fall ill, and then her son-in-law and two of her grandchildren. Even Chloe, the black-and-white dachshund and Chihuahua mix scurrying around the apartment, became sick, she said.

Los Angeles may not have the population density of New York, may not have as many skyscrapers or high-rise apartment buildings or jam-packed subways, but the county does have a higher percentage of overcrowded homes -- 11 percent, according to the U.S. Census Bureau -- than any other major metropolitan area in America.

Overcrowded housing is defined as more than one person per room, excluding bathrooms. If you drive across the vastness of Los Angeles County, starting at the ocean and going east, the shifting landscape tells the story of the housing inequality that has fueled the virus surge. Mansions give way to smaller, single-family homes, and finally to the immigrant areas like where Ms. Rivera, who moved here from El Salvador almost 40 years ago, lives, six people in a tiny one-bedroom. In some areas, like Westlake, where street vendors line the sidewalks near MacArthur Park, close to 40 percent of homes are considered overcrowded.

It is this Los Angeles, of tight-knit families, of streets packed with food vendors from Central America and Mexico, of encampments of homeless residents, where the virus has spread ferociously, bringing so much sickness and death.

Early in the pandemic, many hoped that Los Angeles -- at least the Los Angeles of the popular imagination, with nice houses and backyard pools and everyone in their cars -- would somehow be protected from catastrophe.

Now, the hospitals are overrun, and Southern California has become one of the centers of the nation's outbreak, with alarming daily death tolls. In communities across Los Angeles County, the nation's largest with a population of more than 10 million people, it is clear those early hopes were misguided.

Perhaps nowhere else in America can the unequal toll of the virus be felt more dramatically than in Los Angeles, where suburban sprawl and freeways demarcate the neighborhoods of the haves and the have-nots.

And now that the virus is coursing through the city's densest neighborhoods, it has underscored the crisis in economic inequality and housing affordability that, even before the pandemic, was one of the region's most pressing issues.

The problem has been most visible in the growing number of homeless encampments across the state, but also in some ways hidden, with so many people living in crowded homes.

''I think that L.A. was extremely vulnerable and has been vulnerable all along,'' said Anne Rimoin, an epidemiologist and professor at the University of California, Los Angeles's Fielding School of Public Health. ''L.A. is extremely large and it's extremely complex. There is a lot of overcrowding and I think that is very critical to thinking about how the virus spreads.''

Wearing Masks, Even at Home

Amid soaring cases and deaths, Los Angeles leaders in recent weeks have issued urgent pleas to citizens to wear masks and keep their distance from one another. Officials like Mayor Eric Garcetti are also increasingly warning people that the virus is now spreading rapidly in the one place they thought they were safe: their own homes.

To combat that spread, people should keep their masks on indoors if they live in overcrowded homes, especially those who interact with the public at work, said Barbara Ferrer, Los Angeles County's public health director. Ms. Rivera has already been taking that advice.

''This is particularly important,'' Dr. Ferrer said, ''for those people that live in their households with people who are very vulnerable, people who are older, people who have serious underlying health conditions that put them at great risk for serious illness from Covid-19.''

The county has no way to enforce such a recommendation, but she added that wearing masks indoors would ''add a layer of protection while we get through this surge.''

Because the virus has spread so rapidly in Los Angeles, efforts at contact tracing have not been enough. The county and state has moved some homeless people into motels, and offered rooms in R.V.s and motels to those infected who cannot isolate safely at home, but many people have chosen to stay with their families, or on the street.

The virus has underscored inequalities around the country, bringing far more death to poor people and communities of color.

Consider the number of coronavirus deaths Los Angeles County has registered through Thursday in wealthy, predominantly white neighborhoods on the Westside: Brentwood, nine; Bel-Air, two; Venice, 13; the city of Beverly Hills, 21. There, where life feels almost normal, ambulance sirens are not a constant intrusion and many people are able to work from home.

Now consider the death tolls in overcrowded, more populated neighborhoods to the east, like the one where Ms. Rivera lives: Westlake, 202; Pico-Union, 146; Boyle Heights, 187; the city of Compton, 147.

On one quiet street in Pico-Union, Bob Armstrong runs a business that has been in his family since 1903, first in Canada and then, starting in the 1920s, in Los Angeles -- the Armstrong Family Malloy-Mitten Mortuary. He has never been busier. There are new refrigerated units out back to store the growing number of bodies received from hospitals. He has pulled all his advertising off the internet.

''Everyone in our industry is swamped right now,'' he said. ''We're turning away business. I've been in the business for 45 years and this is the most challenging situation we have ever seen.''

As immigrant households in Los Angeles become consumed by the virus, many people are also worrying about relatives back home. In El Sereno, a largely Latino ***working-class*** neighborhood in East Los Angeles, Domingo Miguel Aguilar, the family patriarch who lives with three generations in a small, two-bedroom bungalow, lost his mother in Guatemala to Covid-19.

In his home, almost everyone became sick. His wife, who had been living in Bakersfield while working at a fruit packaging plant, died.

Mr. Aguilar, 69, an evangelist and missionary, reflects on his losses with the equanimity of a deeply spiritual man. ''We have prayed and God has fortified our lives,'' he said. ''He has blessed us and lifted us. We have not fallen.''

Pawning Jewelry to Afford Food

The virus often leaves economic devastation in its wake because so many people who fall ill are working in jobs that provide no health benefits or sick pay.

Ms. Rivera, who works in child care, lost income when she got sick; so did her son-in-law, who missed shifts at a textile factory. To pay their $1,500 monthly rent, Ms. Rivera had to pawn off the gold necklace her daughter received for her quinceañera. She got $500.

She hopes to get it back, but after just a month, she already owes $200 in interest. They have relied on charity to leave food boxes outside their door.

''Even if we don't have enough to eat we have a roof over our head for the kids,'' Ms. Rivera said.

In South Los Angeles, Hilda Rodriguez-Guzman was lucky enough to buy a house about 20 years ago in the neighborhood where she grew up. But as housing prices have skyrocketed in the region, homeownership is out of reach for her children.

So now, there are four generations living in her small three-bedroom house, which has one bathroom. Her adult son sleeps on the couch. There are grandchildren running around. Her father recently came to live with her after being hospitalized for Covid-19. For a time so did her godson, a veteran who was homeless and suffering from PTSD.

''We are forced to live in these conditions where we're basically all on top of each other,'' Ms. Guzman said. ''There's no privacy.''

Nearly everyone in the house has come down with Covid-19. Ms. Guzman believes that the infections started when her daughter attended a small dinner party in June, after the initial coronavirus restrictions were lifted. Ms. Guzman had the worst of it, and was hospitalized for nine days last summer. She needed supplemental oxygen for months afterward.

In richer and whiter neighborhoods, she said, people who get sick can easily isolate and they often have jobs that provide benefits and allow them to work from home. ''We can't do that,'' she said. ''We don't have that luxury. And it says a lot about the inequity that does exist and the racism. This pandemic has made the disparities all the more clear.''

With so many people in the house, and so many falling sick and missing work, money became tight. Utility bills skyrocketed and so did food costs, as quarantined family members relied on delivery apps like Postmates.

''Luckily we had a little bit saved up but all of it is gone now,'' she said.

And still, as Los Angeles officials parse the daily drumbeat of cases and deaths, looking for any sign that the surge is slowing, Ms. Rivera keeps hearing the sirens.

With each passing ambulance, Ms. Rivera pauses, wondering who is sick this time. Her lingering effects from the virus include loss of smell, and she is scared about getting reinfected.

Before she gets on the bus for work each morning, she says a short prayer, asking God to keep her safe.

But she does not leave it all in God's hands. For protection, she always has extra face masks, passing them around on the bus to those who need one.

Ana Facio-Krajcer contributed reporting.Ana Facio-Krajcer contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/23/us/los-angeles-crowded-covid.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/23/us/los-angeles-crowded-covid.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Betty Rivera, above at right, and five other relatives live in a one- bedroom apartment in Los Angeles. When she fell ill with Covid-19, it was impossible not to spread it. Bob Armstrong, at left, runs a mortuary in the Pico-Union neighborhood. ''This is the most challenging situation we have ever seen,'' he said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARLA GACHET FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A8)

**Load-Date:** January 24, 2021

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[***The Superdelegates Are Nervous; On Politics With Lisa Lerer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y9K-GR41-DXY4-X02P-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** And many of them tell us they’re willing to use a brokered convention to stop Bernie Sanders.

**Body**

And many of them tell us they’re willing to use a brokered convention to stop Bernie Sanders.

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, writing to you aboard a flight to Texas, one of the states voting next week on Super Tuesday.

[*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) to get On Politics in your inbox every weekday.

This week, I took a brief break from chasing candidates across the country to conduct a little stress test on the Democratic Party establishment.

Over the past few days, [*my colleague Reid Epstein and I interviewed 93(!) superdelegates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/27/us/politics/democratic-superdelegates.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) — the elected officials, Democratic National Committee members and other party leaders who could play a role in choosing a nominee at the national convention. Most of them have spent years, or even decades, working to elect Democrats to all levels of government.

After nearly 100 interviews, I can confidently report back to you, dear readers, that in some quarters of the Democratic Party, the anxiety about Senator Bernie Sanders’s popular vote victories in the first three nominating contests is real — and rising.

We are talking palm-sweating, meditation-app-subscribing, yoga-retreat-scheduling levels of anxiety.

One prominent Democrat put the “freakout level” at a 12 — on a scale of one to 10. In private conversations, members of Congress used words like “disaster” and said Mr. Sanders had “hijacked the party.” One lawmaker described the mind-set as “depression mode.” (Many of these people threw in some expletives, too.)

Much of these Democrats’ concern is rooted in fears that having Mr. Sanders at the top of the ticket could cost Democrats seats in competitive House and Senate races, particularly in states like Arizona and Ohio, where some fear his liberal platform could alienate the more moderate suburban voters who helped Democrats win back the House in 2018.

“Bernie Sanders most certainly is not our strongest candidate,” said Will Cheek, a D.N.C. member from Tennessee. “I intend to firmly and resolutely fight for the strongest candidate.”

Of course, there are some committee members who support Mr. Sanders. But they were a clear minority in the group we surveyed — only nine of the people we interviewed said Mr. Sanders should be the party nominee if he captures the most delegates but falls short of a majority.

One of them, Yasmine Taeb, a committee member from Virginia, argued that the party should be more concerned about a candidate like Michael Bloomberg, the former New York mayor.

“Why shouldn’t D.N.C. members — especially the ones of us who were elected by the grass roots — instead be concerned about a former Republican sexist billionaire who is trying to buy the election? I certainly am,” Ms. Taeb said. “I’m not concerned, however, with the progressive candidate with the largest grass-roots support across the country to win the nomination, because that’s precisely what is needed to defeat Donald Trump.”

Mr. Sanders and his advisers agree that his ideas will generate huge excitement among young and ***working-class*** voters, and lead to record turnout. (Such hopes [*have yet to be borne out*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democratic-voters.html) in nominating contests so far, however.)

You may be wondering why I spent so much time interviewing these party officials. Winning the nomination is based on support from voters in primaries and caucuses, right?

Not necessarily.

Those contests proportionally award pledged delegates to candidates who reach 15 percent support in a state or congressional district. Under party rules, the candidate who captures a majority of the pledged delegates becomes the nominee.

But [*if no one hits the magic number of 1,991 pledged delegates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/22/us/politics/democratic-primary-dnc-superdelegates.html), the contest goes to a second ballot at the party’s convention. That’s when the superdelegates could get involved. On that ballot, all 3,979 pledged delegates and 771 superdelegates would be free to vote for any candidate they chose.

From our reporting, Reid and I got the distinct sense that a faction of the Democratic Party is worried enough about Mr. Sanders that they are willing to throw the party into a brokered convention, the kind of messy political battle not seen since 1952, [*when the Democratic nominee was Adlai Stevenson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/27/us/brokered-democratic-convention.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article).

And the crowded primary has prompted many Democrats to believe that such an outcome is not just possible but probable. (Cooler heads at the Democratic National Committee maintain that the party is highly unlikely to head to the convention without an assured nominee.)

But if it happens? Well, that Democratic “freakout level” just might break the scale.

Drop us a line!

We want to hear from our readers. Have a question? We’ll try to answer it. Have a comment? We’re all ears. Email us at [*onpolitics@nytimes.com*](mailto:onpolitics@nytimes.com).

From Opinion: The Sanders debate

Each week, our colleagues from The New York Times’s [*Opinion section*](https://www.nytimes.com/section/opinion) share expert analysis and perspectives from across the political spectrum.

As we approach Super Tuesday, our opinion columnists are asking the same question: Will Bernie Sanders be the Democrats’ nominee? Mr. Sanders says that he has the highest favorability ratings of any candidate and that he can engender support among young and minority voters. But will that be enough?

Mr. Sanders’s “early-state successes have given him a clear path to a plurality of pledged convention delegates,” [*Ross Douthat writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/22/opinion/sunday/bernie-sanders-democrats-2020.html). But if some of the other candidates who aren’t actually winning primaries don’t drop out, he argues, Mr. Sanders will build an insurmountable advantage. And the superdelegates may find themselves irrelevant: “A world where Sanders is on track to get a clear delegate plurality in late March is probably a world where he gets a majority by May,” Mr. Douthat says.

As the Democratic nominee, could Mr. Sanders unify the party and reach outside his base for support? [*David Leonhardt notes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/23/opinion/bernie-sanders-trump-2020.html) that the four most recent presidents all “tried to appeal to voters who weren’t obvious supporters.” Mr. Sanders isn’t doing this, which makes him less than “an ideal Democratic nominee,” Mr. Leonhardt says.

For the most part, the other Democratic candidates in the race — as Tuesday night’s debate made clear — agree with Mr. Leonhardt. A few of the candidates “don’t merely see Sanders as a less-than-ideal adversary for Trump. They see him as political suicide,” [*writes Frank Bruni*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/26/opinion/democratic-debate-south-carolina.html). He said that watching Tuesday’s debate was like watching “a political party devour itself.”

Perhaps this can all be avoided, reasons Tom Friedman. His suggestion? [*Forge a national unity ticket*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/25/opinion/democratic-primary-candidates.html) to defeat Donald Trump.

— Adam Rubenstein

… Seriously

If you’ve seen our debate-night preview pages, you’re probably familiar with the candidate lineups we put at the top:

Well, leave it to Twitter to discover how much fun you can have if you [*hack the page*](https://twitter.com/gothfemme/status/1232424866994892800).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Surprise Pick For Top Office In Virus Fight***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61G1-13M1-JBG3-60VS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Michael D. Shear

**Body**

The selection of Mr. Becerra, the California attorney general, is a surprise. If confirmed, he will face a daunting challenge in leading the department at a critical moment in the pandemic.

WASHINGTON -- President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has selected Xavier Becerra, the Democratic attorney general of California, as his nominee for secretary of health and human services, tapping a former congressman who would be the first Latino to run the department as it battles the surging coronavirus pandemic.

Mr. Becerra became Mr. Biden's clear choice only over the past few days, according to people familiar with the transition's deliberations, and was a surprise. Mr. Becerra has carved out a profile on the issues of criminal justice and immigration, and he was long thought to be a candidate for attorney general.

But as attorney general in California, he has been at the forefront of legal efforts on health care, leading 20 states and the District of Columbia in a campaign to protect the Affordable Care Act from being dismantled by his Republican counterparts. He has also been vocal in the Democratic Party about fighting for women's health.

If confirmed, Mr. Becerra will immediately face a daunting task in leading the department at a critical moment during a pandemic that has killed more than 281,000 people in the United States -- and one that has taken a particularly devastating toll on people of color.

''The A.C.A. has been life-changing and now through this pandemic, we can all see the value in having greater access to quality health care at affordable prices,'' Mr. Becerra said in June, when he filed a brief with the Supreme Court in defense of the health care law. ''Now is not the time to rip away our best tool to address very real and very deadly health disparities in our communities.''

A spokesman for Mr. Biden's transition team declined to comment. The president-elect plans to formally announce Mr. Becerra as his choice to lead the health department early this week, along with several other top health care advisers, according to people familiar with the rollout.

Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the chief of infectious diseases at Massachusetts General Hospital, will be selected to lead the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, according to a person familiar with Mr. Biden's deliberations. Dr. Walensky, whose selection was reported earlier by Politico, will replace Dr. Robert R. Redfield as the leader of the scientific agency at the forefront of the nation's pandemic response.

Dr. Vivek Murthy, who served as surgeon general under President Barack Obama, will reprise that role for Mr. Biden. A telegenic confidant of the president-elect, Mr. Murthy will become one of Mr. Biden's closest advisers on medical issues and will lead much of the public outreach on the pandemic.

Jeffrey D. Zients, an entrepreneur and management consultant who served as the head of Mr. Obama's National Economic Council and fixed the bungled rollout of the health law's online insurance marketplace, will become a coronavirus czar in the White House, leading efforts to coordinate the fight against the coronavirus pandemic among the government's sprawling agencies.

Some medical experts, who have been pushing the Biden team to name people with medical or public health expertise to serve in health leadership positions, were caught off guard -- and unhappily so -- by the news of Mr. Becerra's selection.

In a letter sent last week to Mr. Biden, five leading medical groups -- the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Physicians among them -- called on the president-elect to appoint ''qualified physicians to serve in key positions critical to advancing the health of our nation.''

One person familiar with that effort said people involved were ''astounded'' by the selection of Mr. Becerra, and suggested that Mr. Biden elevate Dr. Murthy to a cabinet-level position.

But in an interview on Sunday night, Dr. Ada D. Stewart, the president of the American Academy of Family Physicians, one of the groups that sent the letter, described Mr. Becerra as ''a good choice'' and ''an experienced legislator and executive'' -- even as she conceded that her group would ''prefer, of course, to have a physician in this position.''

''We've already seen his commitment to health and equity, and those things can't be overlooked,'' she said.

Mr. Becerra's experience in Washington may also help Mr. Biden secure legislative changes to bolster the Affordable Care Act, a central promise that the president-elect made during the 2020 campaign.

Mr. Becerra, 62, served 12 terms in Congress, representing Los Angeles, before becoming the attorney general of his home state in 2017. He is the first Latino to hold that office, and while in Congress he was the first Latino to serve as a member of the Ways and Means Committee, where he worked on health care as a senior member of the health subcommittee. He also led the House Democratic Caucus, which gave him a powerful leadership post.

An outspoken advocate of improved health care access, Mr. Becerra said in 2017 that he would ''absolutely'' support Medicare for all, a proposal for government-run health care that Mr. Biden has explicitly rejected. A source familiar with the selection said Mr. Becerra would support the president-elect's call for strengthening and preserving the A.C.A. and would not be pushing Medicare for all while in office.

As California's top law enforcement official, Mr. Becerra helped lead legal fights across the nation for access to health care, focusing in particular on dismantling barriers for women struggling to get medical services.

In April, Mr. Becerra led a coalition of 22 state attorneys general in challenging a Mississippi law that prohibited doctors from providing abortion services past 15 weeks. In a statement at the time, Mr. Becerra called the ban ''unjust, unlawful, and unfair.''

''Laws like Mississippi's are a systematic attempt to undo a woman's constitutional rights under Roe v. Wade,'' he said. ''I will continue to stand up for safe access to reproductive care and defend these rights for all women.''

Mr. Becerra's office boasted frequently of the many lawsuits he had filed against the Trump administration, including suits challenging the president's immigration and environmental policies. His activism in fighting the Trump agenda in court earned him praise from leading progressives in the Democratic Party.

In September, Mr. Becerra said the tally of his anti-Trump lawsuits had grown to 100.

But Mr. Becerra also partnered with Republican counterparts at times, joining a bipartisan group of attorneys general in August to urge the Department of Health and Human Services and other agencies to increase access to remdesivir, a drug that has shown promise in treating Covid-19. He also worked with Republicans to prevent student vaping.

Born in Sacramento, Mr. Becerra grew up in a ***working-class*** family; his mother emigrated from Mexico, and he was the first in his family to graduate from college. He attended Stanford as an undergraduate and received his law degree there in 1984.

Mr. Biden was impressed by Mr. Becerra's personal story, according to a person familiar with his thinking. In particular, the president-elect liked the fact that Mr. Becerra served clients with mental health needs shortly after graduating from law school, the person said.

While in Congress, Mr. Becerra was a fierce advocate of the Latino community and became deeply involved in efforts to overhaul the nation's immigration system. He also promoted plans to build a national museum devoted to exploring the culture and history of American Latinos. The House voted this year to create such a museum.

Representative Filemon Vela, Democrat of Texas, praised Mr. Biden's choice of Mr. Becerra, calling it ''historic'' and saying the California attorney general was the right person to lead the sprawling agency during the worst public health crisis in 100 years.

''Becerra will lead an agency that will play a crucial role in overseeing a massive immunization effort and help manage a bolstered federal response to tackle the worsening Covid-19 crisis,'' Mr. Vela said. ''He will also help shape the Biden administration's efforts to build on the Affordable Care Act.''

In the late 1990s, Mr. Becerra traveled to Cuba and visited with its leader, Fidel Castro, which infuriated Republican members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. They resigned, saying they were ''personally insulted'' by the visit.

Mr. Biden's selection of Mr. Becerra to replace the current secretary, Alex M. Azar II, comes as the president-elect is under increasing pressure from the Latino community and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to diversify his cabinet. Mr. Becerra is the second Latino Mr. Biden has chosen for his cabinet after the selection last month of Alejandro N. Mayorkas, a Cuban immigrant, as secretary of homeland security.

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham of New Mexico had been thought to be in line for the health secretary's job, but she apparently fell out of the running. Instead, news leaked last week that Ms. Lujan Grisham had been offered, and turned down, the position of interior secretary.

The leak prompted Senator-elect Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico to use a private meeting with top Biden advisers to rebuke the incoming White House chief of staff, Ron Klain, and other senior Biden officials for their treatment of Ms. Lujan Grisham, according to a Democrat familiar with the discussion.

If approved, Mr. Becerra's nomination would create yet another statewide office in California to be filled by Gov. Gavin Newsom, who was already considering candidates, including Mr. Becerra, for the Senate seat being vacated by Vice President-elect Kamala Harris.

Mr. Becerra has been California's attorney general since 2017, when Ms. Harris was elected to the Senate and Gov. Jerry Brown appointed him to fill her seat. His term would expire in 2022.

Jonathan Martin contributed reporting from Washington, and Shawn Hubler from Sacramento.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/06/us/politics/xavier-becerra-hhs-health-secretary.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/06/us/politics/xavier-becerra-hhs-health-secretary.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. chose Xavier Becerra, who has made health care a priority as California's attorney general. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RICH PEDRONCELLI/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A17)

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[***You’ve Probably Heard Socialists Won’t Vote for Biden***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:600V-74P1-DXY4-X00X-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Bhaskar Sunkara

**Highlight:** We may not like him, but we don’t want Trump to win.

**Body**

We may not like him, but we don’t want Trump to win.

It’s not easy being an American socialist these days — despite the fact that Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont built a movement of millions behind ideas we have long supported, we’re now being called out as potential spoilers in the November elections.

Longtime progressives, including more than[*60 veterans*](https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/letter-new-left-biden/) of the 1960s radical organization Students for a Democratic Society, describe socialists — young socialists in particular — as a privileged few who not only reject Joe Biden but are even keen to see him lose, unconcerned and likely to be unaffected by another four years of President Donald Trump.

In the most generous of these narratives, we’re well-meaning naïfs, having failed to temper our radical visions to the pragmatic necessities of achieving change in the United States. This is a timeless narrative of youthful impetuousness. It is also a skewed portrayal of what most democratic socialists are doing today.

The small but resurgent socialist movement in this country is developing a political approach that can speak to millions of alienated Americans. Like center-left liberals and progressives, during the coming presidential election and beyond we aim to defeat right-wing populism. The difference is that we refuse to do so on the centrist terms that we believe helped create it in the first place.

Balancing these imperatives will be tricky. Michael Harrington, the founder of the Democratic Socialists of America, used to say that radicals had to walk a perilous tightrope — they risked teetering off into the abyss of conventional politics on the one side or falling to sectarian irrelevance on the other.

Neither appeared to be a danger a few months ago. A democratic socialist carrying both a radical spirit and legions of supporters seemed to be headed for the White House. The Bernie Sanders campaign scored early successes in the Democratic primary season and signaled the arrival of a new coalition in American politics — young, ***working class*** and committed to egalitarian policies like Medicare for All, higher taxes on the wealthy and free child care.

“[*After the Nevada Blowout, It’s Bernie’s Party Now*](https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/letter-new-left-biden/),” read a headline I wrote for Jacobin, the magazine I edit, after he won that state’s caucus in February. We all know what happened next. Centrist leaders within the Democratic Party, along with millions of ordinary voters, rallied behind Joe Biden.

Many parts of the Sanders agenda had the support of a majority of Americans, but the coalition around the campaign was narrower than we thought. Despite the Vermont senator’s strong showing, it’s still President Barack Obama’s party. For now, at least.

Last month, Mr. Sanders dropped out of the race and endorsed Mr. Biden. For democratic socialists, what for a moment looked like an expressway to power has morphed back into that familiar tightrope.

According to some progressive observers, our next steps should be simple. Donald Trump is a fundamental threat to America, and anyone refusing to vote for Mr. Biden must be indifferent to the suffering of millions. A socialist left cannot isolate itself from a broader progressive movement, the argument goes, and contending for power in a Democratic primary means respecting the results of that primary, much as Mr. Sanders has.

Most Berniecrats agree with this logic: 88 percent of those who voted for Mr. Sanders in 2016 ended up voting for the Democratic nominee, Hillary Clinton, in the general election, and there’s no reason the same won’t happen this fall. But leftists in organizations like the Democratic Socialists of America face a more difficult dilemma. They are not merely figuring out how to vote as individuals — they are weighing how to use finite institutional resources to build the political alternatives of the future.

Most socialists are cleareyed about Mr. Trump as a threat to most Americans, sowing divisions among working people and marrying populist rhetoric to policies that only further enrich his powerful friends. Nor is it uncommon to hear young leftists denounce the Republican Party as the greatest threat to progress in the United States.

I share the belief that having Joe Biden in the White House would be far less damaging to most workers than another four years of Donald Trump. Mr. Biden is at odds with the progressive, labor-oriented wing of his party, but every poor and working person in America, along with every socialist, would be better off butting heads with a White House filled with centrist Democrats than one filled with Trump appointees.

But that doesn’t mean socialists must fall in line behind Mr. Biden. There is an anti-establishment mood growing in this country, and not only among socialists; millions of voters are distrustful of mainstream politicians and sick of choosing between two parties captured by the corporate elite. Bernie Sanders represented a real alternative to many of them, and Joe Biden does not. And they are frustrated by the lack of recognition: In both 2016 and 2020, the runner-up in the Democratic primary has been a democratic socialist, but you wouldn’t guess that by the lack of concessions to his base.

The former vice president promises billionaires that “[*nothing will fundamentally change*](https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/letter-new-left-biden/)” and appears to be under the assumption that forcefully standing for as little as possible is the best way to unite the anti-Trump vote. Following the Democratic Party’s   [*guiding strategy*](https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/letter-new-left-biden/) since 2016, Mr. Biden wants to win over moderate professional-class voters in affluent suburbs; he seems much less interested in reaching workers whose living standards have declined for decades.

That might be fine as an electoral calculation against an unpopular president, but it sits awkwardly alongside the chorus of pundits who are now trying to rally a 60,000-strong socialist organization behind a lackluster centrist campaign. Mr. Biden’s emissaries to the left come with few carrots, and we all know what sort of sticks will follow. The center is already constructing a convenient far-left scapegoat in case Mr. Biden fails. We’re simultaneously too marginal to bring to the table and so powerful that we can swing a presidential election.

Such noise distracts attention from the real work that Democratic Socialists of America chapters across the country are doing this election cycle. Contrary to stereotypes, we are not pushing a third candidate or eager to see Mr. Trump’s re-election. Instead we are campaigning for core demands like Medicare for All, [*saving the U.S. Postal Service*](https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/letter-new-left-biden/) from bipartisan destruction, organizing essential workers to fight for better pay and conditions throughout the coronavirus crisis and backing downballot candidates, mostly running on the Democratic ballot line.

This is the type of activity that if successful will bolster voter turnout and remind millions that politics can improve their lives. Far from unhinged sectarianism, this is a pragmatic strategy. The United States has a political system rigged against third parties, so groups like the D.S.A. aren’t trying to build an independent ballot line in vain.

At the same time, we recognize just how unpopular both parties are. Rather than play spoiler on the one hand, or let mass anger at the political establishment be monopolized by the populist right on the other, socialists are patiently building a base for the pro-worker reforms this country badly needs.

That’s what walking a tightrope, and making sure it actually goes somewhere, means today.

Bhaskar Sunkara (@sunraysunray) is the editor of [*Jacobin*](https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/letter-new-left-biden/) and the author of “   [*The Socialist Manifesto*](https://www.thenation.com/article/activism/letter-new-left-biden/).”

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PHOTO: A books and pamphlets available at the Democratic Socialists of America’s national convention in Atlanta, Georgia last summer. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Audra Melton for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Jenny Schuetz; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65YM-SNF1-DXY4-X13Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 13124 words

**Highlight:** The July 19, 2022 episode of “The Ezra Klein Show”

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Jenny Schuetz. Listen [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html).

Transcripts of our episodes are made available as soon as possible. They are not fully edited for grammar or spelling.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein. This is “The Ezra Klein Show.”

[MUSIC PLAYING]

If you’ve been listening to the show or reading my columns lately, you know I’m circling this question of why liberalism so often fails to build, most of all in the places liberals hold the most power. And there’s no more damning or central example of this failure than housing.

The five states in the U.S. with the highest rates of homelessness are New York, Hawaii, California, Oregon and Washington. Some of the bluest states in the country, not one red state on that list. And they are consistently unable to build enough homes at prices people can actually afford.

And at the core of that failure is the failure to build enough homes, full stop. And that means ***working class*** people can’t live where the wages are highest. They can’t live where the opportunities for them are most promising, where the safety nets are most expansive. That means people who might want to live in, say, states that guarantee abortion rights, can’t afford to.

That means a state like California — that prides itself on all the green energy infrastructure it’s building — is pricing people who would want to live in that infrastructure into states where they use more fossil fuels. Or it’s pricing people into parts of California itself where they have to drive much further into work.

Housing is fundamental. When you fail to provide it, that failure reverberates throughout society, it lays waste to all your other carefully laid policy plans and ideals. Few understand the ins and outs of America’s housing system or systems like Jenny Schuetz. She is a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institute, and she’s the author of the new book, “Fixer-Upper: How to Repair America’s Broken Housing Systems,” which is one of the clearest overviews of America’s housing policy failures and just its housing policies that you’ll find.

But reading it, a much deeper argument struck me throughout. This is very much a book about when democracy works and when it fails. It’s almost a cliché to say that the government that is closest to the people is the government that governs best, that a strong Democratic culture is one where the people most affected by a decision have the most immediate power over it.

And what she’s saying is that this system, what we often imagine to be the essence of democracy, it is failing and it is failing worst in the places where it often looks to be operating best. It’s a pretty profound set of questions, not just for liberals, but for anybody who thinks about political systems, to grapple with. As always, my email [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

Jenny Schuetz, welcome to the podcast.

JENNY SCHUETZ: Good to be here, Ezra.

EZRA KLEIN: So you argue that the very phrase “housing crisis” is a bit of a misnomer. That we’re actually facing overlapping problems, overlapping crises with very different solutions. Tell me how you break it down.

JENNY SCHUETZ: Sure. So the easiest way to think about it is that there are two housing affordability problems. One is that in high-cost metros, places with great job markets, like San Francisco, New York and DC, we haven’t been building enough housing to accommodate population growth and job growth for something like the last 30 years.

So this is just a classic case of we haven’t allowed housing supply to keep up with demand. There are a bunch of high-paid workers who want to live there. They’ve driven up the cost of housing. And we’ve created a bunch of rules that make it impossible for supply to respond to that. So that’s in some sense a localized problem, but in places that are really important to the national economy —

EZRA KLEIN: And to the media, specifically. [LAUGHS]

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yes. Very important to the media, to policymakers, to people who go on podcasts.

EZRA KLEIN: I give a lot of attention to this.

JENNY SCHUETZ: Exactly. The other problem is actually nationwide in scope, but it’s focused on the bottom 20 — 25 percent of households by income. The poorest households everywhere in the country spend more than half of their income on housing costs, and that leaves them too little money left over to pay for things like food and transportation and health care.

That’s not because of a lack of housing. That’s because incomes are very low. And specifically, incomes are too low to pay for what we can think of as the operating cost for minimum quality housing. So landlords have to collect some amount of rent to pay the mortgage and the property taxes and keep the lights on. There are a bunch of people who simply don’t have enough income to pay that. And so they are stretched trying to afford decent quality housing everywhere in the country.

EZRA KLEIN: So we’re going to dig into both of these problems. But I want to touch on some of the ways that the housing issues we have defies some of our political intuitions. So I think in the 30,000-foot view of American politics, you have Democrats who care a lot about the homeless, who care a lot about homelessness, and you have Republicans who think you should pull yourself up by your bootstraps.

If you look at the five states with the highest homelessness rates, it’s New York, it’s Hawaii, California, Oregon, Washington. Why are they all blue?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Oh, I don’t think we’d want to say that the causation runs from Democratic places have high homelessness necessarily. Part of this is that those are all places that have very strong demand for housing. And so they would have a lot of high-income people who want to bid up housing. That’s true in some of the red-leaning states as well, but it’s particularly true in those high-cost coastal states.

But it’s also true that many of the Democratic administrations, at the state and local level, have imposed a lot of rules on the construction process that make it difficult to build housing. And they’ve done this in some cases based on progressive things like we want to protect the environment or we want to give voice to people in the community and let them weigh in on what happens to their neighborhood.

But the downside has been it makes it really hard to build and especially for supply to respond to the increase in demand. So 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.

EZRA KLEIN: Can you say another word on that point you made about voice? Because I think it’s very important here. You suggested we don’t want to think that the correlation is directly Democratic governance to bad housing policy. And I agree with that. But I do think there are subtle connections here and one of them might be the way different places and different governing coalitions think about voice and think about local control.

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, there’s a pretty strong belief, really since about the 1960s, that people should be able to weigh in on what happens to their neighborhoods and their communities. And a lot of this does come from a progressive reaction to overreaching federal government, things like the highways that went into big cities and tore down Black and Latino neighborhoods, replaced them with highways.

And the people who lived there before didn’t get a chance to stand up and say, this isn’t fair. We want to keep our homes. This is going to be very polluting. We’re going to be displaced. So there was a reaction to that saying communities, particularly low-income and non-white communities, should have more of a say. Before there is some sort of big project that comes into their neighborhood, they should have a chance to stand up and give an explanation about why they want to keep their community, and they should be heard.

And so that comes from a good impulse. But in some senses, it’s now been — the impulse to give communities control has been weaponized by wealthy white communities, which then used this to say you can’t build apartments and low-income housing in our wealthy neighborhoods, which doesn’t wind up benefiting the people we were worried about in the first place.

EZRA KLEIN: So I want then to circle back to the second crisis you talked about. I’m going to — I’m going to hold off on the question of housing supply for a little bit. That for low-income Americans housing is unaffordable almost no matter where you live. So tell me first a bit about how we make that calculation. How do we just think about the question and measure the question of housing affordability?

JENNY SCHUETZ: The standard way that HUD, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, measures this is by looking at how much of your income you spend on housing. And so the standard benchmark is that people should spend about 30 percent of their monthly income on housing. So that’s the rent or the mortgage, utilities, all-in housing costs.

If you spend more than 30 percent, HUD says that you are cost-burdened. And if you spend more than 50 percent, they say you are severely cost-burdened. So the 30 percent economists quibble over a little bit, but it’s really hard to imagine that most people want to spend more than half of their income on rent. And especially for low-income households, this leaves them with about $400 a month to pay for everything else.

So if we use something like the Census Bureau’s Supplemental Poverty measure, it tells us $400 a month is not enough to buy groceries and put gas in the car and put clothes on your kid’s back. So these are families that are deprived of basic needs because so much of their income is devoted to housing costs. And the choices that they’re making — if they don’t pay the rent, then they get evicted and become homeless. So they pay the rent first and then fall behind on other things or wind up going without other things that they need.

EZRA KLEIN: And what percentage of people fall into that category?

JENNY SCHUETZ: So for the poorest 20 percent of households, they’re spending over half of their income in rent. So most poor households are cost-burdened, if not severely cost-burdened. Once you get into the next 20 percent up, it’s much smaller.

And once you get into middle-income households, very few people are cost-burdened. And the ones who are, we essentially think of this as a matter of choice. So maybe you choose to live really close to work, so you don’t have to own a car. But this is basically an endemic problem for the poorest 20 percent and almost nonexistent for middle and high-income households.

EZRA KLEIN: And what do we do to help them? People have probably heard that there’s a program called Section 8 housing vouchers. If they’ve not been on them themselves, they may know they’re out there. Why haven’t they simply solved the problem?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Because Congress doesn’t spend enough money on them. Housing vouchers are actually one of the most effective anti-poverty programs we have. It’s essentially a federal voucher that households receive. They can rent an apartment on the private market. They spend 30 percent of their income, whatever dollar value that is, and the federal government picks up the tab for the rest of this.

So that’s actually a very effective way for poor families to be able to rent a place to live that’s decent quality without having to spend more than we think they should on housing costs. The problem is housing vouchers are not an entitlement, meaning that not everybody who is eligible for it receives it.

And in fact, only about one in four or one in five poor households gets any kind of federal housing assistance. That’s very different than something like food stamps or Medicaid, where everybody who is eligible automatically gets it. Congress just has chosen not to put aside enough money in the budget to give housing assistance to most poor people.

EZRA KLEIN: So let me voice a critique you’ll hear from my conservative friends, which is, oh, things like this don’t solve the problem anyway. That if you just give everybody a voucher, or a check, or a subsidy, all that’s going to happen is that landlords or other kinds of housing suppliers are going to pocket that. They’re going to increase prices to take on the subsidy. Or the subsidy won’t do much at all because people don’t want the folks who would use the subsidy living in their housing. How do you think about that?

JENNY SCHUETZ: It’s almost certainly true that if we gave every household in California a housing voucher, that it would not solve the problem because there aren’t enough apartments to go around. And so lots of people either wouldn’t be able to find an apartment or landlords would just raise the rent accordingly. So if you have 20 people applying for an apartment, 19 of them aren’t going to get it even if they all have vouchers and can pay for it.

But if we think about places like Baltimore and St. Louis where there are lots of homes — in fact, there are more homes than they need because they’ve lost so many people over the last 50 years — there are places to house people. People just don’t have money to pay for it. So in some parts of the country, giving people vouchers or just giving them cash would actually solve the problem for poor people.

In the supply-constrained places, we have to do both. We have to give poor people money. We also have to build more homes so that there are places for people to go.

EZRA KLEIN: Let me ask a naïve question here. There is a lot of the country where we have functionally depopulation problems. We built a lot of infrastructure, built a lot of housing at times when these places were vibrant. Think of a Detroit. Think of a Baltimore. Think of a Cleveland. And over time, because of deindustrialization, because of white flight, because of all kinds of things that happened, we now have too few people to support the kind of city that we’ve built for.

And so you could imagine pretty simple and it seems win-win solutions — you got a lot of homeless people in California, help them get a home in Detroit. You hear this argued for immigrants, in particular. You should just be able to get a green card if you’re going to come and buy a home in a place where we actually need people buying homes so we build up a tax and population base.

Is there anything off in that line of thinking? Do we just have a distribution of people problem?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Well, there are a couple of problems with trying to just pick up all the homeless people in California and move them to Detroit and St. Louis. One is that a lot of them —

EZRA KLEIN Well, I don’t mean we should pick them up. It’s more of an option, a voucher, a possibility if you want.

JENNY SCHUETZ: Buy them a bus ticket. I think Ed Glaeser’s recommendation after Katrina was we should give everybody in New Orleans a bus ticket to Houston and let them go and start over.

EZRA KLEIN: Right. That’s the kind of thinking I’m referring here to.

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, so one problem is that a lot of the homeless people in California are employed. They have a job. They have family. They have networks. So they have a life there. But they’re living in their car because they can’t afford to pay for an apartment.

So we could give them the opportunity to move someplace like Detroit or St. Louis where housing is cheap and give them a voucher, but they would have to go find a job and rebuild their networks. And social networks are really important for everybody. You’ve got family and friends. And people with kids rely on siblings and parents to provide child care. So if you move a person away from their social network, they’re going to have a hard time rebuilding all of that.

And I think we could give people money and tell them there are places in the country where housing is cheaper that also have jobs, and we can help you find a job if you want to move there. But it feels really uncomfortable to suggest that all of the poor people who are homeless in California should have to break off their family ties and move someplace when we don’t require that of anybody else.

EZRA KLEIN: So this to me is a very important place where the two crises connect, because something you’ll hear, if you’re around housing politics in California and if you’re around people who are opposed to some of the more sharp increases in supply that people like me want, is that, look, not everybody is guaranteed the opportunity to live in California.

But the point you’re making here, which I’d like you to draw out a bit, is that there is a genuine issue when you restrict supply in the places in the country that have the most jobs, that have the highest pay, that have the most opportunity — that that’s where this becomes not just a housing problem, but also an inequality problem, a justice problem, an opportunity problem. Can you talk a bit about that interaction effect between housing supply and the most dynamic spots in the national economy?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Sure. And we can start with the most macro and abstract version of this, which is that not building enough homes in the parts of the country that have really strong job markets that have very creative and productive companies actually hurts the G.D.P. of the entire country.

So there are a couple of economists who have estimated that G.D.P. is about 36 percent less than it should be over the last several decades — this is nationally — because we haven’t allowed people who, say, grow up in Cleveland and want to work for a software company — they should have a chance to go to the Bay Area, work for a Google or a Facebook and then go start up another company.

So if you think of all of the new jobs that would be created, the new knowledge, the gains to the whole economy from that happening, some of those people weren’t able to move to the Bay Area and get in on the ground floor because housing was so expensive, right? So we’ve effectively lost a bunch of innovation, a bunch of creativity, a bunch of jobs that would benefit all of us, because these very productive places refused to build enough housing.

And if we think about the opportunity level, go down to the metro area. Within metros like San Francisco, but even places like Dallas that build enough housing in general, the highest opportunity neighborhoods tend not to build that much housing. So if you live in the Dallas metro area and you want your kids to go to one of the great suburban school districts, to some place like Highland Park, you have to be able to afford to buy a house or rent a house in Highland Park.

And so the high opportunity places, both metro areas across the country and neighborhoods within metros, aren’t building enough housing. And that means they’re essentially gatekeeping access to things like public schools, jobs, transit, all of the amenities that people want. They simply won’t allow you to move there if you don’t have enough money.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to hold on that point about the fractal nature of this dynamic. So we started at one level. Nationally, if you look at a lot of the very high growth, very high opportunity places, they seem to have a housing supply problem that other places don’t.

But then you’re saying something also here, which is if you look within that very place, within a San Francisco, within a Washington, D.C., within a New York City, you find that the richer neighborhoods are not allowing building. And to the extent building is allowed, it is in the poor neighborhoods.

I lived in Washington, D.C. for about 14 years. And there’s a lot of demand to live in that area. And it is very, very, very, very, very hard to build in Georgetown. But you could build in Trinidad. Can you talk a bit about that dynamic within cities or metropolitan areas?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah. So the controls over housing production are set by local governments. They have things like zoning rules and building codes and environmental reviews. But it’s actually even more hyperlocal than that. Individual neighborhoods get a lot of power over what gets built or not built in the neighborhood. And that’s particularly true for affluent college-educated neighborhoods, because people know all of the right political levers to push and the legal levers to stop development that they don’t want.

So Georgetown is a great example. It’s a very affluent neighborhood. It has some of the oldest housing in the city. They have layers of protection. So first of all, they outlaw apartments on most of the land. They also have used historic preservation so that you can’t tear down the stuff that’s there and replace it with taller, bigger buildings. And the residents are very politically connected and they will sue developers who try to build there.

Most developers don’t even bother because they know it’s just going to be a nightmare process. They’re going to spend a ton of money and never get permitted. So rather than try to fight the neighbors in Georgetown, developers go to some place like U Street or Waterfront, where either there aren’t that many neighbors so far or where neighbors aren’t as engaged and are willing to allow them to build. So we get really uneven development patterns.

I should say that developers aren’t building in the poorest neighborhoods. So in Washington, D.C., east of the river has only recently started getting more activity and a lot of that is subsidized housing. But they go to middle income neighborhoods that are close to the rich neighborhoods where they want to build but aren’t allowed to.

EZRA KLEIN: And this interacts with the gentrification question, which is a really, I think, difficult part of the politics of all this. So can you explain what people are talking about when they talk about gentrification and how you understand it within the context of this dynamic?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, gentrification is a really loaded term, and not everybody uses it to mean the same thing. But probably the standard understanding is that it’s a change in the neighborhood where it’s getting more affluent, usually an influx of, say, college-educated households. Often, it’s used to describe specifically racial change. Although, we’ve seen neighborhoods like Harlem that see an increase in income but stay majority Black, for instance.

But a change in the people who live in the neighborhood usually accompanied also by visible changes in the housing. So this may be rehab of existing homes that become more expensive and nicer to look at, new construction, new kinds of stores and restaurants moving in. So gentrification is used as a catch-all for all of these different things — but the neighborhood changing and becoming more upscale.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, I think it’s also more than that, though. Within the politics of gentrification, as I understand them, and you see them everywhere I’ve lived — where I have watched housing politics, I’ve seen this play out, which is you’ll have people stand up and say, we should build more housing; we should allow more development; we should bring in a big mixed use development right here. And other people will say, particularly in these mixed income neighborhoods, you’re going to do that, and you’re going to price me out.

I think if you’ve been listening to our conversation so far, you might hear this as a traditional issue of rich versus poor, or rich versus middle class politics. But it doesn’t read that way to many people in these actual neighborhoods. A lot of the blocking coalitions for new development actually include poor people, actually include middle-income people, because they feel that what’s going to get built are these luxury condos which are going to increase property values.

And then the person, say, that they’re renting from is going to jack up the rent beyond what they can pay and they’re going to be kicked out of the neighborhood. And so instead of an increase in both supply and quality of housing helping them, an increase in supply and quality of housing is going to kick them out into another further out jurisdiction.

And they’re not even wrong. I mean, this definitely has happened to people. So can you talk a bit about it from that perspective, from that set of concerns?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, and I should say that this is a tough area to reconcile people’s lived experience if you’ve been in a neighborhood that’s going through this process with what we know from the academic research, particularly by economists. So I should say, first of all, that the perception of developer coming in, tearing down some old buildings, maybe some old apartments that are relatively cheap and replacing them with big, fancy, new apartments or condos that are expensive, that’s actually pretty late-stage gentrification.

By the time the developer wants to do new construction in your neighborhood, property values and rents have probably already been going up for a decade and you’ve already started to see a change in who lives in the neighborhood before it gets to that point. So the early stage gentrifiers tend to be somebody who buys an older, poor quality house, moves in, and renovates the house and lives in it. But that’s not nearly as visible as a giant new apartment building going up, right?

And developers don’t come in until after you’ve had a bunch of this rehab. So the forces are already there before people see something and start protesting. What we’ve seen from some of the recent academic literature is that in neighborhoods where you get big new construction projects, that actually helps keep the rents down. So the new construction comes in, that building is expensive, but the existing buildings in the neighborhood are cheaper because there’s now additional supply.

So this is — and we have a number of studies in different cities that look at this. But that’s a very hard, counterintuitive thing to say to somebody who lives in a neighborhood, where they’re seeing a big new property go up and they see that it’s more expensive than their home. And some of them will have their rents go up, right?

So it’s not that all rents in the neighborhood fall immediately with new construction. But on average, rents are slower or fall by more because there’s new construction relative to that same neighborhood if you didn’t allow any development to happen.

EZRA KLEIN: Even if you believe pretty big increases in supply are good, and I tend to do so, it is a case that they create disruption. They do create dislocation. Things do change. And this is a connection I wanted to draw to our earlier part of the conversation on the fractal nature of these development restrictions.

Which is that if you take a given city and it’s basically impossible to build anything, to get past the blocking coalitions and the political power in the richer neighborhoods, but it’s not impossible to do that in the middle income neighborhoods and ultimately in the poorer neighborhoods, you can have a real concentration of change, of dislocation, of political conflict, even, in those neighborhoods in a way that I think is very frustrating to people. Can you discuss that a bit?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, that’s exactly right. And D.C. is a great example. So something like 80 percent of our new development in the 2010s happened in a handful of neighborhoods, many of them that weren’t residential before. So they were big industrial parcels or land owned by the federal government.

So there are these neighborhoods that are completely transformed where you have practically a new city, housing and retail, public space, but they look completely different than they did. And then large swaths of the city have not changed at all. They’ve built no new housing. The existing housing is more expensive and maybe occupied by richer people, but physically they haven’t changed very much. So your perception of whether there’s growth and what that does to rents depend a lot on where you live.

And one way to think about this is the best way to prevent gentrification and displacement in poor Black and brown neighborhoods is to build a ton of expensive new housing in the neighborhoods that are already wealthy and white, except we can almost never do that. And so you want to have — people who want to prevent gentrification should be lobbying to up-zone Georgetown and Ward 3 or the rich parts of San Francisco. But the cross-city politics doesn’t really work that way.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to talk about — I’ve been trying to think about what part of the conversation to bring this in on. And I’m going to do it here and weave in and out of it. I think the argument you’re making here is a pretty profound argument about small-D democratic politics posing as an argument about housing.

And what I mean by that is this — it is almost cliché to say the government that is closest to the people governs best. It is cliché to say government should be responsive to the people who live there, to the constituents. It is cliché to say that the way a strong Democratic culture should work is that the people most affected by a decision should have the most power over it.

And what you’re saying is that that is failing at a very deep level, and it is failing worse in the parts where it is most deployed. So you have — in this respect, you have more small-d democratic cultures where the constituents have more power and access to their representatives in these richer neighborhoods. They have time. They have the knowledge base to navigate the system. They have connections. They can actually be heard. And what you’re saying there is you’re getting the worst outcomes.

So how do you think about that? How do you think about the tension between some of what you’re saying has happened here and what you might think of as classical theory of — and what you might think of as classical democratic theory?

JENNY SCHUETZ: So it’s either two ways to think about this. One is that what looks on the face of it like small-d democratic process, that people get to engage in their local government and make their voice heard, is not actually that democratic. It’s not representative. And we know this, in part, from the work of political scientists who have looked at the characteristics of people who show up to a neighborhood meeting.

So think of a neighborhood where there’s a specific proposal on the table to build some new apartments. You have a neighborhood meeting and people show up and they say, yes, I like this, or, no, I don’t. The people who show up to that neighborhood meeting for five or six hours on a Tuesday night tend to be older, wealthier, whiter, more likely to be homeowners than people who live in the neighborhood overall.

So we know from observing this that this is not, in fact, representative and small-d democratic. There are some people who live in the community who have more free time, especially older retirees, who have more comfort with the political process and are highly invested because they own homes in the neighborhood. They will push back against this.

Whereas a lot of people who are directly affected by that in the neighborhood, they have jobs, they have kids. They can’t come to the meeting or they feel uncomfortable doing it. So it looks like small-d democracy isn’t, and we have kidded ourselves into thinking it is.

The other way to think about this is making decisions at a hyperlocal level, at the neighborhood level, or even at the city and town level doesn’t take into account the spillover effects of where we build and don’t build housing. The people who live in the neighborhood are going to be affected by construction and potentially by displacement or changes to their property values.

But the whole city is also going to be affected by whether housing gets built and where it gets built. The whole region is affected by whether or not there’s housing for people at different income levels. So if a region doesn’t build enough housing to accommodate people who are baristas, and firefighters, and child care workers, the region’s economy doesn’t work well. And then we have climate spillovers as well.

So if the only people who were affected were the people who lived in that neighborhood, it would make more sense that they could have veto power. But there are a ton of people who are impacted by our development patterns who don’t get a voice at all because they don’t live there and don’t get to show up and voice their opinions.

EZRA KLEIN: So I think all that is true. And on some fundamental level, I also don’t know that it solves the tension or the problem that is emerging here. And so I’m still working out these ideas myself. So let me try this on you. I’ve been reading this book called “The Paradox of Democracy,” by Zac Gershberg and Sean Illing.

And it’s about democracy and communication and media. But there’s something they say about democracy that I think is very relevant here, which is that, quote, “It’s better to think of democracy less as a government type and more as an open communicative culture. Democracies can be liberal or illiberal, populist or consensus-based, but those are potential outcomes that emerge from this open culture.”

And I think this idea of thinking about democracy as a culture of communication is really powerful. Because the move I often hear in this conversation, a move you’re making, and that, again, I think is true on some level, is to say that what is happening in these local democracies is nonrepresentative. That if you took a poll, the poll would not show up the same way as the people who show up to the meetings. That if you certainly were able to do a poll of the people who didn’t live there yet, it would be even more different still.

But democracies aren’t polls. They’re not surveys. They’re cultures and they’re systems. And I think in some theoretical way, the way we believe they are supposed to work is almost the way they work in Georgetown, where people really do have access. They really can, when they feel strongly, go. And the more advanced the culture gets, the richer it gets, the more we build systems for voice for that kind of representation that are — and then the analysis of me and you — very vulnerable to capture, very vulnerable to loud voices that want to protect the status quo.

But I think that’s a way of saying, at some level, that there is something very wrong with what happens in democracies as they develop to a certain point. That there’s a real deep, dark downside to that culture of voice that we can justify with very high-minded ideals. But at some point, instead of pushing forward these ideas of pluralism and equality and so on, it actually becomes tools used to protect one’s own — I don’t want to say privilege, but one’s own position in society or the things they’re comfortable with.

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, I mean, I think there are some places where democracy looks more like direct democracy. And that’s really what we’re talking about, is citizens or residents showing up and expressing their view on individual development choices, policy choices, essentially, as they happen in real time.

But of course, most of our country operates as a representative democracy. We elect people like mayors and City Council members and county supervisors who get to set the policy decision for some level of government. And they appoint a head of the department of city planning who comes up with the zoning and implements this.

And so in a sense, we don’t, in fact, have polling on a lot of individual projects. That’s something that I think maybe would actually help with some of this to show — if there’s a majority of people who want there to be more apartments and the apartments don’t get built, then that’s somehow a failure of the larger democracy. But also, people have made decisions to elect officials.

And California is a great example. The state has elected a bunch of people to the state legislature, and arguably the governor, who have said that they want to build more housing and expand supply, and this is important to deal with things like homelessness, which have big spillover effects.

And so if a majority of voters have chosen pro-housing elected officials and then they get to the state house and they try to adopt a bunch of legislation that, in fact, makes wealthy places build more housing, that seems like that’s democracy working in the sense of voters have made their preferences known and then the holdouts, the people who have really deep personal and financial interests in protecting their neighborhoods, who show up and push back against this, that is anti-democratic.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: Another place where I think there’s an interesting tension here is there’s a view that democracy is the handmaiden of experimentation, particularly when you have highly federalized, highly localized decision-making as we do. That what democracy allows compared to other systems is a lot of different kinds of systems to flourish and we can see what works best.

But what is really striking reading your work and looking at housing is actually how little experimentation is possible. And this estimate you make, really, really is wild. That it is illegal to build anything except single-family detached houses on roughly 75 percent of land in most cities today. Can you talk a bit about what it was legal to build from a housing perspective 75 years ago, routinely, and what it is legal to build now?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, we used to build a lot more different kinds of structures in a lot more places and it wasn’t a big deal. So zoning became widespread in cities starting in about the teens and ’20s and then growing — covering most of the country by about the 1940s and ’50s.

If you go to any city that has neighborhoods built in the early 1900s to about 1910, you’ll see much more diverse housing stock in those older neighborhoods. You’ll see single-family detached homes, row homes, apartment buildings of various sizes.

You also see a lot more commercial activity mixed in. So having a neighborhood grocery store and a neighborhood coffee shop in virtually every neighborhood was just typical. So we used to build very diverse neighborhoods in terms of physical structures and uses, which then accommodates a diverse set of incomes and residents.

And then zoning came along and we essentially said, yeah, all of that stuff is illegal. So in fact, a lot of cities that have these diverse neighborhoods, the housing that lives there now, the apartments and townhouses that are in mostly single-family neighborhoods, if that burned down, it would be illegal to rebuild it. We’ve essentially outlawed the stuff that already exists in a lot of homes.

Some place like Cambridge, Massachusetts is a perfect example. The vast majority of parcels in Cambridge, Massachusetts have what are called nonconforming uses. So the structure there is in violation of current zoning laws. Either it’s too tall or too close to the street or a structure that’s illegal. If most of the houses that already exist in your city are currently illegal under zoning, it raises questions about what the zoning is trying to do.

EZRA KLEIN: It’s such a good point. But I want to go even further with it because I think the way you frame that is also the way it is often framed in our conversation, which is single-family houses versus duplexes or fourplexes or a home with an in-law unit. But a point you make and a point many other people make is that housing is also much more diverse even than that. You write that the expectation that each person or nuclear family must have a completely equipped kitchen and bath is relatively recent in human history.

When I was in college, I lived in a dormitory. There was one bathroom for a lot of people. It was a little gross, but it was also totally fine. If you read 19th century or 18th century American history, you constantly have even fairly rich people, or people who become rich in that era, they’re living in boarding houses. They’re going around staying in these weird multi-living situations.

And you can say a lot of things about — I know somebody who works on communes. It’s very, very hard to build communes now. We used to have ways that you could put a lot of people in a smaller amount of space. And we have made that illegal in a lot of places. And we say that it’s for people’s own good. But what we have is a lot of tent encampments. So what about those kinds of housing possibilities?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, we were a lot more flexible with how people lived, not just on things like zoning, but on things like building code. So the boarding house that had one communal kitchen, and meals got cooked, and everybody had, essentially, a bedroom, but you all ate your meals together or ate out at a restaurant all the time, that was very typical. And certainly earliest cities — workers moved from farms to cities, and they all just rented a room in a boarding house and that was pretty much the option. It was much, much cheaper.

I think there’s a question about how many middle class people would like to live in an equivalent kind of set up today. But what we’ve essentially done is say middle class preferences for having nuclear families and having your own kitchen and bath, that’s the only housing structure that’s allowed. And poor people who are currently living in their cars or living in a homeless encampment or on the streets aren’t allowed to live in a smaller unit that we consider not up to standards.

So we’ve imposed this minimum quality and minimum size on all housing, which really hurts people with these very low incomes who can’t afford that. We don’t give them the option to live in lesser kind of conditions than middle class families would want.

One of my favorite examples of this is there’s a proposal to build some apartments in D.C. — underground apartments. And so they would dig down. These would be below grade apartments. And they might have an air shaft or something. But the neighbors around it say, well, that’s terrible. You can’t possibly allow people to live in underground apartments that don’t have natural light.

And it’s like, if you were living in a car or on the street, an underground apartment with no natural light might sound like a pretty good deal. Why shouldn’t we let people choose that?

EZRA KLEIN: And why did we move away from that? So Matthew Yglesias, who’s a writer and my friend who focuses a lot on housing issues, recently did a newsletter on some of these ideas. And his argument, looking at some documents from the mid-20th century, is that this was really a way that middle class or even richer homeowners and homeowner associations were trying to get people they didn’t want out of their communities. That it was fundamentally exclusionary. Is that your view of the causal mechanism here?

JENNY SCHUETZ: It’s mostly about exclusion. And we can’t talk about exclusion based on income without also talking about exclusion based on race. So all of the restrictions that limit housing for very poor people wind up being hardest for Black and Latino households who have lowest incomes. So some of this is just blatantly about exclusion. We don’t want — particularly, we don’t want things like single-room occupancy hotels and boarding houses because they attract concentrations of poor people. And middle class voters and homeowners don’t want that in their neighborhood.

We shouldn’t discount — there certainly are some health and safety reasons for some of the regulations that we have. Things like not wanting to have lots of people living in a shared space. Overcrowded spaces, as we saw with Covid, are not great ways for people to stay healthy when there are communicable diseases. You can overload a house relative to things like the electrical capacity and you wind up having higher risk of fires. So there are some reasons why we have some of these rules, but an awful lot of it comes back to we don’t want to provide housing for very poor people in places where non-poor people live or work or spend their time.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to draw out an argument that you make in your book that I think is really valuable and that people don’t talk about that much, which is that there’s a connection between our housing crises and the decline in investment in social infrastructure. And I’ll give an example.

There was recently a fight in New York over a big development that is getting blocked. And one of the local politicians who was against the development made this argument that, well, if we put all these people in there, we don’t have the parking, we don’t have the streets, we don’t have the subway capacity, and so it’s going to create a lot of congestion. And not really my view, but that is a good argument.

But I think it is true that over time, if you haven’t invested in non-housing infrastructure, then people do have a more reasonable fear that if you suddenly increase the amount of housing, the infrastructure can get overloaded. So can you talk about the role of non-housing infrastructure in housing politics?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, more homes means more people. And they use public services of all kinds. So parking and space for cars is one of the classic examples. But of course, the other big one is schools. If you build a bunch of apartments occupied by families with kids, they’re going to go to school and you need to have spaces in schools and potentially more teachers and so forth.

And local governments pay for all of this infrastructure. So local governments have to figure out if we allow more housing in a particular location, how much more do we have to invest in public services. Will we have enough new revenues coming in from the development to pay for that or do we have to come up with the money elsewhere to distribute this?

We use this as an argument to say no to a lot of housing in places that people maybe don’t want it. But we don’t have particularly good systems of planning citywide or regionwide. So New York City has the best public transportation system in the country. There are a lot of subway stations surrounded by pretty low-density development where you could easily add a bunch of apartments. And nobody would need to have a car because they’re literally on top of a subway station.

But we’re not making the decision, aha, here is a subway station that has extra capacity. We’re going to build a bunch of housing here. We’re not going to build housing way out in the Long Island suburbs where you’d have to put in new streets and roads and infrastructure. In fact, most of our new housing gets added at the urban fringe where there’s literally no infrastructure and you have to build all of it from scratch. And it’s much worse for the climate to be putting in new infrastructure.

And we’ve got areas in the urban core that have underused infrastructure, often that could benefit from having more people using it. Transportation’s a great example. We’ve got low ridership on a lot of commuter rail lines because nobody lives in walking distance of the commuter rail station. So we’re not making the rational, informed decision about where to build based on the costs. That’s largely an excuse to say no when the current residents don’t want more housing.

EZRA KLEIN: So I want to drill in on that point about where it’s good to build environmentally and where you can build. So a lot of building now happens further out in the fringe. This often gets called, at least in California, the wildland urban interface. It’s these outer areas where people are moving because they can’t afford to live in the cities. But you have much more wildfire risk there. They have to commute further, so they’re using their cars more. So it’s pretty bad for the environment on a lot of levels.

And at the same time, you have all these environmental laws being weaponized against development in denser areas. And I just saw the most amazing example of this. Minneapolis had passed this really important, very progressive law ending single-family zoning across the city. And a judge just brought down an injunction against it based on a lawsuit and — sorry, I really can’t believe this one — based on a lawsuit brought in part by the Audubon Society out there saying that the law didn’t go through enough environmental review.

So can you talk about the tensions between building environmentally, but then also getting over environmental reviews when building?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, and this is actually — it’s kind of similar to the way we put citizen voice into the development process because there were a bunch of examples where low-income neighborhoods got bulldozed for big projects. At about the same time, there was a push by the environmental movement that you should think about the environmental consequences of building new projects.

And so we should look at things like, are you building in areas with protected wildlife? Is this going to have problems with storm water runoff? Is this going to somehow pollute the drinking water? So we should do an assessment of the environmental impacts of development. That is a very reasonable thing to expect. And so we now have a national law and state laws requiring some sort of environmental impact review.

But what’s happened over time is that they have become very broad. So the environmental impact is not just on the physical environment. It’s things like noise, and traffic, and congestion, which are really quality of life issues for people who live there. And again, what we do is we analyze a proposal to build in a place — are there going to be any negative consequences to anybody from building here — without thinking about the flip side, if we don’t build here, what are the negative consequences?

So if we don’t build in places in the urban core and the development happens in these very wildfire-prone areas in California and Colorado and so forth, what happens when we build in places that are closer to wildfires? That’s actually much worse. But our environmental review laws aren’t set up to do a cost-benefit of building in one location versus another. It’s just if you can prove any kind of damage of the project that’s proposed in a particular location, you can use these laws to shut it down.

EZRA KLEIN: We seem very well set up to ask, what are the costs and consequences of action, and very poorly set up to ask what are the costs and consequences of inaction. If you propose to make some big infrastructure change or build a large development, you can spend a lot of years fighting out and simply analyzing what that will mean. At the same time, there’s no law that can be brought that forces a similar difficulty for the status quo.

I mean, if the status quo is untenable or worse, there is nothing that forces it to change. And so you have a pretty profound — it seems to me, in the way we’ve developed our laws— asymmetry between the scrutiny we bring to changing anything and the scrutiny we bring to not changing anything.

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yes, we have stacked the system entirely in favor of the status quo. And that’s not a coincidence. People who benefit from the status quo want to keep it that way. And so they — and to a large extent, they have political power and have written laws that protect things as they are.

The people who would benefit most from changes, particularly large-scale changes like making it really easy to build apartments and transit projects in high-demand locations, the people who would benefit from that don’t have that much political power and voice, and haven’t been organized, and so they get shut out.

EZRA KLEIN: There’s also a question here that is in the background, I think, of a lot of housing politics, which is we’ve really, through policy — and I’d like you to talk a bit about which policies — but we’ve really pushed housing as the engine of middle class wealth. We have really pushed people to stock a ton of their money and wealth and long-term financial security or intergenerational financial security in homes.

And so that also creates a politics where people are very, very nervous about anything that might negatively affect their home values. How does that play into all this?

JENNY SCHUETZ: That’s a huge part of it. The federal government has made a bunch of deliberate policy choices to encourage homeownership as a form of wealth-building, at the exclusion of other kinds of wealth-building. So when you buy a house and you take out a mortgage, you can deduct the mortgage interest you pay from your federal income taxes. When you sell your house, the value of the house has gone up, you don’t have to pay capital gains on the increased value of the house.

That’s not true for something like putting money into a stock portfolio. So we’ve created, particularly through the federal tax code, a bunch of incentives to encourage people to use homeownership and home equity as their primary engine of wealth. This is particularly true for middle income families who don’t tend to have big stock portfolios. And then people become very protective of this.

So there’s an economist called Bill Fischel, who wrote a very influential book called, “The Homevoter Hypothesis,” which essentially says that homeowners become single-issue voters based on protecting the value of their property because it’s such a major investment. And you bundle with that, people care about the characteristics of their neighborhood. But that incentivizes them in the same way to resist change that could lower their property values and/or change their daily quality of life.

And this becomes an enormous political block at every level of government. They don’t even have to have an organized PAC because they’re all just aligned on their incentives. They show up. They vote. They write letters to their City Council members and their state legislators. And they drive a lot of the policy decisions and make it very difficult to change any of the policies that have locked in this system.

EZRA KLEIN: We’re talking about a lot of policies at every level here, from our mortgage deduction, to our Federal Reserve policy, to the way local zoning decisions are made in this country that are American. And so I always think it’s good, as a reality check, to ask, well, is this a distinctively American problem?

So if I were to look at peer countries — if I were to look at Canada and the U.K. and Germany and France — how much would I find that the housing problems we’re having here are mirrored there and how much would I find America looking like an outlier?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Some pieces are definitely mirrored in the other kind of Anglo countries. So Canada, the U.K., Australia look fairly similar to the U.S. They have some similar kinds of policies.

We see some big differences — so Germany is one of the very few majority renter-rich nations. So more than half of German households rent their home. And if you look at their federal tax policy, they have exactly flipped the mortgage interest deduction. If you own a piece of property and you rent it out — you don’t live in it yourself, but you rent it to somebody else — then you can deduct the interest from your federal income taxes. But you can’t do that if you live in a house that you own yourself.

So that’s a really nice little trick. You flip the income tax code and it turns out you create an incentive for a bunch of people who own a house to create, essentially, an in-law apartment, an accessory dwelling unit, live in the rental unit, and rent out the main space to somebody else for rental income.

France is an example of a country that is invested much more in social housing not just for poor households but for middle-income households. So they have spent a lot more money. They guarantee housing assistance to all poor people. They have funding companies — private companies — pay into this social housing fund so that there’s a continued stream of money to pay for this.

They have worked very hard to build more social housing in high-opportunity neighborhoods and to have mixed income social housing that’s not so segregated. So these are all policy decisions by countries with similar kinds of income and similar rule-of-law systems, but they’ve chosen to set up some of their policies to be more renter-friendly, more friendly to low-income households and less dependent on the traditional owner-occupied model.

EZRA KLEIN: So that’s really interesting on a couple levels. Let me start with Germany here. Because in addition to just being a fascinatingly different policy equilibrium, it strikes at something in our culture around housing, which is we really make the argument that we should encourage homeownership because homeownership creates a better citizenry.

It creates people who are invested in their communities, who — and in fact, it does seem to do this — who show up and talk at community meetings. But it stabilizes people, stabilizes families. That you will have a better polity, a better social culture if you have more homeownership.

Now, Germany doesn’t seem to me to be a terrible social culture, at least not modern Germany. So does that suggest that we’ve gotten something wrong in the idea that you’re going to have a better macro citizenry if you have very, very, very high rates of homeownership?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, we’ve very much been brainwashed into thinking that homeownership provides stability that rentership can’t. But it depends on how you structure rental markets. So we think of renters as being very transient people who move in and out, younger households. They’re not engaged in their community. They don’t put down roots.

But that’s not true of all renters. So lots of people will rent an apartment and stay in the same apartment for long periods of time. You can have very stable long-term renters who are engaged in their community and committed. It’s not a question of being an owner/renter. A lot of it is about the predictability of your housing costs over the long run.

What homeownership does is give you predictability over what your monthly payments will be for a very long time, which most renters don’t have. But we could create that sort of long-term stability of payment for renters, which would allow them to stay in neighborhoods for longer and to put down roots and be part of the community without being pushed out by financial circumstances.

EZRA KLEIN: And then something you were getting at on France, which is interesting to me, France has a lot of public housing. 40 percent of renters in France live in public housing. Singapore, nearly 80 percent of housing is built by the federal government. Public housing in this country has a terrible reputation. Is that reputation deserved, first? And is it inevitable? Could public housing be part of the answer here?

JENNY SCHUETZ: So a lot of our bad reputation of public housing dates back to the ’70s through the ’90s. There were some very bad periods of public housing where a lot of the housing was in poor quality, had very high crime rates, not in good neighborhoods. So public housing was intentionally located, when it was built, in poor neighborhoods that were not close to areas of opportunity.

So we chose to build it in the worst possible neighborhoods. We chose to make public housing available only to the poorest people. So you segregate poverty in often very, very large properties. And that turned out not to be great for the people who lived in it or for the surrounding neighborhoods.

In the ’90s, we went through a period of tearing down a lot of the really bad public housing, very dangerous places, and dispersing them. That’s still a controversial decision. But as a country, we have not provided public housing well. We made decisions like Congress gets to vote on the amount of funding every year for the maintenance and capital upgrades. We built public housing and didn’t provide enough money to keep it in good working operation for the life of the properties or provide money to build new housing when the buildings got old.

So my view is the U.S. has done public housing poorly. Other countries have done it well. But the fact that we chose to do it badly reflects some political decisions, some social context. And I’m not convinced that the US could do social housing the way France or Vienna or Singapore does. If we could, I would be a lot more enthusiastic about it.

But I just don’t think that we’re going to get there. I don’t think that we have the infrastructure. I don’t think that we have the social buy-in. We definitely don’t have the federal funding commitment to make this work properly. And I think, given our history with it, that’s not the most optimistic way to go.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: Housing is a place in America where I think you’ve seen some of the fastest political change, at least on the ideological level, over the past decade or two. So what people have begun to believe in housing, certainly in Washington, certainly even in the Democratic Party, is really different.

I mean, the focus on supply, the rise of the Yes In My Backyard, YIMBY movement, where people are actively organizing to say build more housing. The Biden administration has both had in its policies and then recently in an executive order, a lot of efforts to increase housing supply. You see places like Minnesota pushing back against single-family zoning. In California, there was an effort to make almost everything possible to build a duplex on.

Do you think the trend here is going to turn around? I mean, has enough been done politically that now we’re just in a lag period between understanding we have a problem and solving it, or are we still pretty far from making progress here?

JENNY SCHUETZ: So I think the policy changes we’ve done so far are moving in the right direction, but still mostly pretty incremental. So even in California, which has pushed more statewide reforms than any place else — California has legalized A.D.U.s and duplexes and lot splits. All of those are good things, but they’re not going to produce millions of units of housing that the state needs.

So I think, on the policy side, we still need to move forward and we probably need to have some more aggressive policies. So it needs to be legal to build big apartments on top of subway stations and commuter rail stations, which it’s kind of crazy that that’s illegal in most places. But the incremental policy changes I think are helpful to build some political support.

First of all, they’re wins for the YIMBY movement. That people pushing for these can point to legislative victories. And also, that when you legalize duplexes statewide, the world doesn’t end. That you have gradual adjustment of neighborhoods without there being plummeting property values and neighborhoods turning into slums overnight. And I think it is probably important to show that these changes are not as scary as the opponents want.

On the political side, this is a very young movement. It’s really only been active for maybe about five years. It’s gaining traction quickly, and it’s gaining traction in more places, not just in the blue expensive places. We’re seeing active reforms in places like Utah. There’s an active group in North Carolina pushing for statewide zoning reform. So it’s gaining traction in more places.

It’s pushed a lot by younger generations who really see homeownership as almost an unattainable goal. I think as long as housing continues to be very expensive, there are going to be more people who find this an appealing way to go. It’s gaining a lot of traction in political establishments on both sides of the aisle, actually. So I think that we’re probably going to see continued movement, but I don’t see the policies getting us to solutions in the next few years, even really in the next decade.

And one way to think about this is California hasn’t built enough homes for 40 years. Even if we got rid of all of the bad policies, including Prop 13 and CEQA tomorrow, it would take decades of very high level building in order to close the gap and bring housing back into the range of affordability for normal people.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to pick up on something you just alluded to there, which is there’s a deep generational dimension to the politics of housing. And I’ve heard you say elsewhere that if you look at survey data, if you look at the politics of it, that there’s almost no deeper divide here. Can you talk about how you see the difference in how young people understand housing in America right now and how older people do?

JENNY SCHUETZ: Yeah, people under probably the age of 40 are really pessimistic about their ability to buy a home in the kinds of neighborhoods they want to live in that fits within their budget. And younger generations have been dealt a bad hand on the labor market side. They came out of school in the Great Recession. They had a much harder time getting jobs. They have much higher rates of student loan debt.

So all of the chips are stacked against them financially, which means that homeownership is a harder goal for them to reach. It’s taken them longer to save up money for down payments. In the meantime, housing costs have gone up faster. So this is a generation that’s facing the worst of all of that.

I’m a Gen Xer. I came out of college in a great labor market where English majors could go work for Goldman Sachs and make $80,000 a year. And five years out of college, if you wanted to buy a house, you could. That’s really impossible for younger households, younger workers today.

And I think part of the problem on the political side is older households just don’t understand how expensive housing has gotten, especially in high opportunity communities. And they think that this is sort of — the millennials are eating too many avocado toasts and not saving up for a down payment, without realizing they’d have to eat no avocado toasts and nothing else and save up for 15 years for a down payment, whereas for earlier generations it just wasn’t that hard.

EZRA KLEIN: I have heard economists say, look, there’s nothing that will as obviously solve itself as intergenerational wealth. That if you believe older people have hoarded all the wealth, well, that is definitely going to change because older people transition out of holding their wealth, to put it delicately. What’s wrong with just saying, well, don’t worry about it, these houses are all going to get passed down?

JENNY SCHUETZ: The intergenerational transmission of wealth that’s going to happen as the silent generation and baby boomers die is going to exacerbate income and wealth inequality, and particularly along racial lines, in ways that I think we’re just not ready for. So if your parents owned a house in California, if they bought in Palo Alto in the 1970s or ’80s, you are going to inherit millions of dollars in property or cash. If your family owned a house in St. Louis, you’re not going to inherit much.

If you look at how homeownership breaks down along racial lines, 70 percent of white households own their home, 40 percent of Black households own their home. The home equity held by white homeowners is roughly double that of home equity for Black homeowners. So rich white boomers dying off and leaving cash to their kids is going to exacerbate the already large racial wealth gap. And then you add on to that all of the stock market wealth and so forth.

We are going to have much, much bigger wealth gaps 20 years from now than we do today. It’s going to do really uncomfortable things to our politics and social society.

EZRA KLEIN: So one thing I really appreciate about your book is that it’s very solutions-oriented. But I wonder if that’s the right level on which to think about this policy by policy. Because you’re also making this argument behind it that the politics of this are askew in a way that prevents good policy from happening.

So let me ask a question this way. What do you think could be done — what is most effective at changing the political context in which solutions can be attempted, experimented with and then scaled up?

JENNY SCHUETZ: So it’s kind of an unfair question to ask me because I’m an economist, not a political scientist. So I think in terms of policy solutions that make sense from the economics. But I will say one of the reasons why I wrote the book is that it feels to me like this is not a political conversation that gets had in the right places by the right people.

We have dedicated NIMBYs who will fight against anything and there’s essentially just no outreach to them. We’re never going to persuade them. There is a small band of dedicated YIMBYs. But then there are an awful lot of more typical households and voters in between for whom this is not a primary issue.

So if you think of the median voter — middle income, middle-aged, suburban homeowners — most of them don’t think of this as a problem they have to get up every day and deal with. You own your house. It’s pretty nice. You live in a nice neighborhood. Why should you care about this?

And so one of the reasons I wrote the book is to try to make the case to that median voter that, in fact, these broken systems have really big consequences for all of us. Climate is a very hard one to ignore. Our current building patterns are making climate change worse. We are already paying financial costs. This disrupts our quality of life.

The under-investment in safe living environments for kids has repercussions for the next generation of workers and citizens. We are massively under-investing in good quality housing, good quality neighborhoods, access to good quality public schools for millions of poor kids. And that’s not going to be good for the country at all.

So I think there’s an argument to be made that the — I don’t know if it’s the silent majority — but the people who are not YIMBYs or NIMBYs should care about this and they should be engaged. And I think that they should be aligned with the YIMBYs in elections, even if they’re not showing up to meetings on this. I don’t know if we are breaking through to that audience or not, but that’s certainly the hope.

EZRA KLEIN: Is there anything here that you just feel we didn’t cover that we really should, that is a big hole in either your theory or just the connective tissue of the argument?

JENNY SCHUETZ: So one thing that I would like to see more of in housing policy is more experimentation. This is a really conservative space. We adopt policies, and we stick with them for very long periods of time. That’s certainly true on the land use side, but even the outlines of our federal tax policy and the way we pay for public services — because all of these things are interconnected, right now they’re reinforcing bad outcomes. It’s hard to persuade people to try something radically different, if we haven’t tried it, to see whether it will work.

And homelessness is a good example. We are at a crisis point. And the current approaches are not working. They are not scaling up, but we haven’t tried something that’s radically different. So I almost feel like there isn’t enough urgency on some of these to —

EZRA KLEIN: What is something that would be radically different?

JENNY SCHUETZ: We could potentially throw out all of the building code regulations around not letting homeless people live in, say, vacant commercial buildings. We have a bunch of vacant office buildings. You can’t just put homeless people in them because they don’t have bathrooms and bedrooms and things like that.

We could just say, for the short-term, that doesn’t matter. They need to have some place to live and let them use them. And that’s not even a huge change in policy. That’s something that local governments could do. But they are very, very risk-averse and not willing to try that.

EZRA KLEIN: Is it legal for them to do that? Because one of the things — I mean, in California, it’s so wild to watch this, right? One thing that I have seen again and again is that because local politicians really are hair on fire about these issues, they really do want to solve them. They try things. They get sued. The advocate communities come down on them. Or they do something that doesn’t seem that hard and then the amount of money it costs is astronomical.

So you take Los Angeles — they passed a measure a couple of years ago under Eric Garcetti. Voters voted for it to tax themselves quite a bit more, to put a bunch of money into a fund to actually build a shelter. And then the problem is they’ve built very, very little because the individual communities organize against it.

So if you look at both the platforms of Rick Caruso and Karen Bass, who are the two front-runners for the mayoralty out there, they both talk about how this measure has functionally failed. And how it’s cost — if I remember the number correctly — more than $700,000 per bed. But when I read their platform, they don’t really have a way to solve it because you’re going back to the same issue of the people in that area will organize.

And just hearing that solution, thinking about any of them, imagining the business owners coming to say they don’t want homeless people living in this relatively vacant commercial area right next to them. Or the homeowners coming into the community meetings to say they don’t want these tiny house facilities built near them. That seems to be the recurrent problem. I wonder how you think about making it less possible for those blocking coalitions to form.

JENNY SCHUETZ: It’s too easy for people to sue to stop stuff. So the legal obstacles to trying new things and especially something that’s going to be a little bit radical, that is one of the reasons why we don’t try it, because elected officials are worried about getting sued and they almost certainly will get sued. The blocking coalitions, it’s not just the business owners and the homeowners who are pushing back against this. It’s also advocates for the homeless who say you can’t put people into buildings that aren’t up to code, that it’s going to be dangerous for them.

A lot of the affordable housing advocates are reluctant to try halfway solutions because they want to get all the way to where they want. So the argument, for instance, over whether we should push to put more homeless people — unsheltered homeless people into shelters — there are a bunch of advocates who don’t want to do that because it takes away the political pressure to create long-term permanent supportive housing, which is better.

So the political coalitions are — it’s really frustrating because you have people who have very good intentions, but I think are asking for the impossible with no way to get there. And people with bad intentions who are coming together to block halfway measures that are incrementally better than what we have but are not perfect.

EZRA KLEIN: So right now we’re at a moment of real tumult, I think, in the housing market more broadly. So the Fed has begun tapping on the brakes in the economy. Interest rates are rising really, really, really very quickly now. I think over the next couple of years, you’re going to see much higher interest rates for somebody trying to take out a mortgage. I’ve seen a lot of analysts who think the housing market has peaked.

Do you think this will be a big change? Do you think this will change either the politics of housing or the price of housing in some of these places? How do you assess what this moment in the actual housing market will do?

JENNY SCHUETZ: So one thing we should keep in mind is that the mortgage market and the housing market are not the same thing. So increasing interest rates makes it more expensive to get a mortgage. That will mean some people don’t take out a mortgage, including some people who currently live in a home aren’t going to move to another home because they’re locked into low rates. So that’s a market for mortgages.

That doesn’t diminish the need for people to live someplace. And I was actually — I’ve not gone back to look and see — we know from prior incidences that when interest rates go up, housing prices go down or at least moderate in growth. People can’t buy the same amount of house for the same amount of money.

I don’t actually know what the evidence is on rents. And that’s my concern that a bunch of would be first-time homeowners don’t buy. They stay on the rental market. That puts more pressure on rents. And so I worry more about renters because they tend to be poorer.

If what we have is a moderation of housing prices in the owner-occupied market and rents stay high, that’s not a net gain. And the headline statistics about interest rates aren’t paying that much attention to the well-being of people who live in rental apartments. So I worry that we’re not going to pay that much attention to them.

EZRA KLEIN: I think that, as a generalizable worry, is a good place to end. Always our final question — what are three books you would recommend to the audience?

JENNY SCHUETZ: So there’s a book called “Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States,” which is an absolute classic. It’s by a historian and tells the long-term history of housing development, mortgage markets, housing policy, the real estate industry in the U.S. It’s great because you realize that suburbanization is not a post-World War II phenomenon. It goes back much further than that.

On housing politics, there are three political scientists — Katie Einstein, David Glick, and Maxwell Palmer — who’ve written a book called “Neighborhood Defenders,” and a bunch of papers since then, which are just a fantastic insight into the nitty-gritty politics, who shows up and participates, the idea that it looks like it’s small-d democracy but isn’t.

And then the last one I’m going to cheat a little bit. It’s the Netflix of a book. So “Maid,” which is a Netflix series based on Stephanie Land’s memoir. You could teach an entire housing policy class around this series. So it shows you how broken the social safety net is, how hard it is to get federal housing assistance.

There’s a whole episode where she rents an illegal A.D.U. and doesn’t have a lease because it’s kind of off-market. So it’s a fascinating idea of the bottom end of the housing market that really doesn’t work and is kind of a shadow market in many ways.

EZRA KLEIN: Jenny Schuetz, thank you very much.

JENNY SCHUETZ: Thanks, Ezra.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

“The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Annie Galvin and Rogé Karma. Fact-checking by Michelle Harris, Mary Marge Locker, Kate Sinclair and Rollin Hu. Original music by Isaac Jones; mixing by Isaac Jones and Sonia Herrero. Audience strategy by Shannon Busta. Our executive producer is Irene Noguchi. Special thanks to Kristin Lin and Kristina Samulewski.

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[***Josh Thomas’s Week: ‘Twitter Has Been a Real Problem’; Recently Viewed***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y9F-W031-DXY4-X4SR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Length:** 1096 words

**Byline:** Eleanor Stanford

**Highlight:** The Australian comedian shares what he watched and listened to over a couple of days.

**Body**

The Australian comedian shares what he watched and listened to over a couple of days.

After hopping around his native Australia last fall with his first stand-up show in six years, the comedian Josh Thomas returned home to Los Angeles. Now he’s taking his show on a U.S. tour through March 11, as well as preparing for a potential second season of “[*Everything’s Gonna Be Okay*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html),” his Freeform show, which debuted in January and is available on   [*Hulu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html).

Working on these projects meant not leaving his house for days at a time, as he read scripts and rewrote jokes, a process he describes as being like “trying to put on a wet bathing suit”

Distraction was never far away, though: “Cheer” distracted him from an Oscar party the night of Feb. 9; RuPaul hosting “Saturday Night Live” distracted him from his work; and Twitter distracted him from everything (“Twitter has been a real problem to me,” Thomas explained).

Over the course of two housebound days, Thomas tracked his cultural diary. These are edited excerpts from a conversation.

Monday Morning

On Sunday night I went to an Oscars party, not an interesting party. You know those nights where you’re out, but you just want to get home to finish your show? Well, I had one of those nights with [*“Cheer.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) So I got home at about 1 a.m. and then I watched the final episode of “Cheer,” just alone, eating leftover curry. I was very drunk and I did cry — when La’Darius’s brother sheds a single tear? That was the end of me.

Then when I woke up in the morning, hung over, I watched Seth Meyers’s [*“A Closer Look”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) segment from his show the night before. At the moment I’m just addicted to American politics, so I’ll watch pretty much all the late-night show monologues the next morning. I really love Seth Meyers, and his “Closer Look” is great because it gets me in deep a little bit. I like   [*“The Late Show With Stephen Colbert”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) because he’s really funny and   [*“Full Frontal With Samantha Bee”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) is probably my favorite, but she’s only weekly.

Then my producing partner Stephanie [Swedlove] called me, because I’ve got to read new writer scripts. Her ringtone is [*“Work Bitch”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) by Britney Spears, which always just makes me laugh. On Stephanie’s phone I set it so that when I ring her,   [*“Beautiful Boy”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) by John Lennon plays.

I watched a lot of YouTube and then I washed my dog (we sit in the bath together) and I listened to [*Lizzo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html). All I really do is listen to Lizzo.

And I read the scripts. I like reading new writers’ scripts because you get to see what writers think new shows should be, before they get churned through the industry. And generally their scripts are not about rich people, but a lot of shows on TV, including mine, are about rich people, which I think is interesting.

Monday Afternoon

And then I looked at [*Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html). At the moment, I find it really hard to look away from what’s happening in the world. I was off Twitter for four months last year but now I’m back in and it’s just hell, actually. Because Twitter is always telling you what’s wrong with everything and then someone else is like, “Actually that is not the real thing that is wrong with that, the real thing that is wrong with that is this” and it’s suffocating. And then occasionally there’s porn and occasionally something quite whimsical and funny. In many ways, it plays into my ADHD really well.

My day was a real hodgepodge: I’ll watch a little something and then I’ll get mad at myself for not working and then I’ll do some work for my stand-up tour and then I’ll decide that it’s very important to catch up on RuPaul Charles hosting [*“Saturday Night Live.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) I mean, if someone gay does someone, then I’ll watch it. And I love RuPaul, obviously.

Monday Evening

So I worked more on my standup tour, and then I thought I should watch the Oscars movies. I’m not on the cutting edge of new entertainment. I’m not one of those people that’s going out trying to find the hot new things. So I usually haven’t seen anything until very late.

I was going to watch [*“Parasite,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) obviously, but I was watching on my laptop in my bed and I thought maybe that wasn’t the best situation to watch “Parasite” in, so I decided to watch   [*“Judy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html)” because I thought it was going to be fun. It was fine.

I’m single, you know, so I watch a lot in the evenings. From 6 p.m. to midnight I’m just watching so much TV. So after “Judy” I watched Conan, and then I watched a new episode of [*“Curb Your Enthusiasm,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) which is a show that I really like, and then I watched   [*“McMillions,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) which is this new HBO thing about McDonald’s. And then I went to bed, finally, around 1 a.m.

Tuesday Morning

The next day I did a lot more work. I watched Seth’s new “Closer Look” again. Then I listened to this podcast I was supposed to be a guest on that it turns out I’m obsessed with, called [*“Off Menu.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) It’s about your dream meal and it’s really lovely.

And I listened to my [*Spotify*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) playlist. I only want music that I’ve heard before, I don’t want new music. So I’ve been playing this 24 song playlist on a loop since October. It’s comforting. The theme of this playlist is songs that my ex-boyfriend used to play. There’s no men, only female singers. One of my favorites is   [*“Let’s Go to the Beach”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) by this Australian band Banoffee. There’s also some Des’ree and   [*“I Try”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) by Macy Gray.

Tuesday Evening

Then finally I watched “Parasite,” and the subtitles stopped me looking at my phone for two hours, which was a real thrill. Subtitled movies are going to be my new thing, I think.

I also watched the documentary [*“American Factory,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) which is very much about the American ***working class***. I watched the films while the [New Hampshire] primary was happening and so I was watching that via Twitter too. And I watched a bit of Elizabeth Warren’s speech, and read everyone’s opinions. This was interesting because both films have themes of class, which I feel like Americans don’t really talk about much, but in this Democratic primary is really a big deal.

So it was a lot of subtitles, and then a lot of ideas about our society and where it’s going, which I really like. I don’t watch a lot of scripted stuff; I like things that feel real. My scripted stuff is as realistic as possible and pretty issues-focused.

I watched Julia Louis-Dreyfus on [*“The Late Show With Stephen Colbert.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/14/arts/television/review-everythings-gonna-be-okay.html) If she’s on TV I’ll have a look, of course. And then I went to bed around 1 a.m. again.

PHOTO: Josh Thomas in Los Angeles. He is back in California after touring his native Australia with his stand-up show. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NATHANIEL WOOD FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2020

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[***Biden, Seizing on Masks as a Campaign Issue, Calls for a Mandate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60KB-8JB1-JBG3-608B-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Joe Biden said wearing a mask was “about your responsibilities as an American” as he and his new running mate, Kamala Harris, drew a contrast with President Trump’s handling of the coronavirus.

WILMINGTON, Del. — [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) and his newly selected running mate, Senator [*Kamala Harris*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) of California, called on Thursday for Americans to be required to wear masks, offering one of the first glimpses at how the Democratic ticket plans to confront the coronavirus and draw a contrast with [*President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html).

Mr. Biden, addressing reporters after receiving a briefing from public health experts, said every American should wear a mask while outside for at least the next three months and that all governors should mandate mask wearing.

“It’s not about your rights,” Mr. Biden said, standing in front of five American flags at the Hotel du Pont in Wilmington. “It’s about your responsibilities as an American.”

Ms. Harris, appearing jointly with Mr. Biden for a second consecutive day, presented his call for mask-wearing as an example of what he would bring to the presidency — providing an early example of how she may try to talk up Mr. Biden to the American people.

“That’s what real leadership looks like,” she said. “We just witnessed real leadership.”

For months, Mr. Biden has assailed Mr. Trump over his handling of the pandemic, and the issue is likely to remain a central argument for Mr. Biden and now Ms. Harris in the final months of the campaign. The mask issue is an area that allows for a clear distinction with how Mr. Trump has approached the virus and how he has used — or not used — the platform that comes with the presidency to set an example for the American people.

Mr. Trump, who has ignored or mischaracterized scientific data throughout the pandemic, opened a White House press briefing on Thursday by calling Mr. Biden’s views “anti-scientific.”

Mr. Trump suggested that a mask mandate threatened to overstep individual freedoms of Americans and said Mr. Biden was more interested in keeping Americans “in their basements for months on end” than in listening to medical experts.

“If the president has the unilateral power to order every single citizen to cover their face in nearly all instances, what other powers does he have?” Mr. Trump said.

Mr. Biden, the former vice president, [*had previously said*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) that as president, he would seek to require people to wear masks in public. Mr. Trump, on the other hand, resisted wearing a mask [*before shifting on the issue*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html).

The virus continues to loom over Mr. Trump as a major political liability. Fifty-seven percent of Americans said the president was doing a bad job dealing with the virus, and 52 percent said the United States’ response was worse than other countries’, according to a [*Monmouth University poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) released Thursday.

And in Wisconsin, an important battleground state, 69 percent of voters said people should be required to wear masks in all public places, according to a [*poll released Tuesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) by Marquette University Law School. Polling by Quinnipiac University last month found that four in five voters in [*Florida*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) and [*Texas*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) also supported mask mandates.

In addition to the briefing on the virus on Thursday, Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris also received a briefing on the economic situation, with experts appearing by videoconference in both sessions. Janet L. Yellen, the former Federal Reserve chair, was among the participants in the economic briefing, the Biden campaign said.

As for their own mask etiquette, Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris did not wear masks, but were seated at a distance, when reporters were briefly allowed into the meeting on the virus. When they later addressed reporters, they wore masks until they got to the lectern, and then put their masks back on after they finished speaking.

Ms. Harris tried to cast doubt on the Trump administration’s efforts to develop a vaccine in a speedy manner, suggesting that what mattered was when that vaccine would be available to the public.

“I think it’s important that the American people, looking at the election coming up, ask the current occupant of the White House: When am I going to get vaccinated?” Ms. Harris said. “Because there may be some grand gestures offered by the current president about a vaccine. But it really doesn’t matter until you can answer the question: When am I going to get vaccinated?”

As Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris put their focus on the pandemic, Mr. Trump continued to ridicule Ms. Harris in a television interview, auditioning one of his demeaning schoolyard nicknames — a go-to Trump tactic that some Republican officials worry will backfire among suburban women who will see such an attack as sexist.

“Now you have sort of a mad woman, I call her, because she was so angry and such hatred with Justice Kavanaugh,” [*he told Maria Bartiromo*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html), an ally who hosts a morning show on the Fox Business Network. “I mean, I’ve never seen anything like it. She was the angriest of the group, and they were all angry. They’re all radical-left angry people.”

But Mr. Trump’s attacks on Ms. Harris seem to have had little initial impact so far; one person close to Mr. Trump deplored what he saw as positive media coverage of the Biden-Harris announcement but conceded it had been “a nearly perfect rollout.”

Republican officials say that their focus groups on Ms. Harris show she is vulnerable to carefully framed criticism that avoids divisive political attacks on gender and race, instead portraying her as an out-of-touch coastal elitist who has little in common with ***working-class*** women. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak for the Trump campaign.

Mr. Trump, however, demonstrated on Thursday that he is unable to follow a surgical approach. At the White House briefing, [*he encouraged a racist conspiracy theory*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) that is rampant among some of his followers: that Ms. Harris is not eligible for the vice presidency or the presidency because her parents were immigrants.

That assertion is false; Ms. Harris was born in California and is eligible to serve.

Mr. Trump also said in an interview on Thursday that he planned to deliver his renomination speech at the Republican National Convention from the South Lawn at the White House, a move that raises legal questions about using federal property for campaign purposes.

The day’s events came at a moment of muted optimism for a president whose approval numbers have tanked in recent months.

Internal campaign and party polling shows Mr. Trump recovering significant ground in several states, including Florida, which several of his aides attributed to his increased focus on the pandemic. (Recent public polling shows Mr. Biden maintaining a small lead in Florida.)

Nobody in Mr. Trump’s circle wants him to stop attacking. But some now fear some of those gains will evaporate if he attacks Ms. Harris with the same caustic abandon that characterized his attacks on Mrs. Clinton four years ago.

Republicans have also had difficulty in executing a coherent strategy against Mr. Biden. They have hit him with a buckshot spray of criticism — calling him soft on China, casting him as too tough on crime for party progressives, and, at the same time, labeling him as anti-police over his embracing of peaceful protests in the wake of the George Floyd killing.

Vice President Mike Pence, visiting Iowa on Thursday, sought to paint both Mr. Biden and Ms. Harris as anti-police and to stoke fears over public safety.

“The truth is you won’t be safe in Joe Biden’s America,” Mr. Pence said at a town hall discussion on law enforcement put on by Heritage Action for America, a conservative group.

Mr. Biden has supported redirecting some funding from the police but has rejected the “defund the police” movement. Ms. Harris, before she was Mr. Biden’s running mate, spoke about “reimagining” the role of law enforcement in America.

Thomas Kaplan reported from Wilmington, and Glenn Thrush from Washington. Michael Gold and Shane Goldmacher contributed reporting from New York, and Katie Rogers from Washington.

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr. and Kamala Harris received virtual briefings from economic and public-health experts on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE V. AGINS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Vaccines, Brexit, Biden: Your Tuesday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61G5-NJ91-DXY4-X262-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 7, 2020 Monday 01:15 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1670 words

**Byline:** Natasha Frost

**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 Britain’s first vaccinations against the coronavirus, the final hope for a Brexit deal and the busiest I.P.O. listing period in decades.

Britain prepares for its largest vaccination effort

Health care workers, volunteers and the military in Britain will begin administering the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine on Tuesday morning, aiming to [*vaccinate more than 20 million people in a few months*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing). Temporary clinics are expected to play critical roles as the mass vaccination program expands.

The National Health Service has taken on its biggest ever logistical challenge by vaccinating tens of millions of people against the coronavirus in a matter of months. At the same time, the law enforcement authorities are contending with an array of potential security threats to the vaccination campaign.

Reinforcements: Retired health workers are being asked to help, while the National Health Service is also recruiting tens of thousands of first-aid workers and others to help administer shots, as the vaccine becomes available to progressively more people.

Here are [*the latest updates*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) and [*maps of the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

In other developments:

* Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada announced that the country [*would get 249,000 doses of Pfizer’s vaccine*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) this month, with millions [*more to follow in 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

1. Several [*countries across Europe are planning to loosen restrictions briefly over the holidays*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) to allow families and friends to gather.
2. A lack of trust in the Kremlin is hobbling [*Russia’s vaccine rollout*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), which began over the weekend.

* Du Weimin, the “king of vaccines,” is one of the richest men in China. His company is now the exclusive mainland manufacturer for the coronavirus vaccine made by AstraZeneca. But in China, [*the pharmaceutical industry*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) is rife with corruption and controversy.

1. After Pfizer delivers its first 100 million vaccine doses to the U.S., the country [*may not get another batch until June*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), after the European Union bought up the supply offered to (and passed on by) the White House last summer.

The final push for a possible Brexit deal

With time running out in Brexit negotiations, Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Monday declared that [*he would travel to Brussels this week*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) in a final effort to strike a trade agreement between Britain and the European Union.

Mr. Johnson’s announcement, after a 90-minute phone call with the president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, raised the stakes as the talks enter their endgame. After 11 months of grinding negotiations, a face-to-face meeting may be the last hope.

Key sticking points remain [*fishing rights*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), state aid and fair competition for industry — issues that have divided the two sides from the start.

Statement: “We agreed that the conditions for finalizing an agreement are not there,” Mr. Johnson and Ms. von der Leyen said, adding that they had asked their negotiators to “prepare an overview of the remaining differences to be discussed in a physical meeting in Brussels in the coming days.”

Opinion: Don’t blame ***working-class*** people for voting to leave the European Union, writes the comedian and actor Russell Brand. Blame [*the party that betrayed them*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Georgia recertifies Biden’s electoral victory

Georgia’s secretary of state [*recertified the results*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) of the state’s presidential race after another recount reaffirmed Joe Biden’s victory over President Trump, the third time that results showed that Mr. Trump had lost the state.

The move came less than 48 hours after Mr. Trump appeared in Georgia, at a rally at which he again claimed the election had been stolen from him because of fraudulent voting.

Mr. Trump’s rally was intended to support the candidacies of two Republican senators who are locked in high-stakes runoff races, which together will decide which party controls the Senate. To win, the [*Democratic challengers will need more than just disaffected Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) seeking to give Mr. Trump one final defeat.

Related: A civil case being pursued by the attorney general for the District of Columbia [*argues that Mr. Trump’s inaugural committee illegally overpaid his family business*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) by as much as $1.1 million for events at his hotel in Washington in January 2017.

If you have 6 minutes, this is worth it

‘This is insanity’: Investors rush in on start-up boom

When school, work and shopping moved online this year, demand skyrocketed for the tech that makes those interactions possible. Add in low interest rates and a surging stock market, and [*there is now a frenzy of deal-making*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), our tech reporter writes. This week, DoorDash and Airbnb plan to go public after the busiest I.P.O. listing period in two decades.

“I haven’t seen anything like this in over 20 years,” said Eric Paley, an investor at the venture firm Founder Collective. “The party is as loud and the drinks are flowing as freely as the dot-com boom, despite that we’re all drinking at home and alone.”

Here’s what else is happening

Police brutality: The police killing of an unarmed disabled Palestinian man in Jerusalem set off international outrage and fueled nationwide protests. But, as has long been the case, the authorities in Israel have failed to [*rein in the use of excessive force*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Pornhub: Visa and Mastercard said they [*would investigate their financial links to the parent company of the adult website*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) after the Times columnist Nicholas Kristof reported that some of Pornhub’s videos depict child abuse and nonconsensual sexual violence.

Soot: The Trump administration decided not to tighten controls on industrial soot emissions, despite research from government scientists that suggests that a slightly tighter level on these [*tiny, lung-damaging particles*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) could save more than 10,000 American lives a year.

Bob Dylan: The [*Nobel-prizewinning singer-songwriter*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) has sold his entire songwriting catalog of more than 600 songs to Universal Music, in what may be the biggest acquisition ever of a single act’s publishing rights, at an estimated cost of more than $300 million.

Snapshot: On Lake Victoria in Kenya, above, attracting baitfish with lanterns extends as far back as anyone can remember. But [*overfishing may jeopardize the tradition*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing). With more than 400 boats fishing on any given night, competition has increased so much that at times violence has erupted on the lake.

Lives lived: The Russian art historian Irina Antonova, who over a half-century transformed the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow and used it to take outside culture to isolated Soviet citizens, [*died last month at 98*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Bear hunt: Australia is starting its [*first koala count in years*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), deploying heat-seeking drones, acoustic surveys and detector dogs to find the marsupials in the wild.

What we’re reading: New York magazine’s tribute to favorite [*businesses that have closed during the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing). “This farewell to beloved establishments is a devastating sample of what the city has lost this year,” writes Melina Delkic, of the Briefings team.

Now, a break from the news

Cook: Store-bought puff pastry makes [*pastel, a wonderfully rich Israeli spiced beef pie*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) scented with cinnamon, dill and parsley, a breeze to cook.

Watch: Reached the limits of your streaming services? Go beyond the algorithm with [*our pick of the best offbeat films*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Listen: Take five minutes out of your day [*to fall in love with Beethoven*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), who was born 250 years ago this month.

[*At Home has our full collection of ideas*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) on what to read, cook, watch, and do while staying safe at home.

And now for the Back Story on …

Poetry to light up the gloom

Ahead of Thanksgiving last month, The Times’s National Desk asked U.S. state poets laureate for [*some words of gratitude in a relentlessly difficult year*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), with a 100-word limit. Felice Belman, an editor on the desk, explains what happened next for Times Insider, [*excerpted here*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

The nation’s poets laureate have a real sense of mission. They aim to encourage an appreciation for poetry, to challenge us, to generate some buzz for the art form. That has required more effort and ingenuity during the coronavirus pandemic. And so, like firefighters waiting in a quiet station for the call to duty, they embraced the Times assignment quickly and wholeheartedly.

Pulling the project together was not without drama, though.

Some poets were tricky to track down. The writer from Vermont has no email address. But her friend, the poet laureate of Rhode Island, knew her phone number and sent her a text message to make sure she had received our query.

Other submissions got caught up in email spam filters. And the poet from Oregon, much like every never-satisfied reporter in the world, kept finessing his poem, even as our deadline crept closer. One poet worried she might have contracted the coronavirus, but she still managed to send a submission.

The result: On a day that also included otherwise alarming news, Times readers also got a large helping of poetry to make it all go down a bit more easily. Even in a post-pandemic world, this might be a terrific tradition to continue.

Thanks for starting your day with The Times.

— Natasha

Thank you

To Theodore Kim and Jahaan Singh for the break from the news. You can reach Natasha and 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 about one Republican election official condemning President Trump’s baseless fraud claims about the presidential election.

Here’s our [*Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), and a clue: Exhale wistfully (four letters). [*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

The word “[*technopopulism*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing)” — from an Op-Ed essay about [*merging populism with technocratic expertise*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) — appeared for the first time in The Times yesterday, as noted by the Twitter bot [*@NYT\_first\_said*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Marc Lacey, The Times’s national editor, will be the new [*assistant managing editor for Live*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), where he will lead a team focused on briefings, blogs and chats.

PHOTO: Nurses simulated the administration of the vaccine during a training session in London last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Pool photo by Yui Mok FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 8, 2020

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[***The American Dream Is Alive and Well***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YXP-H9Y1-DXY4-X18H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 27, 2020 Wednesday 18:31 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1369 words

**Byline:** Michael R. Strain

**Highlight:** We have bigger issues than inequality.

**Body**

We have bigger issues than inequality.

Imagine you could wave a magic wand and double the incomes of the bottom 20 percent of Americans. Would you do it? I imagine your answer is yes.

Now, suppose that in order to increase the incomes of people at the bottom by a factor of two, you had no choice but to increase the incomes of the top 20 percent by a factor of 2.5. Would you still wave the wand? If so, you may be less concerned about inequality than you think.

Inequality is the gap between people at the top and those at the bottom. Over the past decade, the national debate is mostly concerned with inequality of income, but other inequalities — in consumption and wealth, for example — are also frequently discussed. I think the magnitude of attention the top-bottom gap receives is misplaced, in part because of the thought experiment we discussed above.

Many people, myself included, would wave the wand in the second scenario because they would want to increase incomes of those at the bottom. In doing so, they would also be increasing inequality, because incomes at the top would increase by more than those at the bottom. But for those of us who care more about the absolute condition of those at the bottom than about the size of the rich-poor gap, waving the wand is the right choice to make.

Indeed, the size of the income gap — income inequality — is not high on my list of economic and social challenges facing the United States. Of course, the most immediate concern is the coronavirus pandemic and the economic policy and public health responses to it. But the longer-term trend in inequality is not nearly as important to economic prosperity and the health of society as some other critical problems. Those include the relatively slow rate of productivity growth the U.S. has experienced for many years, challenges in imparting education and skills to all Americans, the long-term decline in male employment and reduced economic dynamism, to name a few. And they include the absolute condition of low-income Americans, regardless of the size of the gap between them and households at the top.

Am I unusual in this regard? Do Americans really care as much about inequality as the attention by media and liberal politicians suggest? It may seem absurd to ask that question, but bear with me. During the 1990s, the income gap between households at the top and those at the bottom increased substantially. Inequality of market income — which includes labor, business and capital income — increased by 8 percent from 1991 to 2000, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. The top-bottom gap in household income after taxes and government transfers increased by 11 percent. And yet income inequality received relatively little attention at that time.

Compare that period to the decade from 2007 to 2016 — the most recent period with budget office income data — when the attention inequality received exploded. Over this period, the rich-poor gap in market income grew by less than 2 percent. Inequality of post-tax-and-transfer income — the most comprehensive measure of the flow of resources available to households — actually fell by 7 percent. So as concern about inequality was exploding, measured inequality growth was stagnant or falling.

What could explain this? There’s a lot going on here, of course. But I would argue that part of the answer must be that inflation-adjusted wages for typical workers grew 44 percent more in the 1990s than in the 10 years beginning in 2007. It may be that concern about inequality is driven more by how people are faring in the labor market than the actual size of the rich-poor gap.

The last few years have witnessed much discussion about whether inequality suggests that capitalism itself is broken. Given that income inequality has been stagnant or declining over the most recent decade, the timing of that conversation is odd. Moreover, as of January — the month before the coronavirus pandemic began dealing a crippling blow to the economy — weekly earnings for workers in the bottom 10 percent were growing faster than those at the median, the unemployment rate for workers without a high-school diploma was further below its long-term average than the rate for college graduates, and the rewards from economic growth were flowing to vulnerable workers, including those with disabilities and criminal backgrounds.

The pandemic has changed this, of course. The economy is shrinking at a devastating rate, unemployment is soaring, and small businesses are in peril. But as they have shown time and again, American workers are resilient and are accustomed to facing — and overcoming — economic challenges.

Over the past three decades, despite three recessions, including the Great Recession, inflation-adjusted average wages for nonsupervisory workers increased by one-third. From 1990 to 2016, Congressional Budget Office data show that the median household saw inflation-adjusted market income increase by 21 percent, while post-tax-and-transfer income grew by 44 percent. Households in the bottom 20 percent saw that measure of income grow by two-thirds during this period. These numbers reflect significant increases in purchasing power for typical workers and households.

The American dream that our children will do better than ourselves is alive and well. Using the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, a data set that tracks families over time and across generations, I calculate that inflation-adjusted household income for three-quarters of people in their 40s today is higher than their parents’ income when their parents were of similar age. Eighty-six percent of people raised in the bottom 20 percent have higher household incomes than their parents did. Around eight in 10 men in their 40s today who were raised in the bottom 20 percent earn more money in the job market than their fathers did at a similar age.

This pandemic crisis will inflict tremendous economic suffering on millions, and its lingering effects will be with us for years. But history suggests that over the long term, the upward march of economic progress for workers and households will continue. Capitalism isn’t broken. The game isn’t rigged. Hard work does pay off. Workers do enjoy the fruits of their labor.

This is not a call for complacency. Even before the pandemic, it was obvious that the United States needs better policy to advance economic opportunity for low-income and ***working-class*** households. As I said earlier, the size of the rich-poor gap is not high on my list of concerns. But don’t be confused — we need to do more to help workers at and near the bottom.

Increasing federal earnings subsidies for low-income households — like the earned-income tax credit — would help to fight poverty and increase work force participation. Building skills through better education and work-based learning programs, like apprenticeships, can help workers to command higher wages in the labor market. Reforming unemployment insurance to offer re-employment bonuses this spring and summer in states that lift lockdown orders could help people hit by the pandemic to get back to work. These are just three examples among the many ideas that should be discussed.

These policies would reduce inequality. But that’s a side effect, not the goal. The goal is to help more people earn their own success, realize their potential — and live flourishing lives.

[*Michael R. Strain*](https://www.michaelrstrain.com/) (   [*@MichaelRStrain*](https://www.michaelrstrain.com/)) is director of economic policy studies and Arthur F. Burns Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and a columnist for Bloomberg Opinion. He is the author of “The American Dream Is Not Dead: (But Populism Could Kill It)”.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.michaelrstrain.com/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.michaelrstrain.com/). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.michaelrstrain.com/).

Follow The New York Times Opinion section on [*Facebook*](https://www.michaelrstrain.com/),   [*Twitter (@NYTopinion)*](https://www.michaelrstrain.com/) and   [*Instagram*](https://www.michaelrstrain.com/).

Illustration by Agnes Lee

PHOTO: In the decade from 2007 to 2016, the rich-poor gap in market income grew by less than 2 percent. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Demetrius Freeman for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 27, 2020

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[***Your Monday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:611X-08V1-DXY4-X0GM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 11, 2020 Sunday 10:32 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1534 words

**Byline:** Carole Landry

**Highlight:** Coronavirus surge, North Korea, Rafael Nadal: Here’s what you need to know.

**Body**

Coronavirus surge, North Korea, Rafael Nadal: Here’s what you need to know.

Good morning.

We’re covering a surge in coronavirus cases worldwide, a display of new weaponry by North Korea and President Trump’s plans to resume campaigning.

One million new coronavirus cases in three days

[*More than one million new cases were reported around the world in the past three days*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million), as France, Russia, Nepal and several American states set records for the highest daily number of new infections. India surpassed seven million total cases.

The number of new cases is growing faster than ever, according to a Times database.

Globally, the U.S. leads with the highest number of infections since late May. But India is on course to overtake the U.S. On Sunday, India reported 74,383 new infections, taking its total past seven million. The U.S. has more than 7.7 million cases.

Here are our [*latest updates*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) and [*maps*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) of the pandemic.

In other virus developments:

* [*Cases in Nepal are sharply increasing*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million), overwhelming hospitals. Frontline doctors have also been infected, raising fears that health institutions’ staffing will be hollowed out.

1. South Korea said on Sunday that it was easing social-distancing restrictions, lifting a ban on gatherings of more than 50 people indoors and more than 100 outdoors.
2. The [*Israeli military began treating civilian coronavirus patients*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) for the first time on Sunday, deploying to an overstrained hospital in the port city of Haifa and opening two Covid-19 wards in an underground campus.

North Korea shows off a new missile

North Korea rolled out what appeared to be its [*largest-ever intercontinental ballistic missile*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) during a military parade in Pyongyang on Saturday.

The display was most likely an attempt to show that the country is making advances in military technology, but it was not immediately clear if the new missiles were real or mock-ups.

Analysis: By showing off but not launching a new ICBM that could potentially deliver a nuclear warhead to the U.S., analysts said, Kim Jong-un, the North’s leader, appeared to want to avoid provoking President Trump ahead of the Nov. 3 election.

Scene: The parade, which unlike earlier celebrations was held at night, was meant to lift morale after a difficult year that included devastating floods. It was held on the 75th anniversary of North Korea’s ruling Workers’ Party and featured fireworks, military planes firing flares in the night sky and goose-stepping soldiers who swore to “defend Kim Jong-un with our lives.” The highlight was the array of artillery pieces, tanks, rockets and missiles.

Pakistan bans TikTok

Government critics say [*Pakistan’s decision to ban the Chinese-owned social media app*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) stemmed as much from politics as from concerns about content.

The ban was announced on Friday by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority, which said it had received complaints about “immoral/indecent” content.

Many analysts and journalists say that the ban served a dual purpose: mollifying conservatives and curbing criticism of Prime Minister Imran Khan’s handling of the economy and tough stance toward political rivals.

Example: One TikTok video that was widely shared a few months ago showed two users mocking Mr. Khan for telling Pakistanis not to panic in the face of hardships brought on by the coronavirus pandemic.

Impact: TikTok has about 20 million active monthly users in Pakistan. The head of a digital marketing agency said the number of users had doubled during the country’s lockdown to curb the spread of the virus.

If you have 6 minutes, this is worth it

Thinking local, not global

Helena Norberg-Hodge has been critical of the global system of trade for decades. Now more than ever, she has become a lodestar for people all over the world who want a shift toward what they call localism.

[*In this profile*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million), our Sydney bureau chief writes about the activist-scholar’s newfound relevance during the pandemic, for her ideas on promoting the health of the environment and the happiness of humanity. “There has been such a huge shift in awareness,” she said on a recent visit to a farmers’ market near the New South Wales coast.

Here’s what else is happening

Trump properties: The latest [*Times investigation into President Trump’s tax returns*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) found that more than 200 companies, special-interest groups and foreign governments had patronized Mr. Trump’s properties, funneling in millions of dollars, while reaping benefits from him and his administration.

QAnon in Germany: The U.S. conspiracy theory has [*found fertile ground among Germany’s far-right fringe*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million). The country has the largest QAnon following — an estimated 200,000 people — in the non-English-speaking world, which has quickly built audiences on YouTube, Facebook and the Telegram messenger app.

Kyrgyzstan: Lawmakers in the Central Asian country selected Sadyr Japarov, a convicted kidnapper who was sprung from jail by protesters just days ago [*to be the new prime minister*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million). The arrangement may help calm street violence, but it also stirred some alarm that criminal elements had prevailed.

French Open: [*Rafael Nadal*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) routed Novak Djokovic in the French Open final to win his 20th Grand Slam singles title and tie the men’s record held by Roger Federer.

Snapshot: President Trump at a White House event on Saturday said he was “feeling great” as he spoke from a balcony to hundreds of supporters. Mr. Trump said in an interview on Sunday that he was now[*“totally free of spreading” the coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) as he prepared to resume campaigning for the Nov. 3 election.

What we’re reading: [*This article in The Washingon Post*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million), which Stacy Cowley, a business reporter, calls “a heartbreaking story of how a coronavirus denier became a believer.”

Now, a break from the news

Cook: [*Roasted cauliflower with pancetta, olives and crisp Parmesan*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) is not a side dish but dinner, according to our Food writer Melissa Clark, “and a satisfying one at that.”

Watch: Kiyoshi Kurosawa’s [*“Wife of a Spy”*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) touches on the Imperial Army’s testing of biological and chemical weapons on human subjects in Manchuria before and during World War II. The film garnered Mr. Kurosawa the best director award at the Venice Film Festival.

Do: Stretching and meditative movement like yoga before bed can improve the quality of your sleep. Here is a short and calming routine of [*11 stretches and exercises.*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million)

On a quest for a new project? [*At Home has a full collection of ideas*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) on what to read, cook, watch and do while staying safe at home.

And now for the Back Story on …

An American in Paris

Elaine Sciolino, a writer and former Paris bureau chief for The Times, has lived in Paris since 2002. She wrote about [*her long and complicated relationship with France*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million) and the disconnect in customs for Americans, which the new Netflix series “Emily in Paris” holds up a mirror to. Here’s an excerpt.

French rules regulating interpersonal behavior are a complex maze.

To be overly “familiar” is to invite scorn; to laugh too loudly is to solicit disdain; to take seconds on the cheese course is to jeopardize future invitations. Then, of course, there is the historical fear of the stranger, which penetrates deep into the French soul. At my local cafe, after months of haughty silence from the server, who barely tolerated my presence, I was finally greeted with “Bonjour” and a smile. The secret? A French friend at my side. I needed a local to fit in.

And that brings me to “Emily in Paris.” Within the clichés were grains of truth. A few of them:

The smile: “Stop smiling,” Emily’s boss, Sylvie, commands. “People will think you are stupid.” Americans smile at strangers; Parisians do not, which helps explain why some Americans find Parisians rude.

The voice: “Why are you shouting?” one of Emily’s French colleagues asks when she makes her first presentation. Yes, Americans tend to speak much more loudly than the French.

Work: “Are you crazy,” Sylvie tells Emily when she talks business at an evening reception. We are at a “soiree,” not on a “conference call,” she adds. In Washington, where I was once The Times’s chief diplomatic correspondent, cocktail parties and dinners were thinly veiled excuses to buttonhole sources and get scoops. In Paris, evenings are for relaxation and social discourse. Work, if it is done at all, has to be sneaked in and barely noticeable.

To navigate Paris as an American is to be forced to slow down and embrace the process, ideally with a sense of humor. A playful spirit (in French, if possible) can neutralize a brusque response, draw the other party into a dialogue and create a pleasurable “partage” — a sharing.

Thanks for spending part of your day with The Times. See you next time.

— Carole

Thank you

To Theodore Kim and Jahaan Singh for the break from the news. You can reach the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million).

P.S.

We’re listening to “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million).” Our latest episode is about the campaign for Pennsylvania’s ***working-class*** voters.

Here’s our [*Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million), and a clue: Ballerina skirts (Five letters). [*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million).

The new season of the “Modern Love” podcast kicks off on Wednesday, with new episodes every Wednesday. [*Listen to the trailer*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/10/11/world/covid-coronavirus?name=styln-coronavirus-national&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Interactive&amp;impression_id=e45169e0-0be1-11eb-8c41-4bed16eeac96&amp;variant=1_Show#the-world-recorded-more-than-1-million-new-cases-in-the-last-three-days-and-indias-total-infections-passed-7-million).

PHOTO: A coronavirus testing station in Washington. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Mandel Ngan/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Biden Picks Xavier Becerra to Lead Health and Human Services***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61FV-WJD1-JBG3-604W-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The selection of Mr. Becerra, the California attorney general, is a surprise. If confirmed, he will face a daunting challenge in leading the department at a critical moment in the pandemic.

**Body**

The selection of Mr. Becerra, the California attorney general, is a surprise. If confirmed, he will face a daunting challenge in leading the department at a critical moment in the pandemic.

WASHINGTON — President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has selected [*Xavier Becerra*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), the Democratic attorney general of California, as his nominee for [*secretary of health and human services*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), tapping a former congressman who would be the first Latino to run the department as it battles the surging coronavirus pandemic.

Mr. Becerra became [*Mr. Biden’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) clear choice only over the past few days, according to people familiar with the transition’s deliberations, and was a surprise. Mr. Becerra has carved out a profile on the issues of criminal justice and immigration, and he was long thought to be a candidate for attorney general.

But as attorney general in California, he has been at the forefront of legal efforts on health care, leading 20 states and the District of Columbia in a campaign to protect the Affordable Care Act from being dismantled by his Republican counterparts. He has also been vocal in the Democratic Party about fighting for women’s health.

If confirmed, Mr. Becerra will immediately face a daunting task in leading the department at a critical moment during a pandemic that has [*killed more than 281,000 people in the United States*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) — and one that has taken a particularly [*devastating toll on people of color*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html).

“The A.C.A. has been life-changing and now through this pandemic, we can all see the value in having greater access to quality health care at affordable prices,” Mr. Becerra said in June, when he filed a [*brief*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) with the Supreme Court in defense of the health care law. “Now is not the time to rip away our best tool to address very real and very deadly health disparities in our communities.”

A spokesman for Mr. Biden’s transition team declined to comment. The president-elect plans to formally announce Mr. Becerra as his choice to lead the health department early this week, along with several other top health care advisers, according to people familiar with the rollout.

Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the chief of infectious diseases at Massachusetts General Hospital, will be selected to lead the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, according to a person familiar with Mr. Biden’s deliberations. Dr. Walensky, whose selection was [*reported earlier by Politico*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), will replace Dr. Robert R. Redfield as the leader of the scientific agency at the forefront of the nation’s pandemic response.

Dr. Vivek Murthy, who served as surgeon general under President Barack Obama, will reprise that role for Mr. Biden. A telegenic confidant of the president-elect, Mr. Murthy will become one of Mr. Biden’s closest advisers on medical issues and will lead much of the public outreach on the pandemic.

Jeffrey D. Zients, an entrepreneur and management consultant who served as the head of Mr. Obama’s National Economic Council and [*fixed the bungled rollout*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) of the health law’s online insurance marketplace, will become a coronavirus czar in the White House, leading efforts to coordinate the fight against the coronavirus pandemic among the government’s sprawling agencies.

Some medical experts, who have been pushing the Biden team to name people with medical or public health expertise to serve in health leadership positions, were caught off guard — and unhappily so — by the news of Mr. Becerra’s selection.

In a [*letter sent last week to Mr. Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), five leading medical groups — the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Physicians among them — called on the president-elect to appoint “qualified physicians to serve in key positions critical to advancing the health of our nation.”

One person familiar with that effort said people involved were “astounded” by the selection of Mr. Becerra, and suggested that Mr. Biden elevate Dr. Murthy to a cabinet-level position.

But in an interview on Sunday night, Dr. Ada D. Stewart, the president of the American Academy of Family Physicians, one of the groups that sent the letter, described Mr. Becerra as “a good choice” and “an experienced legislator and executive” — even as she conceded that her group would “prefer, of course, to have a physician in this position.”

“We’ve already seen his commitment to health and equity, and those things can’t be overlooked,” she said.

Mr. Becerra’s experience in Washington may also help Mr. Biden secure legislative changes to bolster the Affordable Care Act, a central promise that the president-elect made during the 2020 campaign.

Mr. Becerra, 62, served 12 terms in Congress, representing Los Angeles, before becoming the attorney general of his home state in 2017. He is the first Latino to hold that office, and while in Congress he was the first Latino to serve as a member of the Ways and Means Committee, where he worked on health care as a senior member of the health subcommittee. He also led the House Democratic Caucus, which gave him a powerful leadership post.

An outspoken advocate of improved health care access, Mr. Becerra said in 2017 that he would “[*absolutely” support Medicare for all*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), a proposal for government-run health care that Mr. Biden has explicitly rejected. A source familiar with the selection said Mr. Becerra would support the president-elect’s call for strengthening and preserving the A.C.A. and would not be pushing Medicare for all while in office.

As California’s top law enforcement official, Mr. Becerra helped lead legal fights across the nation for access to health care, focusing in particular on dismantling barriers for women struggling to get medical services.

In April, Mr. Becerra led a coalition of 22 state attorneys general in challenging a Mississippi law that prohibited doctors from providing abortion services past 15 weeks. In a statement at the time, Mr. Becerra called the ban “unjust, unlawful, and unfair.”

“Laws like Mississippi’s are a systematic attempt to undo a woman’s constitutional rights under Roe v. Wade,” he said. “I will continue to stand up for safe access to reproductive care and defend these rights for all women.”

Mr. Becerra’s office boasted frequently of the many [*lawsuits he had filed against the Trump administration*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), including suits challenging the president’s immigration and environmental policies. His activism in fighting the Trump agenda in court earned him praise from leading progressives in the Democratic Party.

In September, Mr. Becerra said the tally of his anti-Trump lawsuits had grown to 100.

But Mr. Becerra also partnered with Republican counterparts at times, joining a bipartisan group of attorneys general in August to urge the Department of Health and Human Services and other agencies to increase access to remdesivir, a drug that has shown promise in treating Covid-19. He also worked with Republicans to prevent student vaping.

Born in Sacramento, Mr. Becerra grew up in a ***working-class*** family; his mother emigrated from Mexico, and he was the first in his family to graduate from college. He attended Stanford as an undergraduate and received his law degree there in 1984.

Mr. Biden was impressed by Mr. Becerra’s personal story, according to a person familiar with his thinking. In particular, the president-elect liked the fact that Mr. Becerra served clients with mental health needs shortly after graduating from law school, the person said.

While in Congress, Mr. Becerra was a fierce advocate of the Latino community and became deeply involved in efforts to overhaul the nation’s immigration system. He also promoted plans to build a national museum devoted to exploring the culture and history of American Latinos. [*The House voted this year to create such a museum.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html)

Representative Filemon Vela, Democrat of Texas, praised Mr. Biden’s choice of Mr. Becerra, calling it “historic” and saying the California attorney general was the right person to lead the sprawling agency during the worst public health crisis in 100 years.

“Becerra will lead an agency that will play a crucial role in overseeing a massive immunization effort and help manage a bolstered federal response to tackle the worsening Covid-19 crisis,” Mr. Vela said. “He will also help shape the Biden administration’s efforts to build on the Affordable Care Act.”

In the late 1990s, Mr. Becerra traveled to Cuba and visited with its leader, Fidel Castro, which infuriated Republican members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. [*They resigned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), saying they were “personally insulted” by the visit.

Mr. Biden’s selection of Mr. Becerra to replace the current secretary, Alex M. Azar II, comes as the president-elect is under increasing pressure from the Latino community and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to diversify his cabinet. Mr. Becerra is the second Latino Mr. Biden has chosen for his cabinet after the [*selection last month of Alejandro N. Mayorkas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html), a Cuban immigrant, as secretary of homeland security.

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham of New Mexico had been thought to be in line for the health secretary’s job, but she apparently fell out of the running. Instead, news leaked last week that Ms. Lujan Grisham had been offered, and turned down, the position of interior secretary.

The leak prompted Senator-elect Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico to [*use a private meeting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/18/us/politics/xavier-becerra-health-secretary.html) with top Biden advisers to rebuke the incoming White House chief of staff, Ron Klain, and other senior Biden officials for their treatment of Ms. Lujan Grisham, according to a Democrat familiar with the discussion.

If approved, Mr. Becerra’s nomination would create yet another statewide office in California to be filled by Gov. Gavin Newsom, who was already considering candidates, including Mr. Becerra, for the Senate seat being vacated by Vice President-elect Kamala Harris.

Mr. Becerra has been California’s attorney general since 2017, when Ms. Harris was elected to the Senate and Gov. Jerry Brown appointed him to fill her seat. His term would expire in 2022.

Jonathan Martin contributed reporting from Washington, and Shawn Hubler from Sacramento.

PHOTO: President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. chose Xavier Becerra, who has made health care a priority as California’s attorney general. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RICH PEDRONCELLI/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A17)

**Load-Date:** April 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Virus’s Effects: Coughs, Chills and Sometimes a Forgiving Spirit***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YHM-1PT1-DXY4-X186-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 27, 2020 Wednesday 09:32 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1316 words

**Byline:** John Eligon

**Highlight:** Cities are halting evictions and utility shut-offs, and law enforcement officials are freeing some low-level offenders from jail. But how long should the generosity last?

**Body**

Cities are halting evictions and utility shut-offs, and law enforcement officials are freeing some low-level offenders from jail. But how long should the generosity last?

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Rent collections are being delayed. Water restored. Jailhouse doors are swinging open.

The coronavirus, for all its devastation, is spreading a spirit of forgiveness across America and softening the country’s often uncompromising lock-’em-up ways.

Dozens of [*states and localities have suspended evictions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/27/us/coronavirus-evictions-renters.html) and utility shut-offs.   [*The $2 trillion stimulus bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/27/us/coronavirus-evictions-renters.html) that President Trump signed on Friday included provisions to halt evictions in some federally funded housing, defer federal student loan payments interest-free and stop collections on those who are in default. Law enforcement officials in numerous jurisdictions are refusing to send people accused of low-level offenses to jail or releasing some who are already locked up.

The efforts at leniency have bipartisan backing, with the biggest debate over just how long the generosity ought to extend. Those who have long been fighting for tenant rights or criminal justice reform all of a sudden see their views in the mainstream and argue that this is not forgiveness, but justice. Law-and-order and small-government types shudder to think of the consequences if the current mood is longstanding.

“We’re winning stuff that last week sounded radical,” said Tara Raghuveer, a tenant rights advocate in Kansas City, Mo. “We have to start demanding more.”

The calculation for public officials may be as much about practicality as good will.

How can they ask people to stay at a distance, yet pack them into crowded jail cells? How can they demand that residents hunker down at home and maintain good hygiene, yet shut off their water and kick them out of their residences?

Frank White, the executive of Jackson County, which includes Kansas City, said halting evictions during the virus outbreak was the moral thing to do.

“It doesn’t take a genius to figure out that people on the streets at a time like this is not safe for the public,” he said.

The story of one Kansas City man shows why many policymakers say this is a particularly bad time for people to be left high and dry.

Once the tube was removed from his lungs, once he could breathe on his own again, once he knew he would survive the failing heart and collapsed lung that hospitalized him for weeks, Kevin Payne headed home with much trepidation.

His landlords had asked him months earlier to vacate his apartment in Midtown Kansas City because they wanted to renovate it. He hoped they would hold off because of health issues that had hospitalized him for weeks. Yet he arrived home on this day in late February to find an eviction notice on his door.

He was forced to move out the following week, and days later the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [*urged people at least 60 years old to stay in their homes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/27/us/coronavirus-evictions-renters.html) because of the risk of the novel coronavirus.

Without his thousand-square-foot apartment as a safe haven, Mr. Payne wondered how this was supposed to work. He was 60 years old, in poor health, squeezing into a hotel room with his girlfriend, also in fragile health. They needed to eat healthy but were fearful of going to the grocery store, or anywhere else, for risk of exposure to the virus.

“We’re just scared to death,” he said.

Mr. Payne and his girlfriend have not left the small hotel room they now call home since checking in on March 9. Groceries, delivered to them by members of K.C. Tenants, a tenant advocacy group, are piled on a small kitchenette in the room, which is a far cry from the two-bedroom unit they shared on a quiet residential street.

They are both on disability and can probably afford the $1,500-a-month hotel room for another month, Mr. Payne said, but it is impossible to know what comes next.

Though he always paid his $505 rent on time, his landlords said in an email to The New York Times that he was a hoarder who allowed his unit to devolve into unsanitary conditions. They needed to evict him for his health and safety and that of his neighbors. He got 60 days’ notice and a month’s free rent. The court approved the eviction in early February, weeks before anyone realized how the coronavirus would grip the country.

Since then, eviction court proceedings have been suspended statewide in 27 states, and numerous local jurisdictions have acted to do so on their own, [*according to a list*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/27/us/coronavirus-evictions-renters.html) compiled by Emily A. Benfer, a visiting law professor at Columbia Law School. But only 13 states have banned the enforcement of evictions statewide, addressing an important loophole.

Six days after the presiding judge in Jackson County issued [*an order that suspended most court proceedings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/27/us/coronavirus-evictions-renters.html), a court deputy showed up at an older woman’s home on March 18 to evict her. It turned out that while the judge’s order prevented pending cases from proceeding, it did not stop cases that already had been decided.

Ms. Raghuveer, the director of K.C. Tenants, spoke by phone with the deputy enforcing the eviction, and he told her, “The judge has signed off on the eviction, and we need to proceed with it,” according to a recording of the conversation provided by Ms. Raghuveer.

In a subsequent phone conversation, a supervisor at the court told Ms. Raghuveer that it was “business as usual” and he had six deputies out who were each executing several evictions.

After a public outcry, the presiding judge, David M. Byrn, issued [*an order the next day halting eviction enforcement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/27/us/coronavirus-evictions-renters.html) in Jackson County.

Still, housing advocates say governmental officials need to go a step further and provide rental subsidies so tenants do not fall too far behind on their payments.

“The thing that scares me probably more than anything right now is just the incredible onslaught of evictions that may be waiting for poor and ***working-class*** people on the other end of these moratoria,” Ms. Raghuveer said.

The Senate’s stimulus package is not as forgiving as many liberal activists would like to see. There is no student loan debt cancellation, rental assistance for tenants in private housing, utility protections or unemployment and cash benefits for undocumented immigrants.

The question, for some, is where does amnesty end? Landlords have bills to pay, too. Utility companies cannot pump power and water into homes for free. And some law enforcement officials worry that without consequences, lawbreakers may feel emboldened to do as they please.

Clark Neily, the vice president of criminal justice at the Cato Institute, a libertarian policy research group, said he was all for reducing the jail population because he believed way too many people were locked up to begin with. He was not so sure, however, about the feasibility of long-term forgiveness for nonpayment of rent and utilities.

“If you create a situation where people know someone else will pay their rent and they can’t be thrown out of their apartment, they become less disciplined,” he said.

Policymakers on the left say they hope this moment of reprieve for those living on the edge will prompt the country to reconsider how it does things in the first place. Perhaps, they say, people might see that crime does not spike when low-level offenders are not incarcerated, or that there are ways to deal with someone behind on rent that benefits everybody.

“This is an opportunity for us to dissect some of these policies to ensure that they’re right,” said Danyelle Solomon, the vice president of race and ethnicity at the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank. “And not only right, but that they’re equitable.”

PHOTOS: Kevin Payne and his girlfriend, Lori O’Brien, have not left the hotel room they now call home since checking in March 9 after they were evicted from their apartment in Kansas City, Mo. Both have had bouts of pneumonia and are in fragile health. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER SMITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 27, 2020

**End of Document**



[***8 Cannes Film Festival Prizewinners We Love (and 3 We Don’t)***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YYK-V641-JBG3-6505-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 26, 2020 Tuesday 00:41 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1311 words

**Byline:** Manohla Dargis and A.O. Scott

**Highlight:** About now the festival jury would be weighing its choices. So our critics singled out highlights from more than 70 years of festival glory, as well as a few less-than-stellar prizewinners.

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About now the festival jury would be weighing its choices. So our critics singled out highlights from more than 70 years of festival glory, as well as a few less-than-stellar prizewinners.

At the end of every [*Cannes Film Festival*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/cannes-film-festival), juries of cinematic eminences deliver verdicts on the films in competition. The name of the top prize has changed over time — from Palme d’Or to Grand Prix and back again — but the winners include a roster of modern classics.

This year’s prizes would have been announced on Saturday, but the [*festival was canceled*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/cannes-film-festival) because of the pandemic. Instead, our chief critics, Manohla Dargis and A.O. Scott, have selected some of their favorites, and a few that don’t shine quite so brightly.

Bravo!

‘Rome Open City’

Directed by Roberto Rossellini, 1946

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Shot in Rome shortly after the end of the German occupation, [*“Rome Open City”*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/cannes-film-festival) was an early, decisive example of neorealism. It used scavenged film stock, real-life locations and a cast that included many nonprofessional actors (as well as the great Anna Magnani), Part thriller, part documentary, part manifesto, it’s striking not only for its blunt depiction of political violence but also for its warmth, humor and unstinting humanism. (A.O. Scott)

‘The Third Man’

Carol Reed, 1949

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‘La Dolce Vita’

Federico Fellini, 1960

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Of course a movie in which photographers pursue movie stars, movie stars misbehave in public and journalists flit from party to party pretending that what they’re doing is work would triumph in Cannes. Of all the festival’s prizewinners over the years, this one may be closest to the spirit of Cannes itself, at least as it sometimes appears from the outside. Critics have continued to debate the meaning of “La Dolce Vita” — satire or tragedy? diagnosis or symptom? masterpiece or folly? — and Fellini himself was always coy about his intentions. But there is still nothing to equal the experience of following Marcello Mastroianni through an inferno of romantic failure and a purgatory of ethical compromise that is also a movie lover’s paradise. (A.O.S.)

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The Umbrellas of Cherbourg

Jacques Demy, 1964

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The Conversation

Francis Ford Coppola, 1974

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Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, 2005

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‘Barton Fink&#39;

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Three of my favorite filmmakers; two of their worst films. Don’t @ me. (A.O.S.)

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**Load-Date:** May 26, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Favorites (and Not) at Cannes Over the Years***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:600D-1FH1-JBG3-60FK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 26, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1293 words

**Byline:** By Manohla Dargis and A.O. Scott

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/22/movies/cannes-best-worst.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/22/movies/cannes-best-worst.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A crowd after a screening of ''The Umbrellas of Cherbourg'' at the Cannes Film Festival in 1964. This year's festival was canceled, a pandemic casualty. (PHOTOGRAPH BY REPORTERS ASSOCIES/GAMMA-RAPHO, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** May 26, 2020

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[***Thousands of Farmworkers Are Prioritized for Coronavirus Shots***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623X-0361-DXY4-X26X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 1, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Miriam Jordan

**Body**

COACHELLA, Calif. -- The sun-baked desert valley tucked behind the San Jacinto Mountains is best known for an annual music festival that draws 100,000 fans a day and a series of lush, oasis resort towns where well-heeled snowbirds go to golf, sunbathe and party. But just beyond the turquoise swimming pools of Palm Springs, more than 10,000 farmworkers harvest some of the country's largest crops of date palms, vegetables and fruits.

Mainly undocumented immigrants, they have borne the brunt of the coronavirus pandemic in California: In some areas, up to 40 percent of the workers tested for the virus had positive results. The Rev. Francisco Gómez at Our Lady of Soledad church in Coachella said his parish had been averaging 10 burials a week. ''You're talking about an apocalyptic situation,'' he said.

Ending the virus's rampage through farm country has been one of the nation's biggest challenges. Undocumented immigrants are notoriously wary of registering for government programs or flocking to public vaccination sites, and the idea of offering the Covid-19 vaccine to immigrants who are in the country illegally ahead of other Americans has spurred debate among some Republican members of Congress.

But a landmark effort is underway across the Coachella Valley to bring the vaccine directly into the fields. Thousands of farm workers are being pulled into pop-up vaccination clinics hosted by growers and run by the Health Department.

The county is the first in the nation to prioritize farm workers for vaccination, regardless of their age and health conditions, on a large scale. But epidemiologists say such programs will need to expand significantly to have any chance of ending one of the biggest threats to the stability of the country's food supply.

Hundreds of coronavirus outbreaks have crippled the work force on farms and in food processing centers across the country. Researchers from Purdue University estimate that about 500,000 agricultural workers have tested positive for the virus and at least 9,000 have died from it.

In the Coachella Valley, the vaccination program, which began in January, is the culmination of a monthslong effort to educate farmworkers about Covid-19, bringing testing close to their workplaces and encouraging them to stay home if they contract the virus.

On breaks from bunching scallions, harvesting artichokes and pruning grapevines, the workers on a recent morning trickled into an open-air warehouse to receive the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine.

They were spared the frustrating online registration process that most Californians must navigate and the hourslong waits that were typical at mass vaccination sites. Once they agreed to be immunized, an employer or organizer scheduled their appointments. Then, all they had to do was show up.

Rosa Torres, who packs dates, said she never imagined it could be so simple. ''God answered my prayers,'' said Ms. Torres, 49, an immigrant from Mexico, who was resplendent in matching lime-green shirt, wool cap and mask to mark the occasion.

A single mother, she said she could not afford to get sick and miss work.

''As soon as we got word vaccines were going to be available, we were making plans,'' said Janell Percy, executive director of Growing Coachella Valley, a farmer group that is working with the Health Department. Ms. Percy spends frenetic days juggling calls between the county about vaccine availability and growers who inform her of the number of vaccines needed to cover their crews.

On a recent morning, she thought all 350 vaccine slots for the next day had been filled, only to hear from a grower that he had nine extra shots from his allotment.

''I got to find a grower who wants these so they don't go to waste,'' Ms. Percy said as she updated the sheet where she keeps track of distributions with a pencil and an eraser.

The challenges to getting farmworkers vaccinated go well beyond worries about their immigration status. The odds of being able to sign up for a vaccine online are low in a population that often lacks broadband access and faces language barriers. Many cannot easily reach vaccination sites in urban areas because they do not have reliable transportation or the ability to leave work in the middle of the day.

''Farmworkers are living in a reality that is foreign to most of us, and they are invisible to most of us, but they produce billions of dollars in food distributed across the United States,'' said Conrado Bárzaga, chief executive of the Desert Healthcare District.

In March 2020, the federal government designated farmworkers as essential -- a status that enabled them to continue working under stay-at-home orders but also put them at heightened risk of getting the virus.

Policymakers have struggled with how to protect them. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has advised giving agricultural workers early access to the vaccine, but states have taken a range of approaches.

Most have not yet started vaccinating agricultural workers, though many have identified them as a priority population. Most have prioritized people age 65 or older, and the average age of farmworkers is 39, with more than half under 44.

In California, several counties hope in March to expand eligibility to the entire agricultural work force. Colorado, Idaho, Michigan and Wisconsin are among states that have said they intend to start vaccinating farmworkers in the coming weeks.

But other states have taken steps that could discourage workers from coming forward.

In Florida, a citrus powerhouse, people must prove residency to get a vaccine, a requirement that tends to deter unauthorized immigrants. Some pharmacies in Georgia, where people older than 65 are currently eligible for vaccines, have turned away immigrants unable to show a Social Security number. In Nebraska, where immigrants are the backbone of the large meatpacking industry, people without legal status will be vaccinated last, officials said.

In Riverside County, farmworker advocates and growers have been fielding calls from across the country about the vaccination effort, which is considered a model for how to administer vaccines to this population.

''It's not just that they prioritized farmworkers -- they developed a comprehensive, innovative strategy to ensure vaccine access and acceptance in farmworker communities,'' said Alexis Guild, director of health policy at Farmworker Justice, a national advocacy organization.

Gov. Gavin Newsom, after a visit to a Coachella pop-up site on Feb. 17, announced that California would make 34,000 vaccines available to farmworkers in the Central Valley, the state's agricultural heartland. ''What this county has done no other county in the state had done,'' he said. ''We need to replicate this program all up and down the state of California.''

But some in Riverside County, which stretches from ***working-class*** Los Angeles exurbs to the Salton Sea, have questioned whether farmworkers should be at the front of the line.

On a recent evening in Beaumont, about a 30-minute drive from the Coachella Valley, people who had snagged appointments for vaccines through the process available to most California residents -- mainly over 65 -- idled in their cars for hours in the parking lot of a local middle school.

David Huetten, 73, said those confined to wheelchairs in his retirement community had been unable to reach vaccination events like this one. ''When you have seniors and teachers who haven't been vaccinated, I wouldn't put farmworkers at the top of the list,'' he said.

In the nearby town of Banning, Olga Rausch, a 73-year-old retired waitress who had still not been able to sign up for a vaccine, questioned why farmworkers should go before other blue-collar workers who also cannot afford to stay home from work. ''There are a lot of people living in crowded conditions,'' she said. ''Why aren't busboys, dishwashers and people working at the 99-cent store getting the vaccine?''

Most people, however, felt it made sense to prioritize farmworkers. ''They're handling our food,'' said Don Tandy, a 66-year-old Vietnam veteran.

Health officials everywhere are grappling with how to achieve equitable vaccine distribution. President Biden has repeatedly said that delivering the vaccine is core to his coronavirus response, but early data shows that doses have been slower to reach some Black and Latino communities with an elevated risk of infection.

In Riverside County, Hispanics represent nearly half of the population but have so far received only 20 percent of doses. Vaccinating farmworkers is a first step toward addressing the equity problem, said U.S. Representative Raul Ruiz, a physician who grew up in Riverside County.

''We have a moral responsibility to make sure that we do not leave people behind simply because they lack resources or live in certain ZIP codes,'' said Mr. Ruiz, a Democrat, who has been visiting rural communities to encourage residents to get vaccinated.

It has not been easy.

Like many Americans, some farmworkers worry the vaccine is not safe, because disinformation has proliferated on social media. Others fear that being vaccinated could expose them to immigration enforcement.

Prime Time International, the nation's largest grower of bell peppers, invited workers to register for the vaccine last month, and ''the first question was, 'Is immigration going to be there?''' recalled Garrett Cardilino, director of field operations for the company.

To assuage those fears, Riverside County enlisted grass roots organizations to reach out to farmworkers and reassure them.

''There is no chip to track you; there is no negative effect; you don't lose your fertility,'' Montserrat Gomez, an educator with TODEC, a legal-aid nonprofit organization that serves immigrants, told a group of about 30 workers in masks gathered by a spinach field in the town of Winchester.

''The vaccine is now available for you,'' she said. ''Many people wish they had this opportunity.''

Asked whether they knew anyone who had been stricken by the virus, most of the workers raised their hands. Several knew someone who had died.

Rose Perez, a 36-year-old worker at Full Farms, a vegetable farm in the city of Hemet, said she remained suspicious of the vaccine, even though her sister had become gravely ill with the coronavirus. ''I read that nurses died after taking the vaccine,'' she said. ''No one in my family is taking it.''

Domingo Juan, a Guatemalan, also said he did not trust the vaccine: ''This sickness has been around for a long time. Suddenly there's a cure?''

But after the talk, several workers returned to the fields to harvest bok choy and said they were ready to sign up.

Among them was Luis Valdivia, 48, who recently recovered from the virus but had to go without pay during his illness. ''I suffered too much, lost 37 pounds,'' said Mr. Valdivia, his voice still hoarse after weeks of intense coughing. ''I'll take the vaccine; that way, I'll be able to keep working.''

Two rows over, America Aguilera, 46, said she could not remember undocumented immigrants getting preferential treatment for anything in her 21 years in the United States. ''With all due respect,'' she said, ''it's about time we got the opportunity to be first at something.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/28/us/coronavirus-vaccine-farmworkers-california.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/28/us/coronavirus-vaccine-farmworkers-california.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, farmworkers picking vegetables in Hemet, Calif. Far left, employees waiting after receiving a Covid-19 vaccine at a clinic held at Anthony Vineyards in Coachella, Calif. Rosa Torres, left, who packs dates in the Coachella Valley, said she never imagined it could be so simple to get a vaccine.

Luz Gallegos, the executive director of TODEC, speaking to farmworkers about the vaccine in Winchester, Calif. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARIANA DREHSLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2021

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[***Outcry Over Dominic Cummings Turns Public Against Boris Johnson for 1st Time***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:600G-5HS1-JBG3-61T1-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

The image of a powerful official flouting the lockdown rules has struck a nerve in a way that the government’s haphazard response to the virus has not.

LONDON — For more than two months, Prime Minister [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/world/europe/cummings-johnson-covid.html) has floundered in his response to the coronavirus — abandoning widespread testing, dragging his feet on imposing a lockdown, leaving nursing homes unprotected, and muddling his message about how to reopen the British economy.

But it took a rogue 260-mile car trip by Mr. Johnson’s closest adviser to turn the tide of public opinion against him.

The outcry over Mr. Johnson’s chief adviser, [*Dominic Cummings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/world/europe/cummings-johnson-covid.html), showed no signs of abating on Tuesday, as a junior minister in Mr. Johnson’s government resigned in protest and several additional lawmakers from his Conservative Party called on the prime minister to dismiss Mr. Cummings, taking the total number of those who have gone public against him to more than 35.

Two new polls showed a sharp erosion of public support for Mr. Johnson and a wall of opposition for his aide.

The image of a powerful government official flouting the lockdown rules that Downing Street enforces on everyone else has struck a nerve in a way that Britain’s haphazard response to the virus has not. Unlike the mysteries of epidemiology or the technical details of testing, Mr. Cummings’s decision to decamp for his parents’ house in Durham, in the north of England, when others were confined in their homes, is easy to understand.

“I have constituents who didn’t get to say goodbye to loved ones; families who could not mourn together; people who didn’t visit sick relatives because they followed the guidance of the government,” observed Douglas Ross, the under secretary of state for Scotland, in his resignation statement.

“I cannot in good faith tell them they were all wrong and one senior adviser to the government was right,” he said.

Mr. Johnson showed no signs of abandoning Mr. Cummings, offering such an unequivocal defense, analysts said, that it likely forecloses the possibility of opening an inquiry into his conduct — one way the prime minister could have appeased critics.

He risked his political capital to send his aide out to the garden at 10 Downing Street on Monday to mount an unrepentant defense of his actions. Mr. Cummings said that with his wife showing symptoms of the virus and him fearing he would soon contract it, he wanted to line up care for his 4-year-old child with relatives in Durham.

On Tuesday, the British media remorselessly dissected Mr. Cummings’s account. They zeroed in on his claim that after he arrived in Durham and was bedridden for several days there, he drove to a scenic town more than 20 miles away to test his eyesight, which he said had been impaired by his illness, before embarking on the long journey back to London. The visit coincided with the birthday of Mr. Cummings’s wife.

Kay Burley, an anchor at Sky News, pressed an ally of Mr. Cummings’s, Michael Gove, on whether people with damaged eyesight should “get in a car and drive half an hour with your 4-year-old strapped in the back.” Mr. Gove, a senior Cabinet minister, allowed that Mr. Cummings could have skipped the excursion to the town, Barnard Castle, and driven straight to London.

That ordinary Britons were consumed by the picayune details of an unelected political strategist’s personal travels, on a day when new government statistics suggested that [*the death toll from the coronavirus was closing in on 50,000*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/world/europe/cummings-johnson-covid.html), showed why the Cummings affair poses such a threat to Mr. Johnson. It goes beyond the normal din of politics to become a topic for dinner table conversation.

In British parlance, it is a story with “cut through.”

“Sixty-five million of us have been locked up for weeks,” said Jonathan Powell, a former chief of staff to Prime Minister Tony Blair, “and this guy has the cheek to break the rules he created and then tell us he acted reasonably. That has a completely electric effect.”

Mr. Cummings’s effort to explain himself rallied his supporters, who include most prominent cabinet ministers, but failed to turn the tide either among other lawmakers or, apparently, the general public.

A poll by the market research firm, YouGov, taken after Monday’s news conference, found that[*71 percent of respondents believed Mr. Cummings violated government rules*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/world/europe/cummings-johnson-covid.html) in traveling to Durham, [*and 59 percent believed he should resign.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/world/europe/cummings-johnson-covid.html)

Mr. Johnson’s numbers have taken a hit as well. Another survey, [*by the polling firm Savanta ComRes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/world/europe/cummings-johnson-covid.html), found that his approval rating plunged 20 percentage points in the last four days and now stands in negative territory for the first time since his landslide election victory in December.

For all of Mr. Johnson’s struggles in handling the coronavirus, the British public had been patient with him. His ratings surged after he imposed the lockdown on March 23 and peaked when he was admitted to an intensive care unit with the virus on April 8. After he was released from the hospital, and the spotlight shifted to Britain’s mounting death toll, his support began to weaken.

Unlike in the United States, however, where President Trump’s feuds with governors and his touting of dubious remedies have been polarizing, Britons have generally pulled together, showing their solidarity every Thursday night with a round of applause for the National Health Service. This week, critics are calling for people to boo Mr. Johnson before they cheer the health workers.

Criticism of Mr. Cummings has come from across the political spectrum and includes both the Conservative Party establishment and die-hard supporters of Brexit. “No Apology, No Regrets,” said the headline of the staunchly pro-Conservative Daily Mail, which ran 12 pages of coverage, most of it scathing.

Robert Hayward, a Conservative member of the House of Lords and a polling expert, said the episode angered traditional law-and-order Conservatives who do not take kindly to rule breaking. But it has had the same effect on some who voted for the Conservatives for the first time in December in northern, ***working-class*** constituencies —[*the so-called “red wall” seats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/26/world/europe/cummings-johnson-covid.html) historically held by the Labour Party.

“Boris Johnson successfully convinced a fair few people in the Midlands and the north that he was a different sort of Tory and my guess is that this group of people will be most offended by it,” Mr. Hayward said.

Some analysts suggested that the saga could do the same damage to the Conservatives as two other calamities in the party’s modern history.

One was the introduction of the poll tax in the 1980s, which crippled Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and paved the way for her downfall in 1990. The other was when Britain crashed out of a European currency mechanism in 1992, which haunted Prime Minister John Major until he was swept out of power in 1997.

“This has that sort of potential, though whether it gets that far we can’t yet judge,” Mr. Hayward said. Certainly, he said, it was likely “to be damaging for months and possibly for longer.”

PHOTOS: Dominic Cummings, top, a senior aide to Prime Minister Boris Johnson, has been widely criticized for defying Britain’s lockdown orders. He retains the support of Mr. Johnson, but Douglas Ross, a junior minister from Scotland, above right with Mr. Johnson last year, resigned in protest on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER SUMMERS/GETTY IMAGES; DANIEL LEAL-OLIVAS)

**Load-Date:** May 26, 2021

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[***'This Was Trump Pulling a Putin'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:657S-PK11-DXY4-X2G9-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 6879 words

**Byline:** By Robert Draper

**Body**

To hear more audio stories from publications like The New York Times, download Audm for iPhone or Android.

Fiona Hill vividly recalls the first time she stepped into the Oval Office to discuss the thorny subject of Ukraine with the president. It was February of 2008, the last year of George W. Bush's administration. Hill, then the national intelligence officer for Russia and Eurasia for the National Intelligence Council, was summoned for a strategy session on the upcoming NATO summit in Bucharest, Romania. Among the matters up for discussion was the possibility of Ukraine and another former Soviet state, Georgia, beginning the process of obtaining NATO membership.

In the Oval Office, Hill recalls, describing a scene that has not been previously reported, she told Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney that offering a membership path to Ukraine and Georgia could be problematic. While Bush's appetite for promoting the spread of democracy had not been dampened by the Iraq war, President Vladimir Putin of Russia viewed NATO with suspicion and was vehemently opposed to neighboring countries joining its ranks. He would regard it as a provocation, which was one reason the United States' key NATO allies opposed the idea. Cheney took umbrage at Hill's assessment. ''So, you're telling me you're opposed to freedom and democracy,'' she says he snapped. According to Hill, he abruptly gathered his materials and walked out of the Oval Office.

''He's just yanking your chain,'' she remembers Bush telling her. ''Go on with what you were saying.'' But the president seemed confident that he could win over the other NATO leaders, saying, ''I like it when diplomacy is tough.'' Ignoring the advice of Hill and the U.S. intelligence community, Bush announced in Bucharest that ''NATO should welcome Georgia and Ukraine into the Membership Action Plan.'' Hill's prediction came true: Several other leaders at the summit objected to Bush's recommendation. NATO ultimately issued a compromise declaration that would prove unsatisfying to nearly everyone, stating that the two countries ''will become members'' without specifying how and when they would do so -- and still in defiance of Putin's wishes. (They still have not become members.)

''It was the worst of all possible worlds,'' Hill said to me in her austere English accent as she recalled the episode over lunch this March. As one of the foremost experts on Putin and a current unofficial adviser to the Biden administration on the Russia-Ukraine war, Hill, 56, has already made a specialty of issuing warnings about the Russian leader that have gone unheeded by American presidents. As she feared, the carrot dangled by Bush to two countries -- each of which gained independence in the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and afterward espoused democratic ambitions -- did not sit well with Putin. Four months after the 2008 NATO summit, Russian troops crossed the border and launched an attack on the South Ossetia region of Georgia. Though the war lasted only five days, a Russian military presence would continue in nearly 20 percent of Georgia's territory. And after the West's weak pushback against his aggression, Putin then set his sights on Ukraine -- a sovereign nation that, Putin claimed to Bush at the Bucharest summit, ''is not a country.''

Hill would stay on in the same role in the Obama administration for close to a year. Obama's handling of Putin did not always strike her as judicious. When Chuck Todd of NBC asked Obama at a news conference in 2013 about his working relationship with Putin, Obama replied, ''He's got that kind of slouch, looking like the bored kid in the back of the classroom.'' Hill told me that she ''winced'' when she heard his remark, and when Obama responded to Putin's invasion and annexation of the Ukrainian region Crimea a year later by referring to Russia as ''a regional power that is threatening some of its immediate neighbors, not out of strength but out of weakness,'' she winced again. ''We said openly, 'Don't dis the guy -- he's thin-skinned and quick to take insults,''' Hill said of this counsel to Obama about Putin. ''He either didn't understand the man or willfully ignored the advice.''

Hill was sharing these accounts at an Indian restaurant in Colorado, where she had selected some of the least spicy items on the menu, reminding me, ''I'm still English,'' though she is a naturalized U.S. citizen. The restaurant was a few blocks from the University of Denver campus, where Hill had just given a talk about Russia and Ukraine, one of several she would give that week.

Her descriptions of Russia's president to her audience that morning -- ''living in his own bubble''; ''a germaphobe''; ''a shoot-the-messenger kind of person'' -- were both penetrating and eerily reminiscent of another domineering leader she came to know while serving as the National Security Council's senior director of Russian and European affairs from April 2017 to July 2019. Though it stood to reason that a Putinologist of Fiona Hill's renown would be much in demand after the invasion of Ukraine this February, it surprised me that her tenure in the Trump administration almost never came up in these discussions.

The Colorado events were part of a book tour that was scheduled long before the Russian attack. Her memoir, ''There Is Nothing for You Here: Finding Opportunity in the 21st Century,'' traces the journey of a literal coal miner's daughter from ***working-class*** England to the White House. But it covers a period that can be understood as a prelude to the current conflict -- Hill was present for the initial phase of Trump's scheme to pressure President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine, who was elected in 2019, by withholding military aid in exchange for political favors. It is also an insider's look at a chaotic, reckless and at times antidemocratic chief executive. (In response to queries for this article, Trump said of Hill: ''She doesn't know the first thing she's talking about. If she didn't have the accent she would be nothing.'')

Her assessment of the former president has new resonance in the current moment: ''In the course of his presidency, indeed, Trump would come more to resemble Putin in political practice and predilection than he resembled any of his recent American presidential predecessors.''

Looking back on the Trump years, Hill has slowly come to recognize the unsettling significance in disparate incidents and episodes that she did not have the arm's-length view to appreciate in the moment. During our lunch, we discussed what it was like for her and others to have worked for Trump after having done the same for George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Her meeting in the Bush White House in 2008, Hill told me, offered a sharp contrast to the briefings she sat in on during her tumultuous two years of service in the Trump administration. Unlike Trump, President Bush had read his briefing materials. His questions were respectful. She offered him an unpopular opinion and was not punished or frozen out for it. Even the vice president's dyspeptic behavior that day did not unnerve her, she told me. ''His emphasis was on the power of the executive branch,'' she said. ''It wasn't on the unchecked power of one executive. And it was never to overturn the Constitution.''

Of her experience trying to steer policy during her two years in the Trump White House, Hill said: ''It was extraordinarily difficult. Certainly, that was the case for those of us who were serving in the administration with the hopes of pushing back against the Russians, to make sure that their intervention in 2016 didn't happen again. And along the way, some people kind of lost their sense of self.''

With a flash of a smile, she said: ''We used to have this running shtick in our office at the N.S.C. As a kid, I was a great fan of Tolkien and 'Lord of the Rings.' So, in the Trump administration, we'd talk about the ring, and the fear of becoming Gollum'' -- the character deformed by his attachment to the powerful treasure -- ''obsessing over 'my precious,' the excitement and the power of being in the White House. And I did see a lot of people slipping into that.'' When I asked Hill whom she saw as the Gollums in the Trump White House, she replied crisply: ''The ones who wouldn't testify in his impeachment hearing. Quite a few people, in other words.''

Fiona Hill emerged as a U.S. government expert on Russia amid a generation in which the subjects of Russia and Eastern Europe all but disappeared from America's collective consciousness. Raised in economically depressed North East England, Hill, as a brainy teenager, was admonished by her father, who was then a hospital porter, ''There is nothing for you here,'' and so she moved to the United States in 1989 after a year's study in Moscow. Hill received a Ph.D. in history from Harvard and later got a job at the Brookings Institution. In 2006, she became the national intelligence officer for Russia and Eurasia. By that time, the Bush administration was keenly focused on post-Cold War and post-Sept. 11 adversaries both real and imagined, in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The ambitions of Vladimir Putin, meanwhile, were steadily made manifest. On March 19, 2016, two years after Putin's annexation of Crimea, a hacker working with Russia's military intelligence service, the G.R.U., sent an email to Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman, John D. Podesta, from the address [*no-reply@accounts.googlemail.com*](mailto:no-reply@accounts.googlemail.com) The email, which claimed that a Ukrainian had compromised Podesta's password, turned out to be a successful act of spearphishing. It allowed Russia to obtain and release, through WikiLeaks, 50,000 of Podesta's emails, all in the furtherance of Russia's desire that Clinton would become, if not a defeated presidential candidate, then at minimum a damaged one.

The relationship between the Trump campaign, and then the Trump administration, and Russia would have implications not just for the United States but, eventually, for Ukraine as well. The litany of Trump-Russia intersections remains remarkable: Citizen Trump's business pursuits in Moscow, which continued throughout his candidacy. Candidate Trump's abiding affinity for Putin. The incident in which the Trump campaign's national security director, J.D. Gordon, watered down language in the 2016 Republican Party platform pledging to provide Ukraine with ''lethal defense weapons'' to combat Russian interference -- and did so the same week Gordon dined with Russia's ambassador to the United States, Sergey Kislyak, at an event. Trump's longtime political consigliere Roger Stone's reaching out to WikiLeaks through an intermediary and requesting ''the pending emails,'' an apparent reference to the Clinton campaign emails pirated by Russia, which the site had started to post. Trump's chiming in: ''Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing.'' The meeting in the Seychelles islands between Erik Prince (the founder of the military contractor Blackwater and a Trump-campaign supporter whose sister Betsy DeVos would become Trump's secretary of education) and the head of Russia's sovereign wealth fund in an effort to facilitate a back-channel dialogue between the two countries before Trump's inauguration. The former Trump campaign chief Paul Manafort's consistent lying to federal investigators about his own secretive dealings with the Russian political consultant and intelligence operative Konstantin V. Kilimnik, with whom he shared Trump campaign polling. Trump's two-hour meeting with Putin in Helsinki in the summer of 2018, unattended by staff. Trump's public declaration, at a joint news conference in Helsinki, that he was more inclined to believe Putin than the U.S. intelligence team when it came to Russia's interference in the 2016 election. The dissemination by Trump and his allies in 2019 of the Russian propaganda that it was Ukraine that meddled in the 2016 election, in support of the Clinton campaign. Trump's pardoning of Manafort and Stone in December 2020. And most recently, on March 29, Trump's saying yet again that Putin ''should release'' dirt on a political opponent -- this time President Biden, who, Trump asserted without evidence, had received, along with his son Hunter Biden, $3.5 million from the wife of Moscow's former mayor.

Hill had not expected to be a fly on the White House wall for several of these moments. She even participated in the Women's March in Washington the day following Trump's inauguration. But then, the next day, she was called in for an interview with Keith Kellogg, at the time the N.S.C. chief of staff. Hill had previously worked with Trump's new national security adviser, Michael Flynn, and several times had been on the Fox News foreign-policy online show hosted by K.T. McFarland, who had become the deputy national security adviser; the expectation was that she could become an in-house counterweight to Putin's influence. She soon joined the administration on a two-year assignment.

Just four months into his presidency, Trump welcomed two of Putin's top subordinates -- Ambassador Sergey Kislyak and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov -- into the Oval Office. Their meeting became public only because a photographer with the Russian news agency Tass released an image of the three men laughing together.

As N.S.C. senior director for European and Russian affairs, Hill was supposed to be in the Oval Office meeting with Lavrov and Kislyak. But that plan was scotched after her previous sit-down with Trump did not go well: The president had mistaken her for a secretary and became angry that she did not immediately agree to retype a news release for him. Just after the Russians left the Oval Office, Hill learned that Trump boasted to them about firing James Comey, the director of the F.B.I., saying that he had removed a source of ''great pressure'' -- and that he continued to do so in his next meeting, with Henry Kissinger, though the former secretary of state under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford had come to the White House to discuss Russia.

Hill never developed the rapport with Trump that McFarland, Kellogg and H.R. McMaster (who replaced Flynn), her direct superiors, had presumably hoped for. Instead, Trump seemed more impressed with the former Exxon Mobil chief executive Rex Tillerson, his first secretary of state. ''He's done billion-dollar energy deals with Putin,'' Hill says Trump exclaimed at a meeting.

Trump's ignorance of world affairs would have been a liability under any circumstance. But it put him at a pronounced disadvantage when it came to dealing with those strongmen for whom he felt a natural affinity, like President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey. Once, while Trump was discussing Syria with Erdogan, Hill recalled: ''Erdogan goes from talking about the history of the Ottoman Empire to when he was mayor of Istanbul. And you can see he's not listening and has no idea what Erdogan's talking about.'' On another occasion, she told me, Trump cheerfully joked to Erdogan that the basis of most Americans' knowledge about Turkey was ''Midnight Express,'' a 1978 movie that primarily takes place inside a Turkish prison. ''Bad image -- you need to make a different film,'' Hill recalled Trump telling Turkey's president while she thought to herself, Oh, my God, really?

When I mentioned to Hill that former White House aides had told me about Trump's clear preference for visual materials over text, she exclaimed: ''That's spot on. There were several moments of just utter embarrassment where he would see a magazine story about one of his favorite leaders, be it Erdogan or Macron. He'd see a picture of them, and he'd want it sent to them through the embassies. And when we'd read the articles, the articles are not flattering. They're quite critical. Obviously, we can't send this! But then he'd want to know if they'd gotten the picture and the article, which he'd signed: 'Emmanuel, you look wonderful. Looking so strong.'''

Hill found it dubious that a man so self-interested and lacking in discipline could have colluded with Russia to gain electoral victory in 2016, a concern that led to investigations by both the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and Robert Mueller, the special counsel. For that matter, she told me, she had met the Trump campaign foreign-policy adviser Carter Page a few times in Moscow. ''I was incredulous as to how anyone could think he could be a spy. I thought he was way out of his depth.'' The same held true for George Papadopoulos, another foreign-policy adviser. ''Every campaign has loads of clueless people,'' she said.

Still, she came to see in Trump a kind of aspirational authoritarianism in which Putin, Erdogan, Orban and other autocrats were admired models. She could see that he regarded the U.S. government as his family-run business. In viewing how Trump's coterie acted in his presence, Hill settled on the word ''thrall,'' evoking both a mystical attraction and servitude. Trump's speeches habitually emphasized mood over thought, to powerful effect. It did not escape Hill's attention that Trump's chief speechwriter -- indeed, the gatekeeper of whatever made its way into the president's speeches -- was Stephen Miller, who always seemed near Trump and whose influence on administration policy was ''immense,'' she says. Hill recalled for me a time in 2019 when Trump was visiting London and she found herself traveling through the city in a vehicle with Miller. ''He was talking about all the knife fights that immigrants were causing in these areas,'' she said. ''And I told him: 'These streets were a lot rougher when I was growing up and they were run by white gangs. The immigrants have actually calmed things down.''' (Miller declined to comment on the record.)

More than once during our conversations, Hill made references to the Coen brothers filmmaking team. In particular, she seemed to relate to the character played by Frances McDormand in the movie ''Fargo'': a habitually unflappable police chief thrust into a narrative of bizarre misdeeds for which nothing in her long experience has prepared her. Hill was dismayed, but not surprised, she told me, when President Trump carried on about a Democratic rival, Senator Elizabeth Warren, to a foreign leader, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany -- referring to Warren as ''Senator Pocahontas,'' while Merkel gaped in astonishment. Or when, upon learning from Prime Minister Erna Solberg of Norway of her country's reliance on hydropower, Trump took the opportunity to share his standard riff on the evils of wind turbines.

But she was alarmed, Hill told me, by Trump's antidemocratic monologues. ''He would constantly tell world leaders that he deserved a redo of his first two years,'' she recalled. ''He'd say that his first two years had been taken away from him because of the 'Russia hoax.' And he'd say that he wanted more than two terms.''

''He said it as a joke,'' I suggested.

''Except that he clearly meant it,'' Hill insisted. She mentioned David Cornstein, a jeweler by trade and longtime friend of Trump's whom the president appointed as his ambassador to Hungary. ''Ambassador Cornstein openly talked about the fact that Trump wanted the same arrangement as Viktor Orban'' -- referring to the autocratic Hungarian prime minister, who has held his position since 2010 -- ''where he could push the margins and stay in power without any checks and balances.'' (Cornstein could not be reached for comment.)

During Trump's first year in office, he initially resisted meeting with President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine. Obama received Poroshenko in the Oval Office in June 2014, and the United States offered Ukraine financial and diplomatic support, while stopping short of providing requested Javelin anti-tank missiles, in part out of concerns that Russian assets within Ukraine's intelligence community would have access to the technology, according to a 2019 NBC News interview with the former C.I.A. director John Brennan. Now, with Trump's refusal to meet with Poroshenko, it instead fell to Vice President Mike Pence to welcome the Ukrainian leader to the White House on June 20, 2017. After their meeting, Poroshenko lingered in a West Wing conference room, waiting to see if Trump would give him a few minutes.

Finally, the president did so. The two men shook hands and exchanged pleasantries in front of the White House press corps. Once the reporters were ushered out, Trump flatly told Poroshenko that Ukraine was a corrupt country. Trump knew this, he said, because a Ukrainian friend at Mar-a-Lago had told him so.

Poroshenko said that his administration was addressing the corruption. Trump shared another observation. He said, echoing a Putin talking point, that Crimea, annexed three years earlier through Putin's act of aggression, was rightfully Russia's -- because, after all, the people there spoke Russian.

Poroshenko protested, saying that he, too, spoke Russian. So, for that matter, did one of the witnesses to this conversation: Marie Yovanovitch, then the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, who was born in Canada, later acquiring U.S. citizenship, and who recounted the episode in her recent memoir, ''Lessons From the Edge.'' Recalling Trump's words to me, Yovanovitch laughed in disbelief and said, ''I mean, in America, we speak English, but it doesn't make us British!''

The encounter with Poroshenko would portend other unsettling interactions with Ukraine during the Trump era. ''There were all sorts of tells going on that, while official U.S. policy toward Ukraine was quite good, that he didn't personally love that policy,'' Yovanovitch told me. ''So there was always the feeling of, What's going to happen next?''

What happened next was that Trump began to treat Ukraine as a political enemy. Bridling at the intelligence community's assessment that Russia interfered in the 2016 election in hopes of damaging his opponent or helping his campaign, he was receptive to the suggestion of an appealing counternarrative. ''By early 2018, he began to hear and repeat the assertion that it was Ukraine and not Russia that had interfered in the election, and that they had done so to try to help Clinton,'' Tom Bossert, Trump's former homeland security adviser, told me. ''I knew he heard that from, among others, Rudy Giuliani. Each time that inaccurate theory was raised, I disputed it and reminded the president that it was not true, including one time when I said so in front of Mr. Giuliani.''

By 2019, a number of once-obscure Trump foreign-policy aides -- among them Fiona Hill; her successor, Timothy Morrison; Yovanovitch; Yovanovitch's deputy, George P. Kent; her political counselor, David Holmes; her successor, William B. Taylor Jr.; the N.S.C.'s director for European affairs, Alexander Vindman; the special adviser to the vice president on European and Russian affairs, Jennifer Williams; and the U.S. special representative to Ukraine, Kurt D. Volker -- would be tugged into the vortex of a sub rosa scheme. It was, as Hill would memorably testify to Congress later that year, ''a domestic political errand'' in Ukraine on behalf of President Trump. That errand, chiefly undertaken by Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani and his ambassador to the European Union, Gordon Sondland, would garishly illustrate how ''Trump was using Ukraine as a plaything for his own purposes,'' Hill told me.

The first notable disruption in U.S.-Ukraine relations during Trump's presidency came when Yovanovitch was removed from her ambassadorial post at Trump's orders. Though she was widely respected in diplomatic circles, Yovanovitch's ongoing efforts to root out corruption in Ukraine had put her in the cross hairs of two Soviet-born associates of Giuliani who were doing business in the country. Those associates, Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman, told Trump that Yovanovitch -- who had served in the State Department going back to the Reagan administration -- was critical of Trump. She soon became the target of negative pieces in the publication The Hill by John Solomon, a conservative writer with connections to Giuliani, including an allegation by Yuriy Lutsenko, the prosecutor general of Ukraine, that the ambassador had given him a ''do not prosecute list'' -- which Lutsenko later recanted to a Ukrainian publication. The same month that he did so, April 2019, Yovanovitch was recalled from her post.

The career ambassador and other officials urgently requested that Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who had replaced Tillerson, issue a statement of support for her. Pompeo did not do so; according to a former senior White House official, he was eager to develop a closer bond with Trump and knew that Giuliani had the president's ear. Subsequently, a top adviser to the secretary, Michael McKinley, resigned in protest. According to a source familiar with the matter, Pompeo responded angrily, telling McKinley that his resignation stood as proof that State Department careerists could not be counted on to loyally support President Trump's policies. (Through a spokesman, Pompeo declined to comment on the record.)

By the spring of 2019, Trump seemed to be persuaded not only that Yovanovitch was, as Trump would later tell Zelensky, ''bad news'' but that Ukraine was demonstrably anti-Trump. On April 21, 2019, the president called Zelensky, who had just been elected, to congratulate him on his victory. Trump decided that he would send Pence to attend Zelensky's inauguration. Less than three weeks later, Giuliani disclosed to The Times that he planned to soon visit Ukraine to encourage Zelensky to pursue inquiries into the origins of the special counsel's investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 election and into Hunter Biden, who had served on the board of the Ukrainian energy company Burisma Holdings and whose father, Joe Biden, had just announced his campaign for the Democratic nomination. (Giuliani later canceled his travel plans.)

At about the same time, Pence's national security adviser, Keith Kellogg, announced to the vice president's senior staff, ''The president doesn't want him to attend'' Zelensky's inauguration, according to someone present at the meeting. He did not -- a slight to a European head of state.

On May 23, 2019, Charles Kupperman, Trump's deputy national security adviser, and others discussed Ukraine with Trump in the Oval Office. Speaking to the press about the matter for the first time, Kupperman told me that the very subject of Ukraine threw the president into a rage: ''He just let loose -- 'They're [expletive] corrupt. They [expletive] tried to screw me.'''

Because Kupperman had seen how disdainfully Trump treated allies like Merkel, Macron, Theresa May of Britain and Moon Jae-in of South Korea, he knew how unlikely it was that the president could come to see the geopolitical value of Ukraine. ''He felt like our allies were screwing us, and he had no sense as to why these alliances benefited us or why you need a global footprint for military and strategic capabilities,'' Kupperman told me. ''If one were to ask him to define 'balance of power,' he wouldn't know what that concept was. He'd have no idea about the history of Ukraine and why it's in the front pages today. He wouldn't know that Stalin starved that country. Those are the contextual points one has to take into account in the making of foreign policy. But he wasn't capable of it, because he had no understanding of history: how these countries and their leadership evolved, what makes these countries tick.''

In July 2019, Trump ordered that a hold be placed on nearly $400 million in security assistance to Ukraine that had already been appropriated by Congress. The president stood essentially alone in his opposition to such assistance, Kupperman told me: ''Everyone in the interagency process was uniformly united to release the aid. We needed to do this, there was no controversy to it, but it got held up anyway.'' News of the freeze became public that September, and the White House variously claimed that the funds had been withheld because of Ukraine's corruption and because other NATO countries should be contributing more to Ukraine. Alyssa Farah Griffin, then the Pentagon press secretary, recalled to me that she asked Laura Cooper, the Department of Defense deputy assistant secretary for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia, whether the hold was part of the standard review process.

''Absolutely not,'' Cooper replied to her. ''Nothing about this is normal.''

A few days later, the Trump White House released a reconstructed transcript of the president's July 25 phone conversation with Zelensky. In it, Trump responded to the Ukrainian leader's interest in purchasing Javelin missiles by saying: ''I would like you to do us a favor though because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it. I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say CrowdStrike'' -- a reference to the cybersecurity firm hired by the Democratic National Committee to investigate its 2016 email security breach, which became a facet of Giuliani's hallucinatory claim that it was Ukraine, not Russia, that stole the emails. In the same conversation, Trump requested that Zelensky help Giuliani investigate ''Biden's son,'' referring to Hunter Biden, and ominously said of his recently fired ambassador to Ukraine, Marie Yovanovitch, that ''she's going to go through some things.''

''My first reaction to it,'' Farah Griffin told me in speaking about the phone call for the first time publicly, ''was that it was wildly inappropriate to be bringing up domestic political concerns, and it seemed to border on the conspiratorial. I'd been around for a lot of head-of-state meetings and calls, and they're pretty pro forma. You know the things that you're not supposed to say. It seemed like such a bizarre breach of diplomacy.'' She went on: ''But then, once it became clear that the Office of Management and Budget had actually blocked the money prior to the conversation, I thought: Wow. This is bad.''

Fiona Hill and most of the others who testified in 2019 during Trump's first impeachment hearings were unknown to ordinary Americans -- and, for that matter, to Trump himself, who protested on Twitter that his accusers were essentially nobodies. It was their fidelity to their specialized labors that made them such effective witnesses. ''One benefit to our investigation,'' said Daniel Goldman, who served as the lead majority counsel to the House impeachment inquiry, ''was that these were for the most part career public servants who took extensive contemporaneous notes every day. As a result, we received very detailed testimony that helped us figure out what happened.''

In reality, however, what happened in the Ukraine episode was not evident to much of the public. Trump prevailed in his impeachment trial, seeming to emerge from the ordeal without a political scratch. This, his former national security adviser John Bolton told me, distinguished the inquiry from the investigation into the conduct of President Richard Nixon 45 years earlier, which resulted in Nixon's fellow Republicans deserting him. The Senate's acquittal of Trump in his first impeachment trial ''clearly did embolden him,'' Bolton said. ''This is Trump saying, 'I got away with it.' And thinking, If I got away with it once, I can get away with it again. And he did get away with it again.'' (Bolton did not testify before the House committee; at the time, his lawyer said he was ''not willing to appear voluntarily.'')

Hill, for her part, emerged from the events of 2019 rather dazed by her sudden fame -- but just as much so, she told me, by the implications of what she and other White House colleagues had experienced that culminated in Trump's impeachment. ''In real time, I was putting things together,'' she said. ''The domestic political errands, the way Trump had privatized foreign policy for his own purposes. It was this narrow goal: his desire to stay in power, irrespective of what other people wanted.''

Hill was at her desk at home on the morning of Jan. 6, 2021, writing her memoir, when a journalist friend she first met in Russia called. The friend told her to turn on the television. Once she did so, a burst of horrific clarity overtook her. ''I saw the thread,'' she told me. ''The thread connecting the Zelensky phone call to Jan. 6. And I remembered how, in 2020, Putin had changed Russia's Constitution to allow him to stay in power longer. This was Trump pulling a Putin.''

Alexander Vindman, who was removed from his job as N.S.C. director for European affairs months after testifying against Trump (the president, his son Don Jr. and other supporters accused Vindman, a Soviet émigré and Army officer, of disloyalty, perjury and espionage), told me he experienced a similar epiphany in the wake of Jan. 6. Vindman was exercising at a gym in Virginia that afternoon when his wife, Rachel, called him to say that a mob had attacked the U.S. Capitol. After recovering from his stupefaction, ''my first impulse was to counterprotest,'' Vindman recalled. ''I was thinking, What can I do to defend the Capitol? Then I realized that would be a recipe for disaster. It might give the president cause to invoke martial law.''

In Trump's failed efforts to overturn the election results, Vindman told me, the president revealed himself as ''incompetent, his own worst enemy, faced with too many checks in a 240-plus-year-old democracy to be able to operate with a free hand.'' At the same time, he went on: ''I came to see these seemingly individual events -- the Ukraine scandal, the attempt to steal the 2020 election -- as part of a broader tapestry. And the domestic effects of all this are bad enough. But there's also a geopolitical impact. We missed an opportunity to harden Ukraine against Russian aggression.''

Instead, Vindman said, the opposite occurred: ''Ukraine became radioactive for the duration of the Trump administration. There wasn't serious engagement. Putin had been wanting to reclaim Ukraine for eight years, but he was trying to gauge when was the right time to do it. Starting just months after Jan. 6, Putin began building up forces on the border. He saw the discord here. He saw the huge opportunity presented by Donald Trump and his Republican lackeys. I'm not pulling any punches here. I'm not using diplomatic niceties. These folks sent the signal Putin was waiting for.''

Bolton, a renowned foreign-policy hawk who also served in the administrations of Reagan and George W. Bush, also told me that Trump's behavior had dealt damage to both Ukraine and America. The refusal to lend aid to Ukraine, the subsequent disclosure of the heavy-handed conversation with Zelensky and then the impeachment hearing all served to undermine Ukraine's new president, Bolton told me. ''It made it impossible for Zelensky to establish any kind of relationship with the president of the United States -- who, faced with a Russian Army on his eastern border, any Ukrainian president would have as his highest priority. So basically that means Ukraine loses a year and a half of contact with the president.''

Trump, Bolton went on to say, ''is a complete aberration in the American system. We've had good and bad presidents, competent and incompetent presidents. But none of them was as centered on their own interest, as opposed to the national interest, except Trump. And his concept of what the national interest was really changed from day to day and had a lot more to do with what his political fortunes were.'' This was certainly the case with Trump's view of Ukraine, which, Bolton said, describing fantasies that preoccupied the president, ''he saw entirely through the prism of Hillary Clinton's server and Hunter Biden's income -- what role Ukraine had in Hillary's efforts to steal the 2016 election and what role Ukraine had in Biden's efforts to steal the 2020 election.''

Bolton acknowledged to me that he found Trump's conduct both in the Ukraine scandal and on Jan. 6 to be arguably worthy of impeachment. Still, he offered a rather tangled assessment of the two processes -- finding fault with Democrats in the first inquiry for ''trying to ram it through quickly'' and, in the second impeachment, for not pressing quickly enough and ''trying him before January the 20th.''

But Bolton seems to regard the former president's abuses of power as validation of America's institutional strengths rather than a warning sign. ''I think he did damage to the United States before and because of January the 6th,'' Bolton told me. ''I don't think there's any question about that. But I think all that damage was reparable. I think that constitutions are written with human beings involved, and occasionally you get bad actors. This was a particularly bad actor. So with all the stress and strain on the Constitution, it held up pretty well.''

When I asked whether he believed Trump could be viewed as an authoritarian, Bolton replied, ''He's not smart enough to be an authoritarian.'' But had Donald Trump won in 2020, Bolton told me, in his second term he might well have inflicted ''damage that might not be reparable.'' I asked whether his same concerns would apply if Trump were to gain another term in 2024, and Bolton answered with one word: ''Yes.''

At the moment, Trump's chances of victory are favorable. He remains the putative lead candidate for the G.O.P.'s nomination and would most likely face an 81-year-old incumbent whose approval ratings are underwater. Even in defeat, there is little reason to believe that Trump will concede at all, much less do so gracefully. This January, President Biden said: ''I know the majority of the world leaders -- the good and the bad ones, adversaries and allies alike. They're watching American democracy and seeing whether we can meet this moment.'' Biden went on to say that at the G7 Summit in Cornwall, England, the previous summer, his assurances that America was back were met by his foreign counterparts with the response, ''For how long?''

One former foreign-policy official who played a role in the Trump-Ukraine tensions, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to speak freely about the former president, was unsettled but also unsurprised by Biden's account. ''In the back of their minds,'' this former official said of America's allies, ''if Trump is elected again in 2024, where will we be? I think it would be seen among struggling democracies as a disaster. They would see Trump as someone who went through two impeachment inquiries, orchestrated a conspiracy to undo a failed election and then, somehow, is re-elected. They would see it as Trump truly unbound. But to them, it would also say something about us and our values.''

Hill agreed with that assessment when I described it to her. ''We've been the gold standard of democratic elections,'' she told me. ''All of that will be rolled back if Trump returns to power after claiming that the only way he could ever lose is if someone steals it from him. It'll be more than diplomatic shock. I think it would mean the total loss of America's leadership position in the world arena.''

A couple of months ago, Hill told me, she attended a book event in Louisville, Ky. Onstage with her was another recent author, Representative Jamie Raskin of Maryland, who was the House Democrats' lead manager in Trump's second impeachment trial. Raskin, who happens to be Hill's congressman, had also been among the managers in the first trial.

Their event took place on Jan. 24, exactly one month before Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Though Putin's troops had been massed along the border for several months, speculation of war was not a public preoccupation. For the moment, Hill's expertise was in lesser demand than that of Raskin, who is now a member of the House select committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack. For much of their hourlong colloquy, it was Hill who asked searching questions of Raskin -- who, she told me, ''was deeply disturbed by how close we came to basically not having a transfer of power.''

At one point, Hill acknowledged to Raskin and the live audience that she had been thinking lately of the ''Hamilton'' song ''You'll Be Back,'' crooned maliciously by King George to his American subjects. ''I have been worried over whether we might be back to that kind of period,'' she said. Hill went on to describe the United States as being in a state of de-evolution, with the checks on executive power flagging and the concept of governmental experience regarded with scorn rather than admiration.

What she did not say then was something that Hill has told me more than once since that time. Throughout all our changes, presidents and senior staff in government, she said: ''Putin has been there for 22 years. He's the same guy, with the same people around him. And he's watching everything.''

Robert Draper is a contributing writer for the magazine. He is the author of several books, most recently ''To Start a War: How the Bush Administration Took America Into Iraq,'' which was excerpted in the magazine.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/11/magazine/trump-putin-ukraine-fiona-hill.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/11/magazine/trump-putin-ukraine-fiona-hill.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY TRENT DAVIS BAILEY) (MM36)

Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin arriving for a joint news conference in Helsinki in 2018. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM39)

Hill being sworn in as a witness during impeachment-inquiry hearings in November 2019. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AL DRAGO/BLOOMBERG, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (MM40)

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[***Thousands of Farmworkers Are Prioritized for the Coronavirus Vaccine***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623X-0HC1-JBG3-62B3-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Miriam Jordan

**Highlight:** A landmark initiative in California is taking vaccines to the fields, targeting an immigrant work force that is at high risk for Covid-19. Many of the workers are undocumented.

**Body**

COACHELLA, Calif. — The sun-baked desert valley tucked behind the San Jacinto Mountains is best known for an annual music festival that draws 100,000 fans a day and a series of lush, oasis resort towns where well-heeled snowbirds go to golf, sunbathe and party. But just beyond the turquoise swimming pools of Palm Springs, more than 10,000 farmworkers harvest some of the country’s largest crops of date palms, vegetables and fruits.

Mainly undocumented immigrants, they have borne the brunt of the coronavirus pandemic in California: In some areas, up to 40 percent of the workers tested for the virus had positive results. The Rev. Francisco Gómez at Our Lady of Soledad church in Coachella said his parish had been averaging 10 burials a week. “You’re talking about an apocalyptic situation,” he said.

Ending the virus’s rampage through farm country has been one of the nation’s biggest challenges. Undocumented immigrants are notoriously wary of registering for government programs or flocking to public vaccination sites, and the idea of offering the Covid-19 vaccine to immigrants who are in the country illegally ahead of other Americans has [*spurred debate*](https://republicans-oversight.house.gov/release/scalise-presidents-vaccine-plan-must-put-americans-first-not-illegal-immigrants/) among some Republican members of Congress.

But a landmark effort is underway across the Coachella Valley to bring the vaccine directly into the fields. Thousands of farm workers are being pulled into pop-up vaccination clinics hosted by growers and run by the county Health Department.

Riverside County is the first in the nation to prioritize farm workers for vaccination, regardless of their age and health conditions, on a large scale. But epidemiologists say such programs will need to expand significantly to have any chance of ending one of the biggest threats to the stability of the country’s food supply.

Hundreds of coronavirus outbreaks have crippled the work force on farms and in food processing centers across the country. Researchers from Purdue University estimate that about 500,000 agricultural workers have tested positive for the virus and at least 9,000 have died from it.

In the Coachella Valley, the vaccination program, which began in January, is the culmination of a monthslong effort to educate farmworkers about Covid-19, bringing testing close to their workplaces and encouraging them to stay home if they contract the virus.

On breaks from bunching scallions, harvesting artichokes and pruning grapevines, the workers on a recent morning trickled into an open-air warehouse to receive the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine.

They were spared the frustrating online registration process that most Californians must navigate and the hourslong waits that were typical at mass vaccination sites. Once they agreed to be immunized, an employer or organizer scheduled their appointments. Then, all they had to do was show up.

Rosa Torres, who packs dates, said she never imagined it could be so simple. “God answered my prayers,” said Ms. Torres, 49, an immigrant from Mexico, who was resplendent in matching lime-green shirt, wool cap and mask to mark the occasion.

A single mother, she said she could not afford to get sick and miss work.

“As soon as we got word vaccines were going to be available, we were making plans,” said Janell Percy, executive director of Growing Coachella Valley, a farmer group that is working with the Health Department. Ms. Percy spends frenetic days juggling calls between the county about vaccine availability and growers who inform her of the number of vaccines needed to cover their crews.

On a recent morning, she thought all 350 vaccine slots for the next day had been filled, only to hear from a grower that he had nine extra shots from his allotment.

“I got to find a grower who wants these so they don’t go to waste,” Ms. Percy said as she updated the sheet where she keeps track of distributions with a pencil and an eraser.

The challenges to getting farmworkers vaccinated go well beyond worries about their immigration status. The odds of being able to sign up for a vaccine online are low in a population that often lacks broadband access and faces language barriers. Many cannot easily reach vaccination sites in urban areas because they do not have reliable transportation or the ability to leave work in the middle of the day.

“Farmworkers are living in a reality that is foreign to most of us, and they are invisible to most of us, but they produce billions of dollars in food distributed across the United States,” said Conrado Bárzaga, chief executive of the Desert Healthcare District.

In March 2020, the federal government [*designated farmworkers as essential*](https://republicans-oversight.house.gov/release/scalise-presidents-vaccine-plan-must-put-americans-first-not-illegal-immigrants/) — a status that enabled them to continue working under stay-at-home orders but also put them at heightened risk of getting the virus.

Policymakers have struggled with how to protect them. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has advised giving agricultural workers early access to the vaccine, but states have taken a range of approaches.

Most have not yet started vaccinating agricultural workers, though many have identified them as a priority population. Most have prioritized people age 65 or older, and the average age of farmworkers is 39, with more than half under 44.

In California, several counties hope in March to expand eligibility to the entire agricultural work force. Colorado, Idaho, Michigan and Wisconsin are among states that have said they intend to start vaccinating farmworkers in the coming weeks.

But other states have taken steps that could discourage workers from coming forward.

In Florida, a citrus powerhouse, people must prove residency to get a vaccine, a requirement that tends to deter unauthorized immigrants. Some pharmacies in Georgia, where people older than 65 are currently eligible for vaccines, have turned away immigrants unable to show a Social Security number. In Nebraska, where immigrants are the backbone of the large meatpacking industry, people without legal status will be vaccinated last, officials said.

In Riverside County, farmworker advocates and growers have been fielding calls from across the country about the vaccination effort, which is considered a model for how to administer vaccines to this population.

“It’s not just that they prioritized farmworkers — they developed a comprehensive, innovative strategy to ensure vaccine access and acceptance in farmworker communities,” said Alexis Guild, director of health policy at Farmworker Justice, a national advocacy organization.

Gov. Gavin Newsom, after a visit to a Coachella pop-up site on Feb. 17, announced that California would make 34,000 vaccines available to farmworkers in the Central Valley, the state’s agricultural heartland. “What this county has done no other county in the state had done,” he said. “We need to replicate this program all up and down the state of California.”

But some in Riverside County, which stretches from ***working-class*** Los Angeles exurbs to the Salton Sea, have questioned whether farmworkers should be at the front of the line.

On a recent evening in Beaumont, about a 30-minute drive from the Coachella Valley, people who had snagged appointments for vaccines through the process available to most California residents — mainly over 65 — idled in their cars for hours in the parking lot of a local middle school.

David Huetten, 73, said those confined to wheelchairs in his retirement community had been unable to reach vaccination events like this one. “When you have seniors and teachers who haven’t been vaccinated, I wouldn’t put farmworkers at the top of the list,” he said.

In the nearby town of Banning, Olga Rausch, a 73-year-old retired waitress who had still not been able to sign up for a vaccine, questioned why farmworkers should go before other blue-collar workers who also cannot afford to stay home from work. “There are a lot of people living in crowded conditions,” she said. “Why aren’t busboys, dishwashers and people working at the 99-cent store getting the vaccine?”

Most people, however, felt it made sense to prioritize farmworkers. “They’re handling our food,” said Don Tandy, a 66-year-old Vietnam veteran.

Health officials everywhere are grappling with how to achieve equitable vaccine distribution. President Biden has repeatedly said that delivering the vaccine is core to his coronavirus response, but early data shows that doses have been slower to reach some Black and Latino communities with an elevated risk of infection.

In Riverside County, Hispanics represent nearly half of the population but have so far received only 20 percent of doses. Vaccinating farmworkers is a first step toward addressing the equity problem, said U.S. Representative Raul Ruiz, a physician who grew up in Riverside County.

“We have a moral responsibility to make sure that we do not leave people behind simply because they lack resources or live in certain ZIP codes,” said Mr. Ruiz, a Democrat, who has been visiting rural communities to encourage residents to get vaccinated.

It has not been easy.

Like many Americans, some farmworkers worry the vaccine is not safe, because disinformation has proliferated on social media. Others fear that being vaccinated could expose them to immigration enforcement.

Prime Time International, the nation’s largest grower of bell peppers, invited workers to register for the vaccine last month, and “the first question was, ‘Is immigration going to be there?’” recalled Garrett Cardilino, director of field operations for the company.

To assuage those fears, Riverside County enlisted grass roots organizations to reach out to farmworkers and reassure them.

“There is no chip to track you; there is no negative effect; you don’t lose your fertility,” Montserrat Gomez, an educator with TODEC, a legal-aid nonprofit organization that serves immigrants, told a group of about 30 workers in masks gathered by a spinach field in the town of Winchester.

“The vaccine is now available for you,” she said. “Many people wish they had this opportunity.”

Asked whether they knew anyone who had been stricken by the virus, most of the workers raised their hands. Several knew someone who had died.

Rose Perez, a 36-year-old worker at Full Farms, a vegetable farm in the city of Hemet, said she remained suspicious of the vaccine, even though her sister had become gravely ill with the coronavirus. “I read that nurses died after taking the vaccine,” she said. “No one in my family is taking it.”

Domingo Juan, a Guatemalan, also said he did not trust the vaccine: “This sickness has been around for a long time. Suddenly there’s a cure?”

But after the talk, several workers returned to the fields to harvest bok choy and said they were ready to sign up.

Among them was Luis Valdivia, 48, who recently recovered from the virus but had to go without pay during his illness. “I suffered too much, lost 37 pounds,” said Mr. Valdivia, his voice still hoarse after weeks of intense coughing. “I’ll take the vaccine; that way, I’ll be able to keep working.”

Two rows over, America Aguilera, 46, said she could not remember undocumented immigrants getting preferential treatment for anything in her 21 years in the United States. “With all due respect,” she said, “it’s about time we got the opportunity to be first at something.”

PHOTOS: Above, farmworkers picking vegetables in Hemet, Calif. Far left, employees waiting after receiving a Covid-19 vaccine at a clinic held at Anthony Vineyards in Coachella, Calif. Rosa Torres, left, who packs dates in the Coachella Valley, said she never imagined it could be so simple to get a vaccine.; Luz Gallegos, the executive director of TODEC, speaking to farmworkers about the vaccine in Winchester, Calif. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARIANA DREHSLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Did America Misjudge Bernie Sanders? Or Did He Misjudge America?; Feature***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YF8-BPH1-JBG3-642D-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

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On the afternoon of Saturday, March 7, [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/05/us/politics/bernie-sanders-budget-bill.html) stood in an empty conference room in a hotel in downtown Chicago, looking quietly agitated, like a man trying to figure out how to be in seven places at once. A couple of blocks away in Grant Park, where Barack Obama gave his soaring victory speech in November 2008, thousands of supporters awaited him as the sound system blasted a medley of songs with a familiar lyrical theme: “talkin’ ’bout a revolution” (by Tracy Chapman), “the revolution starts now” (Steve Earle), “burn, baby, burn” (the Trammps) “so let the revolution begin” (Flogging Molly). In a few minutes, one of his warm-up acts, a local teachers’ ­union organizer named Stacy Davis Gates, would be pointedly warning the crowd, “See, moderation is a dream ­killer.” And then, “Moderation is inhumane.”

At the park and in the conference room, the air was charged with a state of urgency that did not yet approach panic but was not so distant from it. After [*Joe Biden’s incredible string of victories on Super Tuesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/super-tuesday-03-03), just four days earlier, a new phase of the Democratic primary campaign — one that greatly disfavored Sanders’s once-unstoppable candidacy — was now underway. Former opponents and media pundits were coalescing around Biden, the newly restored front-runner, all but demanding closure to the horse race — essentially, for Sanders to pack up and go back to Vermont. Sanders had a different view of the situation: In so swiftly closing ranks, his detractors were inadvertently proving the case he had been making all along.

[Update: [*Bernie Sanders drops out of the 2020 presidential race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html).]

“Look,” he told me, “we are taking on the establishment. Wall Street is now opening up their checkbooks for Biden, because we are a threat to them. The pharmaceutical industry strongly supports Biden. Health care stocks went up after Super Tuesday. So, no, I’m not shocked by this.”

I suggested to Sanders that while his candidacy was demanding soul-searching on the part of the Democratic Party, it was his failure to persuade its most reliable constituents — African-American voters — that had led him to this precarious moment. But the candidate remained fixated on his adversaries. “Look, what we’re trying to do is take on the entire political establishment,” he repeated. “We’re taking on the entire corporate establishment, the entire media establishment. The real question,” he continued as he edged toward the doorway, “is: A year ago, would somebody have believed that a grass-roots coalition would be where we are today, a few points behind the establishment candidate? That is the real question. We’re taking on everybody! That’s something that has not been done in American history!”

The campaign was nonetheless scrambling to at least slow if not reverse Biden’s momentum. Sanders had in effect conceded the South to his opponent, canceling a long-planned rally in Mississippi while furiously concentrating his efforts on the Midwest. Several appearances were added in Michigan, which would host its delegate-rich primary in three days. A victory there might change the narrative once more. Instead, as we now know, Sanders’s defeat in Michigan seemed to many to be the moment his campaign ended.

He stepped toward his waiting entourage out in the hallway, then turned back. “Do you understand what I’m saying? It’s like saying, you know, ‘We’re surprised you didn’t defeat the heavyweight champion of the world!’”

Less than three weeks earlier, members of the Democratic establishment had all but resigned themselves to Sanders as the party’s nominee. What could they do? He was playing by their rules, was dominating the early states and had the resources — starting with $18.2 million cash on hand at the beginning of the year, more than double Biden’s amount, and then receiving a whopping $46 million in donations in February alone — to outlast every challenger. This state of affairs seemed astounding even to Sanders himself. “Coming from where I’ve come from in my life,” he told me one afternoon in late February, “from the first time I ran for office and won 2 percent of the vote, and then the next time 1 percent of the vote, then 4 percent, then 6 percent — is the idea that, according to some polls, I’m leading the Democratic primary process for president of the United States, is that a little bit strange? Yes, it is.”

Sanders was sitting in a backstage holding room in Bakersfield, Calif., where he would soon be addressing a noisy crowd of mostly young white and Latino supporters. His voice was somewhat hoarse, and he would need to reserve what lung power he had left for when he would be yelling about “the whole damn 1 percent” a few minutes later, so Sanders asked me to sit in the heavy chair directly beside his. The 78-year-old candidate wore neither jacket nor tie, just a baggy and wrinkled light blue dress shirt with the sleeves rolled up to the elbows like a 1960s union boss.

He seemed relaxed, even good-humored, beneath his eternally dyspeptic veneer as he reflected on the improbable arc that began with his tenure as a small-city mayor 39 years earlier. “What we accomplished in Burlington is very much on my mind as I think about the presidency,” he said. He ticked off some of those accomplishments: Most of them reflected liberal priorities, like fighting greedy landlords and “recognizing the gay community in a way that was never done before,” but a few were nonideological triumphs, like bringing a minor-league baseball team to Burlington and rebuilding the city’s wastewater plant. A few days earlier, his wife and confidante, Jane Sanders, told me that they had been discussing potential members of a Sanders cabinet. The media was “crazy, totally wrong” in its speculation about what his administration would look like, she insisted, adding that his choices “will not be coming from the corporate world for the F.D.A. and E.P.A.” She declined to offer further details, explaining, “The way politics is now, if you float a name, that person will be destroyed.”

As the candidate and I talked, the chants outside — “Ber-NIE! Ber-NIE!” — threatened to drown out our conversation. Sanders ended it with a handshake and 10 minutes later took the stage, eventually tugging a generic blue baseball cap over his bald scalp to ward off the California sun.

Pacing and forcefully gesticulating, he delivered an only slightly updated version of the 30-­minute speech he has been delivering since 2015, when the political world suffered its first rude awakening to the septuagenarian socialist and his youth-driven insurgent campaign. A great deal had changed since then, but Sanders’s blunt-instrument oratory had not. “The Republican establishment is getting nervous!” he bellowed. “The Democratic establishment is getting nervous! And they’re going a little bit nuts! ‘How can we stop Bernie? How can we stop the movement of millions of people who are standing up for justice?’ So I’ve got news for the Republican establishment, I’ve got news for the Democratic establishment: THEY CAN’T STOP US!”

To the ears of many in the party establishment, such ranting stood as proof that Sanders — belligerently iconoclastic, stoking populist fury over a rigged system and vowing to carry on regardless of what damage it did to other Democratic office­ seekers — was a left-wing version of Donald Trump: No matter how many voters Sanders brought along with him, his revolution had the edgy makings of what some were calling a hostile takeover.

The next day, Sanders scored a decisive victory in the Nevada caucuses, in large measure because of Latino voters. Having long demonstrated his appeal among the under-40 electorate, Sanders now seemed to have a viable Democratic coalition in his grasp — something that none of his opponents had, to that point, been able to demonstrate. The unthinkable was starting to seem inevitable as the Democratic establishment somberly contemplated the implications of an avowed socialist at the top of the 2020 ticket. Would Sanders cost them the chance to pick up Senate seats in Arizona and Colorado? Would it cost them their House majority?

Fueling their anxieties was an apparently bottomless trove of provocative videos. Sanders in Moscow during the Cold War, praising the Soviet Union’s mass-transit system. Sanders proposing a cap on individual wealth. Sanders expressing admiration for the literacy program introduced by Fidel Castro. When we talked in February, he pointed out to me that most if not all of these statements dated to before he was elected to Congress, back when he was “a reasonably young man.” (In the case of Castro’s literacy program, however, Sanders doubled down on the compliment last month, telling “60 Minutes”: “He had a massive literacy program. Is that a bad thing? Even though Fidel Castro did it?”) I asked if it was fair to say that he had undergone a philosophical evolution since then. “Of course I have,” he said. “Look, what human being doesn’t undergo changes?” He added, “If you’re not a moron, you learn.”

Sanders spoke as if this were a given. At the same time, the man so often described by his campaign ads and senior staff members as “authentic” and “consistent” seemed content to live and die by his reputation for being as immutable as gravity. Nearly all his current and former aides have perfected an impersonation of his thudding Brooklynese. He is understood to be a loner, a constant if not deep thinker with a resting glower and restless hair and an incapacity for niceties. He is an avid non­presence on the Washington social circuit, has little time for the Beltway media (with its frequent comparisons of Sanders and Trump) and has even less time for the Vermont media (which has offended him by raising questions about his family’s activities, including Jane Sanders’s troubled tenure as president of Burlington College, when her decision to buy waterfront land for the campus sent the institution into financial insolvency).

Sanders the socialist does indeed have three houses: a Washington apartment that one former aide called “ratty”; a Burlington home so modest that in 2015 his presidential campaign advisers wanted to hold an open house so reporters could see for themselves what a skinflint Sanders was; and, yes, a lake house in North Hero, Vt., that Sanders bought with royalties from his memoir but seldom visits because he is not fond of vacationing. Nor is he a fan of sharing personal details. After considerable urging from his staff, Sanders now tells audiences that he is the son of a Polish émigré who arrived in Brooklyn penniless and unable to speak English. But while a Barack Obama or a Marco Rubio might draw from such material an uplifting only-in-America parable, the narrative Sanders quickly shifts to is how America has abjectly failed those of his ***working-class*** pedigree.

Never mind his biography, he seems to be saying. “You want to know how Bernie Sanders will govern?” Sanders asked me in Bakersfield. “He was elected mayor in 1981. Check out his record. He was elected to Congress in 1990. Check out his record. Elected to the U.S. Senate in 2006. Check out his record. Now people want to go back and look at something I said or did in the 1970s — fine, it’s there. If you really want to know what I’d do as president, you might want to check on what I did as an elected official.”

It’s indeed a curious fact that those who despise Sanders and those who worship him all tend to base their appraisals almost entirely on his words, past and present, rather than on his deeds — to see him as a bomb-throwing outsider even though he has held elected office for 39 years, about half his life. Then again, Sanders himself says little about his moments of governance, apart from his vote against the Iraq war in 2002.

The early chapters of Sanders’s political evolution are a familiar-enough story by now: the odyssey of the Brooklyn-bred lefty writer and documentary filmmaker who moved to the Vermont-Canada border during the Vietnam draft, ran for U.S. senator and Vermont governor in the 1970s on the socialist Liberty Union party ticket and made national headlines in 1981 as the socialist who beat the incumbent mayor of Burlington by 10 votes. Jane Sanders told me: “Somebody asked him, ‘What do you consider yourself?’ And he said, you know, ‘Democratic socialist.’ And of course then they make a big deal out of it. The New York Times, when he was elected mayor of Burlington, pushed it: ‘Socialist Elected Mayor in Burlington, Vt.’” (The actual headline was “Vermont Socialist Plans Mayoralty With Bias Toward Poor.”) She continued: “They did a bigger story on that than when he announced for president, which they put on A19.” Sanders characterizes his mayoral triumph as a victory for movement politics, noting to me the support he received from “people in the low-income housing projects, women, police unions and neighborhood organizations — a ***working-class*** coalition that was very dissatisfied with the status quo.”

But what’s more notable about Sanders’s eight-year tenure as mayor was how ably he governed from the center-left. Though the establishment-minded local paper, The Burlington Free Press, had initially opposed his candidacy, “by the third term, we were endorsing him,” recalled Jim Welch, who was the paper’s executive editor at the time. “And it was justified. It’s true that he talked a lot about Reagan’s policies toward Central America and nuclear arms. But mainly he was focused on things like keeping the streets plowed and supporting the arts scene. He worked closely with the business community to revitalize the waterfront and preserve the downtown pedestrian mall. I think by the end of it, the business leaders found themselves saying, ‘Boy, I think we made that work.”

In 1990, three years after U.S. News &amp; World Report named Sanders one of America’s best mayors, he defeated the Republican incumbent for Vermont’s at-large congressional seat. He found no hero’s welcome in Washington, however. Referring to the centrist Democratic coalition, Jane Sanders recalled, “The Blue Dogs didn’t want Bernie in the caucus: ‘He’s an independent; let him go be an independent.”

[*[As mayor, Bernie Sanders was more pragmatist than socialist.]*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/26/us/politics/as-mayor-bernie-sanders-was-more-pragmatic-than-socialist.html)

Feeling snubbed, Sanders reverted to fringe leftist, a loner who vocally criticized Democrats and Republicans in more or less equal measure and was safely ignorable by both. “We didn’t have much contact with him, either on bills or on votes,” former Representative John Tanner, a Tennessee Democrat who led the Blue Dog caucus during Sanders’s House tenure, told me. A senior House Democrat (who spoke on the condition of anonymity so as not to be seen as stoking intraparty tensions) unfavorably compared Sanders’s 16-year legacy with that of one of his most vigorous supporters today, Representative Pramila Jayapal of Washington State: “She’s equally liberal, and she’s made a very big impression in her first three years in Congress. That was not Bernie.”

In 2005, Jim Jeffords, the Republican-turned-independent senator from Vermont, announced his retirement. Within days, Sanders declared his intention to run for the seat. Recognizing that Sanders was probably popular enough to beat any Democratic candidate, the party’s Senate leaders, Harry Reid and Chuck Schumer (who attended the same Brooklyn high school as Sanders), opted instead to pre-emptively welcome him to their caucus with open arms. “It was night and day,” Jane Sanders recalled. “Harry asked Bernie, ‘What do you want?’ And he got five committee assignments.”

In return, Reid got the Burlington-mayor version of Bernie Sanders. As a senator, he worked to move whatever legislation was in front of him to the left: expanding Social Security benefits, restricting loopholes for pharmaceutical companies, demanding that the bank-reform bill include an audit of the Federal Reserve. But he also voted reliably with the Democratic caucus. He worked successfully with some Republicans, including John McCain, on a 2014 bill to improve medical access for military veterans. In 2018, he worked with Mike Lee, a Utah Republican, on a war-powers resolution seeking to end America’s role in Saudi Arabia’s war in Yemen (which Trump subsequently vetoed).

Sanders was no more immune to pork-barrel politics than any other senator, setting aside his dovish proclivities to support basing ­F-35 jets at the Vermont Air National Guard base in Burlington. And he could be diplomatic in his pursuit of his big-picture ambitions. When Reid asked for his support for the Affordable Care Act in late 2009, Sanders agreed in exchange for two concessions: a $10 billion addition in the bill for community health centers and a floor vote on Sanders’s preferred health care measure, a single-payer system. Reid agreed to both. When Republicans tried a parliamentary measure on the single-payer-amendment vote that would delay and perhaps scuttle the A.C.A. altogether, Sanders, rather than standing on principle, withdrew the amendment.

Sanders even attended a few Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee events with wealthy donors as a favor to Schumer — a fact that Hillary Clinton’s 2016 campaign would use against him, leaking a photo of Sanders sunbathing at a committee retreat. Tad Devine, Sanders’s strategist in 2016, who had worked for Al Gore and John Kerry’s presidential campaigns, recalls Sanders’s telling him during the campaign, “Tad, you’re my link to the Democratic establishment.” Somewhat taken aback, Devine replied: “Bernie, you’re a U.S. senator. What’s more establishment than that?”

By allying himself with the Democratic Party in the Senate instead of heckling from the fringe, Sanders did sporadically succeed at pushing the party to the left. And his decision to mount a Democratic primary campaign in the 2016 presidential election, instead of a third-party one, had profound consequences for him and for the party. In March 2015, according to Gallup, 76 percent of Americans had either not heard of or had no opinion of Sanders. By the end of 2016, he was one of the most famous politicians in the country, with a higher favorability rating than either Hillary Clinton or Trump. As he won enough early primaries to forestall Clinton’s easy victory, she was forced to move left on Social Security and trade agreements; practically overnight, Sanders’s pet issues like Medicare for All and universal higher education went from fringe positions to the center of Democratic policy debates.

Even before Sanders quit the race early in the summer of 2016, the river of bad blood between his insurgent campaign and the Democratic establishment seemed impossible to bridge. When Devine advised his client to voice his support for Hillary Clinton, Devine recalls Sanders’s replying: “Listen, Tad, you don’t know what it’s like to go in front of 20,000 people. As soon as I mention her name, they’ll scream. I’m going to bring them along; it’s going to have to be a process. Let’s start with the Democratic platform.”

An ugly platform fight then ensued, beginning with squabbles over which members of Sanders’s camp would be allowed on the platform committee and extending into fights over language about fracking, health care and Israel. And though Sanders made more than 30 campaign stops for Clinton during the final weeks of the campaign, an internal analysis of Cooperative Congressional Election Study data conducted by the Sanders pollster Ben Tulchin found that a distinct cohort of Sanders’s electorate had migrated into Trump’s column.

Still, Sanders and the Democratic establishment were not quite finished with each other. Schumer created a Senate leadership post for Sanders, putting him in charge of “outreach” — that is to say, developing grass-roots support for the party on key issues. The party had come to recognize, however grudgingly, that Sanders had proved himself as more than just an agitator. He had galvanized young voters in a way no candidate from either party had done since Obama, building a millions-strong grass-roots army and small-donor database at a time when the party — cast entirely out of power in Washington, fighting the dismantling of Obama’s policy legacy and looking ahead to the 2018 midterm elections — needed all the help it could get.

As Sanders began staffing up for his 2020 presidential campaign, he recruited three alumni of Reid’s staff: Josh Orton became his national policy director, Faiz Shakir joined as his campaign manager and Ari Rabin-Havt was named Shakir’s deputy. In an unusual move, Sanders also hired Hillary Clinton’s former opposition researcher, Tyson Brody, who had spent several months in the previous cycle digging up dirt on the man who would now be his boss. The 2020 campaign would outraise the competition by a two-to-one margin in the first three contests and deploy superior technological tools — among them peer-to-peer texting, the Bern app (which proved to be a key organizing resource for the Sanders operation in Iowa) and the live-streaming of every single campaign event. It also advertised heavily in Latino communities on Sanders’s economic message, steadily gaining support from that group in early states like Nevada and California while Biden’s Latino numbers remained static, as entrance and exit polls in those states would later reveal.

In the meantime, Sanders decided early in the race — against the advice of several of his top aides — to go easy on the front-runner Biden, an establishment figure who had always treated him with kindness and respect. It’s difficult to imagine what else the party would have wanted out of a top-tier campaign — except to have someone besides Sanders at the head of it.

The high point of the Sanders campaign occurred on Feb. 22, the date of the Nevada caucuses. No team was better prepared for that event. Sanders had a paid staff of more than 200 in Nevada, an astonishing commitment that reflected a strategic determination to dominate the early states. From the moment I entered the East Las Vegas Community Center, a caucus site serving a densely Latino part of the city, it was apparent who was going to win that day. Sanders regalia dominated the panorama, his volunteers outnumbering those for all the other candidates combined — Biden, Elizabeth Warren, Pete Buttigieg, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Steyer — by perhaps three to one. The volunteers were well prepared and, in almost all cases, unfailingly courteous to the others in attendance.

But then I happened to notice a lanky, bearded young man in a burgundy cap that read “Bernie.” He was tailing Julián Castro, the former housing secretary and presidential candidate now stumping for Warren at this site — walking inches behind Castro and asking mocking questions about his tenure in the Obama administration that the secretary studiously ignored. Then off to my left, I heard a male voice shout: “That’s an absolute lie! You’re a liar! Show me your studies!” It was a stocky young white man in a blue T-shirt that identified him as a “captain” among Sanders’s Nevada volunteers. He was yelling at a black man who had been telling another caucus­goer that Sanders’s Medicare for All plan would double his taxes.

A middle-aged white woman who was a more senior volunteer than the captain rushed over. Apologizing to the black man, she said: “We all come from the same place. We all want a future for our children.” Pulling the captain aside, I could hear her quietly admonish him as his face reddened: “When you start yelling at someone instead of trying to persuade them, do you know what happens? They call you a Bernie Bro.”

Over and over, Sanders insisted that his coalition amounted to a “unity campaign.” An early sign that Democratic voters did not necessarily see it that way, however, was visible in the Iowa caucuses. The caucus rules allow voters whose preferred candidates fall short on the first ballot to switch their support to another candidate on the second. But while Sanders performed strongly on the first ballot, he attracted notably few additional caucus­goers on the second and came up just short of Buttigieg, who won, in the final delegate tally.

When it came to broadening its coalition, the Sanders campaign offered few gestures of conciliation: no intimations that he would govern as he did in Burlington and in the Senate; no across-the-board denunciations of Bernie Bro harassment; no evocation of an America under a Sanders presidency in which it was possible to see anything other than round-the-clock class warfare.

“What separates Bernie’s team,” said Brian Fallon, the press secretary for the 2016 Clinton campaign and a veteran of Democratic politics, “is that they’re movement people. A lot of people in the operative class who do this for a living are highly skilled but also a little bit functionary: They move from one cycle to the next, very malleable with platforms and agendas.” He went on: “The people Bernie attracts, and I mean this as a compliment, are people who wouldn’t sign up for just anything. If they weren’t with him, they’d be grinding away at an advocacy organization or laboring with a House primary challenger. They’re driven by the cause.” Indeed, many of the campaign’s most important state directors — among them Misty Rebik in Iowa and Rafael Navar in California — were veteran progressive activists, not barnacled campaign itinerants. They were believers recruiting other believers from a universe that in many cases had become alienated from the Democratic Party.

At times, Sanders’s top staff members appeared to wear alienation as a badge of honor. Jeff Weaver, the campaign’s chief strategist, who began his association with Sanders as his campaign driver in 1986, informed reporters in the spin room after the Feb. 26 debate that the very idea of Sanders as the Democratic nominee accepting the billion dollars that Mike Bloomberg has pledged to defeat Trump was “a hard no.” When I asked Rabin-Havt, the deputy campaign manager, whether Bernie’s Democratic detractors simply feared that a socialist was unelectable, he replied: “I think they have laughed at us and ignored us for two years now. And I would link the establishment forces, in a broad sense, to the media, the people who attend cocktail parties and give $2,800 to candidates while eating canapés, the people who were at the Alfalfa Club after-party at Jeff Bezos’s house. I was talking to someone from that set the other day. They said: ‘Just who are your donors? I don’t think I’ve ever met a Bernie donor.’ Exactly! Our world is your server at Starbucks, the guy who packs and sends your books from Amazon. That is our world.”

That sense of embattlement has bred solidarity within the Sanders ranks, but also a view that every conceivable force is arrayed against them. Sanders aides privately expressed to me their belief that the party deliberately chose not to schedule a debate between Super Tuesday and the Michigan primary so as to disadvantage Sanders; that leading data analysts like Nate Silver, Nate Cohn and David Wasserman were willfully “anti-Bernie”; that news organizations, including this one, had a conscious bias against Sanders. The candidate himself wondered aloud to reporters whether The Washington Post, which is owned by the mega­billionaire Jeff Bezos, had possibly conspired with intelligence officials to leak a classified briefing in which Sanders was told that President Vladimir Putin of Russia was trying to aid his candidacy.

Above all, they resent the charge that Sanders is an “all or nothing” absolutist. One top Sanders aide reminded me that it was, after all, Sanders, the supposed Medicare for All zealot, who in the weeks before Trump’s inauguration headed rallies in an effort to save Obama’s imperiled Affordable Care Act. “The fundamental point of the attack,” the aide then said, “is to show that Bernie really doesn’t care about the people he’s fighting for and cares more about the purity of his ideology. That’s [expletive] and has been disproven by what he’s done.”

So why wouldn’t Sanders make these points? Why wouldn’t the aide say them on the record? “We didn’t come into politics yesterday,” he replied dryly. “So, no, especially in a primary campaign, you’re not going to see us compromise with ourselves on the trademark issues.”

The case for Sanders as the superior Democratic nominee was simple and not without logic. As the party’s pre-eminent progressive, he could assemble a solid liberal coalition: young voters, as he had already demonstrated in 2016; Latinos, who had not been particularly animated by Clinton’s immigration-centric appeals; and, as the fruit of relentless lobbying since his disappointing performance the previous cycle, a sizable following of African-Americans. Sanders also maintained that he alone could appeal to the blue-collar workers who, going back to his days governing Burlington, had been his original base.

“I was born into the white ***working class***, all right?” Sanders told me. “And one of the very sad things that has happened, and this has been statistically demonstrated, is, unbelievably, that the Democratic Party has become the party of the more affluent people, while the Republican Party has become the party of the white ***working class***.”

But Sanders wasn’t simply a by­stander to those shifting allegiances. During his time as mayor, demonstrators threatened to shut down Burlington’s G.E. plant, which manufactured Gatling-style guns being shipped by the U.S. to fight leftists in Central America. But the plant also employed hundreds of union workers. Sanders sided with the workers. Today, Sanders was calling for a ban on fracking as a crucial plank in his Green New Deal. Tens of thousands of jobs would be lost — many of which happened to be in the western part of Pennsylvania, a swing state that was vital for a Democratic victory in November.

“Anytime you’re honest and have to make difficult decisions, you’re going to lose some support,” he said. “I understand that. But on the issue of climate change, it’s totally irresponsible for any candidate to deny the reality of what we’re facing.” Sanders added that he had seven grandchildren and that workers in the fossil-fuel industry had kids, too. Besides, he maintained, the union workers knew full well that they “are not my enemy” — and that by providing them with five years of paid retraining, as well as free education and health care, “we’ll protect them.”

But the conundrum Sanders now found himself in with blue-collar voters was of his own making. In 2016, he attracted many of them with a relentless message of economic reform. For this cycle, the candidate chose to run on an all-encompassing “movement” platform with key components — gun control, liberalization of immigration policy and that ban on fracking — that risked raising questions among the white ***working class*** as to whether Sanders would, in fact, “protect them.”

This proved to be the first crack to appear in what Sanders saw as his wall. In Iowa, the rural counties went for Buttigieg. The low overall turnout in that overwhelmingly white state was, as Shakir put it, “worrisome for the entire field” — but especially so for Sanders, who had vowed that young people would turn out in “unprecedented” numbers. A week later in New Hampshire, the voting tallies were more reassuring, but Sanders could not credibly boast that he was chiefly responsible for them, because he won by a little more than one percentage point. Even in Nevada, where Sanders took 53 percent of the Latino vote, there was reason to question whether history really was being made by his campaign: Overall Democratic turnout reached 100,000 with the help of a new early-voting provision that did not exist in the Obama-Clinton face-off of 2008, when turnout nonetheless hit 116,000.

Sanders allowed that he had failed to connect with voters of color in 2016. “My state has a very small African-American community,” he told me in Bakersfield. “We have a very small Latino population in Vermont. So, you learn.” In fact, the Sanders campaign learned very little about how to win over black voters in South Carolina. His team would insist that they had never expected to win there — too conservative, too small a youth population — but early on, they believed they could cut into Biden’s margin. Doing so, however, would have required a yearlong effort to recast Biden as an antibusing and pro-incarceration senator who had previously advocated cuts in Social Security — and to target this message to African-Americans who might not be aware of the vice president’s record. But Sanders, ever skeptical of pollsters and reluctant to go on the attack, would not approve a research budget for such an effort.

One of Sanders’s black surrogates in South Carolina, Ivory Thigpen, a pastor and state representative, told me 10 days after the primary that Biden had vulnerabilities. “I remember having conversations with many of my congregants who would say, ‘I don’t know, the vice president seems kind of shaky,” Thigpen said. But, he added, the Sanders campaign did not exploit those concerns with ads focusing on Biden’s record on, for example, Social Security. “I don’t think that was ever a topic of discussion,” he said. “I do think it could’ve moved the needle some.”

Instead, African-American voters were left to focus on Sanders’s sweeping agenda. “One of the things you have to take into consideration with the older generation is that they don’t want things to change,” Thigpen said. “I remember one individual who literally said to me: ‘My Medicare isn’t for all. I worked for it; it’s mine. And now you want to give it away to someone else who hadn’t earned it.”

Biden took 61 percent of South Carolina’s black vote, won in a landslide and seized the momentum from Sanders. Over the next two days, Buttigieg and Klobuchar — nearly out of cash, with no support of their own from voters of color and now seeing Biden as a viable moderate for the first time — quit the race and threw their support to him on the eve of Super Tuesday. Their withdrawal from the campaign exposed Sanders’s underlying weakness: His electoral floor and his ceiling were essentially one and the same. As a result, he could prosper only in a field that was overcrowded with moderate candidates. “Had they not dropped out,” Ben Tulchin, his pollster, told me, “we would’ve continued to win with a 30 percent share of the vote. We would’ve won Minnesota, Maine, Massachusetts and probably Texas. That’s seven primaries we would’ve taken. The story would have been totally different.”

Instead, the story of Super Tuesday was that the party was rallying around Biden as the likeliest Democrat to defeat Trump. Many of his victories on March 3 occurred with far less ad spending and field organizing than Sanders had devoted. For Sanders, the problem wasn’t a mismatch in resources owing to the dark-hearted connivances of the 1 percent. The problem was the 99 percent. A majority of them had turned away from their leftmost option, just as they did in the 2018 midterms, when a wave of Democratic voters rejected progressives running in battleground districts. Replacing Trump, it seemed, was all the revolution most Democrats wanted.

Just after Klobuchar and Buttigieg suspended their presidential campaigns and, along with the former candidate Beto O’Rourke, announced their support of Biden in early March, Shakir valiantly spun the news to me as a sign of Sanders’s strength. “Quite frankly, I see fear and panic in the establishment,” the campaign manager said. “They wouldn’t be doing this if they didn’t think Bernie Sanders was on a path to winning the nomination and in fact the presidency. And I think those who are accustomed to having and enjoying power might see this as a threat to them.”

Shakir did not seem to think these developments represented honest concerns about having a democratic socialist at the top of the ticket. Like his boss, the campaign manager believed that this was solely about the establishment’s determination to install a protector of the status quo. He insisted to me that Team Bernie was in fact delighted to see it come down to their boss versus Biden — “a perfect foil,” he maintained. “Because they lived through the same moments together, saw the same information, saw the Iraq war, the bankruptcy bill, the balanced-budget bill that tried to cut Social Security, the same trade deals. And one person voted the right side of history and the other the wrong side. And when you vote, judgment is the most important factor.”

But now the Sanders campaign was confronting the judgment of voters: Biden had a center-left coalition (including the allegiance of the party’s crucial black constituency) that seemed capable of prevailing in a general election, while the Sanders movement relied on young voters who weren’t coming out all that abundantly in February and March and therefore couldn’t be counted on to produce a record turnout in November. Precisely because he had come so far — from “Who the hell is Bernie?” to “How the hell do we stop Bernie?”— the gale force of the post-Super Tuesday “Stop Bernie” movement felt, to Bernie and Jane Sanders, far more brutal than it did during the previous cycle. This was not really about wanting to unseat Trump, in the Sanderses’ view. This was about shutting down Sanders’s anti-establishment critique. Little seemed to have changed since the spring of 2015, when Hillary Clinton’s upstart challenger was told by his aides that he might not be able to get on the ballot for the New Hampshire primary because of an obscure provision stating that only registered party members could do so. His muttered reply to a campaign aide then could apply now: “[Expletive] Democrats.”

“The only reason Bernie’s in this race,” Jane Sanders told me in early February, “is because we think he’s the best chance to defeat Trump.” Sanders himself acknowledged this foremost priority the day after his electoral firewall collapsed in Michigan — and then added, with a degree of candor that was remarkable even for him, that millions of Democratic voters across the nation happened to disagree that he represented the best chance of doing so.

Sanders concluded his brief remarks to the press that Wednesday afternoon by enumerating questions he intended to ask “my friend Joe Biden” at their first and only one-on-one debate four days later. It was a signal that Sanders intended for his legacy to be not a kamikaze mission but instead something more fruitful for the party that was never his. In 2016, Sanders proved he could energize a new generation of voters. During this cycle, he found a way to organize and communicate effectively with Latinos — evidenced not only in Nevada and California but also along the border in Texas, where his delegate share came to just nine shy of Biden’s. That accomplishment is no cheap trick. Should Biden, the probable nominee, combine his gains in the Dallas and Houston suburbs with his former rival’s organizational superiority near the Mexican border, Texas could flip to the Democrats for the first time since 1976.

In defeat, Sanders has prompted a reckoning within the Democratic Party. He has forced upon it an airing of ideological differences, compelling progressives and moderates to choose their leader and then make the case in public. Since the rise of the Tea Party, self-described “principled conservatives” like Senators Ted Cruz and Tom Cotton have claimed that they, too, yearn for such a debate with the Republican Party’s center-right establishment, only to opt for Trumpism instead. Even as the two-man race has taken a more pugilistic turn while the economy reels and a pandemic sweeps the globe, Sanders has remained steadfast in his willingness to let the Democratic voters judge him by his democratic-socialist vision of what America should be. And so, it would seem, they have.

“It’s never been about only winning the election,” Jane Sanders told me in February, back when victory was a distinct possibility. “I mean, if you won just because you were the one with the superior campaign strategies, that would not be terribly satisfying in the end. It’s much more satisfying to pick up the paper, go online or watch TV and see town halls of people questioning their senators about Medicare for All from a more informed point of view, using facts rather than vitriol. That’s been so moving to see, really. So gratifying.”

The notion that political change and electoral victory were often two different things — that the former could and did occur without the latter — has been an essential tenet of Sanders’s underdog career. On the day after [*Elizabeth Warren announced that she was suspending her campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/us/politics/elizabeth-warren-drops-out.html), the Vermont senator held a news conference. He wore his navy blazer and a matching tie, an implicit show of respect for the vanquished; and though he took handwritten notes to the lectern, he barely glanced at them, instead gazing reflectively at no one in particular. He observed that many politicians “fade away” as their losing campaigns do. This would not be Warren’s fate, he said. Then he explained why: “She has changed political consciousness in America — which, at the end of the day, is the most important thing that any candidate could do.”

Robert Draper is a writer at large for the magazine. He last wrote about how Medicare for All went mainstream.

PHOTOS: The stage after his March 7 rally in Grant Park in Chicago. (MM29); A Bernie Sanders rally in San Antonio on Feb. 22. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELI DURST FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM31)

**Load-Date:** September 5, 2021

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[***Around Philadelphia, Parents Rebel Against Remote Schooling***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623X-0361-DXY4-X28V-00000-00&context=1519360)

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March 1, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Length:** 1948 words

**Byline:** By Dana Goldstein

**Body**

Frustrated with remote learning, parents in the Philadelphia area are running for office, suing, relocating and retreating to private school.

Aquené Tyler, a mother and hair stylist in North Philadelphia, has been disappointed in her neighborhood's public schools for many years. There were too few books and computers. Even before the pandemic, some schools were shuttered for asbestos removal.

Now, her 9-year-old son and 13-year-old daughter have been learning online for nearly a year, even as masked children gather boisterously at local private schools. Ms. Tyler's children are lonely, and Mya, who is in eighth grade, seems depressed and overwhelmed by her class work. She has begun seeing a counselor remotely.

So Ms. Tyler is planning a radical change: moving her family to Florida, where the Republican-controlled state government has mandated that all districts provide in-person learning five days per week. A niece there is attending traditional public school in Sarasota, complete with sports, arts and music.

''Everywhere else, kids are given better opportunities and chances, other than Philadelphia,'' she said. ''It's a slap in the face consistently.''

A year into the pandemic, less than half of students nationwide are attending public schools that offer traditional, full-time schedules. Now many parents are beginning to rebel, frustrated with the pace of reopening and determined to take matters into their own hands.

Some are making contingency plans to relocate, home-school or retreat to private education if their children's routines continue to be disrupted this fall -- a real possibility as some local school officials and teachers' unions argue for aggressive virus mitigation measures to continue, potentially even after educators are vaccinated.

Other parents are filing lawsuits, agitating at public meetings, creating political action committees, or running for school board seats. Most recognize the potency of the coronavirus but believe schools can open safely, though they have a range of views on the best way to do so.

The Philadelphia region has become a focal point of such activism. Like many left-leaning metropolitan areas across the country, its elected officials, teachers' unions and health agencies have urged strict caution, putting most districts on hybrid schedules, while some remain fully remote. In Philadelphia, where classrooms have been empty for a year, a reopening deal between the teachers' union and district appears imminent, but is expected to bring back only a portion of the youngest students.

Parents who want a full reopening may not be a majority in Philadelphia or nationally. But their voices are growing louder.

''Prior to this pandemic, we didn't ask questions'' of local school officials, said Keven Gessner, a father of four and pharmaceutical executive who plans to run for school board in the Council Rock district in Bucks County, Pa. Elementary school buildings there are open four days per week -- one day too few, in Mr. Gessner's view.

''Kids are sitting in front of screens,'' he said. ''And that's not healthy for children.''

Mr. Gessner, who is Korean American and whose children attend a district that is overwhelmingly middle-class and affluent, is in some ways typical of the activism behind reopening campaigns in places like Los Angeles or Chicago, which have often been led by college-educated parents, disproportionately white.

Surveys suggest that ***working-class*** parents of color whose communities have been harder hit by the coronavirus are less eager for in-person learning. But the rising frustration of parents like Ms. Tyler, who is Black and whose children attend predominantly Black schools, underscores that parent anger about closed schools is anything but monolithic.

Children in North Philadelphia ''need a safe haven more than anybody else,'' Ms. Tyler said. ''They are not being thought about.''

Some parents have already withdrawn their children from public education, unwilling to wait and see. Preliminary data in Pennsylvania analyzed by WHYY shows that as of October, public school enrollment had fallen 6.9 percent in the state's most populous counties, a shortfall of over 50,000 children.

If these families do not return to public education, it could have a significant impact on school budgets, which are tied to the number of children who enroll. Even modest dips in funding can force districts to cut tutoring, extracurricular activities or foreign languages.

Parents who are angry about shuttered schools could also rejigger the politics of public education. Democratic-leaning parents may join their conservative counterparts in becoming distrustful of the teachers' unions that are slowing reopening timelines, and turn to options the unions oppose, like private school vouchers or non-unionized charter schools.

Ms. Tyler, for example, said she would welcome the opportunity for a taxpayer-funded scholarship to enroll her children in private school.

Even so, for some parents in the Philadelphia region, the prospect of abandoning public school is deeply emotional, prompting a reckoning with their own values.

''We believe in the value of public education,'' said Chad Williams, a father of four in the Philadelphia suburbs. ''Or we did.''

Frustrated when the Unionville-Chadds Ford district's long closure gave way to only part-time schedules for most middle and high school students, he and his wife, both lawyers, enrolled their 11th-grader in private school, and are home-schooling their 12- and 14-year-olds. He is a supporter of Open PA Schools, a group that filed a lawsuit against the state and several districts, arguing that extended virtual learning violates Pennsylvania law. The case is pending.

Mr. Williams also plans to testify to the State Senate this week, where he will argue in favor of a full reopening and against ''indefinite'' mask mandates in schools. A draft of his testimony questions the quality of studies on the efficacy of masking and states, ''There is no evidence that children or adolescents are 'spreaders' of this virus.''

While children appear to spread the virus less efficiently than adults, research suggests that they do, in fact, have the ability to transmit it, and that breaches in mask use have likely contributed to in-school spread.

National Republican groups hope disaffected parents will be the potential soccer mom swing voters of the 2022 midterms. They are putting up billboards in Pennsylvania and other swing states blaming Democrats and their union allies for extended school closures. Donald Trump Jr. recently posted a video on the subject.

Polling shows that while voters view education as important, they tend to rank it below issues such as health care, the economy and race relations.

Instead, shuttered schools may breed cynicism toward public institutions across the political spectrum.

''The more we see, the more faith we lose in our system,'' said Clarice Schillinger, another suburban parent.

She pointed out that for many districts, the policy of maintaining six feet of distance between desks has forestalled the ability to serve all students five days per week.

Rich Askey, president of the Pennsylvania State Education Association, the state's largest teachers' union, said, ''The science has not been clear enough about the spread and vaccines, so it's still the responsible move to make sure that after vaccination is accomplished -- and that will take quite some time -- that you still wear a mask and still social distance.''

The unions are a major player in Pennsylvania politics, and although they are most closely tied to Democrats, give to Republican legislators as well.

Parent activists like Ms. Schillinger are beginning to directly take on the unions and critique the six-feet standard, which federal guidelines suggest is ideal but not required. Ms. Schillinger launched a political action committee, the Keeping Kids in School PAC, to support school board candidates, including Mr. Gessner, who want the option for five days per week of in-person learning.

The group is in touch with more than 60 potential candidates, and is encouraging them to run simultaneously on the Democratic and Republican tickets, which is allowed in Pennsylvania school board races.

Ms. Schillinger previously worked for a Republican state legislator, but like hundreds of thousands of other American women, has been unable to hold a job during the pandemic, in part because of the need to assist her two children with remote learning, she said. She eventually pulled her 9-year-old son out of the Hatboro-Horsham district and enrolled him in a fully open Catholic school.

Ms. Schillinger had been a teen parent and strove to establish herself professionally, she noted.

''I have fought and climbed my way up to make this American dream, and I've done it. It's been completely ripped away,'' she said, her voice breaking. ''Now I have left employment. I'm taking care of my kids. I am fighting for my children and I will not stop.''

Her PAC is working with parents in the Norristown Area School District, just northwest of Philadelphia. The district is operating fully remotely, and on Feb. 22 its school board voted to push back a phased transition to hybrid learning to April 5.

The district is largely Black and Latino, and its coronavirus rates have been higher than those in wealthier areas, a factor that both the school board president and teachers' union president cited in explaining why its extended closure was justified.

Nevertheless, about half of parents in the district indicated that they wanted in-person learning for their children.

One of them is Lisa Engleman, a homemaker with two teenagers. Before the pandemic, her son Mason, a high school senior, had been motivated by the requirement to earn solid grades to play on the football team. With the season canceled and classes moved online, she made the decision to send him to live with his grandmother in a nearby, higher-income town. Mason now attends in-person public school there and was able to get back on the football field.

''I just need him to graduate,'' Ms. Engleman said.

''We feel the district is taking advantage of our disadvantage. Not only are we a minority school, but we face economic and financial troubles,'' added Ms. Engleman, who is multiracial. ''I don't think the school district thought parents would get together and fight this.''

In Philadelphia, Priscilla Lo, an advertising executive and mother of an 11-year-old, founded a Facebook group called Philadelphians for Open Schools. Its members are appealing to the City Council and other officials.

She has watched friends move to suburbs where their children can get at least some days of in-classroom learning. ''Rich kids can go to school, but poor kids can't,'' she said. ''How is that fair?''

Ms. Lo questioned the Philadelphia teachers' union's demand that the district improve school ventilation before reopening. She noted that her husband, a doctor, had been treating Covid patients and taking the subway to work throughout the pandemic, and that living with risk was an unfortunate reality.

But across town, Ms. Tyler, the hair stylist and a graduate of the local public schools, said she did not blame the union for holding up the return to in-person learning that her children need; rather, she faulted the city for years of neglect of aging school buildings.

''I feel like the school district has failed them,'' she said of her children -- a failure she hopes to leave behind with her family's move to Florida.

''I can't do it here anymore,'' she added.

Alain Delaquérière contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/28/us/schools-reopening-philadelphia-parents.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/28/us/schools-reopening-philadelphia-parents.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Aquené Tyler, above left, said her children have been learning online for nearly a year, and they have been lonely. She was planning to move her family -- from far left, Robert Mont- gomery, son Dashawn Montgomery, and daughter Mya Tyler -- from Philadelphia to Florida, where in- person learning was mandated. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANNAH YOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Clarice Schillinger of Ambler, Pa., launched a political action committee, Keeping Kids in School PAC, to support school board candidates who want the option for five days per week of in-person learning. The PAC was working with parents in the Norristown Area School District, right, which was fully remote. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE GUSTAFSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A6)

**Load-Date:** March 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Many Need Food, Energizing Push To Expand Relief***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62CC-FDS1-JBG3-606K-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jason DeParle

**Body**

As millions of Americans lack enough to eat, the administration is rapidly increasing aid -- with an eye toward a permanent safety net expansion.

WASHINGTON -- With more than one in 10 households reporting that they lack enough to eat, the Biden administration is accelerating a vast campaign of hunger relief that will temporarily increase assistance by tens of billions of dollars and set the stage for what officials envision as lasting expansions of aid.

The effort to rush more food assistance to more people is notable both for the scale of its ambition and the variety of its legislative and administrative actions. The campaign has increased food stamps by more than $1 billion a month, provided needy children a dollar a day for snacks, expanded a produce allowance for pregnant women and children, and authorized the largest children's summer feeding program in history.

''We haven't seen an expansion of food assistance of this magnitude since the founding of the modern food stamp program in 1977,'' said James P. Ziliak, an economist at the University of Kentucky who studies nutrition programs. ''It's a profound change.''

While dollars and decisions are flowing from the Agriculture Department, the tone has been set by President Biden, who issued an executive order in January telling aides to ''address the growing hunger crisis'' and later lamented the car lines ''half a mile each, just to get a box of food.''

The push reflects an extraordinary shift in the politics of poverty -- driven, paradoxically, both by the spread of hardship to more ***working-class*** and white families and the growing recognition of poverty's disproportionate toll on minorities. With hunger especially pronounced among Black and Latino households, vital to the Democrats' coalition, the administration is framing its efforts not just as a response to pandemic needs but as part of a campaign for racial justice.

''This crisis has revealed how fragile many Americans' economic lives are and also the inequities of who is struggling the most,'' said Stacy Dean, who is leading the effort as a senior official at the Agriculture Department after a prominent career as an anti-hunger advocate. ''It's an incredibly painful picture, and it is even more so for communities of color.''

Like other policies being pursued by the White House -- including a temporary child allowance that is expected to cut child poverty nearly in half -- the effort to reduce hunger reflects a new willingness among Democrats to embrace an identity as poverty fighters that they once feared would alienate the middle class.

To understand what the new policies mean at the kitchen table, consider the experience of Dakota Kirby, 29, a single mother in Indianapolis who lost her job as a caregiver for an elderly woman at the start of the pandemic. Having recently started the job, Ms. Kirby assumed she could not get unemployment benefits and did not apply.

That left her relying on nutritional aid and a trickle of child support to feed a 6-year-old daughter and a year-old son.

''It got a little rough there,'' said Ms. Kirby, adding that she hesitates to complain since ''there's families that have it way worse.''

Even when she budgeted carefully, her $509 a month in food stamps ran out within three weeks. She trimmed her portions and skipped meals, so the children could eat. She got help from a food bank until her children rebelled at butter beans and tuna. She pawned her television set, but still came up short at the checkout line.

''It was humiliating,'' she said, to jettison frozen pizzas in line as strangers looked on. ''I've never had that kind of problem. It makes you really sad and angry as a mom. Especially when it's through no fault of your own.''

Ms. Kirby recently received a 15 percent increase in food stamps, mandated by Congress in December, which was so unexpected she refused to spend it, for fear she would get in trouble.

In addition, both children will now qualify for a program called Pandemic-EBT, which offers electronic vouchers for groceries to replace meals lost during school closings. (Previously only her older child qualified.) And she will receive more money for produce under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, or WIC.

Combined, monthly aid from the three programs will rise to $930 from $665. Put differently, each person in the home will now receive $10 a day to eat, an increase of 40 percent.

''That's a big old jump!'' she said, surprised at the news. ''It will help tremendously.''

The Biden effort marks a sharp change from the philosophy of the Trump administration, which sought to narrow eligibility for food stamps and expand work rules.

So far, the expansion of aid has brought only modest conservative complaint. But what supporters called ''nutritional assistance,'' critics often call ''welfare.'' Past expansions of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, as the food stamp program is formally known, brought counterattacks from conservatives who argued that the program undercut work and marriage.

Angela Rachidi of the conservative American Enterprise Institute said the Biden administration had overstated the need for additional assistance and understated the risks. She noted that the government had spent vast sums to expand other programs and that Congress had substantially raised SNAP benefits for many families at the start of the pandemic. (In addition to increased SNAP, Ms. Kirby received $8,200 in stimulus payments and will get a $6,600 child allowance.)

Ms. Rachidi credited strict welfare rules for prepandemic reductions in poverty -- child poverty fell to a record low -- and warned that a lasting aid expansion would put that progress at risk.

''This has been on the agenda of Democrats and left-leaning advocacy groups for a long time -- they're expanding programs that discourage work and encourage dependency,'' she said. ''There's a clear intention to make these changes permanent, and I think many Republicans have been asleep at the wheel.''

Scenes of crowded food banks have provided some of the most arresting images of the pandemic and brought hunger issues a rare spotlight. A recent Census Bureau survey found that, over the previous week alone, 8.4 percent of adults said their households ''sometimes'' lacked enough to eat and 2.3 percent said they ''often'' did. That translates into 23 million hungry adults, plus millions of children.

Differences in data collection complicate prepandemic comparisons, though multiple estimates suggest hunger levels higher than those of the Great Recession.

At the John Boner Neighborhood Center in Indianapolis, requests for emergency food have become so common that the agency has started to stock food boxes.

''We have people who've never needed assistance before, and we have that population that needed it before but need it more now,'' said Carla James, a staff member.

Interviews with neighborhood residents suggest the aid expansions have done much to reduce hardship, but with their reach varying greatly from household to household.

While Ms. Kirby got no unemployment aid, Sonya Radford quickly received jobless benefits, which more than replaced the income she lost when her job as a nursing assistant ended, and she enrolled in SNAP. That combination left her better able to feed her three children than before the pandemic, when she often relied on food pantries.

''With the benefits, we're pretty well off,'' she said.

Anna Chaney quit her job as a Door Dash driver to watch her daughter and two grandchildren when their schools closed. She has since seen both hardship and plenty. For seven months, surviving on SNAP was such a struggle that she cut portions and diluted the chicken soup. Then she suddenly got $16,000 in overdue unemployment benefits. She filled the freezer with meat and took the family on vacation.

''I wish that the lawmakers would have realized prior to us being in a pandemic that poor people needed more,'' she said. ''It took more of the middle class, and some of the upper class, to find that they needed help for people to act. For me to go in and tell the Indiana legislature, 'Hey, guys, $75 isn't enough to eat for a week,' that's going to be a real hard sell. But when the whole world is suffering, that's a different situation.''

The Biden administration shares the hope -- that demonstrating the value of the aid expansions, most of them temporary, will lead to permanent change. ''We can build a stronger, longer-lasting safety net,'' Ms. Dean said.

Speaking at an anti-hunger conference last month, the agriculture secretary, Tom Vilsack, outlined a kaleidoscope of recent initiatives. They include new subsidies to food banks, an outreach campaign in WIC, food aid for homeless young adults, grants for Puerto Rico and the Mariana Islands, and efforts to deliver more nutritious food.

Perhaps the most important change since the start of the pandemic involves the temporary growth of SNAP benefits, which reach about one in eight Americans and one in four children.

The Biden administration settled legal challenges last week that will further raise benefits beyond those Democrats twice pushed through Congress last year. A federal judge ruled last fall that the Trump administration had erred in denying the poorest 40 percent of households the initial increase; in agreeing to raise those benefits, the Biden administration officials will expand assistance by more than a $1 billion a month.

With the new increase, average benefits will have grown temporarily by roughly three-quarters during the crisis.

Pandemic-EBT, the replacement for school meals, is a large temporary program that could lead to lasting change. Child hunger routinely rises when schools let out, and nutrition advocates have long called for a large summer feeding program. By extending Pandemic-EBT through the summer, Congress is essentially running a pilot program, at a cost of roughly $6 billion, and Biden officials have signaled an interest in making it permanent.

Less immediate but potentially of great importance is a process the Biden team has started to re-examine adequacy of SNAP benefits in normal times. The benefits are based on a budget called the Thrifty Food Plan, which experts have long argued underestimates the costs of feeding a family. Elaine Waxman of the Urban Institute and two colleagues found benefits would have to grow 27 percent (or $15 billion a year in pre-crisis terms) to meet minimal needs.

In 2018, Congress, then under Republican control, authorized the Agriculture Department to re-evaluate the cost of a healthy diet, and Mr. Biden's order urged officials to accelerate the work. While awaiting an internal study, officials have indicated they expect to raise benefits significantly.

''The Thrifty Food Plan is just too thrifty,'' Ms. Dean recently said.

Speaking at the recent conference, Mr. Vilsack cast these efforts as part of a fight for racial justice. A former agriculture secretary under President Barack Obama, he called himself an ''older white guy'' and added, ''I haven't had the experience of being Black.'' But he said an equity commission in the department would re-evaluate policies to ensure racial fairness.

Reassured by a reporter that her benefit increase had not been a mistake, Ms. Kirby, the Indianapolis mother, recently returned to the grocery store where her shortage of funds had led to humiliation in the checkout line.

This time, she brought her children, no longer afraid they would ask for food she could not afford. She bought the frozen pizzas she had been forced to discard in the earlier visit and ''some expensive stuff, like meat sauce for spaghetti.''

''I don't even know how to explain it,'' referring to her eased worries. ''It's like a physical relief. I just knew everything would be OK.''

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Jobless benefits and food stamps have eased Sonya Radford's struggle to feed her three children.

Before receiving an increase in aid, Dakota Kirby skipped meals so that her children could eat. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAITI SULLIVAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

The food distribution center in Chicago. A survey showed that 23 million adults and millions more children sometimes went hungry. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUCY HEWETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Tom Vilsack, the agriculture secretary, said the department would re-evaluate policies to ensure racial fairness in food programs. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 6, 2021

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[***As School Closures Near First Anniversary, a Diverse Parent Movement Demands Action***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623S-CT71-JBG3-6235-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Dana Goldstein

**Highlight:** Frustrated with remote learning, parents in the Philadelphia area are running for office, suing, relocating and retreating to private school.

**Body**

Frustrated with remote learning, parents in the Philadelphia area are running for office, suing, relocating and retreating to private school.

Aquené Tyler, a mother and hair stylist in North Philadelphia, has been disappointed in her neighborhood’s public schools for many years. There were too few books and computers. Even before the pandemic, some schools were shuttered for [*asbestos removal*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html).

Now, her 9-year-old son and 13-year-old daughter have been learning online for nearly a year, even as masked children gather boisterously at local private schools. Ms. Tyler’s children are lonely, and Mya, who is in eighth grade, seems depressed and overwhelmed by her class work. She has begun seeing a counselor remotely.

So Ms. Tyler is planning a radical change: moving her family to Florida, where the Republican-controlled state government has mandated that all districts provide in-person learning five days per week. A niece there is attending traditional public school in Sarasota, complete with sports, arts and music.

“Everywhere else, kids are given better opportunities and chances, other than Philadelphia,” she said. “It’s a slap in the face consistently.”

A year into the pandemic, [*less than half*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) of students nationwide are attending public schools that offer traditional, full-time schedules. Now many parents are beginning to rebel, frustrated with the pace of reopening and determined to take matters into their own hands.

Some are making contingency plans to relocate, home-school or retreat to private education if their children’s routines continue to be disrupted this fall — a real possibility as some local school officials and teachers’ unions argue for aggressive virus mitigation measures to continue, potentially even after educators are vaccinated.

Other parents are filing lawsuits, agitating at public meetings, creating political action committees, or running for school board seats. Most recognize the potency of the coronavirus but believe schools can open safely, though they have a range of views on the best way to do so.

The Philadelphia region has become a focal point of such activism. Like many left-leaning metropolitan areas across the country, its elected officials, teachers’ unions and health agencies have urged strict caution, putting most districts on hybrid schedules, while some remain fully remote. In Philadelphia, where classrooms have been empty for a year, a reopening deal between the teachers’ union and district [*appears imminent*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html), but is expected to bring back only a portion of the youngest students.

Parents who want a full reopening may not be a majority [*in Philadelphia*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) or [*nationally*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html). But their voices are growing louder.

“Prior to this pandemic, we didn’t ask questions” of local school officials, said Keven Gessner, a father of four and pharmaceutical executive who plans to run for school board in the Council Rock district in Bucks County, Pa. Elementary school buildings there are open four days per week — one day too few, in Mr. Gessner’s view.

“Kids are sitting in front of screens,” he said. “And that’s not healthy for children.”

Mr. Gessner, who is Korean American and whose children attend a district that is overwhelmingly middle-class and affluent, is in some ways typical of the activism behind reopening campaigns in places like Los Angeles or Chicago, which have often been led by college-educated parents, disproportionately white.

Surveys suggest that ***working-class*** parents of color whose communities have been harder hit by the coronavirus are [*less eager*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) for in-person learning. But the rising frustration of parents like Ms. Tyler, who is Black and whose children attend predominantly Black schools, underscores that parent anger about closed schools is anything but monolithic.

Children in North Philadelphia “need a safe haven more than anybody else,” Ms. Tyler said. “They are not being thought about.”

Some parents have already withdrawn their children from public education, unwilling to wait and see. Preliminary data in Pennsylvania [*analyzed by WHYY*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) shows that as of October, public school enrollment had fallen 6.9 percent in the state’s most populous counties, a shortfall of over 50,000 children.

If these families do not return to public education, it could have a significant [*impact on school budgets*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html), which are tied to the number of children who enroll. Even modest dips in funding can force districts to cut tutoring, extracurricular activities or foreign languages.

Parents who are angry about shuttered schools could also rejigger the politics of public education. Democratic-leaning parents may join their conservative counterparts in becoming distrustful of the teachers’ unions that are slowing reopening timelines, and turn to options the unions oppose, like private school vouchers or non-unionized charter schools.

Ms. Tyler, for example, said she would welcome the opportunity for a taxpayer-funded scholarship to enroll her children in private school.

Even so, for some parents in the Philadelphia region, the prospect of abandoning public school is deeply emotional, prompting a reckoning with their own values.

“We believe in the value of public education,” said Chad Williams, a father of four in the Philadelphia suburbs. “Or we did.”

Frustrated when the Unionville-Chadds Ford district’s long closure gave way to only part-time schedules for most middle and high school students, he and his wife, both lawyers, enrolled their 11th-grader in private school, and are home-schooling their 12- and 14-year-olds. He is a supporter of Open PA Schools, a group that filed a lawsuit against the state and several districts, arguing that extended virtual learning violates Pennsylvania law. The case is pending.

Mr. Williams also plans to testify to the State Senate this week, where he will argue in favor of a full reopening and against “indefinite” mask mandates in schools. A draft of his testimony questions [*the quality of studies*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) on the efficacy of masking and states, “There is no evidence that children or adolescents are ‘spreaders’ of this virus.”

While children appear to spread the virus less efficiently than adults, [*research suggests*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) that they do, in fact, have the ability to transmit it, and that [*breaches in mask use*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) have likely contributed to in-school spread.

[*National Republican groups*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) hope disaffected parents will be the potential soccer mom swing voters of the 2022 midterms. They are [*putting up billboards*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) in Pennsylvania and other swing states blaming Democrats and their union allies for extended school closures. Donald Trump Jr. recently posted a video on the subject.

[*Polling*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) shows that while voters view education as important, they tend to rank it below issues such as health care, the economy and race relations.

Instead, shuttered schools may breed cynicism toward public institutions across the political spectrum.

“The more we see, the more faith we lose in our system,” said Clarice Schillinger, another suburban parent.

She pointed out that for many districts, the policy of maintaining six feet of distance between desks has forestalled the ability to serve all students five days per week.

Rich Askey, president of the Pennsylvania State Education Association, the state’s largest teachers’ union, said, “The science has not been clear enough about the [*spread and vaccines*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html), so it’s still the responsible move to make sure that after vaccination is accomplished — and that will take quite some time — that you still wear a mask and still social distance.”

The unions are a major player in Pennsylvania politics, and although they are most closely tied to Democrats, give to Republican legislators as well.

Parent activists like Ms. Schillinger are beginning to directly take on the unions and critique the six-feet standard, which [*federal guidelines*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) suggest is ideal but not required. Ms. Schillinger launched a political action committee, the Keeping Kids in School PAC, to support school board candidates, including Mr. Gessner, who want the option for five days per week of in-person learning.

The group is in touch with more than 60 potential candidates, and is encouraging them to run simultaneously on the Democratic and Republican tickets, which is allowed in Pennsylvania school board races.

Ms. Schillinger previously worked for a Republican state legislator, but like [*hundreds of thousands*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) of other American women, has been unable to hold a job during the pandemic, in part because of the need to assist her two children with remote learning, she said. She eventually pulled her 9-year-old son out of the Hatboro-Horsham district and enrolled him in a fully open Catholic school.

Ms. Schillinger had been a teen parent and strove to establish herself professionally, she noted.

“I have fought and climbed my way up to make this American dream, and I’ve done it. It’s been completely ripped away,” she said, her voice breaking. “Now I have left employment. I’m taking care of my kids. I am fighting for my children and I will not stop.”

Her PAC is working with parents in the Norristown Area School District, just northwest of Philadelphia. The district is operating fully remotely, and on Feb. 22 its school board voted to push back a phased transition to hybrid learning to April 5.

The district is largely Black and Latino, and its coronavirus rates have been higher than those in wealthier areas, a factor that both the school board president and teachers’ union president cited in explaining why its extended closure was justified.

Nevertheless, about half of parents in the district indicated that they wanted in-person learning for their children.

One of them is Lisa Engleman, a homemaker with two teenagers. Before the pandemic, her son Mason, a high school senior, had been motivated by the requirement to earn solid grades to play on the football team. With the season canceled and classes moved online, she made the decision to send him to live with his grandmother in a nearby, higher-income town. Mason now attends in-person public school there and was able to get back on the football field.

“I just need him to graduate,” Ms. Engleman said.

“We feel the district is taking advantage of our disadvantage. Not only are we a minority school, but we face economic and financial troubles,” added Ms. Engleman, who is multiracial. “I don’t think the school district thought parents would get together and fight this.”

In Philadelphia, Priscilla Lo, an advertising executive and mother of an 11-year-old, founded a Facebook group called Philadelphians for Open Schools. Its members are appealing to the City Council and other officials.

She has watched friends move to suburbs where their children can get at least some days of in-classroom learning. “Rich kids can go to school, but poor kids can’t,” she said. “How is that fair?”

Ms. Lo questioned the Philadelphia teachers’ union’s [*demand*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html) that the district improve school ventilation before [*reopening*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/inq/toxic-city-philadelphia-inquirer-investigation-lead-asbestos-schools-20170618.html). She noted that her husband, a doctor, had been treating Covid patients and taking the subway to work throughout the pandemic, and that living with risk was an unfortunate reality.

But across town, Ms. Tyler, the hair stylist and a graduate of the local public schools, said she did not blame the union for holding up the return to in-person learning that her children need; rather, she faulted the city for years of neglect of aging school buildings.

“I feel like the school district has failed them,” she said of her children — a failure she hopes to leave behind with her family’s move to Florida.

“I can’t do it here anymore,” she added.

Alain Delaquérière contributed research.

PHOTOS: Aquené Tyler, above left, said her children have been learning online for nearly a year, and they have been lonely. She was planning to move her family — from far left, Robert Mont- gomery, son Dashawn Montgomery, and daughter Mya Tyler — from Philadelphia to Florida, where in- person learning was mandated. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANNAH YOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Clarice Schillinger of Ambler, Pa., launched a political action committee, Keeping Kids in School PAC, to support school board candidates who want the option for five days per week of in-person learning. The PAC was working with parents in the Norristown Area School District, right, which was fully remote. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE GUSTAFSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A6)

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**End of Document**



[***Biden Effort to Combat Hunger Marks ‘a Profound Change’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62C7-8XY1-JBG3-601Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Jason DeParle

**Highlight:** As millions of Americans lack enough to eat, the administration is rapidly increasing aid — with an eye toward a permanent safety net expansion.

**Body**

As millions of Americans lack enough to eat, the administration is rapidly increasing aid — with an eye toward a permanent safety net expansion.

WASHINGTON — With more than one in 10 households reporting that they lack enough to eat, the Biden administration is accelerating a vast campaign of hunger relief that will temporarily increase assistance by tens of billions of dollars and set the stage for what officials envision as lasting expansions of aid.

The effort to rush more food assistance to more people is notable both for the scale of its ambition and the variety of its legislative and administrative actions. The campaign has increased food stamps by more than $1 billion a month, provided needy children a dollar a day for snacks, expanded a produce allowance for pregnant women and children, and authorized the largest children’s summer feeding program in history.

“We haven’t seen an expansion of food assistance of this magnitude since the founding of the modern food stamp program in 1977,” said James P. Ziliak, an economist at the University of Kentucky who studies nutrition programs. “It’s a profound change.”

While dollars and decisions are flowing from the Agriculture Department, the tone has been set by President Biden, who issued [*an executive order*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) in January telling aides to “address the growing hunger crisis” and later lamented the car lines “half a mile each, just to get a box of food.”

The push reflects an extraordinary shift in the politics of poverty — driven, paradoxically, both by the spread of hardship to more ***working-class*** and white families and the growing recognition of poverty’s disproportionate toll on minorities. With hunger especially pronounced among Black and Latino households, vital to the Democrats’ coalition, the administration is framing its efforts not just as a response to pandemic needs but as part of a campaign for racial justice.

“This crisis has revealed how fragile many Americans’ economic lives are and also the inequities of who is struggling the most,” said Stacy Dean, who is leading the effort as a senior official at the Agriculture Department after a prominent career as an anti-hunger advocate. “It’s an incredibly painful picture, and it is even more so for communities of color.”

Like other policies being pursued by the White House — including a temporary child allowance that is expected to cut child poverty [*nearly in half*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) — the effort to reduce hunger reflects a new willingness among Democrats to embrace an identity as poverty fighters that they once feared would alienate the middle class.

To understand what the new policies mean at the kitchen table, consider the experience of Dakota Kirby, 29, a single mother in Indianapolis who lost her job as a caregiver for an elderly woman at the start of the pandemic. Having recently started the job, Ms. Kirby assumed she could not get unemployment benefits and did not apply.

That left her relying on nutritional aid and a trickle of child support to feed a 6-year-old daughter and a year-old son.

“It got a little rough there,” said Ms. Kirby, adding that she hesitates to complain since “there’s families that have it way worse.”

Even when she budgeted carefully, her $509 a month in food stamps ran out within three weeks. She trimmed her portions and skipped meals, so the children could eat. She got help from a food bank until her children rebelled at butter beans and tuna. She pawned her television set, but still came up short at the checkout line.

“It was humiliating,” she said, to jettison frozen pizzas in line as strangers looked on. “I’ve never had that kind of problem. It makes you really sad and angry as a mom. Especially when it’s through no fault of your own.”

Ms. Kirby recently received a 15 percent increase in food stamps, mandated by Congress in December, which was so unexpected she refused to spend it, for fear she would get in trouble.

In addition, both children will now qualify for [*a program called Pandemic-EBT,*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) which offers electronic vouchers for groceries to replace meals lost during school closings. (Previously only her older child qualified.) And she will receive more money for produce under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, or WIC.

Combined, monthly aid from the three programs will rise to $930 from $665. Put differently, each person in the home will now receive $10 a day to eat, an increase of 40 percent.

“That’s a big old jump!” she said, surprised at the news. “It will help tremendously.”

The Biden effort marks a sharp change from the philosophy of the Trump administration, which sought to narrow eligibility for food stamps and expand work rules.

So far, the expansion of aid has brought only modest conservative complaint. But what supporters called “nutritional assistance,” critics often call “welfare.” Past expansions of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, as the food stamp program is formally known, brought counterattacks from conservatives who argued that the program undercut work and marriage.

Angela Rachidi of the conservative American Enterprise Institute said the Biden administration had [*overstated the need for additional assistance and understated the risks*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/). She noted that the government had spent vast sums to expand other programs and that Congress had substantially raised SNAP benefits for many families at the start of the pandemic. (In addition to increased SNAP, Ms. Kirby received $8,200 in stimulus payments and will get a $6,600 child allowance.)

Ms. Rachidi credited strict welfare rules for [*prepandemic reductions in poverty*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/)— child poverty fell to a record low — and warned that a lasting aid expansion would put that progress at risk.

“This has been on the agenda of Democrats and left-leaning advocacy groups for a long time — they’re expanding programs that discourage work and encourage dependency,” she said. “There’s a clear intention to make these changes permanent, and I think many Republicans have been asleep at the wheel.”

Scenes of crowded food banks have provided some of the most arresting images of the pandemic and brought hunger issues a rare spotlight. A recent [*Census Bureau survey*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) found that, over the previous week alone, 8.4 percent of adults said their households “sometimes” lacked enough to eat and 2.3 percent said they “often” did. That translates into 23 million hungry adults, plus millions of children.

[*Differences in data collection*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) complicate prepandemic comparisons, though multiple [*estimates suggest*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) hunger levels [*higher than those of the Great Recession*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/).

At the John Boner Neighborhood Center in Indianapolis, requests for emergency food have become so common that the agency has started to stock food boxes.

“We have people who’ve never needed assistance before, and we have that population that needed it before but need it more now,” said Carla James, a staff member.

Interviews with neighborhood residents suggest the aid expansions have done much to reduce hardship, but with their reach varying greatly from household to household.

While Ms. Kirby got no unemployment aid, Sonya Radford quickly received jobless benefits, which more than replaced the income she lost when her job as a nursing assistant ended, and she enrolled in SNAP. That combination left her better able to feed her three children than before the pandemic, when she often relied on food pantries.

“With the benefits, we’re pretty well off,” she said.

Anna Chaney quit her job as a Door Dash driver to watch her daughter and two grandchildren when their schools closed. She has since seen both hardship and plenty. For seven months, surviving on SNAP was such a struggle that she cut portions and diluted the chicken soup. Then she suddenly got $16,000 in overdue unemployment benefits. She filled the freezer with meat and took the family on vacation.

“I wish that the lawmakers would have realized prior to us being in a pandemic that poor people needed more,” she said. “It took more of the middle class, and some of the upper class, to find that they needed help for people to act. For me to go in and tell the Indiana legislature, ‘Hey, guys, $75 isn’t enough to eat for a week,’ that’s going to be a real hard sell. But when the whole world is suffering, that’s a different situation.”

The Biden administration shares the hope — that [*demonstrating the value of the aid*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) expansions, most of them temporary, will lead to permanent change. “We can build a stronger, longer-lasting safety net,” Ms. Dean said.

Speaking at an anti-hunger conference last month, the agriculture secretary, Tom Vilsack, outlined a kaleidoscope of recent initiatives. They include new subsidies to food banks, an outreach campaign in WIC, food aid for homeless young adults, grants for Puerto Rico and the Mariana Islands, and efforts to deliver more nutritious food.

Perhaps the most important change since the start of the pandemic involves the temporary growth of SNAP benefits, which reach about one in eight Americans and one in four children.

The Biden administration [*settled legal challenges*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) last week that will further raise benefits beyond those Democrats twice pushed through Congress last year. [*A federal judge ruled last fall*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) that the Trump administration had erred in denying the poorest 40 percent of households the initial increase; in agreeing to raise those benefits, the Biden administration officials will expand assistance by more than a $1 billion a month.

With the new increase, average benefits will have grown temporarily by roughly three-quarters during the crisis.

Pandemic-EBT, the replacement for school meals, is a large temporary program that could lead to lasting change. Child hunger routinely rises when schools let out, and nutrition advocates have long called for a large summer feeding program. By extending Pandemic-EBT through the summer, Congress is essentially running a pilot program, at a cost of roughly $6 billion, and Biden officials have signaled an interest in making it permanent.

Less immediate but potentially of great importance is a process the Biden team has started to re-examine adequacy of SNAP benefits in normal times. The benefits are based on a budget called the Thrifty Food Plan, which experts have long argued underestimates the costs of feeding a family. Elaine Waxman of the Urban Institute and two colleagues found [*benefits would have to grow 27 percent*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/01/22/fact-sheet-president-bidens-new-executive-actions-deliver-economic-relief-for-american-families-and-businesses-amid-the-covid-19-crises/) (or $15 billion a year in pre-crisis terms) to meet minimal needs.

In 2018, Congress, then under Republican control, authorized the Agriculture Department to re-evaluate the cost of a healthy diet, and Mr. Biden’s order urged officials to accelerate the work. While awaiting an internal study, officials have indicated they expect to raise benefits significantly.

“The Thrifty Food Plan is just too thrifty,” Ms. Dean recently said.

Speaking at the recent conference, Mr. Vilsack cast these efforts as part of a fight for racial justice. A former agriculture secretary under President Barack Obama, he called himself an “older white guy” and added, “I haven’t had the experience of being Black.” But he said an equity commission in the department would re-evaluate policies to ensure racial fairness.

Reassured by a reporter that her benefit increase had not been a mistake, Ms. Kirby, the Indianapolis mother, recently returned to the grocery store where her shortage of funds had led to humiliation in the checkout line.

This time, she brought her children, no longer afraid they would ask for food she could not afford. She bought the frozen pizzas she had been forced to discard in the earlier visit and “some expensive stuff, like meat sauce for spaghetti.”

“I don’t even know how to explain it,” referring to her eased worries. “It’s like a physical relief. I just knew everything would be OK.”

PHOTOS: Jobless benefits and food stamps have eased Sonya Radford’s struggle to feed her three children.; Before receiving an increase in aid, Dakota Kirby skipped meals so that her children could eat. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAITI SULLIVAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); The food distribution center in Chicago. A survey showed that 23 million adults and millions more children sometimes went hungry. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUCY HEWETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Tom Vilsack, the agriculture secretary, said the department would re-evaluate policies to ensure racial fairness in food programs. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** April 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Debate Behind Them, Democrats Return to a Familiar Foil in Sanders***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y84-WGV1-JBG3-60CC-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg, facing increasing pressure to slow the Vermont senator's rise before Super Tuesday, criticized his record on gun control and his chances against President Trump.

LAS VEGAS -- The day after a Democratic presidential debate brought out the candidates' outrage at Michael R. Bloomberg, the focus turned back toward Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, who leads polls of Nevada, California and the nation.

Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. spent Thursday hammering Mr. Sanders for past positions that were friendly to the gun industry. Mr. Bloomberg warned that nominating Mr. Sanders would be ''a fatal error.'' And former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., said he found it hard to imagine that Mr. Sanders could defeat President Trump in a general election.

''It would be a very, very tough sell,'' Mr. Buttigieg told a crowd of students at a televised event at the University of Southern California. ''I think it would be a tough sell with Mike Bloomberg, too. I'm saying we don't have to choose between these two options. I'm saying there is another way.''

The attacks came two days before Nevada's caucuses, the third contest of the Democratic presidential nominating calendar, and the day after a bitter debate that highlighted the dire situation that Mr. Biden and Mr. Buttigieg face. With Mr. Sanders favored to win in Nevada, they have limited time to try to stop his rise before the delegate-rich Super Tuesday contests on March 3 -- when Mr. Bloomberg and his $300 million advertising campaign await.

Mr. Bloomberg was in one of those Super Tuesday states, Utah, on Thursday, telling voters in Salt Lake City that Mr. Sanders could not appeal to a broad enough array of people to win the White House.

''If we choose a candidate who appeals to a small base -- like Senator Sanders -- it will be a fatal error,'' Mr. Bloomberg said. ''We need Democrats and independents and Republicans to win.''

Both explicitly and obliquely, Mr. Biden and his campaign criticized Mr. Sanders's record on gun control on Thursday, releasing a biting video of the Vermont senator saying in 2012, ''I don't know that you hold a gun manufacturer responsible for what obviously a deranged person does.''

In a speech at a Las Vegas community center later in the day, Mr. Biden implicitly criticized that position again, and more overtly jabbed Mr. Sanders for his past opposition to the Brady bill, which required background checks for gun purchases.

Yet after the event, a reporter asked whether Mr. Biden believed that Mr. Sanders had changed his views on guns.

''I do think he's changed his views,'' Mr. Biden allowed, ''and I'm happy for that.''

By Thursday evening, however, he was prepared to hit Mr. Sanders's record more directly.

''It's not so much what you say you believe now,'' he said at a CNN town hall. ''It's, what did you do and when did you do it? And the fact is, Bernie has had a very different record than me for a long time.''

Mr. Biden spelled it out: ''He voted to exempt gun manufacturers from any liability. Zero. They can't be sued.''

While Mr. Sanders's rivals sought to chip away at his popularity, he laid low on Thursday. He appeared at no public events and conducted interviews with three local TV stations in Las Vegas and Reno, his campaign said.

In a brief exchange aired on CNN from his campaign hotel in Las Vegas, Mr. Sanders criticized the wealth of Mr. Bloomberg, who is worth more than $60 billion.

''Mr. Bloomberg himself is worth more, one person, than the bottom 125 million Americans,'' he said.

The Sanders campaign was relieved on Thursday that he had emerged from Wednesday's debate unscathed, a result that it attributed to his resilience and supporters' loyalty.

''Senator Sanders's opponents have thrown everything they can at him since the launch of his campaign and they've failed to stop his campaign to build a political revolution because of his consistent, lifelong record of standing with the ***working class***,'' said Mike Casca, a campaign spokesman.

The Democratic candidates' urgency to contrast themselves with Mr. Sanders came as expectations grew among rival campaigns and political operatives that he was likely to win Nevada's caucuses on Saturday.

Perhaps in an acknowledgment that they are not likely to emerge on top, Mr. Biden, Mr. Buttigieg, Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts all plan to be out of the state when the caucus results start to be announced on Saturday afternoon.

''I think Nevada is unfathomable,'' said David Axelrod, the architect of Barack Obama's 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns. ''Second place is anybody's guess. And second place is meaningful by the unwritten measuring sticks that the punditocracy creates. Everybody is going to be watching who finishes second.''

More critical to the campaigns than Nevada are the 16 states and territories with contests on Super Tuesday. And reliable public polling data is available in just a few of those states.

In Texas, a recent University of Texas/Texas Tribune poll found Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders in a dead heat. In Virginia, a Monmouth University poll released this week found Mr. Bloomberg joining Mr. Sanders and Mr. Biden in a statistical tie for first place. Mr. Sanders has led recent public polls of California, the biggest Super Tuesday prize on the map.

Mr. Buttigieg exhibited unusual urgency on Thursday, sending a fund-raising appeal that for the first time issued a target he said the campaign must meet to stay afloat.

''We are the best shot at defeating Donald Trump,'' he wrote. ''But the reality is, if we can't raise $13 million before Super Tuesday, we might never get that shot.''

Hours before that please-help-or-we're-sunk appeal, Mr. Buttigieg's campaign released an unsigned ''state of the race'' memo that warned Mr. Sanders was on the verge of building a ''seemingly insurmountable delegate lead.''

Mr. Buttigieg, who has struggled for months to attract black and Latino voters, found himself facing a sometimes skeptical audience in Los Angeles.

Valerie Gutierrez, a junior at the University of Southern California who attended Mr. Buttigieg's event, said she was undecided but leaning toward voting for him, despite fears about his limited appeal.

''The fact that he's not able to get the diverse minority group under his coalition is a bit worrisome for me, because I'm someone from a minority background,'' she said.

Michael Sutter, a U.S.C. senior who said he had already voted early for Mr. Buttigieg, echoed the former mayor's warning that Mr. Sanders could not defeat Mr. Trump.

''Bernie is a little bit too far out there,'' he said. ''He's going to scare people away.''

Sydney Ember contributed reporting from Las Vegas, Giovanni Russonello from New York and Louis Keene from Los Angeles.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/us/politics/nevada-debate-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/us/politics/nevada-debate-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders at a rally in Reno on Tuesday. His campaign was relieved that he emerged from Wednesday's debate unscathed, a result that it attributed to his resilience and supporters' loyalty. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Max Whittaker for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 21, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Biden Spin on ‘America First’; DealBook Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61DY-8JV1-DXY4-X4N7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** Andrew Ross Sorkin, Jason Karaian, Michael J. de la Merced, Lauren Hirsch and Ephrat Livni

**Highlight:** The president-elect’s economic team says that it’s all about workers.

**Body**

The president-elect’s economic team says that it’s all about workers.

Team Biden’s statement of intent

When the president-elect introduced his proposed economic team, he summarized their vision: “Given a fair shot and equal chance, there’s nothing beyond the capacity of the American people.” As word has leaked of his nominees, their backgrounds suggested that the incoming administration’s focus would be on [*workers and income inequality*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html). Yesterday, they backed this up in their own words.

“We were raised to respect the dignity of work,” Vice President-elect Kamala Harris said. Then, [*Mr. Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html)’s economic brain trust emphasized their personal experiences with the plight of workers, sure to be a major theme in the administration’s early days:

* Growing up in “***working-class*** Brooklyn” forever marked the Treasury secretary nominee Janet Yellen, who pledged to run “an institution that wakes up every morning thinking about” people’s jobs, paychecks, struggles, hopes and dignity.

1. The deputy Treasury secretary pick, Wally Adeyemo, said his immigrant parents instilled in him a sense of responsibility to “the country that gave us so many opportunities.” He promised to work “to ensure that everyone has the fair chance they deserve.”
2. “Budgets are not abstractions,” proclaimed Neera Tanden, prospective director of the Office of Management and Budget. “I’m here today because of social programs. Because of budgetary choices.”
3. Cecilia Rouse, the nominee for chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, said that a spike in unemployment while she was in college made it “impossible to separate what we were learning in the classroom from what I knew was going on in towns across the country,” leaving her “drawn to study the labor market in all of its dimensions.”
4. The other appointees for the C.E.A. highlighted memories of parental unemployment and the importance of unions. “Security, union benefits, a place in the neighborhood, a place in the middle class” is what a job at Boeing meant to Heather Boushey’s father. Jared Bernstein said his mother’s proudest moment wasn’t when he got a Ph.D. but when he got a union card.

Behind the rhetoric, securing aid for workers will be difficult, if the long partisan standoff over economic stimulus package is any indication. When he takes office, Mr. Biden will try to balance Republican accusations of a socialist takeover with criticism from progressive Democrats that he is embracing capitalism too closely. That debate is neatly captured by the nomination of Ms. Tanden, who faces a tough confirmation battle with critics on both [*the right*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) and [*the left*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html).

A variation on “America First.” Mr. Biden [*told The Times’s Tom Friedman*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html), “I want to make sure we’re going to fight like hell by investing in America first.” Although this echoes President Trump’s policy branding, in Mr. Biden’s case it means huge government investment in research into energy, biotech and A.I., as well as infrastructure. At the same time, his foreign policy instincts have traces of his predecessor’s anti-globalization stance: There’s a recognition that Americans increasingly feel “the gains from globalization and our economic system needed to be shared more widely,” Nathan Sheets, an Obama-era Treasury Department official, [*told The Wall Street Journal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html).

* This might lead to tensions within his team. Mr. Biden told Tom that he wouldn’t immediately lift the 25 percent tariffs that Mr. Trump imposed on Chinese goods. Ms. Yellen has been [*openly skeptical of tariffs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html).

HERE’S WHAT’S HAPPENING

Britain approves Pfizer’s Covid-19 vaccine. The country became [*the first in the West*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) to authorize a coronavirus vaccine. (Russia and China didn’t wait for large-scale trials.) Britain will begin vaccinations [*next week*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html), starting in nursing homes.

Centrist senators present a compromise stimulus plan. A bipartisan group unveiled a [*$908 billion package*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) to break the political logjam. But Senate Republicans are working on a far smaller proposal that is unlikely to win Democratic support, while Democratic leaders are pushing for more spending.

SoftBank reportedly winds down its stock options trade. The Japanese tech investor is [*letting options expire*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) — mostly by the end of the month — after investors complained about its risky multibillion-dollar strategy, Bloomberg reports. SoftBank will retain stock investments in Big Tech companies like Amazon and Facebook.

Salesforce clinches a $27.7 billion deal for Slack. The acquisition, [*Salesforce’s biggest*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html), is the latest in a wave of workplace software takeovers. But Salesforce investors may be unhappy with the hefty deal premium: Its shares are down in premarket trading. (Slack’s are up nearly 50 percent since reports of the deal emerged.)

President Trump threatens defense cash to attack a tech legal shield. In two tweets, Mr. Trump said he would [*veto a $1 trillion funding bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) unless Congress eliminated Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which protects online platforms from legal liability for content posted by users.

Fresh from selling itself, Kind buys another

Just weeks [*after agreeing to be acquired by Mars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html), the snack maker Kind will announce today a deal to buy a like-minded food company, Nature’s Bakery, for what sources say is around $400 million. Kind’s strategy is to turn itself into a “health and wellness platform,” amassing a range of products it makes or acquires. That plan was in place when Mars was only a minority investor, and “our partners at Mars wants us to continue,” the Kind founder and executive chairman Daniel Lubetzky told DealBook.

A family affair. Nature’s Bakery was founded in 2011 by the father-and-son team of Dave and Sam Marson. The company, which sold a minority stake to private equity firm VMG Partners in 2016, now offers “plant-based, nut-free and dairy-free” products in retailers like Costco and Target. Nature’s Bakery will keep its supply chain separate from Kind’s, to ensure its products stay nut-free.

Preserving the culture. The Nature’s Bakery deal, and Kind’s takeover before it, are the latest in a string of acquisitions by big food brands of smaller, upstart rivals with cultures that are hard to replicate at large corporations. These large acquirers have sought to avoid past stumbles in similar deals, when they [*swallowed brands whole*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) or confused consumers by [*pumping out new iterations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) of niche products too quickly. That has meant creating stand-alone units to manage younger, hipper brands: Hershey, for example, runs several through Amplify Snack Brands, the parent of SkinnyPop, which [*it acquired in 2018*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html).

* Kind, which will operate independently within Mars, plans a hands-off management approach with Nature’s Bakery, while still offering the benefits of the global distribution might of the maker of M&amp;M’s and Snickers. “We want to create a culture where we really empower our partners for them to decide what’s best for their brands,” Mr. Lubetzky said.

“We are definitely not going to launch a hostile takeover. If somebody said it would be a good idea to merge with Tesla, we would have this conversation.”

— Tesla and SpaceX C.E.O. Elon Musk, [*in an interview*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) after accepting a lifetime achievement award from Axel Springer.

Cocoa cases raise bitter questions

Could an American corporation abet child slavery by doing business with suspect suppliers abroad, and should it be held liable if it does? Those were among the thorny questions raised yesterday at [*a Supreme Court hearing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) on cases against Cargill and Nestlé U.S.A. brought by Malians who were forced into child slavery on cocoa farms in Ivory Coast.

“Many of your arguments lead to results that are pretty hard to take,” Justice Samuel Alito said after the companies’ lawyer argued that, under the [*Alien Tort Statute*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html), they can’t be held liable for human rights violations based on business relationships with farmers abroad. The justice wondered how far that argument went, asking if it extended to a business that “surreptitiously hires agents” to kidnap and enslave children, ensuring “bargain prices” on cocoa or coffee. But allowing such suits isn’t straightforward, either.

“They know that’s where the cheap beans come from,” the Malians’ counsel argued. He said that the corporations set up a supply chain known to be tainted by human rights violations, while other companies sourced responsibly and paid more. Justice Stephen Breyer responded to the allegation philosophically, saying that it described businesses that operate “blinking” or with “open eyes.” Speaking over the lawyer’s protestations, the justice wondered who should be responsible for stopping this sort of thing.

It is one of the big questions of the era. Governments, companies, investors and shoppers increasingly agonize about the responsibilities and relationships created by consumption. Notably, [*The Cocoa Barometer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html), a report by N.G.O.s and trade unions released yesterday, supplied one possible answer, [*calling on governments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) of major consuming nations to pass laws that hold companies accountable for human rights abuses in their supply chains.

THE SPEED READ

Deals

* Airbnb is seeking a valuation of nearly $35 billion in its I.P.O. ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))

1. The online health care arm of JD.com raised $3.5 billion in its Hong Kong I.P.O. ([*Bloomberg*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))
2. A bipartisan commission said that Congress should give the Federal Trade Commission more power over mergers involving foreign buyers. ([*WSJ*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))

Politics and policy

* Geoffrey Berman, the former U.S. attorney for Manhattan fired by President Trump in June, will join the law firm Fried Frank as the head of its white-collar defense practice. ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))

1. President Trump has [*considered pre-emptive pardons*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) for three of his children, his son-in-law Jared Kushner, and Rudy Giuliani. Separately, the Justice Department is investigating a [*potential bribery scheme*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html) involving pardon seekers. (NYT)
2. The European Central Bank’s top economist reportedly called banks and investors after policy meetings to offer clarifications, breaking with tradition. ([*WSJ*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))

Tech

* Amazon is joining a broad shift away from Intel’s computer chips. ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))

1. Hewlett Packard Enterprise is moving its headquarters to Houston, the latest Silicon Valley company to decenter from California. ([*CNBC*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))

Best of the rest

* More than 40 American corporate giants — including Amazon, Citigroup and Ford — are urging Congress to support President-elect Joe Biden’s plan for the U.S. rejoin the Paris climate accord. ([*WSJ*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))

1. “Reinventing Workers for the Post-Covid Economy” ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))
2. The arc of women’s work attire during the pandemic: from blazers to “coatigans.” ([*NYT*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html))

We’d like your feedback! Please email thoughts and suggestions to [*dealbook@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/30/business/biden-economics-yellen-labor.html).

PHOTO: Wally Adeyemo, President-elect Joe Biden’s nominee for deputy Treasury secretary. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Wong/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Creating Connections***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y7Y-7PC1-DXY4-X1M0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 20, 2020 Thursday 19:04 EST

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**Section:** EDUCATION; learning

**Length:** 1149 words

**Byline:** John Hanc

**Highlight:** A career center at Brooklyn College provides “the aunts and uncles, the friends of the family that these kids don’t have.”

**Body**

This article is part of our latest [*Learning special report*](https://www.nytimes.com/section/education/learning). We’re focusing on Generation Z, which is facing challenges from changing curriculums and new technology to financial aid gaps and homelessness.

At an event at Brooklyn College’s Magner Career Center a few years ago, Marge Magner herself was introduced. “A student came up to me and said, ‘You’re alive!’” Ms. Magner said, laughing. “‘I thought you had to be dead to have your name on a building.’”

Ms. Magner, 70, is alive and well — as is the center that bears her name. Not only did she contribute the funds to launch it in 2004, she also remains active in helping to promote its mission: to provide advantages to students who often have not had many in their lives.

Brooklyn College, part of the City University of New York system, has traditionally educated those from what Ms. Magner jokingly calls “the real Brooklyn” — not the borough’s regentrified neighborhoods of million-dollar brownstones, but rather ***working-class*** neighborhoods like Midwood, Flatbush and Crown Heights.

During her career in banking — in which she rose to the ranks of chairman and chief executive for Citigroup’s Global Consumer Group, and was named to Fortune magazine’s list of Most Powerful Women in Business four times — Ms. Magner, who graduated from Brooklyn College in 1969, met and worked with many alumni of elite, private universities.

She realized that they were not smarter, more capable or harder working than her classmates. What these more privileged universities had, and what Ms. Magner and her peers lacked, was access to an “old boys” network.

So she decided to create one.

“Let’s be honest,” Ms. Magner said. “Most of the kids from the better schools have some form of infrastructure to help them with internships and jobs. I know that because I get lots of requests to help family members who are from elite schools. And I’m always happy to help them.”

But the approximately 13,000 full-time students at Brooklyn College — 75 percent of whom depend on some form of financial aid and 45 percent of whom are from families in which neither parent completed college — typically do not have that kind of access.

“These kids can’t ask their parents to help them with job connections,” she said. “That’s not their world.”

Certainly Ms. Magner couldn’t. She grew up in Crown Heights. Her father was a lieutenant in the New York City Police Department; her mother taught kindergarten. At the time she attended Brooklyn College, “most of the women on campus were going to become teachers.”

Ms. Magner decided to major in business, but she admitted that at the time she really had no idea what that involved. “To me, a business was the bakery, the butcher and the candy store around the corner,” she said.

She managed to succeed, but she realizes that the “who-you-know” factor is as critical to the career success of Generation Z students as it was for previous cohorts. And that’s why she tries to recruit her fellow alumni to become involved with current students through the center.

“I tell them, ‘We’re the aunts and uncles, the friends of the family that these kids don’t have,’” she said.

Such ersatz family members can sometimes help students in ways that real ones cannot.

“My parents came from a tiny town in Mexico,” said Karina Gomez, a senior who grew up in Sunset Park. “Neither of them went past middle school.”

When it came time to look for internships and other résumé-building opportunities, Ms. Gomez said she “felt lost.” But meeting with staff and alumni through the Magner Center helped her learn management skills that she used to rise to the presidency of the college’s chapter of the [*Association of Latino Professionals for America*](https://www.nytimes.com/section/education/learning). The experience paved the way for her internship with the New York City Department of Finance.

“When I was in college, the only thing you went to the career center for was to look at job postings,” said Brian Fitzgerald, chief executive officer for the Business-Higher Education Forum in Washington.

That has changed, and more college career offices now offer an array of services, including one-on-one mentoring, job shadowing and help identifying internships. “These kinds of services are critical to first-gen students,” he says, adding that research has shown students who participate in such programs are more likely to complete college.

What sets the Brooklyn College model apart is the presence of someone like Ms. Magner. “There are unfortunately too few people like her,” Dr. Fitzgerald said. “Most of the people who are very successful in finance and banking come from privileged backgrounds, go to elite institutions and their philanthropy is generally focused on their alma maters. So it only reinforces the advantages.”

Since its inception, the Magner Center has had an impact: According to an [*annual survey of recent graduates*](https://www.nytimes.com/section/education/learning) by the college, the percentage of students who had internships while attending Brooklyn College rose to over 40 percent in 2018, up from 23 percent in 2003 (the year before the center opened).

While Ms. Magner continues to contribute stipends for student internships, the college now finances most of the operations of the center. Working with its director, Natalia Guarin-Klein and her eight-person staff, Ms. Magner has helped mobilize many of her alma mater’s successful alumni.

Through the center, Brooklyn College graduates who work at organizations like JP Morgan, MSG Networks, Ernst &amp; Young, New York City’s Human Resources Administration, the Brooklyn Navy Yard and Estée Lauder have provided internship and job opportunities to current students.

One who has been both a beneficiary and a mentor is Shikshya Khatiwada. Her parents came to the United States from Nepal, and she grew up in the Midwood section of the borough, where her family moved when she was 15. As a Brooklyn College student in the early 2000s, she felt out of her depth at the prospect of applying for internships and jobs.

“I’m an immigrant,” she said. “I had no idea how to operate in a world full of graduates of elite universities.”

She decided to visit what was then the new Magner Center, and was mentored by Ms. Magner, who offered her an internship as a research analyst.

Now Ms. Khatiwada is a senior director at the IT consulting company Avanade, and she continues to collaborate with Ms. Magner as an alumni mentor at the center. She also hired a recent Brooklyn College graduate, and in February, organized a Brooklyn College Career Day at Avanade’s Manhattan offices (an event that Ms. Magner attended).

Ms. Khatiwada said her company already holds such events for more elite private universities. “Now I’m helping to build a similar pipeline to Brooklyn College,” she said. “Someone has to say, ‘These students are just as good.’”

PHOTO: Students at Brooklyn College on the first day of this term, Feb. 3. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Blesener for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Star Directors Pull Back the Curtain on How They Work; Theater Review***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y80-4YB1-JBG3-64NV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 20, 2020 Thursday 18:57 EST

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**Section:** THEATER

**Length:** 1163 words

**Byline:** Laura Cappelle

**Highlight:** Peter Brook and Thomas Ostermeier are presenting unfinished shows in Paris, offering a rare chance to see how their productions come together.

**Body**

Peter Brook and Thomas Ostermeier are presenting unfinished shows in Paris, offering a rare chance to see how their productions come together.

PARIS — How would you like to have a go at some Shakespeare? On Wednesday night, the British theater director Peter Brook, 94, sat onstage at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, as half a dozen audience members tried their hand at a line from “Othello.”

One inserted a long pause; another shouted it too close to the microphone, and the audience giggled. Brook listened intently. “Let’s just allow the words to vibrate,” he said.

The evening was a rare opportunity to hear from the director, too. For three nights, Brook, who has worked as a director since the 1960s and commands awed respect worldwide, was letting audiences in on his creative process. The project, called “Shakespeare Resonance,” was divided into two parts: an interactive lesson on the musical nature of Shakespeare’s verse, drawing on other plays, and an in-progress staging of “The Tempest.”

And Brook wasn’t the only esteemed director to pull back the curtain this month in Paris. At the Théâtre des Abbesses, the German director Thomas Ostermeier presented a preview of a production still in its early stages: “Who Killed My Father,” an adaptation of a 2018 book by Édouard Louis with the lead role played by the young literary star himself, in his stage debut.

It’s a vulnerable setup. Many artists hate presenting “unfinished” work, and in both cases, the actors had less than two weeks of rehearsals before the public were let in. Yes, the atmosphere at both performances was sympathetic: Everyone around me seemed to be on the edge of their seats, willing the artists on. When Brook, supported by one of his actors, and the rest of the cast first entered, the audience burst into spontaneous applause.

As a critic, workshop presentations are a tricky proposition. It would be churlish to review them like any other production or to complain about slip-ups (not that they were many in either performance). Yet this format also cuts through the pretense that we are dispassionate, all-knowing observers of fundamentally fixed works. Watching “Shakespeare Resonance” and “Who Killed My Father,” I didn’t care about the loose ends. I rooted for the artists involved, and I learned a great deal.

It’s a special privilege to listen to Brook talk about Shakespeare, a playwright he has returned to time and again over 70 years. He made his remarks in French, but the actors performed in English. While Brook’s main focus was on rhythm and inflections, he isn’t precious about accents: As often, he cast actors from all around the world in “Shakespeare Resonance.”

In the first part, Brook asked them to read a handful of lines from various plays, gently chiding them if their musical phrasing wasn’t to his satisfaction. On hearing Lear’s “Is man no more than this?”, he asked the performer to let the word “man” resonate “like a question.”

Brook moved to the first row of the orchestra level for the second part, and the cast launched into a one-hour condensed version of “The Tempest,” which pared the play down to an elliptical suite of scenes, performed with just a handful of props. At one point, when the mercurial Marcello Magni, playing Ariel, concluded a reply to Prospero with the words “were I human,” he lingered for a second on “human,” with a hint of regret. Suddenly, after hearing Brook’s earlier notes, his inflection stood out in the flow of the dialogue. It felt like being in on a trade secret.

Anyone hoping to see Brook direct in real time, however, will be disappointed. On the first night of “Shakespeare Resonance,” neither he nor his longtime collaborator, Marie-Hélène Estienne, intervened during the run-through, or commented afterward. Then again, the cast didn’t need much help. Alongside Magni, Ery Nzaramba grew nicely into the role of Prospero, occasionally channeling a sinister, Gollum-like voice. As Miranda, Brook’s granddaughter Maia Jemmett, continued the family tradition with endearing sincerity.

Brook has worked at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord since 1974, when he discovered the abandoned venue and brought it back without bothering to add a fresh coat of paint. The wear and tear on the walls and the arch framing the stage (on which Hiran Abeysekera, as Caliban, climbs dexterously) are an integral part of the play’s atmosphere. “Resonance is a word that holds special meaning for me in this place,” Brook said at the beginning. “At night, here, you can hear the sound of silence.”

Ostermeier, the director of Berlin’s Schaubühne playhouse, made himself scarcer during the workshop presentation of “Who Killed My Father.” He warned the audience at the start that he might interrupt if anything went wrong, but he didn’t have to. In this one-man-show, Louis held the stage for 90 minutes with genuine instinct and feeling.

It would be impressive under most circumstances, but Louis, 27, who shot to global fame with his novelistic memoir “The End of Eddy,” had never acted professionally before. While he writes in his books that theater classes were an escape for him during his teenage years, working with a star director like Ostermeier — who has [*previously adapted Louis’s autobiographical novel “A History of Violence”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/21/theater/berlin-theater-history-of-violence-decameron.html) — is like going from high-school music lessons straight to the Paris Opera.

“Who Killed My Father” starts with family history and ends in social critique, as Louis explores the government policies that cut his father’s welfare benefits and, according to him, worsened his dad’s health. Given that Louis wrote it, it might be unfair to say that he was far more believable than the actor and director who initially commissioned and performed “Who Killed My Father” for the stage, Stanislas Nordey.

Louis’ physical presence is more restrained, and he and Ostermeier are much bolder in highlighting his unease with the masculine norms his father imposes. He often wrings his hands, the very gesture that was deemed, he says, too effeminate in the ***working-class*** milieu of his childhood.

At several points, Louis dons a wig or a skirt and dances wildly, unselfconsciously, to the songs he loved as a child, shimmying and camping it up to Aqua’s “Barbie Girl” and Celine Dion’s “My Heart Will Go On.” He sings the latter to an empty armchair that stands for his father, with a raw-feeling mix of relief and hurt.

Perhaps it was the unvarnished magic of a workshop performance, but it would have taken a heart of stone not to indulge Louis, and repay his vulnerability with open arms.

Shakespeare Resonance. Directed by Peter Brook. Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord, through Feb. 21.

Who Killed My Father (work in progress). Directed by Thomas Ostermeier. Théâtre des Abbesses. Further performances at the Schaubühne Berlin, March 20-22.

PHOTO: The writer Édouard Louis stars in “Who Killed My Father,” an adaptation of his novelistic memoir directed by Thomas Ostermeier. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jean-Louis Fernandez FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Democrats Pile on Bernie Sanders as Urgency Grows***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y80-9HP1-DXY4-X2T5-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg, facing increasing pressure to slow the Vermont senator’s rise before Super Tuesday, criticized his record on gun control and his chances against President Trump.

**Body**

Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg, facing increasing pressure to slow the Vermont senator’s rise before Super Tuesday, criticized his record on gun control and his chances against President Trump.

LAS VEGAS — The day after a Democratic presidential debate brought out the candidates’ outrage at [*Michael R. Bloomberg*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/michael-bloomberg.html), the focus turned back toward Senator   [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/michael-bloomberg.html) of Vermont, who leads polls of Nevada, California and the nation.

Former Vice President [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/michael-bloomberg.html) spent Thursday hammering Mr. Sanders for past positions that were friendly to the gun industry. Mr. Bloomberg warned that nominating Mr. Sanders would be “a fatal error.” And former Mayor   [*Pete Buttigieg*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/michael-bloomberg.html) of South Bend, Ind., said he found it hard to imagine that Mr. Sanders could defeat President Trump in a general election.

“It would be a very, very tough sell,” Mr. Buttigieg told a crowd of students at a televised event at the University of Southern California. “I think it would be a tough sell with Mike Bloomberg, too. I’m saying we don’t have to choose between these two options. I’m saying there is another way.”

The attacks came two days before Nevada’s caucuses, the third contest of the Democratic presidential nominating calendar, and the day after a bitter debate that highlighted the dire situation that Mr. Biden and Mr. Buttigieg face. With Mr. Sanders favored to win in Nevada, they have limited time to try to stop his rise before the delegate-rich Super Tuesday contests on March 3 — when Mr. Bloomberg and his $300 million advertising campaign await.

Mr. Bloomberg was in one of those Super Tuesday states, Utah, on Thursday, telling voters in Salt Lake City that Mr. Sanders could not appeal to a broad enough array of people to win the White House.

“If we choose a candidate who appeals to a small base — like Senator Sanders — it will be a fatal error,” Mr. Bloomberg said. “We need Democrats and independents and Republicans to win.”

Both explicitly and obliquely, Mr. Biden and his campaign criticized Mr. Sanders’s record on gun control on Thursday, releasing a biting video of the Vermont senator saying in 2012, “I don’t know that you hold a gun manufacturer responsible for what obviously a deranged person does.”

In a speech at a Las Vegas community center later in the day, Mr. Biden implicitly criticized that position again, and more overtly jabbed Mr. Sanders for his past opposition to the Brady bill, which required background checks for gun purchases.

Yet after the event, a reporter asked whether Mr. Biden believed that Mr. Sanders had changed his views on guns.

“I do think he’s changed his views,” Mr. Biden allowed, “and I’m happy for that.”

By Thursday evening, however, he was prepared to hit Mr. Sanders’s record more directly.

“It’s not so much what you say you believe now,” he said at a CNN town hall. “It’s, what did you do and when did you do it? And the fact is, Bernie has had a very different record than me for a long time.”

Mr. Biden spelled it out: “He voted to exempt gun manufacturers from any liability. Zero. They can’t be sued.”

While Mr. Sanders’s rivals sought to chip away at his popularity, he lay low on Thursday. He appeared at no public events and conducted interviews with three local TV stations in Las Vegas and Reno, his campaign said.

In a brief exchange aired on CNN from his campaign hotel in Las Vegas, Mr. Sanders criticized the wealth of Mr. Bloomberg, who is worth more than $60 billion.

“Mr. Bloomberg himself is worth more, one person, than the bottom 125 million Americans,” he said.

The Sanders campaign was relieved on Thursday that he had emerged from Wednesday’s debate unscathed, a result that it attributed to his resilience and supporters’ loyalty.

“Senator Sanders’s opponents have thrown everything they can at him since the launch of his campaign and they’ve failed to stop his campaign to build a political revolution because of his consistent, lifelong record of standing with the ***working class***,” said Mike Casca, a campaign spokesman.

The Democratic candidates’ urgency to contrast themselves with Mr. Sanders came as expectations grew among rival campaigns and political operatives that he was likely to win Nevada’s caucuses on Saturday.

Perhaps in an acknowledgment that they are not likely to emerge on top, Mr. Biden, Mr. Buttigieg, Senator [*Amy Klobuchar*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/michael-bloomberg.html) of Minnesota and Senator   [*Elizabeth Warren*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/michael-bloomberg.html) of Massachusetts all plan to be out of the state when the caucus results start to be announced on Saturday afternoon.

“I think Nevada is unfathomable,” said David Axelrod, the architect of Barack Obama’s 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns. “Second place is anybody’s guess. And second place is meaningful by the unwritten measuring sticks that the punditocracy creates. Everybody is going to be watching who finishes second.”

More critical to the campaigns than Nevada are the 16 states and territories with contests on Super Tuesday. And reliable public polling data is available in just a few of those states.

In Texas, a recent University of Texas/Texas Tribune poll found Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders in a dead heat. In Virginia, a Monmouth University poll released this week found Mr. Bloomberg joining Mr. Sanders and Mr. Biden in a statistical tie for first place. Mr. Sanders has led recent public polls of California, the biggest Super Tuesday prize on the map.

Mr. Buttigieg exhibited unusual urgency on Thursday, sending a fund-raising appeal that for the first time issued a target he said the campaign must meet to stay afloat.

“We are the best shot at defeating Donald Trump,” he wrote. “But the reality is, if we can’t raise $13 million before Super Tuesday, we might never get that shot.”

Hours before that please-help-or-we’re-sunk appeal, Mr. Buttigieg’s campaign released an unsigned “state of the race” memo that warned Mr. Sanders was on the verge of building a “seemingly insurmountable delegate lead.”

Mr. Buttigieg, who has struggled for months to attract black and Latino voters, found himself facing a sometimes skeptical audience in Los Angeles.

Valerie Gutierrez, a junior at the University of Southern California who attended Mr. Buttigieg’s event, said she was undecided but leaning toward voting for him, despite fears about his limited appeal.

“The fact that he’s not able to get the diverse minority group under his coalition is a bit worrisome for me, because I’m someone from a minority background,” she said.

Michael Sutter, a U.S.C. senior who said he had already voted early for Mr. Buttigieg, echoed the former mayor’s warning that Mr. Sanders could not defeat Mr. Trump.

“Bernie is a little bit too far out there,” he said. “He’s going to scare people away.”

Sydney Ember contributed reporting from Las Vegas, Giovanni Russonello from New York and Louis Keene from Los Angeles.

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders at a rally in Reno on Tuesday. His campaign was relieved that he emerged from Wednesday’s debate unscathed, a result that it attributed to his resilience and supporters’ loyalty. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Max Whittaker for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 21, 2020

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[***Beyond Washington, a G.O.P. 'Totally Realigned'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61S9-M401-DXY4-X120-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Byline:** By Lisa Lerer and Reid J. Epstein

**Body**

As President Trump prepares to exit the White House, his ideas, including falsehoods and conspiracy theories, continue to exert a gravitational pull among grass-roots G.O.P. officials.

In Cleveland County, Okla., the chairman of the local Republican Party openly wondered ''why violence is unacceptable,'' just hours before a mob stormed the U.S. Capitol last week. ''What the crap do you think the American revolution was?'' he posted on Facebook. ''A game of friggin pattycake?''

Two days later, the Republican chairman of Nye County in Nevada posted a conspiracy-theory-filled letter on the local committee website, accusing Vice President Mike Pence of treason and calling the rioting a ''staged event meant to blame Trump supporters.''

And this week in Virginia, Amanda Chase, a two-term Republican state senator running for governor, maintained that President Trump might still be sworn into a second term on Jan. 20 and that Republicans who blocked that ''alternative plan'' would be punished by the president's supporters.

''They've got Mitch McConnell up there selling out the Republican Party,'' Ms. Chase, who spoke at the protest in Washington last week, said in an interview. ''The insurrection is actually the deep state with the politicians working against the people to overthrow our government.''

As Mr. Trump prepares to exit the White House and face a second impeachment trial in the Senate, his ideas continue to exert a gravitational pull in Republican circles across the country. The falsehoods, white nationalism and baseless conspiracy theories he peddled for four years have become ingrained at the grass-roots level of the party, embraced by activists, local leaders and elected officials even as a handful of Republicans in Congress break with the president in the final hour.

Interviews with more than 40 Republican state and local leaders conducted after the siege at the Capitol show that a vocal wing of the party maintains an almost-religious devotion to the president, and that these supporters don't hold him responsible for the mob violence last week. The opposition to him emerging among some Republicans has only bolstered their support of him.

And while some Republican leaders and strategists are eager to dismiss these loyalists as a fringe element of their party, many of them hold influential roles at the state and local level. These local officials are not only the conduits between voters and federal Republicans, but they also serve as the party's next generation of higher-level elected officials, and would bring a devotion to Trumpism should they ascend to Washington.

The continued support for the president is likely to maintain Mr. Trump's influence long after he leaves office. That could hamper the ability of the party to unify and reshape its agenda to help woo back moderate suburban voters who play a decisive role in winning battleground states and presidential elections.

At the same time, stepping away from the president could cost the party his supporters -- millions of new ***working-class*** voters who helped Mr. Trump capture more votes than any other Republican presidential candidate in history.

''It is priority No. 1 to retain Trump voters,'' said Harmeet Dhillon, an R.N.C. member from California. ''There is no way to do that with rapid change, tacking in a different direction. Voters are looking to the party for continuity and to stay the course.''

An Axios-Ipsos poll released Thursday showed that a majority of Republicans support the president's recent behavior and say he should be the Republican nominee in 2024.

Already, some from the Trump wing are threatening primary challenges to Republicans deemed insufficiently loyal to the president and fierce opposition to any Republican who works with the new Biden administration. With Mr. Trump barred from prominent social media platforms, they're immersing themselves in right-wing media outlets and waiting for new conservative social media platforms many say are being set up.

''The party is definitely with Trump,'' said Debbie Dooley, a conservative activist in Georgia. ''I'm seeing anger but it's kind of nuanced. There are people that are angrier at these Republicans that have turned their backs on Trump than they are at Democrats.''

That was evident shortly after 10 Republicans joined with Democrats to support impeachment on Wednesday. Within hours of the vote, Drew McKissick, the chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party, blasted out a statement attacking Representative Tom Rice, a Republican from his state who had backed impeachment.

''We completely disagree with this sham and to say I'm severely disappointed in Congressman Tom Rice would be an understatement,'' Mr. McKissick said.

Several House Republicans also called for Representative Liz Cheney of Wyoming, a high-profile voice for impeachment, to step down from her leadership position in the party's caucus.

Anthony Sabatini, a Florida state representative, described Ms. Cheney and other Republicans who voted for impeachment as ''artifacts,'' saying they were out of step in a party that has embraced a more populist platform opposed to foreign interventions and skeptical of free trade.

''She's like a fossil,'' he said of Ms. Cheney. ''The party is completely and totally realigned. Mitt Romney wouldn't win in a primary today. He would not be able to be elected dogcatcher today.''

For years, opponents to Mr. Trump argued that he would lose his hold on the party after a devastating event -- like unrest or violence that would shock the nation. Last week's breach of the Capitol appears to have presented that opportunity to Republicans who want to refocus the party around Mr. Trump's policies, and dispense with the polarizing language and divisive actions that marked his four years in office.

''In this world, I think there's lots of room for the Republican Party,'' said Juliana Bergeron, an R.N.C. member from New Hampshire. ''I'm not sure there's room for the Republican Party of Donald Trump.''

But for many grass-roots officials, the episode at the Capitol was not the inflection point that some Republicans in Washington assumed it would be.

''No, Trump does not have any blame, but the Democrats certainly do, along with all the Republicans that follow with them,'' said Billy Long, the Republican Party chairman in Bayfield County, Wis., who said he was planning to break away from the G.O.P. to start a local Trump-centric third party. ''The Trump movement is not over; like Trump said himself, we are just getting started.''

Republican voters, too, have largely drawn a sharp distinction between the president and those who stormed the Capitol, with 80 percent saying they do not hold Mr. Trump responsible for the rioting and 73 percent saying he is protecting democracy, according to polling released by Quinnipiac University this week.

Even in blue states, Republican leaders find themselves still grappling with Mr. Trump's politics of grievance. In the New Jersey State Senate, Republicans were split on a resolution condemning Mr. Trump for inciting the crowd that attacked the Capitol. The majority of Republicans chose to abstain, and many used their time on the floor to try to flip the debate to the protests against racial injustice over the summer, and had to be reprimanded by the Senate president for veering off topic.

Even if Mr. Trump fades from political life, losing his social media megaphone and bully pulpit, his supporters say his message will be carried forward by a party remade in his image and with strong structural support at all levels.

Since Mr. Trump's 2016 victory, 91 of the 168 positions on the Republican National Committee have turned over, with virtually all of the newcomers elected by Trump-aligned state parties.

The president received widespread praise at a national party meeting held two days after the siege, and was greeted with applause when he called into a breakfast gathering.

Already, battle lines are being drawn between the Trump wing and those who would like to move past the president.

Efforts to mount primary challenges to incumbent Republicans are underway in several states, with the encouragement of Mr. Trump. In Georgia, potential primary candidates are reaching out to conservative activists about challenging the Republican governor, lieutenant governor and secretary of state. Other targets may include Gov. Mike DeWine of Ohio and Senators Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and John Thune of South Dakota.

''The election was crooked and Republicans who could have done something did very little,'' said Dave Wesener, the chairman of the Republican Party in Crawford County, Wis. ''Those Republicans who have not been supportive I affectionately call RINOs. All RINOs should be primaried by conservatives.''

Mr. Wesener plans to give up his role in the local Republican Party next month to demonstrate his disappointment that the party did not fight harder to overturn the results of the election. He also plans to give up his Green Bay Packers season tickets, to protest the team's painting of racial justice slogans on its home field.

In Virginia, Ms. Chase is likely to face a multicandidate Republican field for governor, which will be decided at a convention of party activists this summer. Though state G.O.P. officials opted to avoid a primary in hopes of denying Ms. Chase their nomination at a convention, the party's activist base is filled with Mr. Trump's most die-hard supporters.

''I've been called Trump in heels,'' Ms. Chase said. ''The regular grass roots of Virginia who are not part of the Republican establishment elite, they're supporting me.''

The siege at the Capitol last week has drawn an even brighter line dividing the party. State legislators from more than a dozen states attended the protest, with at least one facing criminal charges for breaching the Capitol as part of the riot. Meshawn Maddock, an activist who is poised to be the incoming Michigan Republican Party co-chairwoman, helped organize busloads of supporters from her state to travel to the Capitol. In the days after the violence, she joined a conservative online group where some participants openly discussed civil war and martial law.

Many continue to defend their role in the event.

''Those who hold sway in Congress today look out on much of the country with disdain. Trump has never done that,'' said State Representative David Eastman of Alaska, who attended the protest. ''I, along with nearly a million other Americans, was glad to travel to D.C. to hear the president speak and thank him for his four years in office. Those in today's ruling class will never truly understand why.''

Nick Corasaniti contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/14/us/politics/trump-republicans.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/14/us/politics/trump-republicans.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Thousands of armed National Guard members were rushed to Washington to bolster security for next week's inaugural celebration. (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. KIRKPATRICK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1)

State Senator Amanda Chase, a candidate for governor in Virginia, maintains that President Trump might still be sworn in. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALYSSA SCHUKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

''It is priority No. 1 to retain Trump voters,'' said Harmeet Dhillon, a Republican National Committee member in California. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EVAN VUCCI/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Many Trump loyalists hold influential roles in the Republican Party at the state and local level. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNY HOLSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

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[***He Has the Résumé and the Money. But Votes?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62T9-MB41-JBG3-60HV-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jeffery C. Mays

**Body**

Shaun Donovan Has the Résumé and the Money. He Just Needs the Votes.

The New York City mayoral race is one of the most consequential political contests in a generation, with immense challenges awaiting the winner. This is the sixth in a series of profiles of the major candidates.

Five years ago, a powerful New York-based political strategist was rooting around for someone whom voters could envision as the city's next mayor, someone with the right type of experience and gravitas to take on the weakened incumbent, Bill de Blasio.

The strategist, Bradley Tusk, believed he had found his candidate: Shaun Donovan, a veteran of the Obama administration and a former city commissioner under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. Mr. Tusk believed that Mr. Donovan's credentials would be irresistible to voters, saying then that New Yorkers ''want the competency of Bloomberg, but they want something that's more progressive.''

Mr. Donovan recently recalled that moment with some wistfulness. He remembered thinking how he had missed so much time with his two sons because of his work for President Barack Obama, first as housing secretary and then budget director. He decided then that running for mayor would have to wait.

Mr. Tusk never found his candidate, and Mr. de Blasio went on to easily capture his second term.

Things have since changed dramatically. Mr. de Blasio is in his final year as mayor, and Mr. Donovan is one of 15 Democrats and Republicans seeking to replace him. Mr. Tusk's firm now manages the campaign of Andrew Yang, one of the race's front-runners.

But Mr. Donovan, 55, has not been able to live up to Mr. Tusk's initial ambition. He remains anchored among the second tier of mayoral contenders, despite the support from a super PAC -- funded almost exclusively by his father -- that has spent $5.5 million so far, much of it on ads trumpeting Mr. Donovan's accomplishments.

He has tried attacking the record of Mr. de Blasio, decrying what he saw as the mayor's poor management of everything from city parks to the census and even the food supply, and drawing a contrast to his time in the Bloomberg administration with its aura of efficiency.

Voters want change, Mr. Donovan says. ''They're sick of the political status quo in New York, but they also want experience,'' he said after a news conference last month at Pelham Parkway Houses in the Bronx, where he criticized Mr. de Blasio's management of public housing. ''New Yorkers don't want a rookie as mayor.''

Yet many of Mr. Donovan's news conferences, where he lays out detailed plans to end homelessness or address gun violence, are sparsely attended. His broadside attacks on other candidates are mostly ignored. Viewers of the first official televised mayoral debate talked more about the expansive HGTV-ready kitchen in Mr. Donovan's background than about his proposals.

Mr. Donovan entered the race confident that his track record of implementing his ideas about reducing inequality while working for the country's first Black president would win voters, but instead has faced criticism that his privileged background left him out of touch with middle-income New Yorkers. He has announced reams of technocratic plans that he considers among the most progressive in the race but has not secured support from the city's progressive establishment.

Mitchell L. Moss, a professor of urban policy and planning at New York University who advised Mr. Bloomberg during his first campaign for mayor in 2001, said that Mr. Donovan had not taken off because ''New Yorkers aren't electing a résumé, we're electing a person.''

Professor Moss effusively praised Mr. Donovan, saying he was one of the smartest people he knew, a common refrain. Mr. Donovan almost single-handedly put New York ''back in the housing business'' when he worked for Mr. Bloomberg, he added.

''Donovan has everything on paper,'' Professor Moss said. ''He may be the right candidate at the wrong time.''

A 'look in the mirror moment'

The realization that he might run for mayor, Mr. Donovan said, came more than four years ago, on the final evening of the Obama administration.

He was among roughly 30 of the administration's longest-tenured officials who gathered on the Truman Balcony of the White House with the president and the first lady, Michelle Obama, reflecting on their past and worrying about the nation's future with Donald J. Trump as president.

''It was a look in the mirror moment,'' Mr. Donovan said. ''How could this have happened, and what are you going to do about it?''

Mr. Donovan grew up on the Upper East Side of Manhattan and attended the prestigious Dalton School. His parents divorced when he was 8 years old, a period that he recalled as difficult for him and his three siblings. He bounced between his parents' apartments, and ''there was lots of feeding ourselves,'' Mr. Donovan said.

''The profound thing for me was being surrounded by people who were wealthy and not happy and not making a difference in the world,'' Mr. Donovan said, recalling how that sense was compounded after he graduated from Harvard University and a friend from Dalton committed suicide.

By then, Mr. Donovan had begun interning for the National Coalition for the Homeless. Mr. Donovan said his father, Michael Donovan, who started a business that became one of the largest ad technology companies in the world, encouraged him to follow his heart in choosing a career, telling him that he could do anything ''except come work for me.''

Mr. Donovan went on to earn master's degrees in public administration and architecture from Harvard. When he was at graduate school in Harvard, Mr. Donovan learned about the Nehemiah Housing Project, which used a community planning model to build thousands of homes in the neglected Brooklyn neighborhoods of Brownsville and East New York.

Bishop Johnny Ray Youngblood, who was then with East Brooklyn Congregations, spearheaded the project. Mr. Donovan read about the effort and sought Bishop Youngblood out.

''He was bright-eyed and bushy tailed,'' said Bishop Youngblood, who recalled sending Mr. Donovan to California for training as a community organizer and saw his follow-through as proof that Mr. Donovan ''was more serious than I thought he was.''

Bishop Youngblood connected Mr. Donovan with the Community Preservation Corporation, an affordable housing developer in New York. Mr. Donovan eventually landed a job with the Clinton administration in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, where he designed a program that helped to preserve moderate- and low-income units across the country.

In 2004, he became Mr. Bloomberg's housing commissioner and worked to reduce homelessness by giving housing vouchers to people being released from Rikers Island. Homelessness declined while Mr. Donovan was in charge of housing.

Housing advocates credit Mr. Donovan with fighting the earliest wave of private equity firms who were buying multifamily properties and forcing out rent-stabilized tenants; they said he effectively worked with tenant groups to identify at-risk buildings and preserve their affordability.

In 2008, Mr. Donovan helped launch the Center for New York City Neighborhoods, which is dedicated to helping people avoid foreclosure and to promote homeownership, an idea that Mr. Donovan believes put him on Mr. Obama's radar.

Craig Gurian of the Anti-Discrimination Center, a fair-housing group that is suing the city to end community preference in affordable housing lotteries, claiming it reinforces segregation, said Mr. Donovan missed opportunities as the city's housing chief to address the problem. Later, when he joined the Obama administration, Mr. Donovan failed to vigorously enforce a similar suit against Westchester County, Mr. Gurian said.

''He's a very smart guy. He knows about housing and he's had the power to do stuff, yet he didn't,'' Mr. Gurian said. ''It just doesn't jibe with his current persona in the mayoral race.''

Mr. Donovan served as Mr. Obama's budget director, led the response to Hurricane Sandy and was secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, where he helped reduce veteran homelessness by almost 40 percent and negotiated the $25 billion settlement with mortgage servicers after the foreclosure crisis.

Eric H. Holder Jr., who served as United States attorney general under Mr. Obama, said Mr. Donovan had an ''expansive view'' of his positions in his quest to help Americans. ''He's a guy who hasn't forgotten why he wanted to be involved in government,'' Mr. Holder said in an interview.

Mr. Donovan also created the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program, which allows private developers to renovate and manage public housing units. Tenants have worried that the program might lead to displacement, an idea Mr. Donovan rejects.

Afua Atta-Mensah, executive director of Community Voices Heard Power, said that many residents found Mr. Donovan to be ''smart, honest and open'' when he defended the rental assistance program during a meeting with mayoral candidates but that he failed to see the gap between ''doing a massive plan from D.C.'' and ''lived experience.''

The group endorsed Maya Wiley, Mr. de Blasio's former counsel, for mayor, and ranked Dianne Morales, a former nonprofit executive, as its second choice.

A perception of privilege

Mr. Donovan is fond of saying that he's running a ''campaign of ideas'' and is in the midst of unveiling 70 ideas in 70 days (Day 36: strengthening the regional food system; Day 42: fast-tracking felony gun cases).

His campaign mailed a 200-page book of ideas to the homes of journalists covering the race for mayor and to elected officials and other candidates. There are proposals for everything from how to alleviate public health disparities to how to fix the New York Jets, a parody plan he unveiled on April Fools' Day. The more left-leaning of those ideas, he said, differentiated him from the more moderate candidates in the field.

If elected, he has promised to provide poor children with bonds to eliminate the racial wealth gap; create 15-minute neighborhoods where a good school, fresh food, transit, a park and health care are within a short walk; remove the New York Police Department from city schools; and cut $3 billion from the police and corrections budget by the end of his first term and spend the money on underserved neighborhoods.

Closing the racial wealth gap has been identified as one of the best ways to address systemic racial inequality in America. Under Mr. Donovan's equity bonds proposal, every child born in New York City would receive an annual payment of $2,000, which would go into an account that would be accessible when they turn 18, and could have $50,000 waiting to pay for college or start a business when they turn 18. Mr. Donovan proposes using a combination of private, city and federal money to fund the costly effort.

Cutting money from both the police and corrections budget shows a willingness to dive below the surface on a nuanced issue such as defund the police and look for creative solutions, Mr. Donovan said.

On a recent visit to the Bronx that included a stop at the Futa Islamic Center for Friday evening prayer services, Mr. Donovan talked about the redevelopment of the South Bronx. The neighborhood was not far from Charlotte Street, the burned-out stretch of vacant lots and rubble near Boston Road visited by President Jimmy Carter in 1977. It is now filled with suburban style homes with lawns, a fabled tale of urban renewal.

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''I am grateful,'' he said, ''but I am also angry.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/30/nyregion/shaun-donovan-nyc-mayor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/30/nyregion/shaun-donovan-nyc-mayor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Shaun Donovan at the Futa Islamic Center in the Bronx, not far from where he began his campaign. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JORDAN GALE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1)

Shaun Donovan, above, is more than halfway through unveiling 70 ideas in 70 days. Mr. Donovan in 2014, far left, when he was the budget direc- tor for President Barack Obama. Near left, speaking about homelessness in the Bronx with Michael Cotton, a resident of the borough. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JORDAN GALE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

STEPHEN CROWLEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

On the anniversary of George Floyd's death, Mr. Donovan was arrested with a small group of protesters at the en- trance to the Holland Tunnel. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHANIE KEITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A20)

**Load-Date:** May 31, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Shaun Donovan Has the Résumé and the Money. He Just Needs the Votes.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62T9-5J21-DXY4-X10V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 31, 2021 Monday 09:09 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 2489 words

**Byline:** Jeffery C. Mays

**Highlight:** In running for mayor of New York, Mr. Donovan is arguing that his leadership experience offers what the city needs in a time of crisis.

**Body**

Shaun Donovan Has the Résumé and the Money. He Just Needs the Votes.

The New York City [*mayoral race*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) is one of the most consequential political contests in a generation, with immense challenges awaiting the winner. This is the sixth in a series of profiles of [*the major candidates*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race).

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results.*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race)]

Five years ago, a powerful New York-based political strategist [*was rooting around*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) for someone whom voters could envision as the city’s next mayor, someone with the right type of experience and gravitas to take on the weakened incumbent, Bill de Blasio.

The strategist, Bradley Tusk, believed he had found his candidate: [*Shaun Donovan*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race), a veteran of the Obama administration and a former city commissioner under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. Mr. Tusk believed that Mr. Donovan’s credentials would be irresistible to voters, [*saying then*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) that New Yorkers “want the competency of Bloomberg, but they want something that’s more progressive.”

Mr. Donovan recently recalled that moment with some wistfulness. He remembered thinking how he had missed so much time with his two sons because of his work for President Barack Obama, first as housing secretary and then budget director. He decided then that running for mayor would have to wait.

Mr. Tusk never found his candidate, and Mr. de Blasio went on to [*easily capture his second term*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race).

Things have since changed significantly. Mr. de Blasio is in his final year as mayor, and Mr. Donovan is one of 15 Democrats and Republicans seeking to replace him. Mr. Tusk’s firm now manages the campaign of [*Andrew Yang*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race), one of the race’s front-runners.

But Mr. Donovan, 55, has not been able to live up to Mr. Tusk’s initial ambition. He remains anchored among the second tier of mayoral contenders, despite the support from a super PAC — [*funded almost exclusively by his father*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) — that has spent $5.5 million so far, much of it on ads trumpeting Mr. Donovan’s accomplishments.

He has tried attacking the record of Mr. de Blasio, decrying what he saw as the mayor’s poor management of everything from city parks to the census and even the food supply, and drawing a contrast to his time in the Bloomberg administration with its aura of efficiency.

Voters want change, Mr. Donovan says. “They’re sick of the political status quo in New York, but they also want experience,” he said after a news conference last month at Pelham Parkway Houses in the Bronx, where he criticized Mr. de Blasio’s management of public housing. “New Yorkers don’t want a rookie as mayor.”

Yet many of Mr. Donovan’s news conferences, where he lays out detailed plans to end homelessness or address gun violence, are sparsely attended. His broadside attacks on other candidates are mostly ignored. Viewers of the [*first official televised mayoral debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) talked more about the expansive HGTV-ready kitchen in Mr. Donovan’s background than about his proposals.

Mr. Donovan entered the race confident that his track record of implementing his ideas about reducing inequality while working for the country’s first Black president would win voters, but instead he has faced criticism that his privileged background left him out of touch with middle-income New Yorkers. He has announced reams of technocratic plans that he considers among the most progressive in the race but has not secured support from the city’s progressive establishment.

Mitchell L. Moss, a professor of urban policy and planning at New York University who advised Mr. Bloomberg during his first campaign for mayor in 2001, said that Mr. Donovan had not taken off because “New Yorkers aren’t electing a résumé, we’re electing a person.”

Professor Moss effusively praised Mr. Donovan, saying he was one of the smartest people he knew, a common refrain. Mr. Donovan almost single-handedly put New York “back in the housing business” when he worked for Mr. Bloomberg, he added.

“Donovan has everything on paper,” Professor Moss said. “He may be the right candidate at the wrong time.”

A ‘look in the mirror moment’

The realization that he might run for mayor, Mr. Donovan said, came more than four years ago, on the final evening of the Obama administration.

He was among roughly 30 of the administration’s longest-tenured officials who gathered on the Truman Balcony of the White House with the president and the first lady, Michelle Obama, reflecting on their past and worrying about the nation’s future with Donald J. Trump as president.

“It was a look in the mirror moment,” Mr. Donovan said. “How could this have happened, and what are you going to do about it?”

Mr. Donovan grew up on the Upper East Side of Manhattan and attended the prestigious Dalton School. His parents divorced when he was 8 years old, a period that he recalled as difficult for him and his three siblings. He bounced between his parents’ apartments, and “there was lots of feeding ourselves,” Mr. Donovan said.

“The profound thing for me was being surrounded by people who were wealthy and not happy and not making a difference in the world,” Mr. Donovan said, recalling how that sense was compounded after he graduated from Harvard University and a friend from Dalton committed suicide.

By then, Mr. Donovan had begun interning for the National Coalition for the Homeless. Mr. Donovan said his father, Michael Donovan, who started a business that became one of the largest ad technology companies in the world, encouraged him to follow his heart in choosing a career, telling him that he could do anything “except come work for me.”

Mr. Donovan went on to earn master’s degrees in public administration and architecture from Harvard. When he was at graduate school in Harvard, Mr. Donovan learned about the Nehemiah Housing Project, which used a community planning model to build thousands of homes in the neglected Brooklyn neighborhoods of Brownsville and East New York.

Bishop [*Johnny Ray Youngblood*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race), who was then with East Brooklyn Congregations, spearheaded the project. Mr. Donovan read about the effort and sought Bishop Youngblood out.

“He was bright-eyed and bushy tailed,” said Bishop Youngblood, who recalled sending Mr. Donovan to California for training as a community organizer and saw his follow-through as proof that Mr. Donovan “was more serious than I thought he was.”

Bishop Youngblood connected Mr. Donovan with the Community Preservation Corporation, an affordable housing developer in New York. Mr. Donovan eventually landed a job with the Clinton administration in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, where he designed a program that helped to preserve moderate- and low-income units across the country.

In 2004, he became Mr. Bloomberg’s housing commissioner and worked to reduce homelessness by giving housing vouchers to people being released from Rikers Island. Homelessness declined while Mr. Donovan was in charge of housing.

Housing advocates credit Mr. Donovan with fighting the earliest wave of private equity firms who were buying multifamily properties and forcing out rent-stabilized tenants; they said he effectively worked with tenant groups to identify at-risk buildings and preserve their affordability.

In 2008, Mr. Donovan helped launch the [*Center for New York City Neighborhoods*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race), which is dedicated to helping people avoid foreclosure and to promote homeownership, an idea that Mr. Donovan believes put him on Mr. Obama’s radar.

Craig Gurian of the [*Anti-Discrimination Center*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race), a fair-housing group that is suing the city to end community preference in affordable housing lotteries, claiming it reinforces segregation, said Mr. Donovan missed opportunities as the city’s housing chief to address the problem. Later, when he joined the Obama administration, Mr. Donovan failed to [*vigorously enforce*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) a similar[*suit against Westchester County*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race), Mr. Gurian said.

“He’s a very smart guy. He knows about housing and he’s had the power to do stuff, yet he didn’t,” Mr. Gurian said. “It just doesn’t jibe with his current persona in the mayoral race.”

Mr. Donovan served as Mr. Obama’s budget director, led the response to Hurricane Sandy and was secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, where he helped reduce veteran homelessness by almost 40 percent and negotiated the $25 billion settlement with mortgage servicers after the foreclosure crisis.

Eric H. Holder Jr., who served as United States attorney general under Mr. Obama, said Mr. Donovan had an “expansive view” of his positions in his quest to help Americans. “He’s a guy who hasn’t forgotten why he wanted to be involved in government,” Mr. Holder said in an interview.

Mr. Donovan also created the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program, which allows private developers to renovate and manage public housing units. Tenants have worried that the program might lead to displacement, an idea Mr. Donovan rejects.

Afua Atta-Mensah, executive director of Community Voices Heard Power, said that many residents found Mr. Donovan to be “smart, honest and open” when he defended the rental assistance program during a meeting with mayoral candidates but that he failed to see the gap between “doing a massive plan from D.C.” and “lived experience.”

The group endorsed Maya Wiley, Mr. de Blasio’s former counsel, for mayor, and ranked Dianne Morales, a former nonprofit executive, as its second choice.

A perception of privilege

Mr. Donovan is fond of saying that he’s running a “campaign of ideas” and is in the midst of unveiling 70 ideas in 70 days (Day 36: strengthening the regional food system; Day 42: fast-tracking felony gun cases).

His campaign mailed a 200-page book of ideas to the homes of journalists covering the race for mayor and to elected officials and other candidates. There are proposals for everything from how to alleviate public health disparities to how to fix the New York Jets, a parody plan he [*unveiled on April Fools’ Day.*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) The more left-leaning of those ideas, he said, differentiated him from the more moderate candidates in the field.

If elected, he has promised to provide poor children with bonds to eliminate the racial wealth gap; create 15-minute neighborhoods where a good school, fresh food, transit, a park and health care are within a short walk; remove the New York Police Department from city schools; and [*cut $3 billion from the police*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) and corrections budget by the end of his first term and spend the money on underserved neighborhoods.

[*Closing the racial wealth gap*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) has been identified as one of the best ways to address systemic racial inequality in America. Under Mr. Donovan’s equity bonds proposal, every child born in New York City would receive an annual payment of $2,000, which would go into an account that would be accessible when they turn 18, and could have $50,000 waiting to pay for college or start a business when they turn 18. Mr. Donovan proposes using a combination of private, city and federal money to fund the costly effort.

Cutting money from both the police and corrections budget shows a willingness to dive below the surface on a nuanced issue[*such as defund the police*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/nyc-mayor-race) and look for creative solutions, Mr. Donovan said.

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PHOTOS: Shaun Donovan at the Futa Islamic Center in the Bronx, not far from where he began his campaign. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JORDAN GALE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1); Shaun Donovan, above, is more than halfway through unveiling 70 ideas in 70 days. Mr. Donovan in 2014, far left, when he was the budget direc- tor for President Barack Obama. Near left, speaking about homelessness in the Bronx with Michael Cotton, a resident of the borough. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JORDAN GALE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; STEPHEN CROWLEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES); On the anniversary of George Floyd’s death, Mr. Donovan was arrested with a small group of protesters at the en- trance to the Holland Tunnel. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHANIE KEITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A20)

**Load-Date:** June 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘Life of a Klansman’ Tells Ugly Truths About America, Past and Present; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60HB-7KW1-JBG3-63JG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 4, 2020 Tuesday 22:31 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1431 words

**Byline:** Walter Isaacson

**Highlight:** In his latest book, Edward Ball retraces an ancestor’s involvement with the Ku Klux Klan in order to shed light on the country’s legacy of white supremacy.

**Body**

LIFE OF A KLANSMAN

A Family History in White Supremacy

By Edward Ball

When his mother died in 2003, the writer Edward Ball went to New Orleans, where her family had lived for generations, to bury her and sort through her belongings. Among her papers were documents that had been collected by her late aunt, including tales about the man who was known in the family as “our Klansman.”

Ball had already written, in 1998, a deeply reported National Book Award-winning history, “[*Slaves in the Family*](https://www.nytimes.com/1998/03/01/books/skeletons-in-the-family-closet.html?searchResultPosition=1),” for which he tracked down descendants of those who had once been enslaved by his South Carolina ancestors on his father’s side. In his new book, “Life of a Klansman,” he follows a similar course, taking the reader along with him on a journey of discovery as he teases out facts, engages in speculation and shares his emotions about the sad saga of Constant Lecorgne, an unsuccessful carpenter and embittered racist who was a great-great-grandfather on his mother’s side.

The result is a haunting tapestry of interwoven stories that inform us not just about our past but about the resentment-bred demons that are all too present in our society today. “This is a family story,” he writes. “Yet it is not a family story wrapped in sugar, the way some people like to serve them.” The family is not just his, it’s our nation’s.

[ Read an excerpt from [*“Life of a Klansman.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1998/03/01/books/skeletons-in-the-family-closet.html?searchResultPosition=1) ]

Lecorgne, born in 1832, was raised in a New Orleans that was, as it has been throughout its history, very complex racially and ethnically. About a quarter of the population were French-speaking whites, a quarter were English-speaking whites, a quarter were free mixed-race Creoles and a quarter were slaves. The Lecorgnes were in the first category, but they rented a home from a free French-speaking woman of color.

Because he has few documents, Ball indulges in a lot of surmises and speculations, perhaps a bit too many for my taste. He pictures the young boy Lecorgne walking with his family the four blocks to Congo Square, where the slaves were allowed to drum and dance on Sunday afternoons. There is a sexual tension that the boy finds both attractive and appalling. “I think I can begin to see, in Congo Square, a script and a stage, a place where Blackness and whiteness meet,” Ball writes. “Complications ensue. They move apart. Eventually the script calls for a crescendo. Blackness and whiteness collide, and the ending, for our Klansman, is an explosion.”

Lecorgne is the unsuccessful and unpopular middle child of a large family. He tries to make a living as a carpenter, but he descends into what is known in the local parlance as petits blancs, the poor ***working-class*** whites. Resentments accrue. When he marries, his wife’s family gives him a household slave as a dowry, but he has to sell her for $500 to afford a home.

The Civil War offers Lecorgne an outlet for his resentments and a chance to finally earn a little respect from his family and neighbors. But even there he fails. After joining one of Louisiana’s militias as a captain, he is demoted to a second lieutenant. On a train trip to Virginia he gets into a melee and, along with much of his unit, is court-martialed. At a public ceremony, he and his comrades have one-half of their scalps shaved and are cashiered. Lecorgne heads back to New Orleans in disgrace.

Under Reconstruction, the city becomes integrated. Blacks can vote, testify against whites in court and sit where they want on the streetcars; a few even attend integrated schools. Lecorgne’s neighborhood in uptown New Orleans, around where Napoleon Avenue meets the river (which is where I grew up), becomes mixed, with Creoles, Germans, Irish, Blacks and mulattoes all living on the same blocks. It’s nice to think what the city, and our nation, might have been had that progression continued. But among the whites, especially the petits blancs, resentments built.

The clubhouses for resentful poor whites are the neighborhood firehouses. Lecorgne joined one just off Napoleon Avenue, the Home Hook &amp; Ladder Company, housed in a Romanesque building with a first-floor facade clad in stone and a second in red brick. Its membership suddenly swelled during Reconstruction to 85 men, far more than were necessary to fight off the neighborhood’s house fires. Instead, as Ball writes, “the firehouses play a big part in the tale of the Ku-klux,” which is what the loose-knit confederation of white supremacist organizations came to be called.

Lecorgne was a minor player in this movement. But for that reason his tale is valuable, both for understanding his times and for understanding our own; he allows us a glimpse of who becomes one of the mass of followers of racist movements, and why.

His one recorded inglorious moment came in early 1873. With Black support, a Republican was elected governor, and the local white militias took up arms to resist his rule. Lecorgne and a group of armed men gathered with the goal of taking over their neighborhood police precinct station, hoping it would spark a wider white uprising. Although the newspapers referred to them as “Ku-Kluxers,” the rebel raiders most likely did not wear robes and hoods. That practice was mainly for rural marauders. They were successful, but the following night the police staged a counterattack. As Lecorgne hid in a staircase, his cousin was wounded and a friend was killed.

Lecorgne surrendered and was carried away to the city jail. In the indictment, which misspelled his name, he is accused of treason and violating federal law for having “unlawfully maliciously and traitorously conspired” to attack state authorities. But a local judge quickly dismissed all the charges. That low point was the high point of his life.

Near the end of his book, Ball makes a fascinating digression. It involves a prominent person of color who lived in New Orleans at the same time as Lecorgne. Louis Charles Roudanez was a medical doctor, trained in France and at Dartmouth, who published The New Orleans Tribune, a daily newspaper for the Black community. An homme de couleur libre, Roudanez married a free woman of color. While researching his own family, Ball decided to look for the descendants of the Roudanez family.

He finds one of the physician-publisher’s great-great-grandchildren, named Mark Roudané, living in a leafy subdivision of St. Paul, Minn. “He was raised white, and he appears white,” Ball writes of Roudané. “In middle age he learned that according to the one-drop rule of blackness, he was not white.” Roudané did not know the tale of his father’s ancestors, or even the Roudanez spelling of his family name, until he stumbled across some family documents when he was 55. As happened with Ball, the discovery of a bit of family history leads Roudané on a quest. “When my father died, in 2005, I was going through his papers and throwing stuff away, and I found an unmarked binder,” Roudané tells Ball. It contained papers showing how his father, who was designated as “colored” on his birth certificate, had forsaken his distinguished roots, changed the spelling of his name as a young man, gone to Tulane by passing as white and then moved to the Midwest. Despite this history, or perhaps because of it, he became a resentful white racist. “When it came to talking about Black people,” Mark Roudané told Ball, “all this venom would come out. I thought, ‘Why is my dad being ugly?’ I didn’t understand it.”

The interconnected strands of race and history give Ball’s entrancing stories a Faulknerian resonance. In Ball’s retelling of his family saga, the sins and stains of the past are still very much with us, not something we can dismiss by blaming them on misguided ancestors who died long ago. “It is not a distortion to say that Constant’s rampage 150 years ago helps, in some impossible-to-measure way, to clear space for the authority and comfort of whites living now — not just for me and for his 50 or 60 descendants, but for whites in general,” Ball writes. “I am an heir to Constant’s acts of terror. I do not deny it, and the bitter truth makes me sick at the stomach.”

Walter Isaacson is a professor of history at Tulane. LIFE OF A KLANSMAN A Family History in White Supremacy By Edward Ball Illustrated. 395 pp. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. $28.

PHOTO: A Klansman photographed in 1871. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM PRIVATE COLLECTION/PICTURE RESEARCH CONSULTANTS AND ARCHIVES)

**Related Articles**

* [*Can You Dismantle White Supremacy With Words?*](https://www.nytimes.com/1998/03/01/books/skeletons-in-the-family-closet.html?searchResultPosition=1)

1. [*When White Supremacists Overthrew an Elected Government*](https://www.nytimes.com/1998/03/01/books/skeletons-in-the-family-closet.html?searchResultPosition=1)
2. [*In ‘Stony the Road,’ Henry Louis Gates Jr. Captures the History and Images of the Fraught Years After the Civil War*](https://www.nytimes.com/1998/03/01/books/skeletons-in-the-family-closet.html?searchResultPosition=1)

**Load-Date:** September 2, 2020

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[***For Homeless Girl Scouts, It’s Not All Badges and Cookies; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YXX-GFW1-JBG3-627P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 19, 2020 Tuesday 12:37 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1304 words

**Byline:** Samuel G. Freedman

**Highlight:** Nikita Stewart’s article about Troop 6000 landed them on the front page. Her book should lead to a bigger conversation about their struggles.

**Body**

TROOP 6000

The Girl Scout Troop That Began in a Shelter and Inspired the World

By Nikita Stewart

On the morning after Easter Sunday in 2017, the front page of The New York Times featured a [*different sort of resurrection story*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/16/nyregion/living-by-the-girl-scout-law-even-without-a-home.html). This one, written by the reporter Nikita Stewart, told of a [*Girl Scout*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/16/nyregion/living-by-the-girl-scout-law-even-without-a-home.html) troop that homeless families had formed in the threadbare hotel that functioned as a city shelter.

As an uplifting testament, the article went viral (in the pre-Covid meaning of the term) and attracted an enormous amount of celebrity support for the dozen or so girls in Troop 6000. They were feted on the TV talk show “The View,” hosted by the New York Liberty of the W.N.B.A. and given a supply of Jessica Alba’s name-brand shampoo. The founding mother of the troop, Giselle Burgess, received a $6,000 check from Jimmy Fallon on his late-night show.

That groundswell of response, with its complicated alloy of heartfelt generosity and overdog guilt, was surely the boon and the bane for “Troop 6000,” the book that Stewart has expanded from her initial article. I do not mean in any way to diminish Stewart’s impressive journalistic skills when I wonder if this book would have existed without the boldface-name buzz that Troop 6000 received. Indeed, the publisher has packaged this book as a feel-good yarn, complete with a hyperbolic subtitle about how the homeless girls “inspired the world.”

To her great credit, Stewart has too much integrity and clarity to go along with the fairy-tale version of Troop 6000’s experience. She problematizes the myth, relentlessly returning to the debilitating chaos of homelessness itself.

Yet Stewart also has to struggle with the result of her own article. Troop 6000 was only several months into existence at that point. What would have been the more normal, gradual and genuine effort to build and maintain a [*Girl Scout*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/16/nyregion/living-by-the-girl-scout-law-even-without-a-home.html) troop in extremis was overwhelmed by its instant vogue. Any journalist or author who practices immersion reporting has to worry about the effect of his, her, or their presence on the subjects and events being observed. But in my decades of experience, I have never encountered a more nettlesome example than “Troop 6000.”

Certainly, the story of Troop 6000 contains irresistible elements for both its writer and her readers. Giselle Burgess, the dominant figure in the book, embodies an essential and often overlooked truth about homelessness: Many of its victims work. As “Troop 6000” opens, Burgess is straining to pay rent for her family of six on her salary as the office manager for a Manhattan dentist. She is a loving and devoted mother, and nothing short of a brilliant crisis manager in navigating the family’s journey through the homelessness bureaucracy.

The nearly fatal flaw is Burgess’s choice of men. She has five children by three fathers. One has vanished entirely and another lands in jail after Burgess breaks off with him because of his violent outbursts.

Then again, a certain president of a certain country of ours happens to have five children by three mothers. But as Stewart’s assiduous reporting implicitly shows, in the ruthless economic system of modern America, if one is born into a ***working-class*** family rather than a real estate empire, then all the emotional strength and practical canniness that Burgess possesses may not be sufficient to save her family.

Before Burgess’s family became homeless, she had placed her older daughters into a Girl Scout troop sponsored by a church in her Queens neighborhood. Burgess had assumed that scouting was “an elusive, uncool, white-people thing. Badges? Cookies? Who needs it?” — but she, as much as her daughters, ends up thriving on the sisterhood, goal-setting and mercifully predictable schedule. To Burgess’s own experience, Stewart adds a helpful bit of history on the Girl Scouts’ long history of reaching across lines of color and class.

When Burgess and her children finally arrive at the Sleep Inn, a de facto homeless shelter tantalizingly within sight of Manhattan’s bejeweled skyline, she comes up with the improbable plan of starting a troop there. In that endeavor, she is greatly helped by two other heroes of the book — the City Council member Jimmy Van Bramer, who had been homeless during his own childhood, and the Girl Scouts administrator Meridith Maskara, who is now C.E.O. of the organization for greater New York.

Despite help from those two allies, Burgess faces exasperating obstacles in forming a troop with the rules regulating life in homeless shelters. Families cannot visit one another in their assigned rooms. Food cannot be cooked on-site. Field trips require a welter of paperwork. The iconic [*Girl Scout cookies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/16/nyregion/living-by-the-girl-scout-law-even-without-a-home.html) cannot be sold to shelter residents in the way that innumerable other Girl Scouts can knock on doors in their neighborhoods.

“Even if they recognized her, many parents ignored Giselle as she tried to hand them flyers,” Stewart writes of Burgess’s recruitment efforts. “Or they nodded their heads yes, but meant no. They were just too busy, buried in worries and the endless paperwork required for public assistance, food stamps, job applications, transferring a child from one school to another, and documentation of continuing need for shelter. … They were just trying to make it through each day.”

A paragraph like that one conveys the rigor of Stewart’s reporting and thinking. She dutifully describes the Cinderella episodes the girls and parents of Troop 6000 enjoy, but she refuses to avert her eyes from their precarious lives. It takes Burgess’s connection to Van Bramer, for instance, to spare the families at the Sleep Inn from being evicted en masse when the hotel owners want to free up rooms for tourists paying full rates.

The instability of homelessness presents a challenge to any journalist or author portraying it. How does one accurately depict incessant disorder without the writing itself turning disorderly? Stewart has not solved that problem. She splinters her book into 26 chapters and each chapter into multiple scenes; she flits from character to character, event to event, often failing to build depth or sustain narrative drive. One unintended result is that, in a book illuminating the life-changing power of scouting, none of the girls in Troop 6000 wind up being nearly as memorable for a reader as Giselle Burgess and several other adults.

Troop 6000, however, has its own staying power. As of August 2018, the end of the time frame for this book, the troop had expanded to 16 shelters throughout New York. Giselle Burgess, meanwhile, has been working full time as a paid outreach coordinator for the Girl Scouts, enabling her family to get out of the shelter and into its own rented home. (Since this book was completed, Burgess has had a sixth child and announced her candidacy for City Council.)

“How had the six of them been able to live crammed into this single room for close to a year and a half on top of all this clutter?” Stewart writes about their moving day. “How had they gotten up and gone to work or school each day only to return to this room to eat, do homework, and take care of the normal chores of life — and start a Girl Scout troop — without constant bickering and disagreement. Looking back now, it seems like they’d accomplished the impossible.”

Samuel G. Freedman, a former columnist about religion and education for The Times, is a professor of journalism at Columbia University and the author of eight books. TROOP 6000 The Girl Scout Troop That Began in a Shelter and Inspired the World By Nikita Stewart 288 pp. Ballantine. $27.

PHOTO: Girl Scouts from Troop 6000 at the Girl Scouts of Greater New York headquarters in New York. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM HODGSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Related Articles**

* [*Living by the Girl Scout Law, Even Without a Home*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/16/nyregion/living-by-the-girl-scout-law-even-without-a-home.html)

1. [*Girl Scouts Troop Will Expand to 15 Homeless Shelters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/16/nyregion/living-by-the-girl-scout-law-even-without-a-home.html)

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Abandon Trump? Deep in the G.O.P. Ranks, the MAGA Mind-Set Prevails***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61S5-FN81-DXY4-X0BJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** As President Trump prepares to exit the White House, his ideas, including falsehoods and conspiracy theories, continue to exert a gravitational pull among grass-roots G.O.P. officials.

**Body**

As President Trump prepares to exit the White House, his ideas, including falsehoods and conspiracy theories, continue to exert a gravitational pull among grass-roots G.O.P. officials.

In Cleveland County, Okla., the chairman of the local Republican Party openly wondered “why violence is unacceptable,” just hours before a mob stormed the U.S. Capitol last week. “What the crap do you think the American revolution was?” he posted on Facebook. “A game of friggin pattycake?”

Two days later, the Republican chairman of Nye County in Nevada posted a conspiracy-theory-filled letter on the local committee website, accusing Vice President Mike Pence of treason and calling the rioting a “staged event meant to blame Trump supporters.”

And this week in Virginia, Amanda Chase, a two-term Republican state senator running for governor, maintained that President Trump might still be sworn into a second term on Jan. 20 and that Republicans who blocked that “alternative plan” would be punished by the president’s supporters.

“They’ve got Mitch McConnell up there selling out the Republican Party,” Ms. Chase, who [*spoke at the protest*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury) in Washington last week, said in an interview. “The insurrection is actually the deep state with the politicians working against the people to overthrow our government.”

As Mr. Trump prepares to exit the White House and [*face a second impeachment trial in the Senate*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury), his ideas continue to exert a gravitational pull in Republican circles across the country. The falsehoods, white nationalism and baseless conspiracy theories he peddled for four years have become ingrained at the grass-roots level of the party, [*embraced by activists, local leaders and elected officials*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury) even as a handful of Republicans in Congress break with the president in the final hour.

Interviews with more than 40 Republican state and local leaders conducted after [*the siege at the Capitol*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury) show that a vocal wing of the party maintains an almost-religious devotion to the president, and that these supporters don’t hold him responsible for the mob violence last week. The opposition to him emerging among some Republicans has only bolstered their support of him.

And while some Republican leaders and strategists are eager to dismiss these loyalists as a fringe element of their party, many of them hold influential roles at the state and local level. These local officials are not only the conduits between voters and federal Republicans, but they also serve as the party’s next generation of higher-level elected officials, and would bring a devotion to Trumpism should they ascend to Washington.

The continued support for the president is likely to maintain Mr. Trump’s influence long after he leaves office. That could hamper the ability of the party to unify and reshape its agenda to help woo back moderate suburban voters who play a decisive role in winning battleground states and presidential elections.

At the same time, stepping away from the president could cost the party his supporters — millions of new ***working-class*** voters who helped Mr. Trump capture more votes than any other Republican presidential candidate in history.

“It is priority No. 1 to retain Trump voters,” said Harmeet Dhillon, an R.N.C. member from California. “There is no way to do that with rapid change, tacking in a different direction. Voters are looking to the party for continuity and to stay the course.”

An [*Axios-Ipsos poll*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury) released Thursday showed that a majority of Republicans support the president’s recent behavior and say he should be the Republican nominee in 2024.

Already, some from the Trump wing are threatening primary challenges to [*Republicans deemed insufficiently loyal to the president*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury) and fierce opposition to any Republican who works with the new Biden administration. With Mr. Trump [*barred from prominent social media platforms*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury), they’re immersing themselves in right-wing media outlets and waiting for new conservative social media platforms many say are being set up.

“The party is definitely with Trump,” said Debbie Dooley, a conservative activist in Georgia. “I’m seeing anger but it’s kind of nuanced. There are people that are angrier at these Republicans that have turned their backs on Trump than they are at Democrats.”

That was evident shortly after [*10 Republicans joined with Democrats to support impeachment*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury) on Wednesday. Within hours of the vote, Drew McKissick, the chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party, blasted out a statement attacking Representative Tom Rice, a Republican from his state who had backed impeachment.

“We completely disagree with this sham and to say I’m severely disappointed in Congressman Tom Rice would be an understatement,” Mr. McKissick said.

Several House Republicans also called for Representative Liz Cheney of Wyoming, a high-profile voice for impeachment, to step down from her leadership position in the party’s caucus.

Anthony Sabatini, a Florida state representative, described Ms. Cheney and other Republicans who voted for impeachment as “artifacts,” saying they were out of step in a party that has embraced a more populist platform opposed to foreign interventions and skeptical of free trade.

“She’s like a fossil,” he said of Ms. Cheney. “The party is completely and totally realigned. Mitt Romney wouldn’t win in a primary today. He would not be able to be elected dogcatcher today.”

For years, opponents to Mr. Trump argued that he would lose his hold on the party after a devastating event — like unrest or violence that would shock the nation. Last week’s breach of the Capitol appears to have presented that opportunity to Republicans who want to refocus the party around Mr. Trump’s policies, and dispense with the polarizing language and divisive actions that marked his four years in office.

“In this world, I think there’s lots of room for the Republican Party,” said Juliana Bergeron, an R.N.C. member from New Hampshire. “I’m not sure there’s room for the Republican Party of Donald Trump.”

But for many grass-roots officials, the episode at the Capitol was not the inflection point that some Republicans in Washington assumed it would be.

“No, Trump does not have any blame, but the Democrats certainly do, along with all the Republicans that follow with them,” said Billy Long, the Republican Party chairman in Bayfield County, Wis., who said he was planning to break away from the G.O.P. to start a local Trump-centric third party. “The Trump movement is not over; like Trump said himself, we are just getting started.”

Republican voters, too, have largely drawn a sharp distinction between the president and those who stormed the Capitol, with 80 percent saying they do not hold Mr. Trump responsible for the rioting and 73 percent [*saying he is protecting democracy*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury), according to polling released by Quinnipiac University this week.

Even in blue states, Republican leaders find themselves still grappling with Mr. Trump’s politics of grievance. In the New Jersey State Senate, Republicans were split on a resolution condemning Mr. Trump for inciting the crowd that attacked the Capitol. The majority of Republicans chose to abstain, and many used their time on the floor to try to flip the debate to the protests against racial injustice over the summer, and had to be reprimanded by the Senate president for veering off topic.

Even if Mr. Trump fades from political life, losing his social media megaphone and bully pulpit, his supporters say his message will be carried forward by a party remade in his image and with strong structural support at all levels.

Since Mr. Trump’s 2016 victory, 91 of the 168 positions on the Republican National Committee have turned over, with virtually all of the newcomers elected by Trump-aligned state parties.

The president [*received widespread praise*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury) at a national party meeting held two days after the siege, and was greeted with applause when he called into a breakfast gathering.

Already, battle lines are being drawn between the Trump wing and those who would like to move past the president.

Efforts to mount primary challenges to incumbent Republicans are underway in several states, with the encouragement of Mr. Trump. In Georgia, potential primary candidates are reaching out to conservative activists about challenging the Republican governor, lieutenant governor and secretary of state. Other targets may include Gov. Mike DeWine of Ohio and Senators Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and John Thune of South Dakota.

“The election was crooked and Republicans who could have done something did very little,” said Dave Wesener, the chairman of the Republican Party in Crawford County, Wis. “Those Republicans who have not been supportive I affectionately call [*RINOs*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury). All RINOs should be primaried by conservatives.”

Mr. Wesener plans to give up his role in the local Republican Party next month to demonstrate his disappointment that the party did not fight harder to overturn the results of the election. He also plans to give up his Green Bay Packers season tickets, to protest the team’s [*painting of racial justice slogans*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury) on its home field.

In Virginia, Ms. Chase is likely to face a multicandidate Republican field for governor, which will be decided at a convention of party activists this summer. Though state G.O.P. officials [*opted to avoid a primary in hopes of denying Ms. Chase their nomination*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kaP8w3-Ftcw&amp;feature=youtu.be&amp;ab_channel=AmericanBridge21stCentury) at a convention, the party’s activist base is filled with Mr. Trump’s most die-hard supporters.

“I’ve been called Trump in heels,” Ms. Chase said. “The regular grass roots of Virginia who are not part of the Republican establishment elite, they’re supporting me.”

The siege at the Capitol last week has drawn an even brighter line dividing the party. State legislators from more than a dozen states attended the protest, with at least one facing criminal charges for breaching the Capitol as part of the riot. Meshawn Maddock, an activist who is poised to be the incoming Michigan Republican Party co-chairwoman, helped organize busloads of supporters from her state to travel to the Capitol. In the days after the violence, she joined a conservative online group where some participants openly discussed civil war and martial law.

Many continue to defend their role in the event.

“Those who hold sway in Congress today look out on much of the country with disdain. Trump has never done that,” said State Representative David Eastman of Alaska, who attended the protest. “I, along with nearly a million other Americans, was glad to travel to D.C. to hear the president speak and thank him for his four years in office. Those in today’s ruling class will never truly understand why.”

Nick Corasaniti contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Thousands of armed National Guard members were rushed to Washington to bolster security for next week’s inaugural celebration. (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. KIRKPATRICK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1); State Senator Amanda Chase, a candidate for governor in Virginia, maintains that President Trump might still be sworn in. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALYSSA SCHUKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); “It is priority No. 1 to retain Trump voters,” said Harmeet Dhillon, a Republican National Committee member in California. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EVAN VUCCI/ASSOCIATED PRESS); Many Trump loyalists hold influential roles in the Republican Party at the state and local level. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNY HOLSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2021

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[***A Year After an Uprising in Algeria, an Old Repression Returns***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:610J-2RC1-JBG3-606T-00000-00&context=1519360)

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Late Edition - Final

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**Byline:** By Adam Nossiter

**Body**

''We are moving backward fast,'' said a leading figure in protests last year that ousted the country's authoritarian ruler.

ALGIERS -- In a Moorish-style palace on the Algerian capital's airy heights, the nation's president proclaimed a new day for his country, saying it was now ''free and democratic.'' The old, corrupt system -- in which he had spent his entire career -- was gone, he insisted.

''We're building a new model here,'' said President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, 75, chain-smoking a pack of cigarettes in an hourslong interview surrounded by aides in his sumptuous office last month. ''I've decided to go very far in creating a new politics and a new economy.''

But old habits die hard in this North African country, which has known nearly 60 years of repression, military meddling, rigged elections and very little democracy. On the streets below Mr. Tebboune's office, Algeria's old realities are reasserting themselves.

The state jails dissidents, and seats have been for sale -- the going price was about $540,000 according to a parliamentarian's court testimony -- in the same Parliament that ratified Mr. Tebboune's proposed new Constitution, drafted after he came to power in a disputed election in December. But the opposition is hobbled by a lack of leadership and a failure to articulate an alternative vision for the country.

A year after a popular uprising ousted the 20-year autocrat, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, and led the army to jail much of his ruling oligarchy, hopes are now fading for an overhaul of the political system and real democracy in Algeria.

''We are moving backward fast,'' said Mohcine Belabbas, an opposition politician who played a major role in the uprising.

Today there are two political narratives in Algeria: the one from Mr. Tebboune, on high, and the one in the streets below.

The revolt in the streets that began last year, known here as Hirak, initially appeared to signal a new dawn in a country that had been stifled for decades by its huge military. But when the movement's failure to coalesce around leaders and agree on goals created a vacuum, the remnants of the repressive Algerian state, with its ample security services, stepped in.

Other advocates for change in the Arab world looked on enviously as week after week, tens of thousands turned out peacefully to protest the continued reign of Mr. Bouteflika, who was left paralyzed after a stroke in 2013. It seemed that the abortive Arab Spring that began in late 2010 was finally being realized.

Algeria, an insular linchpin in the region, is the world's 10th biggest producer of natural gas and is believed to have the second largest military establishment in Africa. It has been a key leader of nonaligned nations since it fought its way to independence from France 58 years ago.

The military established its pre-eminence in politics shortly after that, and has been at the forefront or just behind it ever since. A civil war with Islamists in the 1990s, in which as many as 100,000 were killed, helped consolidate its grip.

Soldiers in uniform are omnipresent in Algiers. But during last year's demonstrations, Algerian security forces didn't open fire on the Hirak protesters, the two sides instead staring each other down in a wary standoff.

Although the army eventually forced Mr. Bouteflika and his governing elite out of office, that was not enough for the protesters. They demanded a full overhaul of the country's political class, elections for a new constituent assembly to replace the country's discredited Parliament, and the army's definitive withdrawal from politics.

They also deemed the army's push for presidential elections premature. But the army's all-powerful chief of staff, Ahmed Gaid Salah, overruled the movement.

Mr. Tebboune, once an ephemeral prime minister under Mr. Bouteflika, is believed to have been backed for the presidency by Mr. Gaid Salah. He was elected in a vote that opponents said drew less than 10 percent of the electorate; Mr. Tebboune said it was more than 40 percent.

He began with a few good-will gestures, releasing some detained protesters. The pandemic stopped the demonstrations in March, and since then the government has played a cat-and-mouse game with Hirak's remnants, releasing some and arresting others. Dozens have been arrested, according to an opposition group.

The pandemic has dovetailed with the national penchant for insularity, giving Algeria a further excuse to tighten its borders and keep out foreigners. The results are low infection and mortality rates, few mask-wearers and a near-total absence of outsiders on the crumbling streets of central Algiers.

The arrest and prosecution of one of the country's best-known journalists, Khaled Drareni, 40, has hardened the mood in the streets and spread fear in the Algerian news media. The editor of a widely followed website, the Casbah Tribune, and a local correspondent for a French television station, Mr. Drareni covered Hirak with a mix of activism and detachment.

''The system renews itself ceaselessly and refuses to change,'' he wrote during last year's uprising. ''We call for press freedom. They respond with corruption and money.''

That remark infuriated the authorities. On Sept. 15, he was convicted of ''endangering national unity'' and sentenced to two years in prison.

The scene outside the courthouse that day turned ugly.

''Khaled Drareni, independent journalist!'' demonstrators shouted before the police poured in to disperse them. ''Scram!'' a muscular plainclothes officer barked at demonstrators. Officers roughly bundled a young woman and an older man into a police van.

''He didn't even have a press card,'' the president fumed during the interview, casting Mr. Drareni as an activist with dubious credentials. Mr. Drareni once interviewed Mr. Tebboune himself, though, as well as President Emmanuel Macron of France.

Mr. Tebboune insisted on an opposing narrative during the three-and-a-half-hour interview, saying his country was now ''free and democratic.'' He later made his normally reticent cabinet members available for interviews, and even demanded that the army chief of staff -- who is never accessible to the media -- agree to be interviewed.

''The army is neutral,'' growled Gen. Saïd Chengriha, a grizzled veteran of the country's 1990s civil war with the Islamists. He succeeded General Gaid Salah, who died of a heart attack in December.

''How do you want us to be involved in politics? We're not at all trained in that,'' said the general, 75, speaking in the military's extensive compound in the heights of Algiers.

But decades of history are not so easily reversed.

The general and the president said they met at least twice a week to discuss the country's situation, which is increasingly perilous because of a drop in oil prices. Well over 90 percent of the largely desert country's exports consist of oil and gas, and with a heavy social expenditures bill, Algeria is estimated to need oil at $100 a barrel to balance its budget. The price has been hovering in the 40s.

Of one thing Mr. Tebboune is certain: The citizen protest movement is over.

''Is there anything left of the Hirak?'' he asked dismissively during the interview.

He spoke of change, vaunting his new Constitution, which limits a president to two terms and recognizes the rights of the opposition, at least in the eyes of its supporters. But this past week, the government threatened to strip Mr. Belabbas, the opposition politician, of his parliamentary immunity.

And for all the talk of a new Algeria, the president employed the old language of the autocrat when he discussed dealing with dissent.

''Everyone has the right to free expression -- but only in an orderly manner,'' he said. ''It's normal that someone who insults and who attacks the symbols of the state winds up in court.''

An Algerian revolt against the French 58 years ago was hampered because of the lack of a clear leader. That resistance to anoint a leader, a tactic to minimize repression, also weakened Hirak.

The activists who took a leading role have refused to engage with the deposed leader's heirs, including the new president.

Behind high locked metal gates, watched from the sun-blasted street by plainclothes officers, Mr. Belabbas acknowledged that the protesters were clear about what they were against -- the entire Algerian political system -- but less so about what should replace it.

''We never succeeded in defining what we were for,'' said Mr. Belabbas, who is head of the Rally for Culture and Democracy party and a member of Parliament.

Caught in the middle are ordinary Algerians -- skeptical of Mr. Tebboune's claims of renewal and of his new Constitution, deflated by the demise of Hirak and angry about the imprisoned Mr. Drareni.

''So, there's a journalist who speaks. You put him in prison. And that's supposed to be democracy?'' asked Isa Mansour, who runs a small clothing store in the ***working-class*** neighborhood of Belouizdad, where the Nobel Prize winner Albert Camus grew up 100 years ago.

''The citizens are fed up with all these promises,'' he said. ''You can't expect reforms from the old guard. Algeria is still looking for democracy.''

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A popular revolt brought tens of thousands into the streets of Algiers last year. Below left, Khaled Drareni, a journalist, being cheered by protesters in March. A court later convicted him of ''endangering national unity.'' Right, security forces surrounding protesters on the day of the presidential election last year. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAD KRAMDI/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

President Abdelmadjid Tebboune came to power after a disputed election in December. ''I've decided to go very far in creating a new politics and a new economy,'' he said in an interview. But there is ample reason for skepticism. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAD KRAMDI/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** October 7, 2020

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[***'It Might Just Save Our Lives'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62T4-3C71-JBG3-64XS-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Length:** 2381 words

**Byline:** By Nicholas Kristof

**Body**

YAMHILL, Ore. -- As more vaccinated Americans emerge, blinking, to survey our post-apocalyptic world, it's becoming increasingly clear that many of our fellow citizens may never fully recover -- even if they didn't actually contract the coronavirus.

That's because quite apart from the direct effects of the virus, the pandemic has aggravated mental illness, domestic violence, addiction and childhood trauma in ways that may reverberate for decades.

My friends who started out prosperous have ridden out the storm in vacation homes and seen their investments soar. Here in rural Oregon where I grew up, my friends who were already down and out are mostly struggling, homeless or even dead, and there is similar anguish across a broad swath of the United States.

That's why President Biden's proposals to invest in families and ***working-class*** Americans are so important. Just as we acted forcefully to address the virus, we should also move decisively to address America's persistent pandemic of despair, addiction and educational failure.

Two of my friends overdosed on heroin during the pandemic, and the girlfriend of one is now self-medicating with meth and is wanted by the law. One of my homeless friends died; another, newly homeless, begs me for money; his mother pleads for me to refuse for fear he will use it to buy drugs and again overdose.

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A 9-year-old girl and her 11-year-old sister already were facing challenges before the virus arrived, for their mom was wrestling with drug addiction and no longer much in their lives. But their dad was trying hard to fill that void, and they were getting by.

Then the father lost his restaurant job early in the pandemic, so he was home with the kids as they grappled with remote schooling. With the financial stress and constant time together, they got on one another's nerves. He wanted to be a good dad, but he drank too much and couldn't always control his anger or cope with life's strains.

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The father is remorseful and blames the alcohol. It's a tragedy for the entire family, and if it hadn't been for the coronavirus, he would have been at work, the children would have been at school, and he wouldn't have had that frustrating phone call.

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The clearest secondary effect is an increase in drug use, for the number of Americans dying from overdoses set another record, an estimated 91,000 for the 12 months ending in October.

That's because in-person counseling and support groups were suspended, because many people felt more anxious and stressed and because so many Americans feel isolated and lonely. So they self-medicate.

Across the country, there's growing concern about fentanyl overdoses arising from the isolation. The Beaverton school district near here warned recently that ''we've lost several students to fentanyl-related poisonings.''

Alcohol kills even more Americans than drug overdoses do, and sales figures and surveys suggest that problem drinking has risen significantly during the pandemic.

Suicide is more complicated. It's too early to have solid data, but preliminary figures indicate that suicide fell 5 percent in 2020, and the organization Crisis Text Line reported fewer inquiries mentioning suicide. Conversely, visits to emergency rooms because of children's mental health crises increased during the pandemic. Young people seem hit particularly hard, with one survey finding that more than a quarter said they ''seriously considered suicide in the past 30 days.'' By comparison, in 2018, 11 percent said they seriously considered suicide at some point in the previous year.

Part of the divergence by wealth and class is simply that stress has risen among those who are hungry or at risk of losing homes. David Blanchflower, an economist at Dartmouth, noted that 18 million Americans sometimes or often don't have enough to eat, according to census data. More than 11 million are behind on rent or mortgage payments.

Significant increases in domestic violence have been reported during the pandemic, partly linked to increased drinking at home.

Child abuse is more difficult to gauge. Most experts I talked to believe that physical abuse (though perhaps not sexual abuse) has increased along with addiction and stress, but this view isn't universal. In any case, the cancellation of in-person instruction has meant that abuse of children is less visible and they have fewer opportunities to confide in an adult to get help.

''In this pandemic we're all isolated, so kids haven't had that connection with that safe neighbor or the Sunday school teacher,'' said Russell Mark, who runs a shelter for abused children, Juliette's House, in McMinnville, Ore. ''So kids have no place to turn.''

''We have a huge number of walking wounded,'' he added.

School closures also mean something very basic: Many disadvantaged kids aren't learning. One study warned that three million children in the United States have missed all formal education, remote or in-person, for a year.

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Several child experts told me that the pandemic has been an ACE machine, with more domestic violence, drug abuse and turmoil in homes, in addition to about 40,000 children losing a parent to Covid-19 itself. Given what we know about ACEs, today's traumatized children may suffer increased risks for decades to come, and some may transmit the disadvantage to the next generation.

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I was heartsick, but Dell's mother, who herself has been drug-free for six years, begged me not to give him money or anything that he could sell; she fears that the proceeds would go to drugs that would kill him. The best hope to save his life, she said wretchedly, is for him to be arrested and go through detox.

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Years ago in Nashville I met Shelia Simpkins, who was trafficked into prostitution at the age of 6. She spent many years enslaved by violent pimps, struggling with addiction and repeatedly getting arrested but finally left with the help of a program called Thistle Farms. She earned a B.A. and helped countless other women start over.

Since the pandemic began, Simpkins completed her master's in social work at Tennessee State University and was recently appointed head of residential services for Thistle Farms and to the board of the National Trafficking Sheltered Alliance. She exemplifies the grit, resilience and potential that are deeply woven into the human fabric.

The toll of the pandemic should underscore the importance of Biden's three-part proposal to invest in America and Americans. The coronavirus has interacted with half a century of inequality, despair and family dysfunction to shatter those who were already fragile. We should fight back with vaccines and P.P.E., yes, but also with policies to address the underlying inequality of opportunity.

No set of policies can solve all the problems, but Biden's three-part proposal would invest heavily in left-behind Americans and give needy children a hand up.

The blunt truth is that it is difficult to heal adults like Dell who have wrestled with addiction for many years and have limited education or job experience. The best time to have helped Dell was when he was 3, or perhaps 13, not now that he is an adult raising his own children. As an adage attributed, perhaps incorrectly, to Frederick Douglass puts it, ''It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.''

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That's how I feel, too. The pandemic has shown more than ever that we inhabit two Americas, but finally this year we have a fighting chance to adopt policies that can help those left behind -- especially children. As we end the coronavirus pandemic, we also have a chance to tackle the pandemic of despair and inequality that holds back so many Americans.

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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)

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/29/opinion/sunday/covid-impact-us.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/29/opinion/sunday/covid-impact-us.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM GOLDBERG/MAGNUM PHOTOS

ALESSANDRA SANGUINETTI/MAGNUM PHOTOS)

**Load-Date:** May 30, 2021

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[***‘If You Would Go Out on a Limb for Us, It Might Just Save Our Lives’; Nicholas Kristof***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62SY-3YH1-JBG3-64N6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 29, 2021 Saturday 17:34 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

**Length:** 2366 words

**Byline:** Nicholas Kristof

**Highlight:** Many Americans  may never fully recover from the pandemic even if they didn’t contract the coronavirus.

**Body**

YAMHILL, Ore. — As more vaccinated Americans emerge, blinking, to survey our post-apocalyptic world, it’s becoming increasingly clear that many of our fellow citizens may never fully recover — even if they didn’t actually contract the coronavirus.

That’s because quite apart from the direct effects of the virus, the pandemic has aggravated mental illness, domestic violence, addiction and childhood trauma in ways that may reverberate for decades.

My friends who started out prosperous have ridden out the storm in vacation homes and seen their investments soar. Here in rural Oregon where I grew up, my friends who were already down and out are mostly struggling, homeless or even dead, and there is similar anguish across a broad swath of the United States.

That’s why President Biden’s proposals to invest in families and ***working-class*** Americans are so important. Just as we acted forcefully to address the virus, we should also move decisively to address America’s persistent pandemic of despair, addiction and educational failure.

Two of my friends overdosed on heroin during the pandemic, and the girlfriend of one is now self-medicating with meth and is wanted by the law. One of my homeless friends died; another, newly homeless, begs me for money; his mother pleads for me to refuse for fear he will use it to buy drugs and again overdose.

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Then the father lost his restaurant job early in the pandemic, so he was home with the kids as they grappled with remote schooling. With the financial stress and constant time together, they got on one another’s nerves. He wanted to be a good dad, but he drank too much and couldn’t always control his anger or cope with life’s strains.

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Across the country, there’s [*growing concern*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm) about fentanyl overdoses arising from the isolation. The Beaverton school district near here [*warned*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm) recently that “we’ve lost several students to fentanyl-related poisonings.”

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The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm).

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM GOLDBERG/MAGNUM PHOTOS; ALESSANDRA SANGUINETTI/MAGNUM PHOTOS)

**Load-Date:** May 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***As Genoa Inaugurates New Bridge, the Feeling Is Bittersweet***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60GY-JWF1-DXY4-X4KB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 2, 2020 Sunday 11:20 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1307 words

**Byline:** Gaia PianigianiGaia Pianigiani is a reporter based in Italy, covering breaking news across Italy and Europe.

**Highlight:** Built in less than two years to replace the collapsed Morandi bridge, the new span is already a point of pride for Italy. But residents fear it will not be enough to revive their aging port city.

**Body**

Built in less than two years to replace the collapsed Morandi bridge, the new span is already a point of pride for Italy. But residents fear it will not be enough to revive their aging port city.

GENOA, Italy — Since the dramatic and deadly [*collapse of the Morandi bridge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/14/world/europe/italy-genoa-bridge-collapse.html) over the Italian port of Genoa two years ago, builders have worked around the clock, through a judicial investigation and the coronavirus pandemic, so a new bridge could open on time.

Designed by a native son of the city, the architect Renzo Piano, and built in a record 15 months, the new Genoa San Giorgio bridge, whose inauguration is Monday, has become a matter of pride for Genoa and all of Italy, a symbol of their can-do spirit.

Yet residents and business owners say the accomplishment will hardly cure the pains of the city, which was shrinking — economically, demographically and culturally — even before the collapse, which killed 43 people on Aug. 14, 2018.

The loss of one of the city’s main arteries and its fastest east-west connection compounded all those problems, devastating businesses and paralyzing life. Today many in Genoa are still suffering and lament that the new bridge will not be enough to overcome the absence of a broad, long-term vision to revive their city.

Though the government and the company that manages the bridge, Autostrade per l’Italia, or Highways for Italy, gave aid to dozens of businesses in the area to help them stay afloat, many had to relocate or remained cut off from the rest of Genoa.

“I lost 50 percent of my business with the collapse; my patients who lived across the bridge could no longer get here,” said Dr. Fabio Bertoldi, a veterinarian whose office is about 300 yards north of the bridge.

“Now I even bike to work,” said Dr. Bertoldi, who lives about 15 miles away. If he drove, he added, “It would take me three hours to get here with the construction on the highway.”

A surge of long-overdue infrastructure work has further snarled traffic. For many of those who live in Genoa, then, the opening of the new bridge is at best bittersweet.

“We are glad for the new bridge, built so fast, and the maintenance on the highways, but it all also leaves us a bitter feeling,” said Egle Possetti, spokeswoman for a group of the victims’ families. “Had they done it before, our relatives might have been alive.” Ms. Possetti’s sister, brother-in-law, young nephew and niece were killed when the bridge fell.

Genoa’s unique location — wedged between mountains and sea in Italy’s northwest — makes it hard to reach and even harder to navigate. It takes five hours to reach Genoa by fast train from Rome, almost twice the time it takes to go from Rome to Milan, which is only about 40 miles farther north.

As high-speed trains near the port city, they must switch to older, slower two-way tracks, which are often flooded by the region’s violent thunderstorms.

In recent months, dozens of new maintenance sites have forced officials to limit road traffic. Drivers endure traffic jams, accompanied by the metallic sound of drilling, that wind along the city’s picturesque highways, an overlapping series of viaducts with stunning sea views.

After the vault of a tunnel northwest of Genoa partly collapsed last year, Italy’s Transportation Ministry ordered a thorough inspection of the region’s overpasses and bridges. Nearly all had safety problems and had to be repaired.

“We are prioritizing security,” Placido Migliorino, the engineer in charge of highway inspections at the ministry, said in a phone interview.

In the past four months, Mr. Migliorino has traveled weekly to Genoa to monitor the progress of the maintenance work.

“About 50 of the galleries are around Genoa, and in some the problems couldn’t be fixed overnight,” Mr. Migliorino said, referring to the area’s tunnels. “That’s why cars and trucks have limited circulation.”

Mr. Migliorino has also been examining viaducts and says they, too, have been poorly maintained.

Emanuele Piccardo, an architecture critic, said, “For a country that tends to work in emergency mode, constant maintenance is difficult, from the local to the national level.”

“You can build the long bypass, or a new bridge,” said Mr. Piccardo, the curator of “The Collapse of Modernity,” an upcoming book on the consequences of the Morandi disaster. “But if you don’t rethink mobility in this narrow valley to make it based on rails instead of wheels, it’s a waste of time.”

Even with the new bridge’s opening, Mr. Piccardo expects the outlying Polcevera River valley to remain greatly disconnected from the city center because of the heavy traffic.

“Building a bridge is an opportunity, but the valley won’t improve just because of this new infrastructure,” he said.

The valley’s Certosa district, just north of the Morandi viaduct, was among the hardest hit by the bridge collapse. These days, its residents mingle in the mornings under trees in the cobblestone piazzas. By midday, the streets are almost empty as the elderly go indoors to nap.

The area, once home to the ***working class*** of Genoa’s industrial port, is an urban sprawl divided by the river that the viaduct crossed. Large department stores and industries line one bank of the river, the port’s containers and residential neighborhoods the other.

Certosa residents say that the new bridge will hardly bring them any closer to the city center. Even Marco Bucci, Genoa’s mayor, admitted after the tragedy that he had never been to the district before.

Residents do not expect the area to be reshaped much, despite a subway stop and the introduction of a park with a memorial for the victims of the bridge collapse, designed by the famed Italian architect Stefano Boeri.

“I don’t blame anyone,” said Paolo Lecca, 68, a retiree, as he looked at the new bridge’s huge working site, where his friends used to live. “But we don’t even have a hospital here. We need to get to Genoa.”

Christian Giannini, 48, who owns a bike store in Certosa, said: “This new bridge is beautiful. I just hope they make what is underneath nice, too.”

Mr. Giannini signed his shop’s lease four days before the Morandi viaduct collapsed. His store overlooks the large boulevard that ran under it, which was closed for eight months. Children once played soccer where cars are now parked.

“It was somewhat charming,” he smiled. “It reminded me of my childhood when we drove here to buy the best clothes in town.”

While some businesses relocated during the reconstruction, others closed for good.

“I open my store every day, but if people leave here, how are we supposed to make business?” asked Marianna Correnti, 61, the owner of a flower shop in the Certosa district. “I had many clients in the apartment buildings that were demolished, and of course they are gone.”

Gian Battista Cassano owns a large scrap center under the bridge and to the west. His cameras recorded the Morandi falling, and he was among those to relocate. Mr. Cassano’s company navigated the red tape to move to a space half as large, and to install solar panels there. But it struggled to pay bills and salaries.

“We were left alone,” he said.

Because of the congestion, some Polcevera Valley residents don’t drive anymore.

“People need to wake up at night to travel with no traffic,” said Teresa Altovino, 49, a health worker shopping at the local market in Certosa. “I even stopped going to the beach.”

Ms. Altovino, who was working in the area when the bridge collapsed, said she walked out of the building that day to see what had happened. She can still hear the people screaming that morning two years ago.

“The new bridge looks solid, but I won’t take it,” she said. “I am too scared.”

PHOTO: The Genoa San Giorgio bridge, designed by the architect Renzo Piano, opens Monday. It replaces the Morandi bridge that collapsed in August 2018, killing 43 people. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUCA ZENNARO/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

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[***Democrats' Big Tent Is Set for a Stress Test Under Biden***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:622D-5TC1-JBG3-626N-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

The party's ideological blend of moderates and progressives carried it to power in Washington, but elements of that coalition could block the most ambitious parts of President Biden's agenda.

As he ran for president last year, Joseph R. Biden Jr. contorted his campaign to appease both wings of the Democratic Party, trying to excite progressives with an ambitious policy platform while assuring moderates he opposed structural changes to the political process.

Now, faced with the realities of governing and dual crises of public health and economic stagnation, Mr. Biden is increasingly squeezed by members of his own party who see an inevitable collision course between his deference to Washington norms and his promises of far-reaching change.

Some progressive Democrats, who have been keeping their powder dry on Mr. Biden since he won the presidency, spoke out in frustration after he staked out two moderate positions at a town hall event in Milwaukee on Tuesday: a willingness to negotiate on the $15 minimum wage he had proposed, and skepticism of a sweeping student loan cancellation program.

On Wednesday, after Mr. Biden also signaled flexibility on his sweeping immigration plans, activists said that they were willing to let him try for a bipartisan deal, but would not wait forever.

And on Friday, it was the Biden administration's turn to be concerned: Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, one of the most moderate Democrats in Washington, announced that he would oppose the president's choice to lead the Office of Management and Budget, imperiling the nomination with an act of friendly fire.

It is all a sign that the big tent of the Democratic Party is set for a stress test under Mr. Biden unlike any it has faced while in power in recent decades. Democrats have long prided themselves on including liberals, moderates and even conservative Democrats in the tent, in sharp contrast to the recent Republican moves in several states to censure members for disloyalty to former President Donald J. Trump.

Still, even though Democrats control Washington, they are hardly united by the same governing goals: The party's ideological blend of moderate and progressive voices helped it win back the White House and the Senate, but elements of that coalition could threaten the most ambitious parts of Mr. Biden's agenda.

''History tells us two years after Obama won, two years after Clinton won -- Republicans did phenomenally well,'' said Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, a leading progressive and presidential candidate last year. ''And they did because Democrats had the power and they did not exercise that power for working families. And I think Joe Biden understands that.''

Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, who endorsed ending the filibuster during her own presidential run, said in an interview that Democrats ''can't give Mitch McConnell a veto over the same things as the American people sent us to Washington to do.''

''Our job is to deliver for the American people. Period,'' she said. ''And I think that Democrats are unified on that. But the point is not the unity. The point is the things we're trying to get done.''

Progressives see issues like a $15 minimum wage, canceling student loan debt and expanding voting rights as a baseline to determining whether Mr. Biden's legacy will be his defeat of Mr. Trump or, as his campaign slogan promised, building the country back better.

The moderates, including Mr. Manchin and other Democratic senators like Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, argue that the path to success in battleground states begins with setting a tone of unity and bipartisanship, as evidenced by both senators' commitment to keeping the Senate filibuster, which has often stood in the way of major legislation.

In Mr. Manchin's statement opposing Mr. Biden's nominee for the Office of Management and Budget, the Democratic operative Neera Tanden, he focused on unity. Citing old tweets of hers that were critical of Republicans and progressives, Mr. Manchin said her confirmation would have a ''toxic and detrimental impact'' on the administration's relationship with Congress.

''We must take meaningful steps to end the political division and dysfunction that pervades our politics,'' he said. ''At a time of crisis, it is more important than ever that we chart a new bipartisan course.''

The debate among Democrats exposes the difference between vague pledges made during campaign season and actual governing values. For more than a year, the party was held together by its shared goal of defeating Mr. Trump, a mantra that kept moderates at bay and progressives in line in addition to driving activism and grass-roots fund-raising. Now, with Mr. Biden in office, the divisions that always lurked underneath the surface are taking shape.

Where Mr. Biden falls is the ultimate unknown. A longtime institutionalist, he has said he opposes ending the filibuster, giving cover to his party's centrist wing. But some Democrats believe that his administration is playing out its options and that once he faces the inevitable opposition of Republicans, he will nix Washington traditionalism in favor of passing his agenda.

During his town hall event in Wisconsin, Mr. Biden signaled an openness to negotiations about the minimum wage, speaking of a gradual increase while also affirming his commitment to $15 per hour. He also rejected one question about whether he intended to cancel up to $50,000 in student debt via executive order.

''I will not make that happen,'' he said.

The answer set off an outcry among progressives, student activists and some members of Congress, who argued that he had not only the legal authority but also a political mandate to act.

Ms. Warren penned a letter with Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader, that said they were confident the Biden administration would ''agree with the standards Obama and Trump used as well as leading legal experts who have concluded that the administration has broad authority to immediately deliver much-needed relief to millions of Americans.''

In the phone interview, she said Mr. Biden had run not only on unity and restoring bipartisanship, but also on the most progressive policy platform in history.

''Biden has said: 'I'm not going to hand you a veto. I'm not going to let you block what this moment demands, I'm not going to let us stop the changes that we need to make for the American people,'' Ms. Warren said. ''So I think that Biden has gotten this exactly right, wants to work on a bipartisan basis, but not at the cost of getting nothing done.''

There is also an increasing activist drumbeat of pressure on Mr. Biden and senators like Mr. Manchin who have at times stood in the way of progressive change. During a virtual meeting last week between Mr. Manchin and low-income West Virginians that was convened by the grass-roots group the Poor People's Campaign, worker after worker pressured the senator to embrace a $15 minimum wage, which he has opposed.

''It feels like he's got his head in the clouds,'' Brianna Griffith, a constituent who met with Mr. Manchin, said afterward. ''Do they understand what's happening to poor West Virginians?''

''Enough is enough,'' said Pam Garrison, another worker who met with Mr. Manchin. ''We're tired of putting the filthy rich in silk beds and us sleeping on straws.''

In a statement, a spokeswoman for Mr. Manchin said he ''appreciated the opportunity'' to meet with members of the Poor People's Campaign and ''discuss the issues most important to them.'' She pushed back on the idea that Mr. Manchin's resistance to a $15 minimum wage meant he did not support low-income workers, and pointed to previous public statements in which he has said he would support a smaller wage increase, citing concerns from the business community.

''Having grown up in the small coal-mining town of Farmington, Senator Manchin understands the challenges facing working West Virginians and small business owners,'' said the spokeswoman, Sam Runyon.

Mr. Manchin's position is also bolstered by a political reality that places moderate voters at the forefront -- a fact that Mr. Biden's White House is keenly aware of. For Democrats to maintain their House majority in the midterm elections next year, they must hold seats in Republican-drawn districts that are often populated by moderate suburban voters. In the Senate, where Democrats are seeking to expand their razor-thin control of the chamber in 2022, they must secure tough statewide victories in places like North Carolina, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Those who want Mr. Biden to embrace major legislation say the moderates have it wrong -- delivering for voters, they say, will protect the party during the midterms, not deferring to Washington rules.

Mr. Sanders took aim at the recent news that a moderate think tank, Third Way, was working on a project seeking to push Democrats toward the center for the midterm elections. He said that issues like canceling student debt, raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour and combating climate change were ''political winners.''

The American ***working class*** today -- white, Black, Latino -- they are hurting. They want us to respond vigorously,'' he said. ''If we do so, I think that they will reward us in 2022. If we fail them, and the Republicans can go around and say, 'Hey, you gave these people the House, the Senate and the White House and they did nothing for you,' we will not do well in 2022.''

Still, the entrenchment by moderate senators -- and the president's current deference to it -- presents a challenge for activists hoping to influence the administration. And while progressive elected officials are confident that Mr. Biden will side with them in the end, a growing chorus of activists is looking to him for more immediate action.

K Trainor, a student activist who has worked with progressive groups to turn out college students for Democrats, said Mr. Biden's answer at the town hall was deeply disappointing. She said that if the administration didn't deliver for young voters, it would make it harder to persuade them to turn out in future elections.

''I think a lot of people in my generation are asking, 'Where is the courage?''' Ms. Trainor said. ''It feels like they're backtracking and we're not even 100 days in.''

The Rev. William J. Barber II, a co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign who organized the West Virginia workers' meeting with Mr. Manchin, said the debate reflected an ugly underbelly of Democratic politics. While poor and low-income workers, particularly those who are racial minorities or young people, make up the core of the Democratic base, he said, the policies that they care about most have often been sacrificed because of political calculations.

They are the human cost of the big tent, he said.

''Democrats ran on this, they put it in their platform and they said this is what needs to happen,'' Dr. Barber said. ''It would be the ultimate abandonment and betrayal to then get here and have the power to do it, and then retreat.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/21/us/politics/biden-agenda-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/21/us/politics/biden-agenda-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A rally for a $15-an-hour minimum wage on Tuesday in Orlando, Fla. President Biden has indicated a willingness to negotiate on the $15 minimum wage. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN RAOUX/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Mr. Biden has also signaled flexibility on immigration. Activists have said they are willing to let him try for a bipartisan deal but will not wait forever. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia has emphasized the importance of setting a tone of unity and bipartisanship. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALYSSA SCHUKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2021

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[***Democrats Get Jump on Lobbying for the Court***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:622D-5TC1-JBG3-626X-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jonathan Martin

**Body**

Party leaders are urging President Biden not only to consider racial diversity in potential Supreme Court nominees, but to look at candidates who don't come from a traditional Ivy League background.

WASHINGTON -- After meeting in the Oval Office earlier this month with President Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and his fellow senior House Democrats, Representative James E. Clyburn of South Carolina made a beeline to Ms. Harris's office in the West Wing to privately raise a topic that did not come up during their group discussion: the Supreme Court.

Mr. Clyburn, the highest-ranking African-American in Congress, wanted to offer Ms. Harris the name of a potential future justice, according to a Democrat briefed on their conversation. District Court Judge J. Michelle Childs would fulfill Mr. Biden's pledge to appoint the first Black woman to the Supreme Court -- and, Mr. Clyburn noted, she also happened to hail from South Carolina, a state with political meaning for the president.

There may not be a vacancy on the high court at the moment, but Mr. Clyburn and other lawmakers are already maneuvering to champion candidates and a new approach for a nomination that might come as soon as this summer, when some Democrats hope Justice Stephen Breyer, who is 82, will retire. With Democrats holding the narrowest of Senate majorities, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death still painfully fresh in their minds, these party leaders want to shape Mr. Biden's appointment, including moving the party away from the usual Ivy League résumés.

The early jockeying illustrates how eager Democratic officials are to leave their mark on Mr. Biden's effort to elevate historically underrepresented contenders for a landmark Supreme Court nomination. But it also casts a spotlight on discomfiting issues of class and credentialism in the Democratic Party that have been just below the surface since the days of the Obama administration.

Some Democrats like Mr. Clyburn, who have nervously watched Republicans try to repackage themselves as a ***working-class*** party, believe that Mr. Biden could send a message about his determination to keep Democrats true to their blue-collar roots by choosing a candidate like Ms. Childs, who attended public universities.

''One of the things we have to be very, very careful of as Democrats is being painted with that elitist brush,'' said Mr. Clyburn, adding: ''When people talk to diversity they are always looking at race and ethnicity -- I look beyond that to diversity of experience.''

Representative G.K. Butterfield of North Carolina, like Mr. Clyburn a veteran member of the Congressional Black Caucus, made a similar point in an email to the White House counsel, Dana Remus, last month listing the caucus's preferred criteria for federal court appointments. Near the top of the list, Mr. Butterfield said, was: ''The judge should have a diversity of experience in multiple settings and in multiple areas including experiences outside of the law.''

Mr. Biden's pledge to nominate the first Black woman to the court was an unusual kind of campaign promise: Mr. Clyburn nudged him to do it at a debate in Charleston before South Carolina's pivotal primary last year. It was a vow that even some of the president's aides resisted, worried that it might look like pandering.

Mr. Biden has said little in public since being elected about his preferences for the court, but as a former chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, he has something of a split personality when it comes to the politics of personnel. While happy to highlight his Scranton, Pa., roots, state school diploma and ''Middle-Class Joe'' moniker, he has long surrounded himself with aides and advisers who brandish the sort of pedigree he lacks.

And some White House officials are already bracing for what they believe will be unfair attacks from the right on whichever Black woman they pick, convinced that the eventual nominee must have an impeccable résumé. ''It's going to have to be someone who has unquestioned credentials so it doesn't look like it's an unqualified person,'' said one senior Biden official, who spoke about possible court nominees on condition of anonymity to share thinking from inside the West Wing.

Among the potential candidates being pitched for a Supreme Court seat, Ms. Childs has a background that differs from most recent nominees. Unlike eight of the nine current Supreme Court justices, Ms. Childs, 54, did not attend an Ivy League university. Her mother worked for Southern Bell in Columbia, S.C. and Ms. Childs won a scholarship to the University of South Florida. She later graduated from the University of South Carolina's law school and became the first Black woman to make partner at one of the state's major law firms. In the fashion of an earlier generation of jurists, she rose in state politics before being appointed to the bench. Ms. Childs served as a top official at South Carolina's labor department before being appointed to the state's workers' compensation board.

''She is the kind of person who has the sort of experiences that would make her a good addition to the Supreme Court,'' Mr. Clyburn said.

Mr. Clyburn, whose coveted endorsement helped revive Mr. Biden's listing campaign before the South Carolina primary last year, has been particularly active on her behalf as part of what his advisers say is his most significant request of the administration. The 80-year-old House whip has made the case for Ms. Childs with Ms. Harris; Ms. Remus; and Senator Richard J. Durbin of Illinois, the Judiciary Committee chair.

Bakari Sellers, a Democratic political commentator who is close to Ms. Harris, has also pitched members of the vice-president's inner circle on Ms. Childs, who was appointed to the federal bench by Mr. Obama in 2010.

''Not just for our party but for the judiciary it's important to have somebody who has lived experiences,'' Mr. Sellers said.

What's prompting some of these officials to go public with a more aggressive form of advocacy are two developments.

First, they saw the makings of a short list in a Ruth Marcus column in The Washington Post earlier this month naming a pair of potential Breyer successors, who like Ms. Childs are young enough to serve on the court for a few decades. The two cited -- U.S. District Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson of Washington, D.C., and California Supreme Court Justice Leondra Kruger -- both have Ivy League law degrees and important connections. Ms. Jackson, 50, was a clerk for Mr. Breyer himself and Ms. Kruger, 44, served as Mr. Obama's deputy solicitor general

There are a handful of other Black women in their 40s with elite credentials who have caught the eye of lawmakers, including some on the Judiciary Committee. There is Danielle Holley-Walker, the dean of Howard University's law school, and Leslie Abrams Gardner, a Federal District Court judge in Georgia who is a younger sister of Stacey Abrams.

More significant is the matter of timing.

There are relatively few Black women on the federal appeals courts, where presidents often draw their nominees to the Supreme Court. Very soon, however, there will be another vacancy on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit -- which can be a springboard to the high court -- when Judge Merrick B. Garland resigns to become attorney general. Ms. Childs may be better positioned to ascend to the Supreme Court if she were to serve on that appeals court, some of her admirers say.

''There is an immediate vacancy there so I would advocate for her consideration to the D.C. circuit,'' Mr. Butterfield, himself a former state Supreme Court judge, said of Ms. Childs. ''And when and if there's a Supreme Court vacancy she ought to be considered for that, as well.''

Another possible contender seen for a court seat is Cheri Beasley, who lost her re-election as chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court by 412 votes in November. She also went to a public university and climbed through the judiciary via service on lower state courts. Yet Ms. Beasley has told people that she is considering a bid for North Carolina's open Senate seat next year, according to one Democrat who has spoken to her.

When a court vacancy does occur, several Democrats say, they are bracing for Obama-era tensions, which were papered over by former President Donald Trump, to emerge.

Many members of the Congressional Black Caucus, as well as a number of white Democrats, say they believe the party is too closely linked to elites, and that perception only hands political fodder to Republicans during campaign season.

''This isn't being critical of the Harvards or the Yales, but I think there's some great attorneys out there that are really, really smart that come from other places on this earth,'' said Senator Jon Tester of Montana, where Democrats lost all three marquee races last year. ''And I think we ought to consider them.''

Vi Lyles, the mayor of Charlotte, said, ''having the broadest perspective of what's gone on in the country makes you a better decision maker and leader.''

Even more delicate are lingering frustrations among Black leaders, many of whom went to state schools or historically Black institutions, about Mr. Obama's arms-length treatment of the Congressional Black Caucus and his administration's seeming preference for appointees with elite credentials.

''He was predisposed to Ivy League nominees, I think we can all agree on that,'' said Mr. Butterfield.

Mr. Sellers was even blunter. ''I love Barack Obama, but there was an Ivy League culture that emanated from the White House, and we got to move away from that,'' he said.

The frustration with Mr. Obama culminated with his selection of Mr. Garland for the Supreme Court following Justice Antonin Scalia's death in 2016. Some congressional Democrats believed the former president could have put pressure on Republicans, and energized Democrats, had he chosen a Black woman and were infuriated when he said he did not seek out ''a Black lesbian from Skokie.''

What Mr. Clyburn will only say obliquely is that Mr. Biden does not just owe Black voters for his nomination, he's indebted to African-Americans who resurrected his candidacy in South Carolina and those across the South who all but cemented his nomination three days later as he swept the region on Super Tuesday.

Some African-American Democrats believe that Black Americans will rally behind whichever Black woman Mr. Biden nominates and suspect Mr. Clyburn is looking for a rationale to elevate his home state and burnish his legacy.

Yet few politicians preach more than Mr. Biden about the importance of ''dancing with the one that brung you,'' as the president often puts it. And so far, Mr. Clyburn has been able to install two of his closest allies in the administration, with former Representative Marcia Fudge being named housing secretary and Jaime Harrison tapped to lead the Democratic National Committee.

Asked if he could support Ms. Childs to the high court, Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, a Republican and the first Southern Black senator elected since Reconstruction, said he was not ready to commit. But he praised her for having ''a very good reputation'' and said her appointment ''would reflect the positive and powerful progress we've made in the great state of South Carolina.''

Mr. Scott was more direct, though, when asked if Mr. Biden owed it to South Carolina's Black voters given the role they played in his path to the presidency.

''Jim Clyburn would say so,'' he said with a smile.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/21/us/politics/biden-supreme-court-black-woman.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/21/us/politics/biden-supreme-court-black-woman.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Representative James E. Clyburn, center left, has offered J. Michelle Childs, a U.S. District Court judge, far left, as a potential Supreme Court nominee. Another contender is Cheri Beasley, right, who was chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGE

MELISSA SUE GERRITS/THE FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A16)

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[***Tough Times for Pigeon Keepers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6227-40V1-JBG3-61HM-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

On a cold, rainy evening in December, a terrified pigeon crash-landed onto a table in the outdoor seating area of a retro-themed bar in Ocean Hill, Brooklyn.

Circling overhead was a Cooper's hawk that had accidentally dropped the bird and certainly wanted its dinner back. The bar owners kept the scene from turning gruesome by quickly covering the bloodied pigeon with napkins until the predator flew away.

The cocktail drinkers may have been startled, but the pigeon, which had spent most of its life in a coop on a rooftop across the street, would require care before it was able to fly again. Its owner patched the wound under its wing with Krazy Glue.

New Yorkers are rarely confronted so dramatically with the fact that thousands of pigeons are owned by a dwindling fraternity of their neighbors. Though keeping pigeons was once commonplace -- it was cinematic shorthand for ''***working-class*** loner,'' like Marlon Brando's dockworker in ''On the Waterfront'' -- the hobby is now almost prohibitively expensive in the city.

Urban bird keeping is practically a full-time job, owing to the emergence of new avian viruses that require regular vaccinations as well as scrutiny from a Buildings Department that demands coops be kept up to code. The rooftop has also become a coveted amenity in luxury apartment buildings, better served by deck furniture than a rickety assemblage of plywood and chicken wire.

As Joey Scott, who keeps hundreds of pigeons atop a building on the border of Bed-Stuy and Bushwick, put it: ''Who has the time, who has the money, and who has the roof?''

He's one of the few who does. Mr. Scott grew up in Canarsie, where he was raised by a grandfather who kept hundreds of birds on his property. When the family needed to sell that house 20 years ago, he and his brother, Michael, suddenly had nowhere to keep the flocks they had inherited.

His brother eventually bought a rundown building on Bushwick Avenue for about $160,000, largely so they could store the birds on top of it; the pair also opened a store nearby called Pigeons on Broadway. The neighborhood's real estate values increased steadily -- and then drastically -- over the following two decades. That first apartment building is now worth close to $1 million, and the pigeons have become a potential liability. They make a mess, and their food attracts mice. Who would want to live under all that?

The brothers also slowly started calibrating their pet store's stock to cater to people who care for more than pigeons. Mr. Scott thinks that items pertaining to cats and dogs probably constitute the majority of their sales these days. They still sell pigeons, but increasingly the people who buy them don't intend to keep them for long: a woman who buys them for religious rituals, a hunting club in Connecticut that uses them to train its dogs, still others who would rather not say what they're using them for. The Scotts can't be emotional about the transactions if they want to keep the lights on. ''When we opened the store, we said keeping pigeons was an old man's game,'' Joey Scott said, ''but we're still here.''

There have been other adjustments in the ensuing years. Now in their 50s and both separated from their wives, the brothers live above the store in a sparse three-room apartment where they sleep on adjacent cots. The fact that they own the building outright means they don't have to deal with landlords asking intrusive questions about the nearly 300 birds on the roof, though they still put in a ton of effort to make sure neighbors have no reason to complain to the Sanitation Department.

One early winter morning, Mr. Scott spent about two hours feeding the birds and hosing down their cages. If a hawk hadn't been posted up nearby, he would have spent about the same amount of time letting them fly around. There are hundreds of varieties of pigeons, and the Scotts are partial to ones that have gold-flecked wingtips and that can soar so high they turn into barely perceptible specks in the sky. ''These days kids need everything to be constantly exciting, like a video game,'' he said. ''But having them fly and come back to you? Forget it. I was sold.''

For Brooklynites like Mr. Scott, keeping pigeons is an intense daily physical routine of hauling water and bird feed up a ladder. And the birds generate a tremendous amount of waste, which has to be collected and disposed of. ''It's a lot of work,'' said Mr. Scott, who paused for a smoke on the roof before heading to his day job in construction.

Though they may be part of a dying breed, the Scott brothers are not the only pigeon keepers in the neighborhood. They have a colleague -- ''nemesis'' might be a better word -- who has his coops just a few blocks away, though he is perhaps a world apart in terms of personality. This is the swaggering Dave Malone, who keeps several hundred birds on a rooftop he rents across the street from the retro bar where his injured pigeon landed.

Since Mr. Malone fell two stories off his roof last year and broke his back (as well as both legs), he mostly outsources the cleaning and feeding of his flock. He grew up nearby in Brownsville, he said, where his father let him keep 80 birds in the window cage of the one-bedroom apartment that he shared with 12 siblings. When his pets outgrew that space, it wasn't a problem because he had access to whatever nearby abandoned structure he pleased. He remembers the free real estate as the sole benefit of living in such a bleak place, and credits it for keeping him from ever touching alcohol or drugs. ''You could go in a hole in one building, keep walking and come out a block away,'' he said of Brownsville in the 1970s. ''But we could also build whatever we wanted, wherever we wanted.''

Those days ended in 2001, when a developer bought the building Mr. Malone had long used as a home base. But the former high school football player, who is in near-constant contact with the boxer Mike Tyson, his best friend and a noted pigeon enthusiast, has done extremely well for himself, operating a bodyguard company that caters to celebrities. He pays a man in Ocean Hill $300 a month in return for access to his roof. Mr. Malone and Mr. Tyson -- they share the pigeons -- also employ a team of people to take care of the birds when they can't get around to it themselves. They're mostly into rollers, which are pigeons bred to do cartwheels in the air.

Mr. Malone first got interested in pigeons as a child because his neighbors would use them as part of a war game that involved trying to coerce birds from different flocks to defect to their faction. He became hooked on both the strategy of the sport as well as the companionship of both the birds and the people who fly them. It's challenging for him to comprehend that none of his 10 children feel similarly compelled.

Hoping to inspire someone to follow in his footsteps, Mr. Malone said that he had placed $5 million in an escrow account and was ready to pull the trigger on any structure large enough to accommodate a 32-foot-long coop and tall enough to give him a strategic vantage point over longstanding rivals like the Scott brothers and a guy down on Eastern Parkway who goes by the nickname Panama. But his options are somewhat limited. Not many people want to live next to -- or underneath -- hundreds of birds.

Because rooftops are the only space most city-dwellers have to keep their birds, it's typical for die-hards to end up retiring on Long Island, where they can build coops in their yards. Suffolk County is now the nexus of an aging subculture's social world and where its remaining members go to buy and sell pigeons.

On a recent Sunday, about 40 or so pigeon keepers were waiting for the auctioneer, a man they all call Paul Newman. Trash talk and cigarette smoke were free-flowing at this parking lot next to a cemetery in North Babylon, where they have gathered most weekends since 2002.

On the way out to Long Island, Mr. Malone passed Mr. Scott on the expressway, and he started swerving his S.U.V. in an attempt to startle him. He stuck his middle finger out the window as he passed his rival, muttering insults under his breath. It was unclear how much this was a joke.

Neither party acknowledged the other after everyone arrived safely. Instead they mingled with the dozens of others who wouldn't consider spending their Sunday mornings anywhere else. While the venue may not be much to look at, everyone in the pigeon-keeping world seemed to be there.

All attention turned to Paul Newman -- a small septuagenarian with Hollywood good looks, actually named George Ruotolo -- when he finally jumped out of his antique red hot rod and onto the crate he uses as an auction block. ''I got 15 dollars,'' he yelled as two white pigeons slammed around in their cage. ''Who's going to give me 20?''

He moved on to other lots when no one bought those specific birds, but it was a beautiful day, and a woman was selling cups of coffee with powdered creamer out of her car for only a buck a pop. Other homemade wares were available for discerning shoppers, like face masks that declared, ''It's a pigeon thing!'' After the event ended, Mr. Malone hopped in his S.U.V. and began the hourlong trek back to Brooklyn.

''I only want to stay in this area because pigeons are accepted here,'' he said. ''I don't want to go to Park Slope, where people are going to be complaining and I'm going to have to be fighting and spending money to keep my pigeons.''

Later, brewing a cup of coffee in the clubhouse he keeps next to his coops, he added, ''There was a time in New York where people actually minded their business.''

Mr. Malone is nursing his injured pigeon back to health and is grateful for the intervention of the bar's staff. He recognizes that gentrification poses an existential threat to his way of life but takes their willingness to help as an indication that he'll win over his new neighbors in the end. He already has his eye on a different building on the same block in Ocean Hill.

''Sitting outside and seeing the birds flying and how pretty their colors are and how smart the pigeons are and the tricks they can do?'' said Mr. Malone as he stood on his roof, taking in the wonder of it all. ''Everyone loves something beautiful.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/nyregion/pigeons-rooftop-brooklyn.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/18/nyregion/pigeons-rooftop-brooklyn.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, Joey Scott tending the 300 pigeons he keeps on his roof in Brooklyn. ''It's a lot of work,'' he said. At left are a pair of Mr. Scott's rollers. (MB1)

Top, Dave Malone, a pigeon enthusiast, in Ocean Hill, Brooklyn. Center from left: a fan wearing his love

pigeons from Michael and Joey Scott's coop. Above from left: a set of blue bar homers at auction on Long Island

Michael Scott and a cockatiel at Pigeons on Broadway, his pet store in Bushwick, Brooklyn. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY OK MCCAUSLAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MB6)

**Load-Date:** February 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How Democrats Are Already Maneuvering to Shape Biden’s First Supreme Court Pick***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6227-33S1-JBG3-61B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Party leaders are urging President Biden not only to consider racial diversity in potential Supreme Court nominees, but to look at candidates who don’t come from a traditional Ivy League background.

**Body**

Party leaders are urging President Biden not only to consider racial diversity in potential Supreme Court nominees, but to look at candidates who don’t come from a traditional Ivy League background.

WASHINGTON — After meeting in the Oval Office earlier this month with President [*Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/14/us/ketanji-brown-jackson-mcconnell-judges.html), Vice President Kamala Harris and his fellow senior House Democrats, Representative James E. Clyburn of South Carolina made a beeline to Ms. Harris’s office in the West Wing to privately raise a topic that did not come up during their group discussion: the Supreme Court.

Mr. Clyburn, the highest-ranking African-American in Congress, wanted to offer Ms. Harris the name of a potential future justice, according to a Democrat briefed on their conversation. District Court Judge J. Michelle Childs would fulfill Mr. Biden’s pledge to appoint the first Black woman to the Supreme Court — and, Mr. Clyburn noted, she also happened to hail from South Carolina, a state with political meaning for the president.

There may not be a vacancy on the high court at the moment, but Mr. Clyburn and other lawmakers are already maneuvering to champion candidates and a new approach for a nomination that might come as soon as this summer, when some Democrats hope Justice Stephen Breyer, who is 82, will retire. With Democrats holding the narrowest of Senate majorities, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s death still painfully fresh in their minds, these party leaders want to shape Mr. Biden’s appointment, including moving the party away from the usual Ivy League résumés.

The early jockeying illustrates how eager Democratic officials are to leave their mark on Mr. Biden’s effort to elevate historically underrepresented contenders for a landmark Supreme Court nomination. But it also casts a spotlight on discomfiting issues of class and credentialism in the Democratic Party that have been just below the surface since the days of the Obama administration.

Some Democrats like Mr. Clyburn, who have nervously watched Republicans try to repackage themselves as a ***working-class*** party, believe that Mr. Biden could send a message about his determination to keep Democrats true to their blue-collar roots by choosing a candidate like Ms. Childs, who attended public universities.

“One of the things we have to be very, very careful of as Democrats is being painted with that elitist brush,” said Mr. Clyburn, adding: “When people talk to diversity they are always looking at race and ethnicity — I look beyond that to diversity of experience.”

Representative G.K. Butterfield of North Carolina, like Mr. Clyburn a veteran member of the Congressional Black Caucus, made a similar point in an email to the White House counsel, Dana Remus, last month listing the caucus’s preferred criteria for federal court appointments. Near the top of the list, Mr. Butterfield said, was: “The judge should have a diversity of experience in multiple settings and in multiple areas including experiences outside of the law.”

Mr. Biden’s pledge to nominate the first Black woman to the court was an unusual kind of campaign promise: Mr. Clyburn nudged him to do it at a debate in Charleston before South Carolina’s pivotal primary last year. It was a vow that even some of the president’s aides [*resisted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/14/us/ketanji-brown-jackson-mcconnell-judges.html), worried that it might look like pandering.

Mr. Biden has said little in public since being elected about his preferences for the court, but as a former chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, he has something of a split personality when it comes to the politics of personnel. While happy to highlight his Scranton, Pa., roots, state school diploma and “Middle-Class Joe” moniker, he has long surrounded himself with aides and advisers who brandish the sort of pedigree he lacks.

And some White House officials are already bracing for what they believe will be unfair attacks from the right on whichever Black woman they pick, convinced that the eventual nominee must have an impeccable résumé. “It’s going to have to be someone who has unquestioned credentials so it doesn’t look like it’s an unqualified person,” said one senior Biden official, who spoke about possible court nominees on condition of anonymity to share thinking from inside the West Wing.

Among the potential candidates being pitched for a Supreme Court seat, Ms. Childs has a background that differs from most recent nominees. Unlike eight of the nine current Supreme Court justices, Ms. Childs, 54, did not attend an Ivy League university. Her mother worked for Southern Bell in Columbia, S.C. and Ms. Childs won a scholarship to the University of South Florida. She later graduated from the University of South Carolina’s law school and became the first Black woman to make partner at one of the state’s major law firms. In the fashion of an earlier generation of jurists, she rose in state politics before being appointed to the bench. Ms. Childs served as a top official at South Carolina’s labor department before being appointed to the state’s workers’ compensation board.

“She is the kind of person who has the sort of experiences that would make her a good addition to the Supreme Court,” Mr. Clyburn said.

Mr. Clyburn, whose coveted endorsement helped revive Mr. Biden’s listing campaign before the South Carolina primary last year, has been particularly active on her behalf as part of what his advisers say is his most significant request of the administration. The 80-year-old House whip has made the case for Ms. Childs with Ms. Harris; Ms. Remus; and Senator Richard J. Durbin of Illinois, the Judiciary Committee chair.

Bakari Sellers, a Democratic political commentator who is close to Ms. Harris, has also pitched members of the vice-president’s inner circle on Ms. Childs, who was appointed to the federal bench by Mr. Obama in 2010.

“Not just for our party but for the judiciary it’s important to have somebody who has lived experiences,” Mr. Sellers said.

What’s prompting some of these officials to go public with a more aggressive form of advocacy are two developments.

First, they saw the makings of a short list in a Ruth Marcus [*column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/14/us/ketanji-brown-jackson-mcconnell-judges.html) in The Washington Post earlier this month naming a pair of potential Breyer successors, who like Ms. Childs are young enough to serve on the court for a few decades. The two cited — U.S. District Judge [*Ketanji Brown Jackson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/14/us/ketanji-brown-jackson-mcconnell-judges.html) of Washington, D.C., and California Supreme Court Justice Leondra Kruger — both have Ivy League law degrees and important connections. Ms. Jackson, 50, was a clerk for Mr. Breyer himself and Ms. Kruger, 44, served as Mr. Obama’s deputy solicitor general

There are a handful of other Black women in their 40s with elite credentials who have caught the eye of lawmakers, including some on the Judiciary Committee. There is Danielle Holley-Walker, the dean of Howard University’s law school, and Leslie Abrams Gardner, a Federal District Court judge in Georgia who is a younger sister of Stacey Abrams.

More significant is the matter of timing.

There are relatively few Black women on the federal appeals courts, where presidents often draw their nominees to the Supreme Court. Very soon, however, there will be another vacancy on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit — which can be a springboard to the high court — when Judge Merrick B. Garland resigns to become attorney general. Ms. Childs may be better positioned to ascend to the Supreme Court if she were to serve on that appeals court, some of her admirers say.

“There is an immediate vacancy there so I would advocate for her consideration to the D.C. circuit,” Mr. Butterfield, himself a former state Supreme Court judge, said of Ms. Childs. “And when and if there’s a Supreme Court vacancy she ought to be considered for that, as well.”

Another possible contender seen for a court seat is Cheri Beasley, who lost her re-election as chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court by 412 votes in November. She also went to a public university and climbed through the judiciary via service on lower state courts. Yet Ms. Beasley has told people that she is considering a bid for North Carolina’s open Senate seat next year, according to one Democrat who has spoken to her.

When a court vacancy does occur, several Democrats say, they are bracing for Obama-era tensions, which were papered over by former President Donald Trump, to emerge.

Many members of the Congressional Black Caucus, as well as a number of white Democrats, say they believe the party is too closely linked to elites, and that perception only hands political fodder to Republicans during campaign season.

“This isn’t being critical of the Harvards or the Yales, but I think there’s some great attorneys out there that are really, really smart that come from other places on this earth,” said Senator Jon Tester of Montana, where Democrats lost all three marquee races last year. “And I think we ought to consider them.”

Vi Lyles, the mayor of Charlotte, said, “having the broadest perspective of what’s gone on in the country makes you a better decision maker and leader.”

Even more delicate are lingering frustrations among Black leaders, many of whom went to state schools or historically Black institutions, about Mr. Obama’s arms-length treatment of the Congressional Black Caucus and his administration’s seeming preference for appointees with elite credentials.

“He was predisposed to Ivy League nominees, I think we can all agree on that,” said Mr. Butterfield.

Mr. Sellers was even blunter. “I love Barack Obama, but there was an Ivy League culture that emanated from the White House, and we got to move away from that,” he said.

The frustration with Mr. Obama culminated with his selection of Mr. Garland for the Supreme Court following Justice Antonin Scalia’s death in 2016. Some congressional Democrats believed the former president could have put [*pressure on Republicans, and energized Democrat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/14/us/ketanji-brown-jackson-mcconnell-judges.html)s, had he chosen a Black woman and were infuriated when [*he said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/14/us/ketanji-brown-jackson-mcconnell-judges.html) he did not seek out “a Black lesbian from Skokie.”

What Mr. Clyburn will only say obliquely is that Mr. Biden does not just owe Black voters for his nomination, he’s indebted to African-Americans who resurrected his candidacy in South Carolina and those across the South who all but cemented his nomination three days later as he swept the region on Super Tuesday.

Some African-American Democrats believe that Black Americans will rally behind whichever Black woman Mr. Biden nominates and suspect Mr. Clyburn is looking for a rationale to elevate his home state and burnish his legacy.

Yet few politicians preach more than Mr. Biden about the importance of “dancing with the one that brung you,” as the president often puts it. And so far, Mr. Clyburn has been able to install two of his closest allies in the administration, with former Representative Marcia Fudge being named housing secretary and Jaime Harrison tapped to lead the Democratic National Committee.

Asked if he could support Ms. Childs to the high court, Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina, a Republican and the first Southern Black senator elected since Reconstruction, said he was not ready to commit. But he praised her for having “a very good reputation” and said her appointment “would reflect the positive and powerful progress we’ve made in the great state of South Carolina.”

Mr. Scott was more direct, though, when asked if Mr. Biden owed it to South Carolina’s Black voters given the role they played in his path to the presidency.

“Jim Clyburn would say so,” he said with a smile.

PHOTOS: Representative James E. Clyburn, center left, has offered J. Michelle Childs, a U.S. District Court judge, far left, as a potential Supreme Court nominee. Another contender is Cheri Beasley, right, who was chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGE; MELISSA SUE GERRITS/THE FAYETTEVILLE OBSERVER, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A16)

**Load-Date:** June 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The 22-Year-Old Force Behind Egypt’s Growing #MeToo Movement; The Saturday Profile***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60YX-TPY1-DXY4-X11G-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** Declan Walsh

**Highlight:** In a moment of rage, Nadeen Ashraf created an Instagram page naming a man accused of being a sexual harasser. Within a week, it had 70,000 followers.

**Body**

In a moment of rage, Nadeen Ashraf created an Instagram page naming a man accused of being a sexual harasser. Within a week, it had 70,000 followers.

CAIRO — Nadeen Ashraf had a burning secret. Earlier this summer, an anonymous Instagram page that named and shamed a man accused of being a notorious sexual harasser at Egypt’s most prestigious university was causing a sensation among her friends. Unknown to them, she was running it.

The experiment started, in a flash of fury, in the dead of night. On July 1 Ms. Ashraf, a 22-year-old philosophy major, was up late to cram for an exam the next morning when she became preoccupied with the fate of a Facebook post that had mysteriously disappeared.

Days earlier, a fellow student at the American University in Cairo had posted a warning on Facebook about a man she said was a sexual predator — a brash, manipulative young man from a rich family said to be harassing and blackmailing women on campus. Now, Ms. Ashraf realized as she stared at her laptop, the post had been deleted without explanation.

Enraged, she set aside her textbooks and created an [*Instagram page*](https://www.instagram.com/assaultpolice/) under a pseudonym — @assaultpolice — that identified the man, [*Ahmed Bassam Zaki*](https://www.instagram.com/assaultpolice/), alongside his photo and a list of accusations of misdeeds against women.

“This guy had been getting away with stuff since the 10th grade,” she said. “Every time a woman opened her mouth, someone taped it shut. I wanted to stop that.”

After creating the page, Ms. Ashraf flopped into bed at 6 a.m. and slept through her exam. But when she awoke, she found hundreds of notifications from people who applauded her post, and about 30 messages from women who confided that they, too, had been assaulted by Mr. Zaki. Some said they had been raped.

An Egyptian #MeToo moment was born.

Within a week, Mr. Zaki had been [*arrested*](https://www.instagram.com/assaultpolice/), the @assaultpolice account had amassed 70,000 followers and the page had prompted an outpouring of testimonies from other [*Egyptian women*](https://www.instagram.com/assaultpolice/) fed up with being humiliated and violated.

Sexual assault is endemic in Egypt — a United Nations study in 2013 found that 99 percent of women had experienced harassment or violence — but reporting it is notoriously difficult. Police officials are reluctant to register assault cases. Powerful institutions prefer to sweep accusations under the carpet. Even the families of victims, wary of scandal or feeling a misplaced sense of shame, tend to hush it up.

Ms. Ashraf’s bold page offered a new way.

“It was so wonderful,” she recalled, sitting in her family home. “A lot of the girls who got in touch said ‘I can’t believe I’m finally being heard.’ Even though it was a dark time, here they were speaking out. There was a sense of empowerment, of relief.”

On Sept. 1, the authorities charged Mr. Zaki, 21, with three counts of sexual assault against underage women, as well as multiple counts of blackmail and harassment. He remains in detention, awaiting trial.

But then a second high-profile case came to light, also through Ms. Ashraf’s Instagram page, that complicated matters. It promised to be even more sensational — an account of a gang rape by five young men in a five-star hotel overlooking the Nile. In recent weeks, however, the case has become clouded in a murk of counter-accusations and leaked images that threatens to overshadow the progress Ms. Ashraf has made — and possibly even reverse it.

“It’s very worrisome,” she said.

Ms. Ashraf, 22, is not an archetypal Egyptian rebel. She comes from an apolitical family that lives in a gated community in eastern Cairo — a place of manicured lawns and hushed streets lined with luxury vehicles where support for Egypt’s authoritarian leader, President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, runs relatively high.

Her father owns a software company, her mother is a nutritionist, and her family stayed in the suburbs during the 2011 uprising that toppled Egypt’s longtime ruler, Hosni Mubarak, and the 2013 protests that ushered in a military takeover and Mr. el-Sisi’s rule.

When the #MeToo movement erupted in the United States in 2017, driven by accusations against the disgraced film producer [*Harvey Weinstein*](https://www.instagram.com/assaultpolice/), she didn’t pay much attention — even if she did have her own experience of assault.

When she was 11 years old, a delivery man carrying laundry approached her as she walked down the street and slapped her bottom. “I had no idea why he was doing this,” she said. “It took me years to realize it was sexual.”

Public outrage over sexual assault has been growing in Egypt for about a decade, driven by high-profile attacks and, last year, harassment accusations against [*a famous soccer player*](https://www.instagram.com/assaultpolice/). Even so, men continue to assault with impunity.

***Working-class*** women run a gantlet of harassment in crowded public buses, Ms. Ashraf said. Among the rich, although dating is tolerated, young men exploit their family connections to misbehave with license, she said, and many parents reflexively blame their daughters when things go wrong.

“The first response is that it’s your fault,” she said. “How did he get your number? Why did you let him in?”

Ms. Ashraf initially shielded her activism from her parents, who thought she was locked into her bedroom to study. When she finally came clean to her father, weeks later, he was alarmed. “He went silent for three minutes,” she recalled. “Then he said, ‘You can’t tell anyone.’”

Ms. Ashraf told him it was a little late for that.

Is her brand of vigilantism open to abuse, or even fair? False accusations are a hazard, she admitted, adding that she tried to confirm the charges against Mr. Zaki through her network of friends. Even so, she had to delete one accusation, from his time as a business student in Spain, after it was found to be untrue.

In a country like Egypt, such methods were necessary, she said. “It’s not like the West. You can’t just walk into a police station.”

The real difficulties started, though, with the second high-profile case.

In late July, Ms. Ashraf posted to Instagram about five men in their 20s, from wealthy families, who were said to have gang-raped a teenage woman in a suite at the Fairmont Nile City hotel after a party in 2014. A video of the assault, made by a sixth man, had been distributed to their friends.

The accusation caused a sensation. Although Ms. Ashraf didn’t identify the accused men, copycat accounts sprang up on Instagram that did. One is the son of a prominent steel tycoon; another is the son of a well-known soccer coach.

Within one week the victim, who said her drink had been spiked by the assailants, approached the police and pressed charges. In late August, Egypt’s prosecutor general announced five arrests — two men in Egypt and three in Lebanon, who have since been extradited to Egypt. At least three other men are being sought.

But the investigation became muddied after investigators moved against several people who had come forward in connection to the case. Two men were accused of “debauchery” — code for homosexuality — based on photos found in their phones that were later leaked to the news media.

They have been detained, as has a woman — a former partner of one of those accused of rape — whose intimate photos have been leaked onto the internet.

Just who leaked those photos is unclear, and the cases are expected to come to court in the coming weeks. But they have already sent a chill through the ranks of Egyptian women who hoped it had become safer to report sexual violence.

“Fairmont has become our case of the century,” Ms. Ashraf said. “But it shouldn’t be a precedent for assault cases. There’s so many other things coming up that prove we are on the side of girls.”

After threats to her security, Ms. Ashraf suspended her Instagram page for 10 days in August. Now it is up and running again, but with a focus on educating women about their rights.

“You use the word consent all the time in English,” she said. “But I’ve never heard its Arabic equivalent — taraadi. So we try to translate these concepts, break them down, explain.”

The only name she’s made public of late is her own. Realizing that her identity was leaking out, and fearing retribution from men who were threatened by the page, she decided it was safest to end her anonymity. “I figured that if the bad guys knew who I was, good people should too,” she said. “There’s protection in that.”

Nada Rashwan contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Top, Nadeen Ashraf at her home in Cairo. Above, a mural reading “Safe streets against harassment” in Cairo. Left, the Fairmont Nile City hotel. An @assaultpolice post about an accusation of gang rape there in 2014 quickly spread on social media. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SIMA DIAB FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; AMR ABDALLAH DALSH/REUTERS; SAMER ABDALLAH/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** July 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Pandemic Star Faces His Career-Making Test***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:629N-XSX1-JBG3-62GX-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Joe Coscarelli

**Body**

The 20-year-old rapper and singer had one of the biggest hits of last year with ''Mood,'' and is easing into the life of a celebrity with the release of his debut album, ''El Dorado.''

It wasn't supposed to be the right time for a breakthrough, but 24kGoldn had a career-making hit in hand.

Spring was turning to summer last year, and the coronavirus was surging worldwide. ''Mood'' -- a two-and-a-half minute, guitar-driven, melodic-rap confection -- did not exactly fit the vibe. But nearly two years into almost making it after signing a major-label contract, Goldn and his team were in throw-it-at-the-wall mode: This is the best record we have, they told themselves. Let's go.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

To say it worked, in spite of the circumstances, would be an understatement: ''Mood,'' by Goldn and the like-minded sing-rapper Iann Dior, spent six weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 last year, plus another two weeks in January, boosted in part by a steady flow of TikTok memes, a Justin Bieber and J Balvin remix and little competition. The song has been streamed more than 1.5 billion times globally.

But even more impressively in a fragmented market, ''Mood'' also dominated across old-fashioned radio formats, including rhythmic, rock, alternative, Top 40 and adult contemporary, making it officially uncategorizable as anything but a true smash.

So while Goldn may have entered the pandemic as yet another teenage rapper who scored a record deal off social-media buzz and songwriting talent, only to risk getting lost in the shuffle, he is leaving it as a newborn pop star, with every industry tool at his disposal to help him grow into the role.

''You're important,'' Goldn's friend and creative director, Be, teased with an added expletive in a tiny Midtown hotel room this month, in between promotional appearances and remote record company meetings to finalize an album cover. ''Conference calls, bro!''

Goldn, now 20 and caked in TV makeup for the first time, turned a bit bashful, but concurred: ''Stretch is getting like 500 emails a day now,'' he said of his manager, ''and it used to be like seven, a year and a half ago! I went from Squidward to handsome Squidward real fast,'' he added, referring to a ''SpongeBob SquarePants'' meme.

Now, with the world and the music business easing back into more normal operations, Goldn has to actually seize what his big song set up for him. His first album, ''El Dorado,'' is out Friday via the Records label, a joint venture with Sony Music, and its partner Columbia, and it represents one of the first major trial balloons for the emerging-artist machine during a still-tentative moment. The tough part for Goldn, especially in the age of masked semi-isolation and no concerts, is putting a memorable face (and personality) to the high-grade melodies, in hopes of becoming a true multi-hyphenate.

Fortunately for him and those betting on him, the artist -- born, somehow, Golden Landis Von Jones to two former models in San Francisco -- was seemingly built in a lab that mints charisma-oozing, genre-agnostic Gen-Z pop acts. Fizzy, warm and winning, he's the kind of young man whom a friend's parents would swoon over upon first meeting -- a popular kid who's avoided alienating any outsider constituencies. With a Cheshire cat smile in width, if not mischievousness, he is likable even while deciding which pair of leather pants to wear to a fashion magazine.

''Goldn very much reminded me of a young Will Smith,'' said Barry Weiss, the veteran music executive who signed Goldn to Records, and who previously helped jump-start the careers of a teenage Smith, Britney Spears, 'N Sync and Chris Brown. ''If this kid wanted to go into politics ...,'' Weiss said.

Musically, Goldn found another sweet spot. His songs are part of the sanded-down long tail of SoundCloud rap, braiding together two dominant strands of recent rock-adjacent hip-hop: the bouncy, pop-punk-inflected melodies warbled by Chief Keef, iLoveMakonnen, Lil Uzi Vert, Playboi Carti and Juice WRLD, plus the guitar loops that have become a go-to foundation for earwormy beats. ''El Dorado,'' which features Future and DaBaby, also finds Goldn showing flashes of Bruno Mars, Chance the Rapper and Post Malone.

Goldn cited some modern punk-rap reference points as influences, but also his latent familiarity with the alternative hits of his youth. ''Pop-punk was a part of pop culture at the time,'' he said. ''You turn on 'Cheaper by the Dozen' and you've got 'In Too Deep' by Sum 41. You've got games like Rock Band and Guitar Hero selling millions of copies around the world. So whether I was aware of it or not, that type of stuff was really shaping my childhood.''

''When those styles started getting popularized by artists like Carti and Uzi,'' he added, ''it hit my generation in places that we didn't know we could be hit before.''

Weiss, who was introduced to Goldn by the producer and A&R man D.A. Doman, first heard him as ''much more of a pure hip-hop artist'' on early songs like ''Ballin Like Shareef'' and ''Valentino,'' which would go on to become Goldn's first TikTok success.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Taken by the rapper's hooks and look, Weiss quickly jumped on a plane to Los Angeles, where Goldn was studying finance on scholarship at the University of Southern California, and pursued what he called an old-school, ''don't let the kid out of the room'' strategy to signing him. (Goldn still managed to hold off for a while and, during a follow-up trip to New York, even took a meeting at another major label after telling his primary suitors that he had ''to do some family stuff.'')

''It felt like I was going after Patrick Mahomes -- a franchise player,'' Weiss said. ''I wanted to put the whole company behind this kid.''

But when Goldn returned later, as a signed artist, with the song ''City of Angels'' -- a track he made with Omer Fedi, an Israeli guitarist, songwriter and producer -- Weiss was confused. ''It was a head-scratcher to me,'' he said, recalling telling Goldn's circle, ''Guys, this is like, a rock record.''

Goldn's response? ''Kids don't think that way!''

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

The track became the centerpiece to Goldn's first official release, the ''Dropped Outta College'' EP, released in 2019, after he did just that -- a gradual process that hinted at Goldn's overall savvy.

''I figured out a way that if I dropped all of my classes except for one, I could still get my full scholarship to live on campus for free and eat on campus for free,'' Goldn said, grinning. ''I got to live on campus, keep promoting my music, keep being a public figure there and not have to really worry about school too much.'' (The one class he did take, on international commerce, came with a trip to Japan.)

A naturally graceful social maneuverer, Goldn found that his time at U.S.C. also introduced him to a moneyed, well-connected milieu that he had not encountered growing up as a biracial, ***working-class*** kid in the Oceanview neighborhood of San Francisco (which, like a true Bay Area native, he refers to as Lakeview).

''In L.A., kids have whole positions in the social hierarchy just based off who their parents are,'' he said -- a good primer for the shmoozy politics of the music industry.

But he also made real friends in high places. After leaving campus, Goldn moved into the guesthouse of a classmate whose mother just happened to be Nancy Josephson, a partner at William Morris Endeavor. She is now his agent, and a loosely autobiographical show starring Goldn is in development -- ''The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air'' as his life blooms into ''Entourage.'' Goldn half-jokingly refers to himself as the Black Vinnie Chase.

Like his parents, who got by on commercial work and then service-industry jobs, Goldn modeled and acted some as an adorable child with ''a huge Afro.'' The attention from his classmates -- not to mention the spending money -- was thrilling, he said, and the work got him comfortable in front of a camera. ''I was really good in the auditions,'' Goldn said, stating the obvious.

But despite his Hollywood inroads, the pandemic might very well have halted whatever momentum Goldn had generated around town. Instead, another guitar riff from Fedi, cooked up while Goldn was playing Call of Duty, led quickly to ''Mood.''

''A lot of bigger people took their foot off the gas during uncertain times,'' KBeazy, a producer behind the hit and other tracks on Goldn's album, said. ''For us, who still weren't established, we were like, 'It's go time -- now or never.'''

For its collaborators, ''Mood'' was more than just a defining track -- the song was also a path to the signature sound that Goldn had been lacking, not to mention a group of friends and now roommates.

Along with Fedi and KBeazy, Goldn's 21st-century equivalent of a session band also includes Blake Slatkin, another young songwriter and studio whiz who started his career as an intern for the hitmaker Benny Blanco, and whose parents' house in Beverly Hills provided some isolated studio space during Covid-19. (''Oh, we all got Covid,'' Slatkin said, though they were careful to stay -- and even sleep -- in the studio.)

The tight group, which is just as likely to listen to Modest Mouse and Weezer as Uzi and Lil Baby, assured that ''El Dorado'' would have a cohesive feel, instead of the more predictable method of sticking Goldn in the studio with a slate of hot producers who were strangers.

''I already tried that line of thinking where we make every song as different as possible and try and get a hit off of it,'' Goldn said. In the industry these days, ''I think there are a lot of things that feel more futuristic that aren't really as helpful as people think,'' he added. ''And I think there's a lot of stuff that worked in the past that people forgot worked.''

For better or worse, like most artists his age, Goldn also doubles as a trend forecaster and digital marketer -- innate skills that he can't help given how he grew up, scouring SoundCloud, buying sneakers online and lurking a Kanye West message board.

He first earned industry inquiries after submitting his music to a DJ Booth blogger who promised to review anything sent to him (the verdict: ''just a bit of exposure away from being a certifiable hit''). And, when his labels were skeptical of his progress, Goldn worked the nascent TikTok market, meeting with various influencers while on tour and posting constantly to seed and tease his songs. (Never one to miss an optimized opportunity, Goldn also put out a song called ''I Go to USC'' while the 2019 college admissions scandal swirled.)

''The crazy thing about marketing is it changes every day,'' Goldn said. ''Even the way TikTok was when 'Mood' was blowing up versus how it is now -- in only a span of eight months, it's two completely different playing fields.'' The labels, he said, are ''just flooding it, and they don't understand how it fully works.''

In an S.U.V. this month after taping an appearance on ''Desus & Mero'' -- where he gushed with the hosts about having a Jewish mother and loving ''Survivor,'' a show that premiered six months before he was born -- Goldn was scrolling through photos and videos of himself. He'd been sent a promo clip for his album that was designed for Instagram, but the video quality was lacking.

''That always makes it perform worse,'' he said as he demanded a cleaner version.

Goldn mentioned his fondness for examining the data himself, explaining that he could tell when a song of his was about to blow up when its daily streams increased on a Sunday, when they should be declining. A booming track's growth chart ''looks like a hockey stick,'' he said.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

But these fixations meant that Goldn knew full well that ''Coco'' and ''3, 2, 1,'' the follow-ups to his No. 1 hit, were not the same sort of unstoppable rocket ship that he'd gotten used to. ''How come it's not doing like 'Mood'?'' he admitted asking himself before realizing ''not every song can be 'Mood.'''

Still, Goldn was obviously itching to bask in the success of what he'd already accomplished during such a bizarre period. He noted that he'd yet to experience playing a sweaty, mosh-heavy festival set or being mobbed by fans in front of his hotel. Releasing ''El Dorado'' was the first step to these pop-star rites of passage, he knew, but as he continued a promo tour low on crowds and high on health-and-safety protocols, it was clear that he would have to wait just a little bit longer.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/23/arts/music/24kgoldn-el-dorado.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/23/arts/music/24kgoldn-el-dorado.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The rapper and singer 24kGoldn, above and below, began his music career while still a student on scholarship at the University of Southern California. His aesthetic is informed by pop-punk in addition to rap. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE GROSKOPF FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2021

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[***‘Lean Into It. Lean Into the Culture War.’; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634P-6SF1-JBG3-648H-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2799 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** Is it Democrats or Republicans who are tearing us apart?

**Body**

Should responsibility for the rampant polarization that characterizes American politics today be laid at the feet of liberals or conservatives? I posed that question to my friend [*Bill Galston*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), a senior fellow at Brookings and a columnist at The Wall Street Journal.

He emailed me his reply:

It is fair to say that the proponents of cultural change have been mostly on offense since [*Brown v. the Board of Education*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), while the defenders of the status quo have been on defense.

Once the conflict enters the political arena, though, other factors come into play, Galston argues:

Intensity makes a huge difference, and on many of the cultural issues, including guns and immigration, the right is more intense than the left.

Galston put it like this:

When being “right” on a cultural controversy becomes a threshold issue for an intense minority, it can drive the party much farther to the left or right than its median voter.

Along with intensity, another driving force in escalating polarization, in Galston’s view, is elite behavior:

Newt Gingrich believed that the brand of politics [*Bob Michel*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/) practiced had contributed to House Republicans’ 40-year sojourn in the political desert. Gingrich decided to change this, starting with Republicans’ [*vocabulary and tactics*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/). This proved effective, but at the cost of rising incivility and declining cooperation between the political parties. Once the use of terms such as “corruption,” “disgrace” and “traitor” becomes routine in Congress, the intense personal antipathy these words express is bound to trickle down to rank-and-file party identifiers.

The race and gender issues that have come to play such a central role in American politics are rooted in the enormous changes in society from the 1950s to the 1970s, Galston wrote:

The United States in the early 1950s resembled the country as it had been for decades. By the early 1970s, everything had changed, stunning Americans who had grown up in what seemed to them to be a stable, traditional society and setting the stage for a conservative reaction. Half a century after the Scopes trial, evangelical Protestantism re-entered the public square and soon became an important build-block of the coalition that brought Ronald Reagan to power.

One of the biggest changes in the country in the wake of the civil rights and immigration reforms of the 1950s, ’60s and ’70s has been in the demographic makeup of the nation. Seventy years ago, the country was 89.5 percent white, according to [*the census*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/). By 2019, the white share of the population [*fell*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/) to 60.1 percent. In 2019, Pew Research [*reported*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/):

Nonwhites are about twice as likely as whites to say having a majority nonwhite population will be good for the country: 51 percent of all nonwhite adults — including 53 percent of blacks and 55 percent of Hispanics — say this, compared with 26 percent of whites.

In many ways, this transformation posed a challenge to customary social expectations. “How would the progressive cultural program deal with traditionalist dissent?” Galston asked:

One option was to defuse a portion of the dissent by carving out exceptions to religious and conscience-based objections. The other was to use law to bring the objectors to heel. Regrettably, the latter course prevailed, generating conflicts over abortion with the Little Sisters of the Poor, with a baker over a cake for a same-sex wedding, among others, and with Catholic social service providers over same-sex adoptions.

Recently two columnists who are hardly sympathetic to Trump or Trumpism — far from it — raised questions about whether the right or the left deserves blame or responsibility for the kind of conflicts that now roil elections. [*Kevin Drum*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), in “[*If you hate the culture wars, blame liberals*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/),” and [*Damon Linker*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), in “[*The myth of asymmetric polarization*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/),” make the case that the left has been the aggressor in the culture wars.

“It is not conservatives who have turned American politics into a culture war battle. It is liberals. And this shouldn’t come as a surprise,” Drum wrote. “Almost by definition, liberals are the ones pushing for change while conservatives are merely responding to whatever liberals do.” Linker took this a step further, arguing that progressives do not want to acknowledge that “on certain issues wrapped up with the culture war, Democrats have moved further and faster to the left than Republicans have moved to the right,” because to do so “would require that they cede some of the moral high ground in their battles with conservatives, since it would undermine the preferred progressive narrative according to which the right is motivated entirely by bad faith and pure malice.”

Drum and Linker were quickly followed by other commentators, including [*Peggy Noonan*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), a conservative columnist for The Wall Street Journal, who wrote a piece that was summed up nicely by its headline: “[*The Culture War Is a Leftist Offensive*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/).”

I asked [*Jacob Hacker*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), a political scientist at Yale, for his assessment of the Drum and Linker arguments, and he wrote back:

It strains credulity to argue that Democrats have been pushing culture-war issues more than Republicans. It’s mostly Republican elites who have accentuated these issues to attract more and more ***working-class*** white voters even as they pursue a plutocratic economic agenda that’s unpopular among those voters. Certainly, Biden has not focused much on cultural issues since entering office — his key agenda items are all bread-and-butter economic policies. Meanwhile, we have Republicans making critical race theory and transgender sports into big political issues (neither of which, so far as I can tell, hardly mattered to voters at all before they were elevated by right-wing media and the G.O.P.).

Hacker provided me with a graphic of ideological trends from 1969 to 2020 in House and Senate voting by party that clearly shows much more movement to the right among Republicans than movement to the left among Democrats.

There is substantial evidence in support of Hacker’s argument that Republican politicians and strategists have led the charge in raising hot-button issues. On June 24, for example, Representative [*Jim Banks*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/) of Indiana, chairman of the [*Republican Study Committee*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/) — a group of conservative members of the House — sent out [*a memo*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/) telling colleagues:

We are in a culture war. On one side, Republicans are working to renew American patriotism and rebuild our country. On the other, Democrats have embraced and given a platform to a radical element who want to tear America down.

The letter ends: “My encouragement to you is lean into it. Lean into the culture war.”

At the state legislative level, The Associated Press — in an April story, “[*In G.O.P. strongholds, a big push on ‘culture war’ legislation*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/)” — cited a surge in legislation restricting transgender surgery and banning the teaching of critical race theory.

In this view, the left may start culture war conflicts, but the right is far more aggressive in politicizing them, both in legislative chambers and in political campaigns.

Conversely, [*Andrew Sullivan*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), in “[*What Happened to You? The radicalization of the American elite against liberalism*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/),” makes the case that the extreme left has created a hostile environment not only for conservatives but also for traditional liberals:

Look how far the left’s war on liberalism has gone. Due process? If you’re a male on campus, gone. Privacy? Stripped away — by anonymous rape accusations, exposure of private emails, violence against people’s private homes, screaming at folks in restaurants, sordid exposés of sexual encounters, eagerly published by woke mags. Nonviolence? Exceptions are available if you want to “punch a fascist.” Free speech? Only if you don’t mind being fired and ostracized as a righteous consequence. Free association? You’ve got to be kidding. Religious freedom? Illegitimate bigotry. Equality? Only group equity counts now, and individuals of the wrong identity can and must be discriminated against. Colorblindness? Another word for racism. Mercy? Not for oppressors. Intent? Irrelevant. Objectivity? A racist lie. Science? A manifestation of white supremacy. Biological sex? Replaced by socially constructed gender so that women have penises and men have periods. The rule of law? Not for migrants or looters. Borders? Racist. Viewpoint diversity? A form of violence against the oppressed.

Drum and Linker base much of their argument on [*Pew Research*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/)data (illustrated by the graphic below) to prove that the Democratic Party has shifted much farther to the left than the Republican Party has shifted to the right. On a zero (very liberal) to 10 (very conservative) scale, Drum wrote, “between 1994 and 2017, Democrats had gotten three points more liberal while Republicans had gotten about half a point more conservative.”

[*Jocelyn Kiley*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), associate director for political research at Pew, argues, however, that her data shows something quite different. The Pew analysis is based on responses to [*10 questions*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), each of which asks subjects to pick between two alternatives — for example, “government is almost always wasteful” versus “government often does a better job than people give it credit for,” or “homosexuality should be discouraged by society” versus “homosexuality should be accepted by society.”

In recent years, Kiley wrote in an email,

on a few basic values — most notably, views around gay and lesbian people and same-sex relationships — society as a whole (including both Republicans and Democrats) has moved in a more liberal direction.

In addition, Kiley noted,

members of both parties hold [*more positive views of immigrants than in the past*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), even as the partisan divide on these views has become more pronounced.

The Democratic shift to the left reflects in large part a parallel shift in the general public. The median voter has become more liberal, and as a result, in 2017 Democratic voters were modestly closer to the median voter than Republican voters (by one point on a 20-point scale).

I asked [*Brian Schaffner*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), a principal investigator at the Cooperative Election Study and a political scientist at Tufts, about the Drum and Linker columns. Schaffner made an argument similar to Kiley’s:

The overall median among the population of Americans has moved leftward from 1994 to 2017. Even if Republicans have shifted less than Democrats, compared to their views in 1994, this hardly makes them less extreme in the current moment. To put a finer point on it, imagine an individual who supported school segregation in 1965 and who still held that same view 50 years later. Clearly it is the lack of a shift in views over five decades that would have made that individual extreme in the year 2015.

Schaffner observes that the data

shows a very clear shift among Democrats, while Republicans hardly move at all. But independents are also moving in the same direction as Democrats on these issues. Sure, Republicans aren’t shifting their views, but their unwillingness to update their assessments of racism in America is essentially leaving them behind as the rest of America’s attitudes are evolving.

[*Ryan Enos*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), a political scientist at Harvard, took the Schaffner argument a step further:

Most importantly, I think we should question whether the “culture war” metaphor is appropriate — war gives the idea that there are aggressors trying to change society to match their preferences, but much of the change in opinion we see from both parties is necessarily a reaction to society changing around them.

Democrats, Enos continued,

moved to the left on gay marriage because more of them were beginning to know gay people who had come out of the closet despite the legal and social pressures not to. And Democrats moved to the left on immigration because the Western world, not just the United States, is diversifying as economic and social trends have moved people from one part of the world to another. On these and other issues, Democrats’ attitudes change then not because they are trying to shape society, but because they are merely reacting to it.

It would be wrong, Enos concluded, “to think cultural change is all about politics.”

The Pew data is based on questions first developed in 1994 and include none of the contentious contemporary issues that have provoked pushback against the left wing of the Democratic Party.

In a [*March 12 column*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/) published before his “[*Myth of asymmetric polarization*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/)” essay, Linker himself assigned responsibility to Trump and to Republicans for a climate in which “it sometimes seems as if the culture war has swallowed up everything in American politics.” Linker traces this phenomenon to

Donald Trump’s presidential campaign and victory against Hillary Clinton in November 2016. Trump won, in part, by blending strong support from religious conservatives with firm backing by more secular conservatives and moderates who responded to Trump’s strong, culturally inflected defense of immigration restrictionism, gun rights, and America’s distinctive national identity. Through his four years in office, Trump used Twitter, public rallies, and other presidential statements to frame many of his policy commitments in culture war terms, casting his opponents on these issues as morally alien from American culture and history. By the last year of his presidency, Trump had gone far beyond abortion, immigration, and guns to culturalize crime, race relations, economic policy, voting rights and even mask-wearing in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

[*Andra Gillespie*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), a political scientist at Emory, expanded on this point in an email:

The questions that comprise the Pew index are not necessarily what is driving concern about extremism today. Today, we are concerned about who is more likely to believe in QAnon or which group is more likely to believe that armed resistance to government might be necessary to save America.

Recent data, Gillespie wrote, shows that Republicans are far more likely to believe in QAnon or that significant proportions of Republicans believe that the 2020 election was stolen, despite a wealth of evidence to the contrary. This, Gillespie contends, is the reason “that the public discourse is focusing on right-wing extremism right now.”

As the 2022 election comes into view, the key issue is less the question of which party is the aggressor in the culture wars than whether Republicans can gin up enough controversy over the so-called woke agenda to make it salient to voters on Election Day, regardless of whether or not responsibility for these issues can reasonably be attributed to the Democratic Party.

Linker’s March 12 column, “[*Will the GOP’s culture war gambit blow up in its face?*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/),” describes the difficulties facing the Republican Party in achieving this goal.

At the moment, the electorate faces

a culture war that appears to be metastasizing, though with its left side displaying far more ambivalence about waging it than those on the right. In purely tactical terms, this makes sense. Republicans are motivated to pursue culture war battles, and to frame policy disputes in culture-war terms, because they think it benefits them politically. And they may be right about that — precisely because Democrats are more divided on those issues than Republicans.

But there’s a catch, Linker continued:

While Republicans and progressive activists are hurling invective at each other, Democrats in Congress and the White House are preparing to send substantial amounts of money, in the form of pandemic relief, to hundreds of millions of Americans. That’s likely to be pretty popular — and opens up an intriguing possibility. What if, while Republicans are busy trying to bait Democrats on culture war issues, those Democrats end up winning public opinion in a big way by refusing to play along, changing the subject, and actually making the lives of most Americans concretely better? If so, the culture-war play by the right could end up backfiring big time.

If right-wing manipulation of cultural and racial issues does end up backfiring, that will defy the long history of the Republican Party’s successful deployment of divisive wedge issues — from Richard Nixon to Ronald Reagan to George H.W. Bush to Newt Gingrich to George W. Bush to Donald Trump. Republicans have repeatedly demonstrated that the half-life of these radioactive topics is longer than expected, and Democrats, if they want to protect their fragile majority, must be doubly careful not to hand their adversaries ever more powerful weapons.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Andrew Harnik/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Democrats’ Big Tent Helped Them Win. Now It Threatens Biden’s Agenda.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6227-33S1-JBG3-619Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** The party’s ideological blend of moderates and progressives carried it to power in Washington, but elements of that coalition could block the most ambitious parts of President Biden’s agenda.

**Body**

The party’s ideological blend of moderates and progressives carried it to power in Washington, but elements of that coalition could block the most ambitious parts of President Biden’s agenda.

As he ran for president last year, Joseph R. Biden Jr. contorted his campaign to appease both wings of the Democratic Party, trying to excite progressives with an ambitious policy platform while assuring moderates he opposed structural changes to the political process.

Now, faced with the realities of governing and dual crises of public health and economic stagnation, Mr. Biden is increasingly squeezed by members of his own party who see an inevitable collision course between his deference to Washington norms and his promises of far-reaching change.

Some progressive Democrats, who have been keeping their powder dry on Mr. Biden since he won the presidency, spoke out in frustration after he staked out two moderate positions [*at a town hall event*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/02/16/us/joe-biden-trump) in Milwaukee on Tuesday: a willingness to negotiate on the $15 minimum wage he had proposed, and skepticism of a sweeping student loan cancellation program.

On Wednesday, after Mr. Biden also signaled flexibility on his sweeping immigration plans, activists said that they were willing to let him try for a bipartisan deal, but [*would not wait forever*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/02/16/us/joe-biden-trump).

And on Friday, it was the Biden administration’s turn to be concerned: Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, one of the most moderate Democrats in Washington, announced that he would [*oppose the president’s choice*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/02/16/us/joe-biden-trump) to lead the Office of Management and Budget, imperiling the nomination with an act of friendly fire.

It is all a sign that the big tent of the Democratic Party is set for a stress test under Mr. Biden unlike any it has faced while in power in recent decades. Democrats have long prided themselves on including liberals, moderates and even conservative Democrats in the tent, in sharp contrast to the recent Republican moves in several states to censure members for disloyalty to former President Donald J. Trump.

Still, even though Democrats control Washington, they are hardly united by the same governing goals: The party’s ideological blend of moderate and progressive voices helped it win back the White House and the Senate, but elements of that coalition could threaten the most ambitious parts of Mr. Biden’s agenda.

“History tells us two years after Obama won, two years after Clinton won — Republicans did phenomenally well,” said Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, a leading progressive and presidential candidate last year. “And they did because Democrats had the power and they did not exercise that power for working families. And I think Joe Biden understands that.”

Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, who endorsed ending the filibuster during her own presidential run, said in an interview that Democrats “can’t give Mitch McConnell a veto over the same things as the American people sent us to Washington to do.”

“Our job is to deliver for the American people. Period,” she said. “And I think that Democrats are unified on that. But the point is not the unity. The point is the things we’re trying to get done.”

Progressives see issues like a $15 minimum wage, canceling student loan debt and expanding voting rights as a baseline to determining whether Mr. Biden’s legacy will be his defeat of Mr. Trump or, as his campaign slogan promised, building the country back better.

The moderates, including Mr. Manchin and other Democratic senators like Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, argue that the path to success in battleground states begins with setting a tone of unity and bipartisanship, as evidenced by both senators’ commitment to keeping the Senate filibuster, which [*has often stood in the way of major legislation*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/02/16/us/joe-biden-trump).

In Mr. Manchin’s statement opposing Mr. Biden’s nominee for the Office of Management and Budget, the Democratic operative Neera Tanden, he focused on unity. Citing old tweets of hers that were critical of Republicans and progressives, Mr. Manchin said her confirmation would have a “toxic and detrimental impact” on the administration’s relationship with Congress.

“We must take meaningful steps to end the political division and dysfunction that pervades our politics,” he said. “At a time of crisis, it is more important than ever that we chart a new bipartisan course.”

The debate among Democrats exposes the difference between vague pledges made during campaign season and actual governing values. For more than a year, the party was held together by its shared goal of defeating Mr. Trump, a mantra that kept moderates at bay and progressives in line in addition to driving activism and grass-roots fund-raising. Now, with Mr. Biden in office, the divisions that always lurked underneath the surface are taking shape.

Where Mr. Biden falls is the ultimate unknown. A longtime institutionalist, he has said he opposes ending the filibuster, giving cover to his party’s centrist wing. But some Democrats believe that his administration is playing out its options and that once he faces the inevitable opposition of Republicans, he will nix Washington traditionalism in favor of passing his agenda.

During his town hall event in Wisconsin, Mr. Biden signaled an openness to negotiations about the minimum wage, speaking of a gradual increase while also affirming his commitment to $15 per hour. He also rejected one question about whether he intended to cancel up to $50,000 in student debt via executive order.

“I will not make that happen,” he said.

The answer set off an outcry among progressives, student activists and some members of Congress, who argued that he had not only the legal authority but also a political mandate to act.

Ms. Warren penned a letter with Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader, that said they were confident the Biden administration would “agree with the standards Obama and Trump used as well as leading legal experts who have concluded that the administration has broad authority to immediately deliver much-needed relief to millions of Americans.”

In the phone interview, she said Mr. Biden had run not only on unity and restoring bipartisanship, but also on the most progressive policy platform in history.

“Biden has said: ‘I’m not going to hand you a veto. I’m not going to let you block what this moment demands, I’m not going to let us stop the changes that we need to make for the American people,” Ms. Warren said. “So I think that Biden has gotten this exactly right, wants to work on a bipartisan basis, but not at the cost of getting nothing done.”

There is also an increasing activist drumbeat of pressure on Mr. Biden and senators like Mr. Manchin who have at times stood in the way of progressive change. During a virtual meeting last week between Mr. Manchin and low-income West Virginians that was convened by the grass-roots group the Poor People’s Campaign, worker after worker pressured the senator to embrace a $15 minimum wage, which he has opposed.

“It feels like he’s got his head in the clouds,” Brianna Griffith, a constituent who met with Mr. Manchin, said afterward. “Do they understand what’s happening to poor West Virginians?”

“Enough is enough,” said Pam Garrison, another worker who met with Mr. Manchin. “We’re tired of putting the filthy rich in silk beds and us sleeping on straws.”

In a statement, a spokeswoman for Mr. Manchin said he “appreciated the opportunity” to meet with members of the Poor People’s Campaign and “discuss the issues most important to them.” She pushed back on the idea that Mr. Manchin’s resistance to a $15 minimum wage meant he did not support low-income workers, and pointed to previous public statements in which he has said he would support a smaller wage increase, citing concerns from the business community.

“Having grown up in the small coal-mining town of Farmington, Senator Manchin understands the challenges facing working West Virginians and small business owners,” said the spokeswoman, Sam Runyon.

Mr. Manchin’s position is also bolstered by a political reality that places moderate voters at the forefront — a fact that Mr. Biden’s White House is keenly aware of. For Democrats to maintain their House majority in the midterm elections next year, they must hold seats in Republican-drawn districts that are often populated by moderate suburban voters. In the Senate, where Democrats are seeking to expand their razor-thin control of the chamber in 2022, they must secure tough statewide victories in places like North Carolina, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Those who want Mr. Biden to embrace major legislation say the moderates have it wrong — delivering for voters, they say, will protect the party during the midterms, not deferring to Washington rules.

Mr. Sanders took aim at the [*recent news*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/02/16/us/joe-biden-trump) that Third Way, a moderate think tank that has often pushed Democrats toward the center, was working on a project to review the party’s 2020 performance and make recommendations for the 2022 midterms. He said that issues like canceling student debt, raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour and combating climate change were “political winners.”

The American ***working class*** today — white, Black, Latino — they are hurting. They want us to respond vigorously,” he said. “If we do so, I think that they will reward us in 2022. If we fail them, and the Republicans can go around and say, ‘Hey, you gave these people the House, the Senate and the White House and they did nothing for you,’ we will not do well in 2022.”

Still, the entrenchment by moderate senators — and the president’s current deference to it — presents a challenge for activists hoping to influence the administration. And while progressive elected officials are confident that Mr. Biden will side with them in the end, a growing chorus of activists is looking to him for more immediate action.

K Trainor, a student activist who has worked with progressive groups to turn out college students for Democrats, said Mr. Biden’s answer at the town hall was deeply disappointing. She said that if the administration didn’t deliver for young voters, it would make it harder to persuade them to turn out in future elections.

“I think a lot of people in my generation are asking, ‘Where is the courage?’” Ms. Trainor said. “It feels like they’re backtracking and we’re not even 100 days in.”

The Rev. William J. Barber II, a co-chair of the Poor People’s Campaign who organized the West Virginia workers’ meeting with Mr. Manchin, said the debate reflected an ugly underbelly of Democratic politics. While poor and low-income workers, particularly those who are racial minorities or young people, make up the core of the Democratic base, he said, the policies that they care about most have often been sacrificed because of political calculations.

They are the human cost of the big tent, he said.

“Democrats ran on this, they put it in their platform and they said this is what needs to happen,” Dr. Barber said. “It would be the ultimate abandonment and betrayal to then get here and have the power to do it, and then retreat.”

PHOTOS: A rally for a $15-an-hour minimum wage on Tuesday in Orlando, Fla. President Biden has indicated a willingness to negotiate on the $15 minimum wage. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN RAOUX/ASSOCIATED PRESS); Mr. Biden has also signaled flexibility on immigration. Activists have said they are willing to let him try for a bipartisan deal but will not wait forever. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES); Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia has emphasized the importance of setting a tone of unity and bipartisanship. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALYSSA SCHUKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2021

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[***On Politics: We Could Be Here Awhile***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y67-TCY1-DXY4-X3Y7-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Highlight:** Bernie Sanders won New Hampshire, but the Democratic race might not be settled anytime soon.

**Body**

Bernie Sanders won New Hampshire, but the Democratic race might not be settled anytime soon.

Good morning and 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, in Manchester, N.H., the morning after the New Hampshire primary.

[*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) to get On Politics in your inbox every weekday.

This could go on for a while.

That was my thought on Tuesday night, as I watched the results of the New Hampshire primary with the rest of The New York Times politics team.

I wasn’t the only one offering ominous forecasts of electoral longevity: The word “slog” reverberated through the lobby of the Courtyard by Marriott in Manchester. “The loser is certainty,” [*proclaimed Senator Cory Booker’s former campaign manager*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).

But before we dig into last night’s results, let’s start with a little thought experiment.

Imagine an alternate universe where Bernie Sanders knocked it out of the park, winning by a huge margin in New Hampshire after finding success in Iowa. The democratic socialist from Vermont would be cruising to the nomination, propelled through the next primary contests by a burst of first-in-the-nation momentum.

But that’s not what happened last night.

In reality, Mr. Sanders won New Hampshire by a hair over Pete Buttigieg, a margin far narrower than when he beat Hillary Clinton by 22 points here in 2016. In Iowa, he effectively won the popular vote, but he didn’t mobilize historic numbers of voters and split the victory with Mr. Buttigieg.

His small margin of victory undercuts a major premise of his campaign: that he would expand the electorate by turning out ***working-class*** voters and young people — groups that are typically less likely to show up on Election Day.

True, Mr. Sanders is facing more competitors than in 2016. But as he fails to win big, the field isn’t getting particularly small.

While two of the lower-polling candidates — the entrepreneur [*Andrew Yang*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) and Senator   [*Michael Bennet*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) of Colorado — dropped out of the race last night, the top five have vowed to continue at least until Super Tuesday, on March 3.

Some are even expanding their operations: Amy Klobuchar, who beat expectations with a third-place finish in New Hampshire, has raised more than $2 million since her well-reviewed debate performance on Friday. She plans to use some of that cash to hire more staff for Nevada, South Carolina and the Super Tuesday states.

Still more candidates loom. The billionaires of the race, Tom Steyer and Michael Bloomberg, are pouring money into the coming primary states. We’ve already seen evidence in polling that their dollars are moving voters their way.

Mr. Sanders has advantages, too. History is on his side: In the modern primary era, no Democrat has won both Iowa and New Hampshire and not become the nominee.

With Joe Biden struggling, Mr. Sanders is better positioned than either Ms. Klobuchar or Mr. Buttigieg to win over voters of color and young voters. He’s crowding out Elizabeth Warren in the “liberal lane.” And he is raising more money than any of his rivals.

Perhaps most important, while the Democrats from the center-left wing of the party captured more than 50 percent of the votes in New Hampshire, moderates have yet to coalesce around a single candidate.

But a larger field generally means a longer contest: A basic rule of presidential primaries is that the more quickly the field winnows, the sooner the eventual winner can reach the majority of delegates necessary to win the nomination.

We’ve seen a version of this before.

In 2016, a charismatic New Yorker with a devoted following nearly won the Iowa caucuses and won New Hampshire. A divided field kept voters from uniting around a single alternative. And his rivals remained in the race well into the spring.

His name? Donald J. Trump.

More New Hampshire coverage

Read [*our recap*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) of Bernie Sanders’s win, catch up on   [*five takeaways*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) from the New Hampshire vote and see   [*the latest results*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).

Photo of the day

David Ottinger after voting at the town hall in Deerfield, N.H.

Sanders, Buttigieg and Klobuchar look ahead to a more diverse electorate

With Iowa and New Hampshire behind us, attention turns to the broader, more diverse playing field ahead, reflecting the actual nature of the Democratic electorate.

After his narrow win in New Hampshire, Bernie Sanders now heads into a seemingly favorable state, Nevada, which [*will hold its caucuses on Feb. 22*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).

For the runners-up on Tuesday, Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar, the next week and a half is their opportunity to win over a significant number of Hispanic and African-American voters, who have generally not shown interest in them.

On Tuesday, Ms. Klobuchar’s campaign bought its first TV ads in Nevada, spending $184,000 on spots in the Las Vegas and Reno markets. Mr. Buttigieg has been running ads statewide there since December.

Joe Biden has the [*lead in most Nevada polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), but it has been over a month since the latest one was taken. So the data we have does not reflect the collapse in Mr. Biden’s support over the past two weeks.

National polling shows that Mr. Sanders is now the clear leader among Hispanic Democrats, who could make up as much as a quarter of those participating in the Nevada caucuses this year, and he’s not far behind Mr. Biden among black voters. In 2016, about four in 10 Democratic caucusgoers were nonwhite; that share could increase this year.

Neither Ms. Klobuchar nor Mr. Buttigieg has reached double digits in any Nevada polls, but a lot has changed for their candidacies in the past few weeks.

A week after the Nevada caucuses comes the South Carolina primary. That race has been seen as Mr. Biden’s to lose, but it could be up for grabs if his candidacy continues to stumble. After that comes Super Tuesday, with voting in 14 states (and among Democrats abroad).

Mr. Biden’s high poll numbers appear to have been built on a combination of name-recognition and perceived electability. Once his candidacy was threatened, his support proved so weak that it had virtually no floor: He fell from the mid-20s in New Hampshire polls a month ago to just 8 percent in Tuesday’s primary.

For Mr. Sanders, the concern is different: He has a high floor, buoyed by strong support from young people and very liberal voters, but will his ceiling also be low? Can he win over a considerable share of older voters, and those at the ideological center?

Or, with the Democratic Party’s rank-and-file moving to the left and the primary race loaded down with moderate competitors, will he not need to?

… Seriously

It’s time.

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Is there anything you think we’re missing? Anything you want to see more of? We’d love to hear from you. Email us at [*onpolitics@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Craig Lassig/EPA, via Shutterstock; Mike Segar/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***‘This Was Trump Pulling a Putin’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656G-9SX1-DXY4-X3TH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 6855 words

**Byline:** Robert Draper

**Highlight:** Amid the current crisis, Fiona Hill and other former advisers are connecting President Trump’s pressure campaign on Ukraine to Jan. 6. And they’re ready to talk.

**Body**

Fiona Hill vividly recalls the first time she stepped into the Oval Office to discuss the thorny subject of Ukraine with the president. It was February of 2008, the last year of George W. Bush’s administration. Hill, then the national intelligence officer for Russia and Eurasia for the National Intelligence Council, was summoned for a strategy session on the upcoming NATO summit in Bucharest, Romania. Among the matters up for discussion was the possibility of Ukraine and another former Soviet state, Georgia, beginning the process of obtaining NATO membership.

In the Oval Office, Hill recalls, describing a scene that has not been previously reported, she told Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney that offering a membership path to Ukraine and Georgia could be problematic. While Bush’s appetite for promoting the spread of democracy had not been dampened by the Iraq war, President Vladimir Putin of Russia viewed NATO with suspicion and was vehemently opposed to neighboring countries joining its ranks. He would regard it as a provocation, which was one reason the United States’ key NATO allies opposed the idea. Cheney took umbrage at Hill’s assessment. “So, you’re telling me you’re opposed to freedom and democracy,” she says he snapped. According to Hill, he abruptly gathered his materials and walked out of the Oval Office.

“He’s just yanking your chain,” she remembers Bush telling her. “Go on with what you were saying.” But the president seemed confident that he could win over the other NATO leaders, saying, “I like it when diplomacy is tough.” Ignoring the advice of Hill and the U.S. intelligence community, Bush announced in Bucharest that “NATO should welcome Georgia and Ukraine into the Membership Action Plan.” Hill’s prediction came true: [*Several other leaders at the summit objected to Bush’s recommendation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/03/world/europe/03nato.html). NATO ultimately issued a compromise declaration that would prove unsatisfying to nearly everyone, stating that the two countries “will become members” without specifying how and when they would do so — and still in defiance of Putin’s wishes. (They still have not become members.)

“It was the worst of all possible worlds,” Hill said to me in her austere English accent as she recalled the episode over lunch this March. As one of the foremost experts on Putin and a current unofficial adviser to the Biden administration on [*the Russia-Ukraine war*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/ukraine-russia), Hill, 56, has already made a specialty of issuing warnings about the Russian leader that have gone unheeded by American presidents. As she feared, the carrot dangled by Bush to two countries — each of which gained independence in the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and afterward espoused democratic ambitions — did not sit well with Putin. Four months after the 2008 NATO summit, Russian troops crossed the border and [*launched an attack on the South Ossetia region of Georgia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/19/world/europe/ukraine-georgia-war.html). Though the war lasted only five days, a Russian military presence would continue in nearly 20 percent of Georgia’s territory. And after the West’s weak pushback against his aggression, Putin then set his sights on Ukraine — a sovereign nation that, Putin claimed to Bush at the Bucharest summit, “is not a country.”

Hill would stay on in the same role in the Obama administration for close to a year. Obama’s handling of Putin did not always strike her as judicious. When Chuck Todd of NBC asked Obama at a news conference in 2013 about his working relationship with Putin, [*Obama replied*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/10/world/europe/kerry-and-hagel-meet-with-their-russian-counterparts.html), “He’s got that kind of slouch, looking like the bored kid in the back of the classroom.” Hill told me that she “winced” when she heard his remark, and when Obama responded to Putin’s invasion and annexation of the Ukrainian region Crimea a year later by referring to Russia as “a regional power that is threatening some of its immediate neighbors, not out of strength but out of weakness,” she winced again. “We said openly, ‘Don’t dis the guy — he’s thin-skinned and quick to take insults,’” Hill said of this counsel to Obama about Putin. “He either didn’t understand the man or willfully ignored the advice.”

Hill was sharing these accounts at an Indian restaurant in Colorado, where she had selected some of the least spicy items on the menu, reminding me, “I’m still English,” though she is a naturalized U.S. citizen. The restaurant was a few blocks from the University of Denver campus, where Hill had just given a talk about Russia and Ukraine, one of several she would give that week.

Her descriptions of Russia’s president to her audience that morning — “living in his own bubble”; “a germaphobe”; “a shoot-the-messenger kind of person” — were both penetrating and eerily reminiscent of another domineering leader she came to know while serving as the National Security Council’s senior director of Russian and European affairs from April 2017 to July 2019. Though it stood to reason that a Putinologist of Fiona Hill’s renown would be much in demand after the invasion of Ukraine this February, it surprised me that her tenure in the Trump administration almost never came up in these discussions.

The Colorado events were part of a book tour that was scheduled long before the Russian attack. Her memoir, [*“There Is Nothing for You Here: Finding Opportunity in the 21st Century,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/01/books/review-fiona-hill-there-is-nothing-for-you-here.html) traces the journey of a literal coal miner’s daughter from ***working-class*** England to the White House. But it covers a period that can be understood as a prelude to the current conflict — Hill was present for the initial phase of Trump’s scheme to pressure President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine, who was elected in 2019, by withholding military aid in exchange for political favors. It is also an insider’s look at a chaotic, reckless and at times antidemocratic chief executive. (In response to queries for this article, Trump said of Hill: “She doesn’t know the first thing she’s talking about. If she didn’t have the accent she would be nothing.”)

Her assessment of the former president has new resonance in the current moment: “In the course of his presidency, indeed, Trump would come more to resemble Putin in political practice and predilection than he resembled any of his recent American presidential predecessors.”

Looking back on the Trump years, Hill has slowly come to recognize the unsettling significance in disparate incidents and episodes that she did not have the arm’s-length view to appreciate in the moment. During our lunch, we discussed what it was like for her and others to have worked for Trump after having done the same for George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Her meeting in the Bush White House in 2008, Hill told me, offered a sharp contrast to the briefings she sat in on during her tumultuous two years of service in the Trump administration. Unlike Trump, President Bush had read his briefing materials. His questions were respectful. She offered him an unpopular opinion and was not punished or frozen out for it. Even the vice president’s dyspeptic behavior that day did not unnerve her, she told me. “His emphasis was on the power of the executive branch,” she said. “It wasn’t on the unchecked power of one executive. And it was never to overturn the Constitution.”

Of her experience trying to steer policy during her two years in the Trump White House, Hill said: “It was extraordinarily difficult. Certainly, that was the case for those of us who were serving in the administration with the hopes of pushing back against the Russians, to make sure that their intervention in 2016 didn’t happen again. And along the way, some people kind of lost their sense of self.”

With a flash of a smile, she said: “We used to have this running shtick in our office at the N.S.C. As a kid, I was a great fan of Tolkien and ‘Lord of the Rings.’ So, in the Trump administration, we’d talk about the ring, and the fear of becoming Gollum” — the character deformed by his attachment to the powerful treasure — “obsessing over ‘my precious,’ the excitement and the power of being in the White House. And I did see a lot of people slipping into that.” When I asked Hill whom she saw as the Gollums in the Trump White House, she replied crisply: “The ones who wouldn’t testify in his impeachment hearing. Quite a few people, in other words.”

Fiona Hill emerged as a U.S. government expert on Russia amid a generation in which the subjects of Russia and Eastern Europe all but disappeared from America’s collective consciousness. Raised in economically depressed North East England, Hill, as a brainy teenager, was admonished by her father, who was then a hospital porter, “There is nothing for you here,” and so she moved to the United States in 1989 after a year’s study in Moscow. Hill received a Ph.D. in history from Harvard and later got a job at the Brookings Institution. In 2006, she became the national intelligence officer for Russia and Eurasia. By that time, the Bush administration was keenly focused on post-Cold War and post-Sept. 11 adversaries both real and imagined, in Afghanistan and Iraq.

[*The ambitions of Vladimir Putin*](https://nytimes.com/2019/06/25/magazine/russia-united-states-world-politics.html), meanwhile, were steadily made manifest. On March 19, 2016, two years after Putin’s annexation of Crimea, a hacker working with Russia’s military intelligence service, the G.R.U., sent an email to Hillary Clinton’s campaign chairman, John D. Podesta, from the address [*no-reply@accounts.googlemail.com*](mailto:no-reply@accounts.googlemail.com) The email, which claimed that a Ukrainian had compromised Podesta’s password, turned out to be a successful act of spearphishing. It allowed Russia to obtain and release, through WikiLeaks, 50,000 of Podesta’s emails, all in the furtherance of Russia’s desire that Clinton would become, if not a defeated presidential candidate, then at minimum a damaged one.

The relationship between the Trump campaign, and then the Trump administration, and Russia would have implications not just for the United States but, eventually, [*for Ukraine as well*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/11/us/ukraine-trump.html). The litany of Trump-Russia intersections remains remarkable: Citizen Trump’s business pursuits in Moscow, which continued throughout his candidacy. Candidate Trump’s abiding affinity for Putin. The incident in which the Trump campaign’s national security director, J.D. Gordon, watered down language in the 2016 Republican Party platform pledging to provide Ukraine with “lethal defense weapons” to combat Russian interference — and did so the same week Gordon dined with Russia’s ambassador to the United States, Sergey Kislyak, at an event. Trump’s longtime political consigliere Roger Stone’s reaching out to WikiLeaks through an intermediary and requesting “the pending emails,” an apparent reference to the Clinton campaign emails pirated by Russia, which the site had started to post. Trump’s chiming in: “Russia, if you’re listening, I hope you’re able to find the 30,000 emails that are missing.” The meeting in the Seychelles islands between Erik Prince (the founder of the military contractor Blackwater and a Trump-campaign supporter whose sister Betsy DeVos would become Trump’s secretary of education) and the head of Russia’s sovereign wealth fund in an effort to facilitate a back-channel dialogue between the two countries before Trump’s inauguration. The former Trump campaign chief Paul Manafort’s consistent lying to federal investigators about his own secretive dealings with the Russian political consultant and intelligence operative Konstantin V. Kilimnik, with whom he shared Trump campaign polling. Trump’s two-hour meeting with Putin in Helsinki in the summer of 2018, unattended by staff. Trump’s public declaration, at a joint news conference in Helsinki, that he was more inclined to believe Putin than the U.S. intelligence team when it came to Russia’s interference in the 2016 election. The dissemination by Trump and his allies in 2019 of the Russian propaganda that it was Ukraine that meddled in the 2016 election, in support of the Clinton campaign. Trump’s pardoning of Manafort and Stone in December 2020. And most recently, on March 29, Trump’s saying yet again that Putin “should release” dirt on a political opponent — this time President Biden, who, Trump asserted without evidence, had received, along with his son Hunter Biden, $3.5 million from the wife of Moscow’s former mayor.

Hill had not expected to be a fly on the White House wall for several of these moments. She even participated in the Women’s March in Washington the day following Trump’s inauguration. But then, the next day, she was called in for an interview with Keith Kellogg, at the time the N.S.C. chief of staff. Hill had previously worked with Trump’s new national security adviser, Michael Flynn, and several times had been on the Fox News foreign-policy online show hosted by K.T. McFarland, who had become the deputy national security adviser; the expectation was that she could become an in-house counterweight to Putin’s influence. She soon joined the administration on a two-year assignment.

Just four months into his presidency, Trump welcomed two of Putin’s top subordinates — Ambassador Sergey Kislyak and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov — into the Oval Office. Their meeting became public only because a photographer with the Russian news agency Tass released an image of the three men laughing together.

As N.S.C. senior director for European and Russian affairs, Hill was supposed to be in the Oval Office meeting with Lavrov and Kislyak. But that plan was scotched after her previous sit-down with Trump did not go well: The president had mistaken her for a secretary and became angry that she did not immediately agree to retype a news release for him. Just after the Russians left the Oval Office, Hill learned that Trump boasted to them about firing James Comey, the director of the F.B.I., saying that he had removed a source of “great pressure” — and that he continued to do so in his next meeting, with Henry Kissinger, though the former secretary of state under Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford had come to the White House to discuss Russia.

Hill never developed the rapport with Trump that McFarland, Kellogg and H.R. McMaster (who replaced Flynn), her direct superiors, had presumably hoped for. Instead, Trump seemed more impressed with the former Exxon Mobil chief executive Rex Tillerson, his first secretary of state. “He’s done billion-dollar energy deals with Putin,” Hill says Trump exclaimed at a meeting.

Trump’s ignorance of world affairs would have been a liability under any circumstance. But it put him at a pronounced disadvantage when it came to dealing with those strongmen for whom he felt a natural affinity, like President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey. Once, while Trump was discussing Syria with Erdogan, Hill recalled: “Erdogan goes from talking about the history of the Ottoman Empire to when he was mayor of Istanbul. And you can see he’s not listening and has no idea what Erdogan’s talking about.” On another occasion, she told me, Trump cheerfully joked to Erdogan that the basis of most Americans’ knowledge about Turkey was “Midnight Express,” a 1978 movie that primarily takes place inside a Turkish prison. “Bad image — you need to make a different film,” Hill recalled Trump telling Turkey’s president while she thought to herself, Oh, my God, really?

When I mentioned to Hill that former White House aides had told me about Trump’s clear preference for visual materials over text, she exclaimed: “That’s spot on. There were several moments of just utter embarrassment where he would see a magazine story about one of his favorite leaders, be it Erdogan or Macron. He’d see a picture of them, and he’d want it sent to them through the embassies. And when we’d read the articles, the articles are not flattering. They’re quite critical. Obviously, we can’t send this! But then he’d want to know if they’d gotten the picture and the article, which he’d signed: ‘Emmanuel, you look wonderful. Looking so strong.’”

Hill found it dubious that a man so self-​interested and lacking in discipline could have colluded with Russia to gain electoral victory in 2016, a concern that led to investigations by both the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and [*Robert Mueller*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/18/us/politics/mueller-report-document.html), the special counsel. For that matter, she told me, she had met the Trump campaign foreign-policy adviser Carter Page a few times in Moscow. “I was incredulous as to how anyone could think he could be a spy. I thought he was way out of his depth.” The same held true for George Papadopoulos, another foreign-​policy adviser. “Every campaign has loads of clueless people,” she said.

Still, she came to see in Trump a kind of aspirational authoritarianism in which Putin, Erdogan, Orban and other autocrats were admired models. She could see that he regarded the U.S. government as his family-run business. In viewing how Trump’s coterie acted in his presence, Hill settled on the word “thrall,” evoking both a mystical attraction and servitude. Trump’s speeches habitually emphasized mood over thought, to powerful effect. It did not escape Hill’s attention that Trump’s chief speechwriter — indeed, the gatekeeper of whatever made its way into the president’s speeches — was Stephen Miller, who always seemed near Trump and whose influence on administration policy was “immense,” she says. Hill recalled for me a time in 2019 when Trump was visiting London and she found herself traveling through the city in a vehicle with Miller. “He was talking about all the knife fights that immigrants were causing in these areas,” she said. “And I told him: ‘These streets were a lot rougher when I was growing up and they were run by white gangs. The immigrants have actually calmed things down.’” (Miller declined to comment on the record.)

More than once during our conversations, Hill made references to the Coen brothers filmmaking team. In particular, she seemed to relate to the character played by Frances McDormand in the movie “Fargo”: a habitually unflappable police chief thrust into a narrative of bizarre misdeeds for which nothing in her long experience has prepared her. Hill was dismayed, but not surprised, she told me, when President Trump carried on about a Democratic rival, Senator Elizabeth Warren, to a foreign leader, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany — referring to Warren as “Senator Pocahontas,” while Merkel gaped in astonishment. Or when, upon learning from Prime Minister Erna Solberg of Norway of her country’s reliance on hydropower, Trump took the opportunity to share his standard riff on the evils of wind turbines.

But she was alarmed, Hill told me, by Trump’s antidemocratic monologues. “He would constantly tell world leaders that he deserved a redo of his first two years,” she recalled. “He’d say that his first two years had been taken away from him because of the ‘Russia hoax.’ And he’d say that he wanted more than two terms.”

“He said it as a joke,” I suggested.

“Except that he clearly meant it,” Hill insisted. She mentioned [*David Cornstein*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/22/world/europe/david-cornstein-hungary-trump-orban.html), a jeweler by trade and longtime friend of Trump’s whom the president appointed as his ambassador to Hungary. “Ambassador Cornstein openly talked about the fact that Trump wanted the same arrangement as Viktor Orban” — referring to the autocratic Hungarian prime minister, who has held his position since 2010 — “where he could push the margins and stay in power without any checks and balances.” (Cornstein could not be reached for comment.)

During Trump’s first year in office, he initially resisted meeting with President Petro Poroshenko of Ukraine. Obama received Poroshenko in the Oval Office in June 2014, and the United States offered Ukraine financial and diplomatic support, while stopping short of providing requested Javelin anti-tank missiles, in part out of concerns that Russian assets within Ukraine’s intelligence community would have access to the technology, according to a 2019 NBC News interview with the former C.I.A. director John Brennan. Now, with Trump’s refusal to meet with Poroshenko, it instead fell to Vice President Mike Pence to welcome the Ukrainian leader to the White House on June 20, 2017. After their meeting, Poroshenko lingered in a West Wing conference room, waiting to see if Trump would give him a few minutes.

Finally, the president did so. The two men shook hands and exchanged pleasantries in front of the White House press corps. Once the reporters were ushered out, Trump flatly told Poroshenko that Ukraine was a corrupt country. Trump knew this, he said, because a Ukrainian friend at Mar-a-Lago had told him so.

Poroshenko said that his administration was addressing the corruption. Trump shared another observation. He said, echoing a Putin talking point, that Crimea, annexed three years earlier through Putin’s act of aggression, was rightfully Russia’s — because, after all, the people there spoke Russian.

Poroshenko protested, saying that he, too, spoke Russian. So, for that matter, did one of the witnesses to this conversation: Marie Yovanovitch, then the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, who was born in Canada, later acquiring U.S. citizenship, and who recounted the episode in her recent memoir, [*“Lessons From the Edge.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/16/books/review-lessons-from-edge-marie-yovanovitch-ukraine-ambassador.html) Recalling Trump’s words to me, Yovanovitch laughed in disbelief and said, “I mean, in America, we speak English, but it doesn’t make us British!”

The encounter with Poroshenko would portend other unsettling interactions with Ukraine during the Trump era. “There were all sorts of tells going on that, while official U.S. policy toward Ukraine was quite good, that he didn’t personally love that policy,” Yovanovitch told me. “So there was always the feeling of, What’s going to happen next?”

What happened next was that Trump began to treat Ukraine as a political enemy. Bridling at the intelligence community’s assessment that Russia interfered in the 2016 election in hopes of damaging his opponent or helping his campaign, he was receptive to the suggestion of an appealing counternarrative. “By early 2018, he began to hear and repeat the assertion that it was Ukraine and not Russia that had interfered in the election, and that they had done so to try to help Clinton,” Tom Bossert, Trump’s former homeland security adviser, told me. “I knew he heard that from, among others, Rudy Giuliani. Each time that inaccurate theory was raised, I disputed it and reminded the president that it was not true, including one time when I said so in front of Mr. Giuliani.”

By 2019, a number of once-obscure Trump foreign-policy aides — among them Fiona Hill; her successor, Timothy Morrison; Yovanovitch; Yovanovitch’s deputy, George P. Kent; her political counselor, David Holmes; her successor, William B. Taylor Jr.; the N.S.C.’s director for European affairs, Alexander Vindman; the special adviser to the vice president on European and Russian affairs, Jennifer Williams; and the U.S. special representative to Ukraine, Kurt D. Volker — would be tugged into the vortex of a sub rosa scheme. It was, [*as Hill would memorably testify*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/21/us/politics/impeachment-hearing.html) to Congress later that year, “a domestic political errand” in Ukraine on behalf of President Trump. That errand, chiefly undertaken by Trump’s personal attorney Rudy Giuliani and his ambassador to the European Union, Gordon Sondland, would garishly illustrate how “Trump was using Ukraine as a plaything for his own purposes,” Hill told me.

The first notable disruption in U.S.-Ukraine relations during Trump’s presidency came when Yovanovitch was removed from her ambassadorial post at Trump’s orders. Though she was widely respected in diplomatic circles, Yovanovitch’s ongoing efforts to root out corruption in Ukraine had put her in the cross hairs of two Soviet-born associates of Giuliani who were doing business in the country. Those associates, Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman, told Trump that Yovanovitch — who had served in the State Department going back to the Reagan administration — was critical of Trump. She soon became the target of negative pieces in the publication The Hill by John Solomon, a conservative writer with connections to Giuliani, including an allegation by Yuriy Lutsenko, the prosecutor general of Ukraine, that the ambassador had given him a “do not prosecute list” — which Lutsenko later recanted to a Ukrainian publication. The same month that he did so, April 2019, [*Yovanovitch was recalled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/11/us/politics/marie-yovanovitch-trump-impeachment.html) from her post.

The career ambassador and other officials urgently requested that [*Secretary of State Mike Pompeo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/26/magazine/mike-pompeo-translates-trump.html), who had replaced Tillerson, issue a statement of support for her. Pompeo did not do so; according to a former senior White House official, he was eager to develop a closer bond with Trump and knew that Giuliani had the president’s ear. Subsequently, a top adviser to the secretary, Michael McKinley, resigned in protest. According to a source familiar with the matter, Pompeo responded angrily, telling McKinley that his resignation stood as proof that State Department careerists could not be counted on to loyally support President Trump’s policies. (Through a spokesman, Pompeo declined to comment on the record.)

By the spring of 2019, Trump seemed to be persuaded not only that Yovanovitch was, as Trump would later tell Zelensky, “bad news” but that Ukraine was demonstrably anti-Trump. [*On April 21, 2019, the president called Zelensky*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/25/us/politics/ukraine-phone-call-transcript.html), who had just been elected, to congratulate him on his victory. Trump decided that he would send Pence to attend Zelensky’s inauguration. Less than three weeks later, Giuliani disclosed to The Times that he planned to soon visit Ukraine to encourage Zelensky to pursue inquiries into the origins of the special counsel’s investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 election and into Hunter Biden, who had served on the board of the Ukrainian energy company Burisma Holdings and whose father, Joe Biden, had just announced his campaign for the Democratic nomination. (Giuliani later canceled his travel plans.)

At about the same time, Pence’s national security adviser, Keith Kellogg, announced to the vice president’s senior staff, “The president doesn’t want him to attend” Zelensky’s inauguration, according to someone present at the meeting. He did not — a slight to a European head of state.

On May 23, 2019, Charles Kupperman, Trump’s deputy national security adviser, and others discussed Ukraine with Trump in the Oval Office. Speaking to the press about the matter for the first time, Kupperman told me that the very subject of Ukraine threw the president into a rage: “He just let loose — ‘They’re [expletive] corrupt. They [expletive] tried to screw me.’”

Because Kupperman had seen how disdainfully Trump treated allies like Merkel, Macron, Theresa May of Britain and Moon Jae-in of South Korea, he knew how unlikely it was that the president could come to see the geopolitical value of Ukraine. “He felt like our allies were screwing us, and he had no sense as to why these alliances benefited us or why you need a global footprint for military and strategic capabilities,” Kupperman told me. “If one were to ask him to define ‘balance of power,’ he wouldn’t know what that concept was. He’d have no idea about the history of Ukraine and why it’s in the front pages today. He wouldn’t know that Stalin starved that country. Those are the contextual points one has to take into account in the making of foreign policy. But he wasn’t capable of it, because he had no understanding of history: how these countries and their leadership evolved, what makes these countries tick.”

In July 2019, Trump ordered that a hold be placed on nearly $400 million in security assistance to Ukraine that had already been appropriated by Congress. The president stood essentially alone in his opposition to such assistance, Kupperman told me: “Everyone in the interagency process was uniformly united to release the aid. We needed to do this, there was no controversy to it, but it got held up anyway.” News of the freeze became public that September, and the White House variously claimed that the funds had been withheld because of Ukraine’s corruption and because other NATO countries should be contributing more to Ukraine. Alyssa Farah Griffin, then the Pentagon press secretary, recalled to me that she asked Laura Cooper, the Department of Defense deputy assistant secretary for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia, whether the hold was part of the standard review process.

“Absolutely not,” Cooper replied to her. “Nothing about this is normal.”

A few days later, the Trump White House released a reconstructed transcript of the president’s July 25 phone conversation with Zelensky. In it, Trump responded to the Ukrainian leader’s interest in purchasing Javelin missiles by saying: “I would like you to do us a favor though because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it. I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say CrowdStrike” — a reference to the cybersecurity firm hired by the Democratic National Committee to investigate its 2016 email security breach, which became a facet of Giuliani’s hallucinatory claim that it was Ukraine, not Russia, that stole the emails. In the same conversation, Trump requested that Zelensky help Giuliani investigate “Biden’s son,” referring to Hunter Biden, and ominously said of his recently fired ambassador to Ukraine, Marie Yovanovitch, that “she’s going to go through some things.”

“My first reaction to it,” Farah Griffin told me in speaking about the phone call for the first time publicly, “was that it was wildly inappropriate to be bringing up domestic political concerns, and it seemed to border on the conspiratorial. I’d been around for a lot of head-of-state meetings and calls, and they’re pretty pro forma. You know the things that you’re not supposed to say. It seemed like such a bizarre breach of diplomacy.” She went on: “But then, once it became clear that the Office of Management and Budget had actually blocked the money prior to the conversation, I thought: Wow. This is bad.”

Fiona Hill and most of the others who testified in 2019 during Trump’s first impeachment hearings were unknown to ordinary Americans — and, for that matter, to Trump himself, who protested on Twitter that his accusers were essentially nobodies. It was their fidelity to their specialized labors that made them such effective witnesses. “One benefit to our investigation,” said [*Daniel Goldman*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/02/us/politics/trump-impeachment-goldman-castor.html), who served as the lead majority counsel to the House impeachment inquiry, “was that these were for the most part career public servants who took extensive contemporaneous notes every day. As a result, we received very detailed testimony that helped us figure out what happened.”

In reality, however, what happened in the Ukraine episode was not evident to much of the public. Trump prevailed in his impeachment trial, seeming to emerge from the ordeal without a political scratch. This, his former national security adviser John Bolton told me, distinguished the inquiry from the investigation into the conduct of President Richard Nixon 45 years earlier, which resulted in Nixon’s fellow Republicans deserting him. The Senate’s acquittal of Trump in his first impeachment trial “clearly did embolden him,” Bolton said. “This is Trump saying, ‘I got away with it.’ And thinking, If I got away with it once, I can get away with it again. And he did get away with it again.” (Bolton did not testify before the House committee; at the time, his lawyer said he was “not willing to appear voluntarily.”)

Hill, for her part, emerged from the events of 2019 rather dazed by her sudden fame — but just as much so, she told me, by the implications of what she and other White House colleagues had experienced that culminated in Trump’s impeachment. “In real time, I was putting things together,” she said. “The domestic political errands, the way Trump had privatized foreign policy for his own purposes. It was this narrow goal: his desire to stay in power, irrespective of what other people wanted.”

Hill was at her desk at home on the morning of Jan. 6, 2021, writing her memoir, when a journalist friend she first met in Russia called. The friend told her to turn on the television. Once she did so, a burst of horrific clarity overtook her. “I saw the thread,” she told me. “The thread connecting the Zelensky phone call to Jan. 6. And I remembered how, in 2020, Putin had changed Russia’s Constitution to allow him to stay in power longer. This was Trump pulling a Putin.”

[*Alexander Vindman*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/29/us/politics/who-is-alexander-vindman.html), who was removed from his job as N.S.C. director for European affairs months after testifying against Trump (the president, his son Don Jr. and other supporters accused Vindman, a Soviet émigré and Army officer, of disloyalty, perjury and espionage), told me he experienced a similar epiphany in the wake of Jan. 6. Vindman was exercising at a gym in Virginia that afternoon when his wife, Rachel, called him to say that a mob had attacked the U.S. Capitol. After recovering from his stupefaction, “my first impulse was to counterprotest,” Vindman recalled. “I was thinking, What can I do to defend the Capitol? Then I realized that would be a recipe for disaster. It might give the president cause to invoke martial law.”

In Trump’s failed efforts to overturn the election results, Vindman told me, the president revealed himself as “incompetent, his own worst enemy, faced with too many checks in a 240-plus-year-old democracy to be able to operate with a free hand.” At the same time, he went on: “I came to see these seemingly individual events — the Ukraine scandal, the attempt to steal the 2020 election — as part of a broader tapestry. And the domestic effects of all this are bad enough. But there’s also a geopolitical impact. We missed an opportunity to harden Ukraine against Russian aggression.”

Instead, Vindman said, the opposite occurred: “Ukraine became radioactive for the duration of the Trump administration. There wasn’t serious engagement. Putin had been wanting to reclaim Ukraine for eight years, but he was trying to gauge when was the right time to do it. Starting just months after Jan. 6, Putin began building up forces on the border. He saw the discord here. He saw the huge opportunity presented by Donald Trump and his Republican lackeys. I’m not pulling any punches here. I’m not using diplomatic niceties. These folks sent the signal Putin was waiting for.”

Bolton, a renowned foreign-policy hawk who also served in the administrations of Reagan and George W. Bush, also told me that Trump’s behavior had dealt damage to both Ukraine and America. The refusal to lend aid to Ukraine, the subsequent disclosure of the heavy-handed conversation with Zelensky and then the impeachment hearing all served to undermine Ukraine’s new president, Bolton told me. “It made it impossible for Zelensky to establish any kind of relationship with the president of the United States — who, faced with a Russian Army on his eastern border, any Ukrainian president would have as his highest priority. So basically that means Ukraine loses a year and a half of contact with the president.”

Trump, Bolton went on to say, “is a complete aberration in the American system. We’ve had good and bad presidents, competent and incompetent presidents. But none of them was as centered on their own interest, as opposed to the national interest, except Trump. And his concept of what the national interest was really changed from day to day and had a lot more to do with what his political fortunes were.” This was certainly the case with Trump’s view of Ukraine, which, Bolton said, describing fantasies that preoccupied the president, “he saw entirely through the prism of Hillary Clinton’s server and Hunter Biden’s income — what role Ukraine had in Hillary’s efforts to steal the 2016 election and what role Ukraine had in Biden’s efforts to steal the 2020 election.”

Bolton acknowledged to me that he found Trump’s conduct both in the Ukraine scandal and on Jan. 6 to be arguably worthy of impeachment. Still, he offered a rather tangled assessment of the two processes — finding fault with Democrats in the first inquiry for “trying to ram it through quickly” and, in the second impeachment, for not pressing quickly enough and “trying him before January the 20th.”

But Bolton seems to regard the former president’s abuses of power as validation of America’s institutional strengths rather than a warning sign. “I think he did damage to the United States before and because of January the 6th,” Bolton told me. “I don’t think there’s any question about that. But I think all that damage was reparable. I think that constitutions are written with human beings involved, and occasionally you get bad actors. This was a particularly bad actor. So with all the stress and strain on the Constitution, it held up pretty well.”

When I asked whether he believed Trump could be viewed as an authoritarian, Bolton replied, “He’s not smart enough to be an authoritarian.” But had Donald Trump won in 2020, Bolton told me, in his second term he might well have inflicted “damage that might not be reparable.” I asked whether his same concerns would apply if Trump were to gain another term in 2024, and Bolton answered with one word: “Yes.”

At the moment, Trump’s chances of victory are favorable. He remains the putative lead candidate for the G.O.P.’s nomination and would most likely face an 81-year-old incumbent whose approval ratings are underwater. Even in defeat, there is little reason to believe that Trump will concede at all, much less do so gracefully. This January, President Biden said: “I know the majority of the world leaders — the good and the bad ones, adversaries and allies alike. They’re watching American democracy and seeing whether we can meet this moment.” Biden went on to say that at the G7 Summit in Cornwall, England, the previous summer, his assurances that America was back were met by his foreign counterparts with the response, “For how long?”

One former foreign-policy official who played a role in the Trump-Ukraine tensions, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to speak freely about the former president, was unsettled but also unsurprised by Biden’s account. “In the back of their minds,” this former official said of America’s allies, “if Trump is elected again in 2024, where will we be? I think it would be seen among struggling democracies as a disaster. They would see Trump as someone who went through two impeachment inquiries, orchestrated a conspiracy to undo a failed election and then, somehow, is re-elected. They would see it as Trump truly unbound. But to them, it would also say something about us and our values.”

Hill agreed with that assessment when I described it to her. “We’ve been the gold standard of democratic elections,” she told me. “All of that will be rolled back if Trump returns to power after claiming that the only way he could ever lose is if someone steals it from him. It’ll be more than diplomatic shock. I think it would mean the total loss of America’s leadership position in the world arena.”

A couple of months ago, Hill told me, she attended a book event in Louisville, Ky. Onstage with her was another recent author, Representative Jamie Raskin of Maryland, who was the House Democrats’ lead manager in Trump’s second impeachment trial. Raskin, who happens to be Hill’s congressman, had also been among the managers in the first trial.

Their event took place on Jan. 24, exactly one month before Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Though Putin’s troops had been massed along the border for several months, speculation of war was not a public preoccupation. For the moment, Hill’s expertise was in lesser demand than that of Raskin, who is now a member of the House select committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack. For much of their hourlong colloquy, it was Hill who asked searching questions of Raskin — who, she told me, “was deeply disturbed by how close we came to basically not having a transfer of power.”

At one point, Hill acknowledged to Raskin and the live audience that she had been thinking lately of the “Hamilton” song “You’ll Be Back,” crooned maliciously by King George to his American subjects. “I have been worried over whether we might be back to that kind of period,” she said. Hill went on to describe the United States as being in a state of de-evolution, with the checks on executive power flagging and the concept of governmental experience regarded with scorn rather than admiration.

What she did not say then was something that Hill has told me more than once since that time. Throughout all our changes, presidents and senior staff in government, she said: “Putin has been there for 22 years. He’s the same guy, with the same people around him. And he’s watching everything.”

Robert Draper is a contributing writer for the magazine. He is the author of several books, most recently “To Start a War: How the Bush Administration Took America Into Iraq,” which was excerpted in the magazine.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY TRENT DAVIS BAILEY) (MM36); Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin arriving for a joint news conference in Helsinki in 2018. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM39); Hill being sworn in as a witness during impeachment-inquiry hearings in November 2019. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AL DRAGO/BLOOMBERG, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (MM40)

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[***Sanders Campaign Says It Raked In $25 Million in January***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y55-VC01-DXY4-X50X-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Body**

The Vermont senator's announcement came as the Biden, Buttigieg and Warren campaigns are showing signs of financial strain.

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont raised $25 million in January, his campaign said on Thursday, a staggering sum that gives him an enviable financial advantage at a crucial moment in the Democratic primary race.

He plans to use the windfall to immediately buy $5.5 million in television and digital ads across 10 states, at a time when some of his rivals are shifting or cutting their existing ad reservations.

The $25 million haul is more money than any other candidate raised in any full quarter during 2019, including several presidential hopefuls who hold the big-dollar fund-raisers that Mr. Sanders forgoes. The announcement is the latest sign of an epochal change in money in politics, with candidates now able to finance a top-tier national campaign fueled by masses of donors giving a steady stream of small amounts.

For Mr. Sanders's top rivals, the news is likely to be unsettling: Their campaigns are all showing signs of financial strain. Former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., has briefly left the campaign trail to raise money, and former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. is taking time next week for a new batch of fund-raisers.

Mr. Sanders can now plan past the New Hampshire primary on Tuesday with greater financial confidence, an important development given the possibility of an extended Democratic primary with multiple candidates including Michael R. Bloomberg, a self-financing billionaire whose full influence will not be felt until March because he is skipping the first four contests.

The Sanders campaign also announced that it had received 1.3 million donations in January, and that more than 1.5 million different individuals had donated over the course of the campaign.

''***Working-class*** Americans giving $18 at a time are putting our campaign in a strong position to compete in states all over the map,'' said Faiz Shakir, Mr. Sanders's campaign manager, in a statement.

The Sanders ad buy includes California and Texas, where the campaign has already been advertising, as well as eight additional states it had not targeted: Arkansas, Colorado, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Utah.

Mr. Sanders's show of financial might came as the Democratic candidates are still awaiting final results from Monday's Iowa caucuses, a delay that has had a dampening effect on any one contender developing momentum heading into New Hampshire. Mr. Buttigieg and Mr. Sanders are now all but tied in the Iowa delegate race, with 99 percent of precincts reporting, but the lack of an official winner makes it easier for Mr. Sanders to seize the spotlight with his good fund-raising news.

Both Mr. Sanders and Mr. Buttigieg are competing aggressively, along with other candidates, for a victory in New Hampshire, where Mr. Sanders hopes to establish himself as the liberal front-runner ahead of Ms. Warren (who finished third in Iowa) with a repeat of his big win in the state four years ago against Hillary Clinton. His January fund-raising total outpaced the $21.1 million he raised in January 2016 against Mrs. Clinton.

Despite only having a few days left to campaign before the New Hampshire primary, Mr. Buttigieg spent Wednesday night holding an evening fund-raiser in New York, with another one scheduled for Thursday morning.

A top adviser to Mr. Buttigieg, Michael Halle, wrote a thinly veiled post on Twitter suggesting where a Buttigieg-backing super PAC might best spend its funds, and even alluded to a message that the campaign would appreciate seeing put on television. ''Pete's military experience and closing message from Iowa work everywhere especially in Nevada where it's critical they see this on the air through the caucus,'' Mr. Halle wrote.

Ms. Warren's campaign manager, Roger Lau, responded by pointing out what he called a ''fun fact about how some campaigns exploit our broken campaign finance laws,'' suggesting that if Mr. Halle had written that message in private to a super PAC, it could constitute illegal coordination with an outside group.

For her part, Ms. Warren has cut nearly $500,000 in future ad reservations in Nevada and South Carolina over the last two days, according to the media tracking firm Advertising Analytics. Those are the two states that follow New Hampshire in voting in February.

''I just always want to be careful about how we spend our money,'' Ms. Warren told reporters in New Hampshire on Wednesday.

Ms. Warren's campaign told supporters in an email on Tuesday that the Iowa Democratic Party's inability to announce any results on Monday night had muted whatever financial boost she could have received from the caucuses. ''We didn't get a big night of exciting news coverage about them (or the late-night boost in fund-raising that usually comes with it),'' her campaign wrote.

As for Mr. Biden, he began 2020 with the least cash on hand of any of the four top candidates -- less than $9 million -- and his apparent fourth-place finish in Iowa already had some in the Democratic establishment skittish about his prospects.

His campaign had said ahead of the caucuses that January was his ''strongest month of fund-raising since launch.'' An analysis of Federal Election Commission records indicates that his January total was somewhere between about $8 million (his previous high in October 2019) and $9.7 million (his April total).

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden was also moving around his ad reservations, with about $150,000 cut from South Carolina and reinvested in Nevada, according to Advertising Analytics. Nevada will hold its caucuses on Feb. 22, and South Carolina has its primary on Feb. 29.

The need for cash is apparent from Mr. Biden's schedule: In the days after the New Hampshire primary next week, he has no less than four fund-raisers, including two in New York, one in Denver and one in Reno, Nev.

A pro-Biden super PAC, Unite the Country, announced a $900,000 ad campaign in New Hampshire the day after the Iowa caucuses. That would be a sizable share of its remaining funds, according to previous announcements from the group.

Steve Schale, its executive director, had said the super PAC was on pace to spend about $6 million in Iowa, and the group announced on Jan. 31 that it had raised $7.6 million ''to date.''

As Mr. Biden and other candidates rush to refill coffers after spending millions in Iowa, Mr. Bloomberg, the billionaire former mayor of New York City who is self-financing his 2020 run, awaits the whole field in March.

Mr. Bloomberg's presence has acted as something of a potential safe harbor for more moderate donors concerned about both Mr. Sanders's strong showing in Iowa and Mr. Biden's weak one.

Reid J. Epstein contributed reporting from Washington.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/06/us/politics/bernie-sanders-donations.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/06/us/politics/bernie-sanders-donations.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Sen. Bernie Sanders in Derry, N.H., on Wednesday. His campaign said it had received 1.3 million donations in January. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alyssa Schukar for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 7, 2020

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[***Sanders Raises $25 Million in January, a Huge Show of Financial Strength***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y4Y-TRD1-JBG3-631Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 6, 2020 Thursday 22:56 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1167 words

**Byline:** Shane Goldmacher

**Highlight:** The Vermont senator’s announcement came as the Biden, Buttigieg and Warren campaigns are showing signs of financial strain.

**Body**

The Vermont senator’s announcement came as the Biden, Buttigieg and Warren campaigns are showing signs of financial strain.

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont raised $25 million in January, his campaign said on Thursday, a staggering sum that gives him an enviable financial advantage at a crucial moment in the Democratic primary race.

He plans to use the windfall to immediately buy $5.5 million in television and digital ads across 10 states, at a time when some of his rivals are shifting or cutting their existing ad reservations.

The $25 million haul is more money than any other candidate raised in any full quarter during 2019, including several presidential hopefuls who hold the big-dollar fund-raisers that Mr. Sanders forgoes. The announcement is the latest sign of an epochal change in money in politics, with candidates now able to finance a top-tier national campaign fueled by masses of donors giving a steady stream of small amounts.

For Mr. Sanders’s top rivals, the news is likely to be unsettling: Their campaigns are all showing signs of financial strain. Former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., has briefly left the campaign trail to raise money, and former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. is taking time next week for a new batch of fund-raisers.

Mr. Sanders can now plan past the New Hampshire primary on Tuesday with greater financial confidence, an important development given the possibility of an extended Democratic primary with multiple candidates including Michael R. Bloomberg, a self-financing billionaire whose full influence will not be felt until March because he is skipping the first four contests.

The Sanders campaign also announced that it had received 1.3 million donations in January, and that more than 1.5 million different individuals had donated over the course of the campaign.

“***Working-class*** Americans giving $18 at a time are putting our campaign in a strong position to compete in states all over the map,” said Faiz Shakir, Mr. Sanders’s campaign manager, in a statement.

The Sanders ad buy includes California and Texas, where the campaign has already been advertising, as well as eight additional states it had not targeted: Arkansas, Colorado, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Utah.

Mr. Sanders’s show of financial might came as the Democratic candidates are still awaiting final results from Monday’s Iowa caucuses, [*a delay*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/iowa-caucus-problems.html) that has had a dampening effect on any one contender developing momentum heading into New Hampshire. Mr. Buttigieg and Mr. Sanders are now   [*all but tied*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/iowa-caucus-problems.html) in the Iowa delegate race, with 99 percent of precincts reporting, but the lack of an official winner makes it easier for Mr. Sanders to seize the spotlight with his good fund-raising news.

Both Mr. Sanders and Mr. Buttigieg are competing aggressively, along with other candidates, for a victory in New Hampshire, where Mr. Sanders hopes to establish himself as the liberal front-runner ahead of Ms. Warren (who finished third in Iowa) with a repeat of his big win in the state four years ago against Hillary Clinton. His January fund-raising total outpaced the $21.1 million he raised in January 2016 against Mrs. Clinton.

Despite only having a few days left to campaign before the New Hampshire primary, Mr. Buttigieg spent Wednesday night holding an evening fund-raiser in New York, with another one scheduled for Thursday morning.

A top adviser to Mr. Buttigieg, Michael Halle, wrote a thinly veiled post on Twitter suggesting where a Buttigieg-backing super PAC might best spend its funds, and even alluded to a message that the campaign would appreciate seeing put on television. “Pete’s military experience and closing message from Iowa work everywhere especially in Nevada where it’s critical they see this on the air through the caucus,” Mr. Halle wrote.

Ms. Warren’s campaign manager, Roger Lau, responded by pointing out what he called a “fun fact about how some campaigns exploit our broken campaign finance laws,” suggesting that if Mr. Halle had written that message in private to a super PAC, it could constitute illegal coordination with an outside group.

For her part, Ms. Warren has cut nearly $500,000 in future ad reservations in Nevada and South Carolina over the last two days, according to the media tracking firm Advertising Analytics. Those are the two states that follow New Hampshire in voting in February.

“I just always want to be careful about how we spend our money,” Ms. Warren [*told reporters in New Hampshire on Wednesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/iowa-caucus-problems.html).

Ms. Warren’s campaign told supporters in an email on Tuesday that the Iowa Democratic Party’s inability to announce any results on Monday night had muted whatever financial boost she could have received from the caucuses. “We didn’t get a big night of exciting news coverage about them (or the late-night boost in fund-raising that usually comes with it),” her campaign wrote.

As for Mr. Biden, he began 2020 with the least cash on hand of any of the four top candidates — less than $9 million — and his apparent fourth-place finish in Iowa already had some in the Democratic establishment skittish about his prospects.

His campaign had said ahead of the caucuses that January was his “strongest month of fund-raising since launch.” An analysis of Federal Election Commission records indicates that [*his January total was somewhere between about $8 million (his previous high in October 2019) and $9.7 million (his April total).*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/05/us/politics/iowa-caucus-problems.html)

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden was also moving around his ad reservations, with about $150,000 cut from South Carolina and reinvested in Nevada, according to Advertising Analytics. Nevada will hold its caucuses on Feb. 22, and South Carolina has its primary on Feb. 29.

The need for cash is apparent from Mr. Biden’s schedule: In the days after the New Hampshire primary next week, he has no less than four fund-raisers, including two in New York, one in Denver and one in Reno, Nev.

A pro-Biden super PAC, Unite the Country, announced a $900,000 ad campaign in New Hampshire the day after the Iowa caucuses. That would be a sizable share of its remaining funds, according to previous announcements from the group.

Steve Schale, its executive director, had said the super PAC was on pace to spend about $6 million in Iowa, and the group announced on Jan. 31 that it had raised $7.6 million “to date.”

As Mr. Biden and other candidates rush to refill coffers after spending millions in Iowa, Mr. Bloomberg, the billionaire former mayor of New York City who is self-financing his 2020 run, awaits the whole field in March.

Mr. Bloomberg’s presence has acted as something of a potential safe harbor for more moderate donors concerned about both Mr. Sanders’s strong showing in Iowa and Mr. Biden’s weak one.

Reid J. Epstein contributed reporting from Washington.

PHOTO: Sen. Bernie Sanders in Derry, N.H., on Wednesday. His campaign said it had received 1.3 million donations in January. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alyssa Schukar for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2020

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[***The Books of the Year***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61BC-J2V1-JBG3-645J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 20, 2020 Friday 07:30 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1615 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** And what else you need to know today.

**Body**

And what else you need to know today.

Want to get The Morning by email? [*Here’s the sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Good morning. For a break from the news, check out The Times’s annual list of 100 notable books.

Every November, after the editors of The Times Book Review have wrapped up their big end-of-year issues, they immediately turn their attention to the following year. They start by creating a working list of nominees for the next iteration of 100 Notable Books — the one that will be published almost a year later.

In the subsequent months, the editors add to the list, knowing all the while that they will need to conduct a ruthless winnowing at the end, down to 50 books of fiction and 50 of nonfiction, spanning every genre. “It’s a lot of triage and hard choices,” Pamela Paul, the Book Review editor, told me.

Today, Pamela and her colleagues [*released the new list*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). The Times has published a version of it every year since 1968 (although the early ones were longer), and publishers say it often has a big effect on a book’s sales.

[The [*Best Books of 2020*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing): View our full list.]

The 2020 list has both timeless and timely qualities. It includes novels that could have come out any year — by Hilary Mantel, J.M. Coetzee, Megha Majumdar and Lily King — as well as nonfiction about Winston Churchill, Newt Gingrich, Malcolm X and Ronald Reagan.

But the list also reflects the biggest themes of 2020. “Racial justice, immigration, ideological divisions, identity and economic disparities permeate both the fiction and nonfiction sides of our list,” Pamela says. There are books about violence against Black Americans, the political alienation of white ***working-class*** Americans and more.

There are even a few books that manage to speak to life during the pandemic, if indirectly — like Ben Ehrenreich’s memoir of solitary living in the American West. (And, yes, a more famous memoir, the one by Barack Obama, also made the list.)

I’ll offer my own endorsement from the 100: “Deaths of Despair and the Future of Capitalism,” by Anne Case and Angus Deaton. It covers arguably the single most alarming development in American life, one that helps explain the frustration pulsing through the country: In many communities, people are [*not living as long as their parents did*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Up next from the Book Review is the release of the year’s 10 best books, on Monday morning. [*Readers will be able to watch the announcement here.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in several U.S. states [*is growing*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) more rapidly than anywhere else in the world. That was also true early in the summer, before Spain, France and some other countries overtook the U.S. in the late summer and early fall.
* The World Health Organization said Europe’s latest restrictions appeared to be [*slowing the spread of the virus*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). New cases there have dropped about 10 percent in the past week.

1. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urged Americans [*not to travel for Thanksgiving*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), saying the safest way to celebrate was “at home with the people you live with.” (Here’s what [*more than 600 epidemiologists*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) are doing. A common theme: staying home.)
2. U.S. airlines still expect Thanksgiving week to be [*one of the busiest periods*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) for air travel since the spring.
3. UNICEF, the United Nations agency for children, [*said school closures were helping to create a “lost generation”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of students while doing little to slow the spread of the virus.
4. Steven Mnuchin, the Treasury secretary, [*said he did not plan to extend*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)several emergency loan programs that are set to expire at the end of the year. The Federal Reserve said it preferred that the programs continue.

The Presidential Transition

* In an extraordinary step, President Trump summoned Republican members of the Michigan Legislature to the White House, as part of [*his effort to subvert the Electoral College process*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). President-elect Joe Biden leads in Michigan by 158,000 votes.

1. Business leaders in Washington, D.C., and on Wall Street are increasingly calling on the Trump administration [*to begin the transition*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).
2. More Republicans have pushed back against Trump. Fred Upton, a senior Michigan Republican in the House, said Trump should concede. Joni Ernst, an Iowa Republican, called rigging accusations from Trump’s lawyers [*“offensive” and “absolutely outrageous.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)
3. And Senator Mitt Romney of Utah, a Republican, [*excoriated the president’s attempts*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) to overturn his defeat. “It is difficult to imagine a worse, more undemocratic action by a sitting American President,” Romney said.
4. Senator David Perdue, a Republican facing a January runoff in Georgia, [*made profits*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) from a Navy contractor’s stock while overseeing the naval fleet.

Other Big Stories

* In the U.S., the rate of H.I.V.-related deaths [*fell by about half*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) from 2010 through 2018. The declines were smaller for women and Black Americans.

1. U.S. prosecutors [*have declined to pursue*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) cases against thousands of people who were arrested at demonstrations against police brutality this summer, concluding that protesters were exercising their civil rights.
2. Two fraud inquiries — one criminal and one civil — into Trump and his businesses [*are now looking at tax deductions*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) taken on consulting fees, some of which appear to have gone to Ivanka Trump.
3. The Justice Department [*carried out the first of three executions*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) scheduled before the end of Trump’s term. Biden has said he will work to end the use of capital punishment by the federal government.
4. General Motors said it would push to [*introduce more electric vehicles*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) by 2025. The company is hoping to challenge Tesla, the [*current leader*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) in electric vehicles.
5. Klay Thompson of the Golden State Warriors, one of the N.B.A.’s best shooters, [*will miss the upcoming season*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) after tearing his Achilles tendon in a pickup game.
6. And one more piece of book news: Douglas Stuart [*won the Booker Prize*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) for his autobiographical novel “Shuggie Bain,” the story of the lonely gay son of an alcoholic mother in 1980s Scotland.

Morning Reads

Modern Love: [*A grandmother’s love*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) fills the void for a writer who lost her mother at a young age.

Notable birds: A worker setting up the Christmas tree in Rockefeller Center in Manhattan this week [*came eye to eye*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) with a tiny owl that had accidentally gotten stuck in the branches. (The owl was [*thirsty and hungry*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), but mostly fine.) And now that we’re on the topic: Central Park has a [*new celebrity bird*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

From Opinion: The historian and author Yuval Noah Harari [*explains the allure*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) — and fatal flaw — of conspiracy theories. [*David Brooks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), [*Paul Krugman*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) and [*Farhad Manjoo*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) have columns.

Lives Lived: Drew S. Days III was solicitor general of the United States and the first Black American to lead the civil rights division of the Justice Department. Born in the segregated South, he attended and then taught at Yale Law School. [*He died at 79*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

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ARTS AND IDEAS

Six word stories

At a Thanksgiving dinner more than a decade ago, a magazine editor named Larry Smith made a suggestion to his relatives seated at the table: They should each tell a story about themselves — in only six words. It was a twist on a challenge that somebody apparently once issued to Ernest Hemingway.

Smith’s family had fun with the idea that night, and he soon turned it into [*a best-selling book series*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing). More recently, he wrote a Times Op-Ed, [*“The Pandemic in Six-Word Memoirs.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)

For Thanksgiving, I want to invite the readers of this newsletter to do a version of the exercise. In this year of pandemic, politics and so much else, tell us what makes you grateful, in just six words.

“The constraint of the six-word form helps us get to the essence of what matters most,” Smith says, “and I can’t think of a time when expressing gratitude has been more important.”

He advises you to go in any direction you want: “You can express gratitude for life’s big things (‘Cancer-free after five long years’) or seasonal joys (‘Daughter now makes family Thanksgiving feast’). Maybe you’re thankful for current events (‘Vaccines are coming — thank you, science!’) or a longer life journey (‘We all lived through son’s teens’).”

[*You can leave your six words here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and we’ll print a selection in a newsletter next week.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Time for a [*hearty one-pot dinner of chicken thighs*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) with apples and greens.

Theater From Home

Among [*this week’s picks*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing): a rendition of “Uncle Vanya” starring Constance Wu and Samira Wiley.

And to Read

This [*weird, winding tale*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) of a pig-shaped couch, hand-stitched from velvet and satin.

Late Night

The [*late-night hosts*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) talked about a [*dark liquid streaming down*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) Rudy Giuliani’s face.

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was expunging. Today’s puzzle is above — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) if you have a Games subscription.

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing), and a clue: Gamer beginners (five letters).

And you can try [*this week’s news quiz*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you Monday. — David

P.S. The word “[*founderitis*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” appeared for the first time in The Times this week, [*in a story about*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing) the director of the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, as noted by the Twitter bot [*@NYT\_first\_said*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

You can see [*today’s print front page here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

Today’s episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing)” is about how a medical examiner in Wisconsin experienced the pandemic. On “[*The Argument*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing),” Representative Pramila Jayapal discusses the Democrats’ divisions.

Lalena Fisher, Claire Moses, Amelia Nierenberg, Ian Prasad Philbrick and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Roberts Rurans FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 20, 2020

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[***She Experienced Busing in Boston. Now She’s the City’s First Black Mayor.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:628N-BNM1-DXY4-X1J7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 23, 2021 Tuesday 16:16 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1897 words

**Byline:** Ellen Barry

**Highlight:** At 11, Kim Janey was bused into a neighborhood where Black students were pelted with rocks. As acting mayor, she hopes to help Boston step out of the shadow of that era.

**Body**

At 11, Kim Janey was bused into a neighborhood where Black students were pelted with rocks. As acting mayor, she hopes to help Boston step out of the shadow of that era.

BOSTON — On a September morning in 1976, an 11-year-old Black girl climbed onto a yellow school bus, one of tens of thousands of children sent crisscrossing the city by court order and deposited in the insular neighborhoods of [*Boston*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/11/02/us/elections/results-boston-mayor-city-council.html) in an effort to force them to integrate.

As her bus swung uphill into the heart of the Irish-American enclave of Charlestown, she could see police officers taking protective positions around the bus. After that, the mob: white teenagers and adults, shouting and throwing rocks, telling them to go back to Africa.

That girl, [*Kim Janey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/27/us/black-women-mayor-us-cities.html), became acting [*mayor of Boston*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/11/02/us/elections/results-boston-mayor-city-council.html) on Monday, making her the first [*Black*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/adams-second-black-mayor.html) person to occupy the position, at a moment of uncommon opportunity for people of color in this city.

With the [*confirmation of her predecessor, Martin J. Walsh*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/03/22/us/biden-news-today/martin-walsh-labor-secretary-biden), as U.S. labor secretary, the 91-year succession of Irish-American and Italian-American [*mayors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/adams-second-black-mayor.html) appears to be ending, creating an opening for communities long shut out of the city’s power politics.

It isn’t clear what role Ms. Janey, 55, will play in this moment. As the president of Boston’s City Council, she automatically takes the position for seven months before the November election, and she has not said whether she plans to run. But the [*five candidates already in the race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/06/us/boston-city-council-change.html) are all people of color, and racial justice is certain to be [*a central theme of the campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/boston-mayor-election.htmlhttps://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/09/us/boston-mayor-election.html).

Nearly 50 years after court-ordered desegregation, Boston, the home of abolitionism, [*remains profoundly unequal*](https://apps.bostonglobe.com/spotlight/boston-racism-image-reality/). In 2015, the median net worth for white families in the city was nearly $250,000 compared with just $8 for [*Black*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/adams-second-black-mayor.html) families, according to [*a study from the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston*](https://www.bostonfed.org/publications/one-time-pubs/color-of-wealth.aspx).

Boston’s police force [*remains disproportionately white*](https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/turn-blind-eye-bostons-police-remain-largely-white-76179620). And [*a recent review*](https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2021/02/2020%20City%20of%20Boston%20Disparity%20Study%20Final%20Report_1.pdf) of city contracts found that [*during the first term*](https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/02/05/business/city-boston-spent-21-billion-contracts-over-five-years-less-than-1-percent-went-black-owned-or-latino-owned-businesses/) of Mr. Walsh’s administration, [*Black-owned firms landed roughly half of 1 percent of the $2.1 billion in prime contracts*](https://www.wgbh.org/news/local-news/2021/02/05/black-owned-businesses-have-been-largely-shut-out-of-boston-contracts-city-study-shows).

None of this comes as a surprise to Bostonians who, like Ms. Janey, came of age in the 1970s — the “kids on the bus,” as one of them put it. Now in their 50s, they are a group without illusions about what it will take to close those gaps.

Denella J. Clark, 53, president of the [*Boston Arts Academy Foundation,*](https://bostonartsacademy.org/people/clark-denella/) carries a scar on her left leg from a broken bottle that was thrown at her by a white woman when she was a 9-year-old being bused into a South Boston elementary school.

“I still think we have those people that are throwing bottles, they’re just not doing it overtly,” she said. “When you see some of this change, it’s because people were forced to make those changes, just like in the court case” that [*led to busing*](https://www.nytimes.com/1975/05/11/archives/us-judge-orders-busing-of-21000-in-boston-schools-4000-more.html) in Boston.

Michael Curry, who was 7 when he was first bused into Charlestown, described a similar conclusion: In a city with a limited pool of jobs and contracts, “the people who have taken advantage of those things are being asked to share that pie.”

“Boston will not go without a fight,” he said.

‘Where Are They Now?’

Mr. Curry, now 52, recently realized something: More than four decades after he was bused to the Warren-Prescott elementary school, he has rarely returned to Charlestown.

He is middle-aged now, a father of three and a lawyer. But he can still close his eyes and replay the path of that bus as it slid past the Museum of Science, then turned right and crossed into Charlestown, where crowds were waiting, armed with rocks or bricks.

“It boggles my mind to this day,” he said. “How much hate and frustration and anger would you have to have to do that to children?”

He wonders sometimes about those white parents. “Where are they now?” he said. “Do they look back and say ‘I was there that day’?”

This month, Mr. Curry, a former president of Boston’s N.A.A.C.P. branch, reached out to his social media networks, asking friends for their own memories. The responses came back fast — and raw. “Absolutely no interest in recollecting memories from that era,” one said. “It was a nightmare.”

One person who has struggled to put that time behind her is Rachel Twymon, 59, whose family’s story was the subject of a Pulitzer Prize-winning 1985 book, “Common Ground,” which later became a television mini-series. Ms. Twymon still seethes at her mother, one of the book’s protagonists, for sending her to school in Charlestown in the name of racial justice.

“For adults to think their decision was going to change the world, that was crazy,” said Ms. Twymon, an occupational therapist who lives in New Bedford, Mass. “How dare you put children in harm’s way? How dare you? I have never been able to come to grips with that.”

Ms. Janey’s recollections of busing are tempered, by comparison.

“I had no idea what would be in store,” she said. “When I finally sat on the school bus and faced angry mobs of people, had rocks thrown at our bus, racial slurs hurled at us, I was not expecting that. And there’s nothing that can prepare you for that.”

She quickly added, though, that the environment changed as soon as she stepped inside Edwards Middle School, where her closest friend was Cathy, a white girl from an Irish-American family.

“The other thing that I would share, and I think this gets lost when we talk about this painful part of our history, is that inside that school building, I was a kid,” she said. “We were children. We cared about who we would play with, and who’s going to play jump rope, and who wants to play hopscotch.”

Lost and Gained

The city Ms. Janey will lead as [*mayor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/adams-second-black-mayor.html) is radically changed, in part because of what happened after busing: The ***working-class***, Irish-American neighborhoods that fiercely resisted integration began to wane under pressure from white flight and gentrification.

They had been poor neighborhoods. Patricia Kelly, 69, [*a Black teacher from New Jersey who was assigned to a Charlestown elementary school in 1974,*](https://moakleyarchive.omeka.net/items/show/3754) recalled her shock at the deprivation she encountered there; once, she gingerly approached a boy’s mother about the stench of urine on his clothes and was told that they had no hot water.

After busing began, [*Boston’s public schools lost almost a third of their white students*](https://www.nytimes.com/1975/12/15/archives/white-pupils-rolls-drop-a-third-in-boston-busing-white-pupils-rolls.html) in 18 months, as white families enrolled their children in parochial schools or boycotted schools in protest.

For David Arbuckle, 58, who is white, it meant that most of his old friends were gone. He recalled walking to school through crowds of white residents who bellowed at him for violating the antibusing boycott, a daily gantlet that gave him stomachaches.

For decades, some of those childhood friends blamed desegregation for ruining their chances in life, Mr. Arbuckle said.

“They would tell you, ‘I didn’t get an education because Black people came to my school and took my seat,’” he said. The 1980s only deepened their grievances, he said; factory jobs were drying up, and court-ordered [*affirmative action*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/04/04/nyregion/from-court-order-to-reality-a-diverse-boston-police-force.html) policies, many complained, made it more difficult to be hired by the Police or Fire Departments.

“It almost feels like a lost generation, to some extent,” said Mr. Arbuckle, who now works in management for the commuter rail system in Boston. Returning to Charlestown as an adult, shuttling his sons to hockey practice, he sometimes wore a suit, straight from the office, and people from the neighborhood “would turn on me because I was a yuppie.”

He said it was hard to imagine members of the older generation softening their views, even as the city surrounding them became wealthier and more diverse.

“I don’t know if people have to die off,” he said. “I know it sounds awful.”

‘A Hundred-Year Fight’

Ms. Janey — whose ancestors escaped to Canada through the Underground Railroad and [*began settling in Boston in the second half of the 19th century*](https://vitabrevis.americanancestors.org/2021/02/mayors-of-boston/) — does not dwell on busing when she tells the story of her life, except to say that it was a setback.

“It was the first time that I didn’t feel safe in school,” she said. “It was the first time that I was not confident about how teachers felt about me as a little Black girl, the way I felt in elementary school.”

Her parents withdrew her as soon as they could, sending her to the middle-class suburb of Reading through a voluntary busing program, starting in the eighth grade. She would go on to work as a community activist, serving at [*Massachusetts Advocates for Children*](https://www.massadvocates.org/news/massachusetts-advocates-for-children-congratulates-mayor-kim-janey-xdpre) for almost two decades before running for a seat on the Boston City Council in 2017.

She described her work in education, [*in a talk to students last year,*](https://historyofboston.cssh.northeastern.edu/topics/the-future-of-boston/) as an extension of the civil rights movement that swept up her parents.

“The fight for quality education for Black families in this city dates to the beginning of this country,” she said. “It’s a hundred-year fight.”

The fury unleashed by busing reshaped Boston in many ways, including by setting back the ambitions of Black candidates. White anger made it difficult for them to build the multiracial coalitions that were necessary to win citywide office in Boston, said Jason Sokol, a historian and author of “All Eyes Are Upon Us: Race and Politics From Boston to Brooklyn.”

“You can’t overlook how powerful the legacy of the battles over school desegregation were,” he said. “The white resistance was so vicious that it didn’t seem like a political system a lot of African-Americans wanted to be part of. It was just very poisoned for a long time.”

Ms. Janey, who became [*mayor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/adams-second-black-mayor.html) when Mr. Walsh stepped down on Monday, will officially take the oath of office on Wednesday, acutely conscious of her place in history.

The city will be watching to see if she makes a mark between now and November: [*The powers of an acting mayor in Boston are limited*](https://www.bostonherald.com/2021/01/20/what-would-kim-janeys-powers-as-acting-mayor-of-boston-be/), and she may have difficulty making key appointments. Ms. Clark of the Boston Arts Academy Foundation, who serves on Ms. Janey’s transition committee, warned against expecting swift change in the city’s politics.

“I worry they’re going to block her at every instance,” she said. “We all know what Frederick Douglass said: ‘Power concedes nothing.’ This is Boston. This is a big boys’ game.”

Still, Thomas M. Menino, one of Ms. Janey’s predecessors, became acting mayor under similar circumstances, when the city’s mayor was appointed as a U.S. ambassador. Mr. Menino used the platform to build a powerful political base and [*was elected mayor four months later*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/20/us/in-boston-mayor-builds-a-legacy-with-construction-cranes.html), becoming the city’s first Italian-American mayor. He went on to be re-elected four times, [*serving for more than 20 years*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/31/us/thomas-m-menino-mayor-who-transformed-boston-dies-at-71.html).

Ms. Janey, by all appearances, would like to follow a similar path. Her swearing-in, she said last week, is a moment full of hope, a measure of how far Boston has come.

“I’m at a loss for words, because, at 11 years old, I saw firsthand some of the darkest days of our city,” she said. “And here I am.”

PHOTOS: KIM JANEY, acting mayor of Boston, who at age 11 was bused to a neighborhood where a white mob threw rocks at Black students.; MICHAEL CURRY, who was 7 when he was first bused into Charlestown, an Irish-American enclave where crowds were armed with rocks or bricks.; RACHEL TWYMON, who still seethes at her mother for sending her to school in Charlestown in the name of racial justice. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHILIP KEITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Students arrived by bus at South Boston High School in 1976. Nearly 50 years after court-ordered desegregation, deep inequality persists. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ED JENNER/THE BOSTON GLOBE, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***24kGoldn Became a Pandemic Pop Star. Now Comes the Real-World Test.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:628M-B051-JBG3-617M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

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**Section:** ARTS; music

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**Byline:** Joe Coscarelli

**Highlight:** The 20-year-old rapper and singer had one of the biggest hits of last year with “Mood,” and is easing into the life of a celebrity with the release of his debut album, “El Dorado.”

**Body**

The 20-year-old rapper and singer had one of the biggest hits of last year with “Mood,” and is easing into the life of a celebrity with the release of his debut album, “El Dorado.”

It wasn’t supposed to be the right time for a breakthrough, but 24kGoldn had a career-making hit in hand.

Spring was turning to summer last year, and the coronavirus was surging worldwide. “Mood” — a two-and-a-half minute, guitar-driven, melodic-rap confection — did not exactly fit the vibe. But nearly two years into almost making it after signing a major-label contract, Goldn and his team were in throw-it-at-the-wall mode: This is the best record we have, they told themselves. Let’s go.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU)]

To say it worked, in spite of the circumstances, would be an understatement: “Mood,” by Goldn and the like-minded sing-rapper Iann Dior, spent six weeks at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 last year, plus another two weeks in January, boosted in part by a steady flow of TikTok memes, a [*Justin Bieber and J Balvin remix*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU) and little competition. The song has been streamed more than 1.5 billion times globally.

But even more impressively in a fragmented market, “Mood” also dominated across old-fashioned radio formats, including rhythmic, rock, alternative, Top 40 and adult contemporary, making it officially uncategorizable as anything but a true smash.

So while Goldn may have entered the pandemic as yet another teenage rapper who scored a record deal off social-media buzz and songwriting talent, only to risk getting lost in the shuffle, he is leaving it as a newborn pop star, with every industry tool at his disposal to help him grow into the role.

“You’re important,” Goldn’s friend and creative director, Be, teased with an added expletive in a tiny Midtown hotel room this month, in between promotional appearances and remote record company meetings to finalize an album cover. “Conference calls, bro!”

Goldn, now 20 and caked in TV makeup for the first time, turned a bit bashful, but concurred: “Stretch is getting like 500 emails a day now,” he said of his manager, “and it used to be like seven, a year and a half ago! I went [*from Squidward to handsome Squidward*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU) real fast,” he added, referring to a “SpongeBob SquarePants” meme.

Now, with the world and the music business easing back into more normal operations, Goldn has to actually seize what his big song set up for him. His first album, “El Dorado,” is out Friday via the Records label, a joint venture with Sony Music, and its partner Columbia, and it represents one of the first major trial balloons for the emerging-artist machine during a still-tentative moment. The tough part for Goldn, especially in the age of masked semi-isolation and no concerts, is putting a memorable face (and personality) to the high-grade melodies, in hopes of becoming a true multi-hyphenate.

Fortunately for him and those betting on him, the artist — born, somehow, Golden Landis Von Jones to two former models in San Francisco — was seemingly built in a lab that mints charisma-oozing, genre-agnostic Gen-Z pop acts. Fizzy, warm and winning, he’s the kind of young man whom a friend’s parents would swoon over upon first meeting — a popular kid who’s avoided alienating any outsider constituencies. With a Cheshire cat smile in width, if not mischievousness, he is likable even while deciding which pair of leather pants to wear to a fashion magazine.

“Goldn very much reminded me of a young Will Smith,” said Barry Weiss, the veteran music executive who signed Goldn to Records, and who previously helped jump-start the careers of a teenage Smith, Britney Spears, ’N Sync and Chris Brown. “If this kid wanted to go into politics …,” Weiss said.

Musically, Goldn found another sweet spot. His songs are part of the sanded-down long tail of [*SoundCloud rap*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU), braiding together two dominant strands of recent rock-adjacent hip-hop: the bouncy, pop-punk-inflected melodies warbled by Chief Keef, [*iLoveMakonnen*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU), [*Lil Uzi Vert*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU), [*Playboi Carti*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU) and [*Juice WRLD*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU), plus the [*guitar loops*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU) that have become a go-to foundation for earwormy beats. “El Dorado,” which features Future and DaBaby, also finds Goldn showing flashes of Bruno Mars, Chance the Rapper and Post Malone.

Goldn cited some modern punk-rap reference points as influences, but also his latent familiarity with the alternative hits of his youth. “Pop-punk was a part of pop culture at the time,” he said. “You turn on [*‘Cheaper by the Dozen’*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU) and you’ve got ‘In Too Deep’ by Sum 41. You’ve got games like Rock Band and Guitar Hero selling millions of copies around the world. So whether I was aware of it or not, that type of stuff was really shaping my childhood.”

“When those styles started getting popularized by artists like Carti and Uzi,” he added, “it hit my generation in places that we didn’t know we could be hit before.”

Weiss, who was introduced to Goldn by the producer and A&amp;R man D.A. Doman, first heard him as “much more of a pure hip-hop artist” on early songs like [*“Ballin Like Shareef”*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU) and “Valentino,” which would go on to become Goldn’s first TikTok success.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU)]

Taken by the rapper’s hooks and look, Weiss quickly jumped on a plane to Los Angeles, where Goldn was studying finance on scholarship at the University of Southern California, and pursued what he called an old-school, “don’t let the kid out of the room” strategy to signing him. (Goldn still managed to hold off for a while and, during a follow-up trip to New York, even took a meeting at another major label after telling his primary suitors that he had “to do some family stuff.”)

“It felt like I was going after Patrick Mahomes — a franchise player,” Weiss said. “I wanted to put the whole company behind this kid.”

But when Goldn returned later, as a signed artist, with the song “City of Angels” — a track he made with Omer Fedi, an Israeli guitarist, songwriter and producer — Weiss was confused. “It was a head-scratcher to me,” he said, recalling telling Goldn’s circle, “Guys, this is like, a rock record.”

Goldn’s response? “Kids don’t think that way!”

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU)]

The track became the centerpiece to Goldn’s first official release, the “Dropped Outta College” EP, released in 2019, after he did just that — a gradual process that hinted at Goldn’s overall savvy.

“I figured out a way that if I dropped all of my classes except for one, I could still get my full scholarship to live on campus for free and eat on campus for free,” Goldn said, grinning. “I got to live on campus, keep promoting my music, keep being a public figure there and not have to really worry about school too much.” (The one class he did take, on international commerce, came with a trip to Japan.)

A naturally graceful social maneuverer, Goldn found that his time at U.S.C. also introduced him to a moneyed, well-connected milieu that he had not encountered growing up as a biracial, ***working-class*** kid in the Oceanview neighborhood of San Francisco (which, like a true Bay Area native, he refers to as Lakeview).

“In L.A., kids have whole positions in the social hierarchy just based off who their parents are,” he said — a good primer for the shmoozy politics of the music industry.

But he also made real friends in high places. After leaving campus, Goldn moved into the guesthouse of a classmate whose mother just happened to be Nancy Josephson, a partner at William Morris Endeavor. She is now his agent, and a loosely autobiographical show starring Goldn is in development — “The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air” as his life blooms into “Entourage.” Goldn half-jokingly refers to himself as the [*Black Vinnie Chase*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU).

Like his parents, who got by on commercial work and then service-industry jobs, Goldn modeled and acted some as an adorable child with “a huge Afro.” The attention from his classmates — not to mention the spending money — was thrilling, he said, and the work got him comfortable in front of a camera. “I was really good in the auditions,” Goldn said, stating the obvious.

But despite his Hollywood inroads, the pandemic might very well have halted whatever momentum Goldn had generated around town. Instead, another guitar riff from Fedi, cooked up while Goldn was playing Call of Duty, led quickly to “Mood.”

“A lot of bigger people took their foot off the gas during uncertain times,” KBeazy, a producer behind the hit and other tracks on Goldn’s album, said. “For us, who still weren’t established, we were like, ‘It’s go time — now or never.’”

For its collaborators, “Mood” was more than just a defining track — the song was also a path to the signature sound that Goldn had been lacking, not to mention a group of friends and now roommates.

Along with Fedi and KBeazy, Goldn’s 21st-century equivalent of a session band also includes Blake Slatkin, another young songwriter and studio whiz who started his career as an intern for [*the hitmaker Benny Blanco*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU), and whose parents’ house in Beverly Hills provided some isolated studio space during Covid-19. (“Oh, we all got Covid,” Slatkin said, though they were careful to stay — and even sleep — in the studio.)

The tight group, which is just as likely to listen to Modest Mouse and Weezer as Uzi and Lil Baby, assured that “El Dorado” would have a cohesive feel, instead of the more predictable method of sticking Goldn in the studio with a slate of hot producers who were strangers.

“I already tried that line of thinking where we make every song as different as possible and try and get a hit off of it,” Goldn said. In the industry these days, “I think there are a lot of things that feel more futuristic that aren’t really as helpful as people think,” he added. “And I think there’s a lot of stuff that worked in the past that people forgot worked.”

For better or worse, like most artists his age, Goldn also doubles as a trend forecaster and digital marketer — innate skills that he can’t help given how he grew up, scouring SoundCloud, buying sneakers online and lurking a Kanye West message board.

He first earned industry inquiries after [*submitting his music*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU) to a DJ Booth blogger who promised to review anything sent to him ([*the verdict*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU): “just a bit of exposure away from being a certifiable hit”). And, when his labels were skeptical of his progress, Goldn worked the nascent TikTok market, meeting with various influencers while on tour and posting constantly to seed and tease his songs. (Never one to miss an optimized opportunity, Goldn also put out a song called [*“I Go to USC”*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU) while the 2019 college admissions scandal swirled.)

“The crazy thing about marketing is it changes every day,” Goldn said. “Even the way TikTok was when ‘Mood’ was blowing up versus how it is now — in only a span of eight months, it’s two completely different playing fields.” The labels, he said, are “just flooding it, and they don’t understand how it fully works.”

In an S.U.V. this month after taping an appearance on “Desus &amp; Mero” — where he gushed with the hosts about having a Jewish mother and loving “Survivor,” a show that premiered six months before he was born — Goldn was scrolling through photos and videos of himself. He’d been sent a promo clip for his album that was designed for Instagram, but the video quality was lacking.

“That always makes it perform worse,” he said as he demanded a cleaner version.

Goldn mentioned his fondness for examining the data himself, explaining that he could tell when a song of his was about to blow up when its daily streams increased on a Sunday, when they should be declining. A booming track’s growth chart “looks like a hockey stick,” he said.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/GrAchTdepsU)]

But these fixations meant that Goldn knew full well that “Coco” and “3, 2, 1,” the follow-ups to his No. 1 hit, were not the same sort of unstoppable rocket ship that he’d gotten used to. “How come it’s not doing like ‘Mood’?” he admitted asking himself before realizing “not every song can be ‘Mood.’”

Still, Goldn was obviously itching to bask in the success of what he’d already accomplished during such a bizarre period. He noted that he’d yet to experience playing a sweaty, mosh-heavy festival set or being mobbed by fans in front of his hotel. Releasing “El Dorado” was the first step to these pop-star rites of passage, he knew, but as he continued a promo tour low on crowds and high on health-and-safety protocols, it was clear that he would have to wait just a little bit longer.

PHOTOS: The rapper and singer 24kGoldn, above and below, began his music career while still a student on scholarship at the University of Southern California. His aesthetic is informed by pop-punk in addition to rap. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE GROSKOPF FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 25, 2021

**End of Document**



[***President Heralds Economic Gains, Leaving Out the Caveats***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y4R-WJG1-DXY4-X4D5-00000-00&context=1519360)

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**Byline:** By Jim Tankersley

**Body**

The president emphasized a ''blue collar'' boom in his speech to Congress. But workers in those industries have seen a slowdown -- or even losses -- in jobs.

WASHINGTON -- President Trump used his State of the Union address on Tuesday to tick off a laundry list of economic gains, citing record low unemployment for women, higher incomes for households and a ''blue collar'' boom that he said is underway across America.

The speech showcased what will be Mr. Trump's primary message as he heads into a re-election campaign that he hopes will be a referendum on the United States economy. But it also overstated the strength of an economic expansion that has slowed or stalled for parts of his base.

''Jobs are booming. Incomes are soaring. Poverty is plummeting,'' Mr. Trump said. ''America's fortunes are on the rise.'' He added, ''I am thrilled to report to you tonight that our economy is the best it has ever been.''

The economic expansion has now reached its 11th year, a record for the modern era of economic statistics in the United States. Unemployment sank to 3.5 percent in December, down from 4.7 percent when Mr. Trump took office. Workers' wages are growing, particularly for those in the jobs that pay the least, like retail clerks and restaurant workers. The stock market, which is one of the president's favorite gauges of economic success, is up about 20 percent from a year ago.

Forty percent of Americans say they are better off financially than they were at the same time last year -- double the number who say they are worse off, according to a survey conducted last month for The New York Times by the online research firm SurveyMonkey. That is the brightest economic outlook respondents have expressed in the three years the survey has been conducted. Independent voters, a particularly crucial electoral bloc, reported a surge in confidence in the latest survey.

And yet the economy grew faster under several of Mr. Trump's predecessors than it has on his watch. When he bragged of the economy's strength on Tuesday, Mr. Trump frequently cited ''record'' low rates of unemployment and poverty, which are in part attributable to the low and falling rates he inherited from former President Barack Obama.

The economy's improvement has also slowed on several fronts since last year, particularly in the president's favored blue-collar sectors like mining and manufacturing.

Mr. Trump declared in his 2019 State of the Union speech that ''an economic miracle is taking place in the United States, and the only thing that can stop it are foolish wars, politics or ridiculous partisan investigations.''

Over the last year, the president's economic policies have not delivered anything close to the miracle he had promised to white ***working-class*** voters in the industrial Midwest. Combined employment in construction, manufacturing and mining grew more slowly last year than at almost any other point in the current expansion.

Job growth has slowed sharply -- from 2.6 percent at the start of 2019 to 1.3 percent at the end of the year -- in so-called middle-wage sectors that include mining, construction and transportation, according to calculations by Nick Bunker, an economist at the Indeed Hiring Lab. That blue-collar slowdown is driving the deceleration of job growth across the United States economy.

Mr. Trump's policies have also not revived employment in coal mining, as he promised; the sector lost 1,000 jobs nationwide in 2019, according to the Labor Department. Primary metals manufacturing, which includes the steel and aluminum industries that Mr. Trump claimed to have restored with tariffs, shed about 12,000 jobs in 2019.

Employment growth in manufacturing, which Mr. Trump promoted in his speech last year, slowed to fewer than 50,000 jobs in 2019 -- the worst rate of his presidency and the second worst of the long recovery from recession.

Mr. Trump nodded implicitly to that slowdown in his speech on Tuesday night. Last year, he claimed, incorrectly, that the United States had created 600,000 factory jobs during his tenure. On Tuesday, he revised that number down to ''half a million,'' which is the correct figure.

Many economists blame the economy's deceleration on the trade wars Mr. Trump has waged with China and other countries that send steel, aluminum, washing machines and solar panels to the United States.

Economic growth slowed to 2.3 percent last year, according to data released last month by the Commerce Department. That is a percentage point less than what Mr. Trump's advisers predicted for the year. Across Mr. Trump's three years in office, growth has never reached the 3 percent rate that administration forecasters have projected. It has fallen well short of Mr. Trump's campaign promises of 4, 5 or even 6 percent annual rates.

Independent economists expect only modest growth this year from the initial trade deal that Mr. Trump reached with China and the revamped North American trade pact that he signed last week.

And while Mr. Trump signed a large tax cut in 2017, it has failed to produce the sustained investment boom that he and Republicans promised. After surging in 2018 following a cut in the corporate income tax rate, business investment shrank for the final three quarters of 2019.

Investment has now grown more slowly in the quarters after the tax cut than it did in the eight years, including the end of the Great Recession, under Mr. Obama.

Mr. Trump's only mention of business investment was in reference to opportunity zones, a creation of the 2017 tax law that bestowed tax incentives on investors who put money into projects in so-called distressed communities. He did not directly mention the corporate rate cuts that were the centerpiece of the 2017 law, nor the investment decline.

Mr. Trump did not propose a new round of tax cuts, as his advisers had hinted he might. His most substantial economic policy proposal was to call on Congress to pass a bipartisan family leave law that has been championed by his daughter Ivanka Trump.

The president was unequivocal in saying that his policies had fundamentally transformed the economy.

''The days of our country being used, taken advantage of and even scorned by other nations are long behind us,'' he said. ''Gone, too, are the broken promises, jobless recoveries, tired platitudes and constant excuses for the depletion of American wealth, power and prestige.''

Other analysts say Mr. Trump has benefited from a historically anomalous economic stimulus while unemployment is low. The Federal Reserve ended a slow march of interest rate increases last year and slashed rates instead, spurring growth and stock gains. Combined with military and other federal spending increases that bipartisan majorities in Congress passed and Mr. Trump signed into law, the tax cuts have helped to swell the federal budget deficit to $1 trillion a year.

Mr. Trump did not mention the Fed, a frequent target of his criticism, or the growing deficit in his speech.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/04/business/economy/trump-economy-state-of-the-union.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/04/business/economy/trump-economy-state-of-the-union.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: ''I am thrilled to report to you tonight that our economy is the best it has ever been,'' President Trump said in his State of the Union address on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Dan Olson; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6558-B6D1-DXY4-X0G5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 5, 2022 Tuesday 16:15 EST

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 12103 words

**Highlight:** A crypto conversation with video essayist Dan Olson.

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Dan Olson. 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, and this is “The Ezra Klein Show.” So back in the fall, I wanted to do a cluster of episodes on crypto, and I didn’t quite get there. Right before I went on paternity leave, I got the first one that I’d wanted to do done, which was with crypto investor Katie Haun and was built around the question, what if the crypto boosters are right? What is it that they’re trying to build? What kinds of problems could their technologies and their ideas solve? And what kinds of problems could be created by their success?

It took a while, but this is a show I’d intended to pair alongside it. This is a conversation asking the inverse question — what if they’re wrong? What if their technology doesn’t build anything like the world they think they’re building? What kinds of problems could be created by crypto’s failure? And who could be hurt by it?

And I’ll be honest. I’m probably in a different place on this myself from the intervening months. I’ve become a lot more worried about crypto. The advertisements I’m watching when you have Matt Damon doing ads suggesting you’re a coward if you don’t buy crypto, you’ve got Larry David doing a Super Bowl ad, a Super Bowl ad, where the explicit message, the whole point of the ad, is, invest in crypto, even though you don’t understand it.

Every day, I get WhatsApp messages trying to get me to join this or that Bitcoin chat group. I get a lot of scammy crypto stuff. This is what a bubble looks like. And there is a lot of cash being spent right now to get dumb money to invest, a lot of cash creating marketing, really slick marketing, and then to say nothing of actual scams that are pitched explicitly at people who don’t understand what it is they’re buying. And I’ve covered enough bubbles and enough financial crises to get nervous when I start seeing that.

A few months ago, the single best, most thoroughgoing critique of crypto I’ve seen was released. Dan Olson is a video essayist on YouTube whose channel is called “Folding Ideas,” where he does these great, deep videos that focus on questions of art and gaming and commerce. And so he naturally got interested in crypto because of the rise of NFTs have made crypto a huge transformation, a new player in the art world. And he dove deep into the technologies and the ideas here.

And I think it would be fair to say, he did not end up impressed. He’s got this more than two-hour takedown called “Line Goes Up.” And it went incredibly viral. It’s been viewed by millions of people. We got dozens of requests to have him on the show. And something he does in “Line Goes Up,” something he does throughout his thinking here, is, he takes crypto seriously as a culture and an asset class and a financial market, not just as a technology.

Crypto isn’t just code. It’s also marketing and investments and currency prices and incentives and in-jokes and social pressures. And all of that matters because that’s actually where a lot of the problems and warning signs lurk. I find it hard. A difficulty of this conversation is deciding how much I want to or even think you can keep some of these things separate.

Can you like the technology and be worried about the culture? Can you think some of the ideas are good, but think of the way the investments are working isn’t good? Or do you have to treat it all as one thing but it is to some degree all if not one thing very interrelated. And so you have to treat it as a single system, or as he calls it, as a machine.

If you can, I do recommend listening to the show alongside the Katie Haun conversation, which we’ll link in the description. Because I think the two together give you a sense of both what this will look like if it goes well, but also how it could go very, very badly. As always, my email is [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com) Dan Olson, welcome to the show.

DAN OLSON: Thank you for having me.

EZRA KLEIN: Your critique of crypto is pretty thoroughgoing, I think it’d be fair to say. And so before we get to it, I want us to show some understanding of the vision that has powered crypto. The people involved in it will tell you they’re building a better internet, that they’re solving a bunch of the problems the internet we have now possesses. So what are they trying to build? What has made so many people, smart people, good-hearted people, so excited?

DAN OLSON: Basically, if you go into any group and press them on that question, you’ll get a different answer. And it may range from something that’s relatively cogent and focused about, well, we’re trying to build decentralized systems of governance so that we could have a version of Twitter that is owned in fractional portions by every single user. And that’s a coherent goal, regardless of whether or not you think it’s a feasible goal.

But then you go into a lot of others, and it’s just a lot of wash about, well, we’re building something new. And it’s going to be different. And we’re going to push corporations off the internet. It doesn’t really make a lot of sense. There’s not a lot of coherence to it. There’s not a strong vision. There’s just a vibe.

There’s just an energy there about being involved in something that feels like the cutting edge, regardless of whether or not anyone’s able to vocalize it. And a lot of crypto enthusiasts will point to that ineffability as the thing that gets them excited. You know, it’s like, oh, we’re participating in something that’s so new, that’s so radical, that it’s difficult to even give voice to it.

EZRA KLEIN: You used a word there that I think is really important because I think there’s more of a unifying thread here than you do, which is participating. So I’ve come to think there are two levels to the claims crypto people are making about the world they’re trying to build. One, and I think this comes more from the V.C.s, the financiers, the companies, is that they’re trying to create ownership. They’re trying to create the capacity to own digital goods. And that explains a lot of what’s going on — own a currency, own an NFT, own a JPEG, whatever.

But then there’s this other level, which is the crypto community, for lack of a better term. And I think the unifying thread there, as I’ve tried to understand it and report on it and absorb it, is participation, that at every level, it’s a view about participating in the way our digital world is run, participating in building it, participating in governing it, participating in profiting off of it, that, obviously, we all participate in the internet to the extent we use it. We create content for it.

But there’s a sense that we are just creating and other people are deciding that we don’t participate at the fundamental layer of the system. And what I see as the thing people are trying to build rightly or wrongly well or poorly is the structures of participation.

And that what’s alluring about it to people, what is seductive once you get into it, is the feeling, because I do think it’s more of a feeling than a fact, but nevertheless, a feeling of participating not just in the construction of something new, but in participating in your four NFT Discord communities. It’s a metaphor for the way you would be a participant in the whole thing at a time when I think people feel really alienated by the companies that run the internet, governments, et cetera.

DAN OLSON: I would agree with a lot of that assessment. And I think where I would diverge is that I don’t think that the goal of like, oh, this participatory energy is what we’re trying to build as a baseline of the future system, I don’t think that that’s necessarily a goal at all. The charitable myth laden version is a version of the internet where corporations have been defanged, corporations are unable to ingress into calcification, where everybody is a part owner, everybody is a stakeholder, everybody profits off of it.

You own all of your actions and all of your data, and you are thus free to sell and profit off of that. A lot of it’s about control. A lot of the myth making is about control. And this is where it starts to get a little bit fraught because we start running into things that crypto enthusiasts will describe as good things. They’ll be just like, oh. They’ll get super hyped about, imagine if you had granular ownership of like every single tweet you ever made, and you could fractionalize those tweets and their value.

You could take a tweet the was really popular, and you could fractionalize it so that you could create a community around that tweet, where everybody who buys into this fractionalized version of that tweet owns a part of the essence of that tweet. And then the more that tweet gets sold, the more that fractionalization increases in its perceived value, and the more you are rewarded as the person for tweeting that. And they’ll get really excited about that. And I just look at that and go like, that sounds horrifying to me, but they get really excited about it.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah, there was a running joke in our prep for this conversation between me and my producer, Annie Galvin, where we would run across these descriptions of things very much like that. But they all boil down to this question of, wouldn’t it be cool if you could own X? And in parentheses, we kept ending up asking, well, would it actually be cool?

There’s an idea — I came to journalism as a blogger. And there’s an idea floating around, wouldn’t it be cool if people minted their blog posts as these digitally scarce goods, right, as NFTs? And then the blog post would be displayed, and then like in a museum, it would be like, this blog post on loan from the collection of X, where X is some crypto whale or some crypto community. And I mean, as a blogger, my actual answer to that is, would that be cool? Like, what about that exactly would be cool?

And on the other hand, right, on the other hand, the fact that a lot of us have this feeling that we are endlessly producing content for internet giants that we don’t make any money off of.

DAN OLSON: I’m empathetic to that, absolutely, yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah, I mean, the work of Jaron Lanier, “You Are Not a Gadget,” there’s a long history going back that we are getting pillaged by the internet. There’s a long lineage of this thinking. A lot of my skepticism comes into the fact that we are buying too much into the logic of commercialization in an effort to solve a commercialization problem. But nevertheless, the idea that there is a problem with not profiting off of what you create on the internet, that is a true idea.

DAN OLSON: Yeah, I have an empathy for it. I have an empathy for a lot of the myths that the A16Z’s of the world use to get people into it of like, hey, your data is being sold by these tech giants. And there’s kind of a sleight of hand that’s working there, which is that it’s like, your data in kind of scare quotes isn’t valuable in a granular sense.

Our data is valuable to these tech giants. The fact that they have access to like, millions of points of reference in order to construct their models out of and to then sell those models to vendors, that’s what’s valuable. Your individual contribution to that is fractions of a cent of value. There’s this core problem of your data is being sold. And the answer to that is not, well, what if you could individually sell your data?

EZRA KLEIN: I think it’s an important point, and, ah, it gives me a couple of different directions to go in here. Fuck it, let’s go in the deep one. OK, you’re an art guy. You have this great YouTube page. You think a lot about art and art markets and the whole art thing. I sound real, real intelligent here. One of the tensions, it seems to me, in the way that the NFT culture of art and fractionalization and art sales is evolving is that there’s always been a tension in art and in creation about what happens when you yoke creation to different incentives.

So there’s this very famous beloved book by Lewis Hyde, “The Gift,” about doing art as a kind of gifting economy as an alternative to the logic of capitalism, that art is not supposed to be, and that the artistic impulse is not pure capitalism. And then, of course, there’s the reality that you need to eat and the reality that people need to get paid.

But the thing that worries me here, to what you were just saying — and you see it in the way people are talking about these crypto games, where, instead of playing for fun, you play to get tokens that maybe you can then convert out into money, or that you’re now going to get paid by Twitter if you have a really good tweet — is that I am not sure it builds a better world, to give people these power law incentives to work in the content minds, which, to say, some people do really well. And I’ve done really well out of it. I mean, I was a blogger, and I became a journalist, and I work at The New York Times now, and it’s great.

But I mean, take TikTok as it exists now and how alluring and seductive it is, and now imagine that every time you’re some teen whose TikTok gets 50,000, 150,000, a million hits completely randomly, you actually get a bunch of money. Not a ton of money, but enough that it matters to you. How much more addictive does TikTok become to you when it really is a slot machine that occasionally pays out coins? And is that a better world? It isn’t 100 percent clear to me that it is.

DAN OLSON: It does strike me as like horrifying, the potential for that. I’ve been spending a lot of time looking at other content communities online that are heavily industrialized in this sense, so like content mills, and really asking myself, what is it like to work in a content mill? So you have all these content mills that churn out endless reams of garbage about you know, acai berries and blueberries and how oatmeal will help you grow your hair back or whatever.

And humans are writing that. Someone somewhere, a creative person or a skilled writer, or at least, a like, aspiring writer, is sitting somewhere in a room, using their fleshy human hands to type on a keyboard and will those words into existence. And that incentive cage is basically what you’re describing there. It’s just taking the incentives and structure of a content mill and encaging, enclosing, if you will, the entire internet in it.

EZRA KLEIN: At the very least, I would say it is a somewhat sad restructuring of the utopian vision of the internet that always strikes me here that, you know, there was all these ideas about abundance and a world that operated on a different logic. And now — and this is something you get at in some of your work — there’s an idea that we are going to more fully absorb that logic, but people think maybe they can be the masters of it. And most people end up in the middle of that. And it’s not always great.

But something that has come up a little bit in our conversation that I want to pull out, we’ve been talking about tech giants. We’ve been talking about tech giants as the implicit and explicit enemy of this vision — your Twitters, your Metas, your Googles. You can go on down the line. But if you back up, I would say, five or 10 years in crypto world, back then, the enemy was banks, monetary policy authorities, the government, the global currency structure.

And it is an interesting transition from this being a way to overturn government control of currencies to this being a way to change how a successor to social media compensates social media creators. Can you talk a bit about that part of the ideological and conceptual evolution here?

DAN OLSON: I mean I think it’s as simple as, the first myths failed to gain widespread traction. The Bitcoin utopia, one, failed to materialize, and two, failed to really speak to people, and three, was basically revealed, largely, as a sham. You had all of these myths about, oh, Venezuela is going to — if you’re looking at, like, 2013, 2014, it’s like, Venezuela is going to adopt Bitcoin as its national currency any day now. And it’s like, they didn’t. Still hasn’t happened. Still not going to happen.

You would get a lot of, yeah, maybe Bitcoin doesn’t make sense if you live in Canada, which has one of the, air quote, best functioning bank systems in the world. OK, but if you live in Central South America, where things are a lot more dysfunctional, where you have a lot of government censorship around money, and there’s all of these issues with remittances.

And you get a lot of people talking up how much it’s going to help people in those places. But then the actual “boots on the ground” adoption is, average people only adopt cryptocurrency in those environments when things get so truly dire that they’re like, whatever. I might as well deal with jumping through all of these crypto hoops in order to try and get some Bitcoin that I can convert into pesos that I can actually spend. So the Bitcoin utopia never emerged. The Ethereum utopia never emerged. Then you got the whole I.C.O. gradual explosion leading up to just these —

EZRA KLEIN: Can you say what I.C.O. is?

DAN OLSON: An initial coin offering is, somebody starts a new cryptocurrency. They generate a genesis block, which creates, like, a million, a billion — an arbitrary number of new coins out of thin air. And then they sell off whatever percentage of that initial chunk. Then their new blockchain starts its rolling operations.

The terminology that comes directly from investing — you’ve got an initial public offering when a company switches from being a privately owned company into offering public shares. Same logic, just nothing preventing people who buy into the I.C.O. from just turning around and immediately dumping their stuff 30 seconds later.

And so you had literally hundreds of new cryptocurrencies started in the years leading up to 2017, 2018. And then in 2018, there was this massive just atomic bomb of I.C.O.s. They were all over the place. And, like, 90 percent of these coins inevitably fail.

EZRA KLEIN: So Bitcoin emerges. It becomes widespread in public knowledge of it. It becomes quite valuable. If you go back eight years, if you had told me Bitcoin’s worth today, I would have never guessed how few applications there are to spend it. It would have never occurred to me that those two things would be simultaneous, that it would be so functionally useless as a currency but so valued as an asset class.

But then, as you say, there’s an explosion of new currencies. And a lot of the new currencies, at least one of the ideas behind some of them, is, well, we’re going to fix problems in Bitcoin. It won’t be mined in the same crazy, energy-intensive way, or it won’t be limited in the same way that creates such volatility. And you can go on down the line of problems people wanted to fix. What is a financial incentive in this period to start a new currency? Why might you want to do that, such that so many people would do it?

DAN OLSON: Oh, because the ground-floor payoff is potentially explosive. It’s all driven by that narrative, like, OK, at one point, Bitcoin was worth $0.08. Now it’s worth $60,000 or whatever the price is on that day. And so the whole I.C.O. craze, which really hasn’t entirely stopped, is driven on that logic of, like, what if Bitcoin happens again? This could be Bitcoin. And this is all coinciding with a general movement in tech of everybody looking for that unicorn investment.

So that’s the narrative, is, it’s just extremely financially driven of, we’ll start our new coin. It’s Bitcoin with a twist. So it’s lemon-lime Bitcoin. And it’s going to do the same thing that Bitcoin is going to do. And even if it doesn’t, what’s $5,000 buy-in on a couple million coins? Sure, it may not take off like Bitcoin. But what if it does? That $5,000 could become 300 million.

EZRA KLEIN: And this gets to an important dynamic in a lot of these operations, and I think now, too, in a lot of NFTs, which is that because the price of a new asset like this is almost entirely denominated in hype, right, almost entirely driven by whether or not other people are excited about the new asset, it turns out that if you have a lot of hype power on the internet, you can control the speculative run-up of this thing that you invested in before you manipulated it.

So I think of the canonical example of this being Elon Musk hyping Dogecoin to the moon. He can make a tremendous amount of money, to the extent he wants to — he’s already quite rich— from investing in any random currency before then saying, on his Twitter account, hey, look. And what I see happening behind that, to some degree, is a lot of people doing very small versions of the Elon Musk play. But a small version where you make $65,000 is still pretty cool.

And so that seems like one of the issues here, that there also develops a culture of, you make money by creating or finding a new crypto asset and then convincing other people it’s cool when you were already there first. And if you have a little bit of power, that’s a really neat game to keep playing.

DAN OLSON: Yeah, you have this constantly blossoming garden of new assets. So whether it’s new coins or whether it’s new NFT projects — NFTs have really allowed the I.C.O. logic to find a much more downwardly scalable format where, basically, influencers at any size of influence can participate in the same thing, where it’s like, you can find an asset class that whatever size influencer you are, you can move the needle on.

If you’ve got this NFT project that probably only, like, 300 people are going to buy into, but you’ve got a following of, like, 80,000 people on Twitter, if you can get 30 more people to buy in, you’ve just increased the traffic to that by 10 percent. You can noticeably move the needle on participation, and thus the needle on price.

EZRA KLEIN: Right. But now you begin to get into this problem, which you were alluding to a few minutes ago when you said that the myths began to fail, which is that the currencies don’t take over. They keep going up — some of them — like Bitcoin and Ethereum.

But you begin to need other stories. The story of Ethereum becomes this global decentralized computer. But it becomes clearer and clearer you’re not going to overturn governments. It becomes clearer and clearer you’re not going to overturn central banks. And so you need other villains, other stories to keep pulling people into this project.

And I think that is part of how you get this transfer over to the internet giants, where I’m not convinced there’s actually a more compelling story of how this overturns Meta as opposed to becoming part of Meta’s business model. But talk a bit about that, because I do think it’s been a more sustainable story. It is at least more plausible how you could replace some of the internet’s players than how you can replace the currencies that have guns behind them.

DAN OLSON: Yeah, I think it’s just as simple as, it’s easier to grapple with. You know, anybody who’s my age, anybody who’s middle-aged, has watched a whole — several waves of tech giants rise and fall. Who are AOL today? Who’s Yahoo? So it does just seem like that much more believable that it’s like, yeah, we could cause Facebook to go to zero. That could happen. And realistically, the thing that’s going to cause Facebook to go to zero is Facebook. Their own actions are going to slay them long before Web3 lands even a minor wound.

So I think it just comes down to the comprehensibility of it, that it just seems that much more believable that it’s like, we could replace Twitter. We could replace Facebook. We could replace Google. We could replace YouTube — versus, like, yeah, we’re going to replace the trillion-dollar U.S. military.

EZRA KLEIN: But something really puzzling happens right about here. And this was a big topic I was trying to get at with Katie Haun. But you’ve taken it on, too, I think, in a more direct way, which is, the people making this argument most loudly are the people who invested in, started, and still sit on the boards of the Web2 giants.

So take A16Z, because they’ve been really at the center of the crypto boom. Chris Dixon over there has been a real important both investor and thinker and storyteller in this. But Marc Andreessen — he sits on Facebook’s board. And that’s true throughout that organization for a lot of the companies in Web2.

And they’re investing in companies that look, to me, like OpenSea, which is a big marketplace for selling NFTs that could become the big middlemen of the crypto world. And so there’s this — or Jack Dorsey moving very heavily into this. Then he steps down from Twitter, eventually.

But there’s a weird thing that occurs, that it wasn’t Ben Bernanke saying we should overturn the U.S. dollar with Bitcoin. But it does become, in this period — it’s like, all the people who built and are profiting off of the internet we have are also now trying to harness this populist energy and this meme energy and saying they’re going to blow up the whole internet we have for this decentralized internet where, conceptually, they won’t have any power. It seems real weird.

DAN OLSON: It’s definitely weird, and it feels bizarre and hypocritical until you just look at it through an utterly mercenary lens. You know, if you just allow a little bit of cynicism to creep into it, it becomes very logical and straightforward, which is that A16Z — Marc, Chris, and co. — believe that they can make just an absolutely unfathomable amount of money if they can be not sitting on the board of the new Facebook, but they can be the Mark Zuckerberg of the new Facebook.

A lot of it comes down to that if you want to see those triple-digit, quadruple-digit multipliers, you need something new. So if you’re Marc Andreessen, you need there to be a new thing. You need there to be a new wave of things to invest in that are going to quintuple 10 times, 50 times, 100 times, 1,000 times in value. That’s his job. That’s his business, is building those. And this new populist wave provides a tool for generating those types of things.

And they’ve always been open about this, that they’ve always been a spaghetti against the wall shotgun coverage operation that is like, we invest in 100 things, and only one of them succeeds. Gary Vee — same thing. And they’ll say this out loud, that it’s like, their entire M.O. is, I invest in 50 things, 100 things, 200 things, and I only need one of them to be a unicorn. And it goes 1,000 times, 2,000 times, 10,000 times. It goes to the moon. And that pays off literally everything else. I just need one Facebook to pay for a Juicero.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: So let’s let some cynicism creep in here, but in a different way of just being mercenary, because there are different ways of understanding the underlying vision. We started by talking a bit about the more utopian vision of people just participating, of people buying in, of people who like the technology.

But you look at the entire structure of it — the people investing, the markets, the use cases being proposed. And your argument is that the end goal of this infinite machine is the financialization of everything. So tell me about that vision. Tell me about what it means to financialize everything through crypto.

DAN OLSON: It means that everything that can be conceptualized as valuable can be numeralized. There is sort of this sense that it’s like, oh, well, this is already the status quo. Your social-media presence is already quantified. It’s already, like, here’s how many followers you have. Here’s how many likes you get. Here’s your engagement metrics. And we have this heavily metricized engagement with the internet already. And this is the next step of that, of like, OK, how many dollars can that translate into?

And the model that is used for that monetization is stocks. It’s speculative financial instruments that, OK, we can take the most abstract thing imaginable, like the concept of insurance on a mortgage. Not a house, a mortgage. So there’s, you have a house. The house has a mortgage. The mortgage is insured against failure.

And we can take that concept of the mortgages being insured, and we can create an instrument out of that. And now you’ve got synthetic C.D.O.s that are betting on the outcome of an outcome of an outcome of an outcome of an outcome of an outcome. Once you’ve broken that ice, then it’s like, oh, well, we can apply this to literally anything that humans are capable of putting words to.

EZRA KLEIN: I think a good way to ground this idea is to talk about some of the examples here. So tell me a bit about the Beeple sale. A lot of people heard Beeple sold this piece of art for $69 million. And for a lot of people, that was a moment. If people are buying NFT art for $69 million, that must mean there’s real value there. Maybe I don’t understand the value, but it is there. Otherwise, people wouldn’t be paying $69 million for it.

But an argument you make and that some journalists who have tracked the sale’s outcome have made is that that is a misunderstanding of what the value in the Beeple sale was and what the person that was trying to do. So tell me the story of that sale and its role, as you understand it.

DAN OLSON: So Beeple is a digital artist who has been putting out daily art for years now. And what just gets colloquially called the Beeple sale was a sale of a collage of these everyday images just arranged into a giant block. And that was sold for an Ethereum equivalent of $69 million. But the buyer — they had already bought several other specific artworks that Beeple had sold in the months prior. And they were using these as the foundation for a new fractionalized investment coin called B20.

EZRA KLEIN: Wait, so what does that mean, though? How does buying digital art create the foundation for a new coin?

DAN OLSON: The asset gets used as the backing or the leverage for further investment.

EZRA KLEIN: It’s collateral.

DAN OLSON: Basic collateral. So the whole idea of these schemes is that you have an artwork. That artwork is tied to a token or is signified by a token, which is the NFT. And then that token is the collateral on a series of derivative financial products.

EZRA KLEIN: Why do you need the Beeple artwork in that whole structure at all?

DAN OLSON: To create the myth. You need it to tell the story. You need to have a thing that humans can look at and go, like, OK, here’s this Beeple artwork that sold for 69 million. Therefore, it has value. And that value is the thing that justifies the existence of these derivative token products.

EZRA KLEIN: So what you’ve fundamentally done, on some level, is, you’ve bought this piece of NFT artwork for a record-breaking price. You’ve created a mythology around it. This is now the piece of NFT artwork. If people know anyone, they know this one. The point of the investment is not the value the art had to the buyer, but the value the art had as a financial kernel for this other project.

DAN OLSON: Yes. And it’s very difficult to wrap your head around. It’s difficult to summarize quickly. And that incoherence is, in a lot of ways, a selling point that gets used in interactions with consumer investors, because there’s this sense of, like, yeah, this is really difficult to understand, and that’s what makes it special. Like, you see the value in it. And you get a lot of this ego-padding myth-making that extends out of the fact that it’s basically this difficult-to-understand, incoherent thing where the complexity is treated as a sign that this is important.

EZRA KLEIN: So this, if anything has — I don’t even want to say I’m turned on crypto, because I think some of the underlying technology remains interesting. But if anything has turned me against the system, the culture of it, as it exists today, I want to say it is this dynamic right here. And I think, one day — and we’ll see — this is prediction, so I can be proven wrong — we’re going to look at the Larry David Super Bowl ad as the example of what was going wrong here. Did you happen to see that ad?

DAN OLSON: I deliberately avoided it.

EZRA KLEIN: OK, so let me describe it. So the Larry David Super Bowl ad, which, remember, is a Super Bowl ad, so it’s a lot of money to spend on anything — but it is Larry David through the ages, dressed up in historical period garb. Some caveman brings him a wheel. And he says, who needs a wheel? Basically. I’m paraphrasing here. Like, at least you can eat a bagel. Who cares about a wheel?

Edison shows him a light bulb. And he’s like, eh, who cares about the light bulb? I don’t get it. That doesn’t make any sense to me. Somebody gives him coffee. He says, this is bitter. Ugh, I don’t get it. And it ends with some guy going in to pitch Larry David on FTX, which is a way you can begin trading crypto. And he says, eh, I don’t get it. And I’m never wrong about these things. Then it says, don’t be like Larry David. Don’t miss out. When you see something like that — because I come to this — I’m an economics reporter. I cover financial crises. When you start seeing things like that, you’re dealing with a need for the acquisition of dumb money. That is why you buy an ad like that.

And that ad is not an argument for why crypto works. It’s not an argument for what it does or what problems it can solve. It is just financial FOMO. And if that ad was some thing alone, maybe I wouldn’t care. But this seems pretty endemic to the culture. Can you talk a bit about NGMI, and HFSP, and diamond hands, and all these little acronyms and lingo that go around like this?

DAN OLSON: Yeah, so there’s an internal language of cryptocurrency that really revolves around this idea of making it and in groups and out groups. And none of this is new or unique. It applies to dozens and dozens of communities. It’s pervasive in online trading and also online gambling. So NGMI — Not Going to Make It. HFSP or HFBP — Have Fun Staying Poor, Have Fun Being Poor, very much this —

People are frustrated with the operation of the world, as it exists right now, and the way that things are clearly stacked in favor of people who have the ins to do trading. Basically, participation in the financial economy is the only possible method for really changing your station in life. If you want to move from ***working class*** to idle class, you’re never going to do that off of wages. Like, it’s mathematically impossible for you to work enough hours to get rich off of even, like, $25 an hour, $50 an hour, $80 an hour.

If you want to move from ***working class*** to idle class, you need to find something that’s going to give you 1,000 times, 10,000 times, 100,000 times return. You need to participate in these investment schemes. And so there’s this frustration that the average person has been denied the opportunity to win this very specific type of lottery. And out of that emerges a protective aggression against other people of the same station criticizing this system that you are then choosing to participate in. So if you’re trying to get into that investment scheme, you’re doing the Robinhood thing, you’re doing day trading, you’re letting it take over your life, you’re obsessing about it, you’re watching candle bars all day, every day, you’re hanging off of every word Gary Vee says —

If you’re letting that consume your personality, and someone comes and says, like, hey, I think this is actually really destructive, and it’s a bad thing to buy into, the protective response to that ends up being this aggression of, well, you just aren’t willing to do what’s necessary to change your station in life. Have fun staying poor. I’m not going to stay poor. I’m willing to do what needs to be done. I’m willing to change my personality. I’m willing to change my outlook. I’m willing to take these risks. I’m willing to not be a coward and/or be a big-enough coward to engage in these systems, to bet on crypto, to bet on NFTs, to bet on OpenSea, to bet on DeFi, to bet on this new, completely unhinged, incoherent financial class, because getting in on the ground floor of the next big thing is my only ticket out of this hellhole.

EZRA KLEIN: And I want to note that all of this — the Not Going to Make Its, the diamond hands, right? You never stop holding —

DAN OLSON: Oh, right. I didn’t talk about — yeah, yeah. You want me to just ramble about diamond hands for a bit? Because oh, boy. The psychology behind diamond hands is —

EZRA KLEIN: Do it.

DAN OLSON: — wild. So diamond hands — the logic under there and the way that that gets weaponized is that there’s not enough liquidity in these ecosystems. There’s not enough liquidity in crypto, as a whole, for the whales to do what they need to do. But then that disparity between how much cash is actually floating around and these absolutely absurd valuations that get tossed around is vast. And as a result, it’s very, very bad if people try to cash out in waves.

So as a protective measure, as like an immune-system response, the culture has developed diamond hands as a virtue, that someone who is willing to bear incoherence, that someone who is willing to bear instability, who is willing to just look past the volatility and the warning signs and just keep holding — you are a spiritually better person if you are a diamond hands who is willing to just get a grip on your Bored Ape and never sell it. So you have this Bored Ape, and it has this fictional price, whatever it’s at right now — $60,000, $120,000, $250,000, $2 million. Whatever the theoretical price of this thing is can only be realized if you sell. But selling is quitting. And quitting is spiritually bad. It means that you have given up. It means you don’t believe in the theoretical future value of that Ape.

So it’s trying to play both sides at the same time. It’s trying to make you think that it’s like, you have this asset. You are rich now, because you have this Bored Ape, and it has this value. But you’re actually cash poor, because you don’t have the money from that Ape. You can only get that money if you sell it. But selling it would be a bad thing to do. It would make you a bad person. It would make you a coward. You would be balking in the face of the future.

EZRA KLEIN: And all of this, I think it’s important to say, is backed up by both the logic and record of a speculative-asset run-up, which is to say that if you had invested in Bitcoin 10 years ago, by any reasonable measure, you probably would have wanted to sell every couple of years, because you would have made a ton of money on the investment. People aren’t really using this thing. All these, you know, Bitcoin repositories are getting hacked.

DAN OLSON: Yeah, statistically, if you invested in Bitcoin 10 years ago, either the F.B.I. would have it right now, or it would have been lost in the Mt. Gox hack.

EZRA KLEIN: Sure. But if you had it, right? If you had had diamond hands —

DAN OLSON: If you had gotten lucky, yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: — if you just held on, and held on, and held on, and held on, and not listened to the naysayers, and not listened to the journalists, and not listened to everybody who doubted, you just kept getting richer, and richer, and richer, and richer, and richer. And Bitcoin has had an extraordinary run-up. The cultural power of the stories of people who put a couple hundred or a couple thousand bucks in and now have astonishing money — that is potent. And so it’s also powered, this culture, because you can look at those guys and say, oh, I should have been like them.

DAN OLSON: It happened before. It’ll happen again.

EZRA KLEIN: But of course, the problem with bubbles is, they’re all like that until they’re not. You don’t want to bet against it, because you don’t know when it’ll pop. There’s an old line. The market can stay irrational longer than you can stay solvent.

DAN OLSON: Great line.

EZRA KLEIN: But nevertheless, there is this problem when you are convincing people. It just seems to me that what I see in the market, for a lot of these assets right now, is, they are doing the kind of acquisition strategy you need to get dumb money in.

DAN OLSON: Buy the dip.

EZRA KLEIN: Right, money that doesn’t understand what you’re doing. And also, then, they’re creating a culture that tries to make money dumber, right? That tries to get people to not follow their instincts, to not look at what they’re seeing in front of them, and to not sell.

And I don’t believe, for a moment, the people who aren’t going to sell are the super-sophisticated V.C.s. I don’t believe, for a moment, it’s the folks — the real financiers won’t know when to sell. But a lot of folks will have been brought in behind them. And they won’t have been able to sense the market changing. And they will have believed diamond hands and Not Going to Make It. And they would have been excited about the run-up they already experienced. That’s how you get a really painful crash.

DAN OLSON: Yes, and we already see some of that — OK, so “buy the dip” is a really, really, really, really, really, really common phrase. Any time that Bitcoin or Ether take a downturn, it’s like, buy the dip. Now is your chance— you know buy low, sell high. Well, this is as low as it’s going to get, for the time being. And I was seeing buy the dip all the way from Christmas through mid-January. These prices that were slowly going down — it’s like, now is your chance to get in on Ether. Now is your chance to get in on Bitcoin. Buy the dip. Buy the dip. Buy the dip. Buy the dip.

January 21 rolls around. And, well, that dip just got a lot dippier. And so anybody who bought the dip on January 1 now has to wait like how much longer before it goes back up? Will it ever go back up? Will it get back up to where it was back in November? No one actually knows. You need to be a prophet in order to buy it. And that’s why the argument, the market can remain irrational longer than you can remain solvent, goes in both directions. Like, it can crash faster than you could possibly predict that it’s about to.

EZRA KLEIN: Right. So we’ve been treating it here as a speculative asset class that has simply the dynamics of a speculative asset. But if you’re storytelling to say, no, you’re buying something real, right? If I invest in Tesla, I’m taking a point of view that there are going to be more Teslas on the road, and that company is going to be more profitable because of the change over to electric cars in the future than is true today. If I invest in anything, any company you can think of, I am making a statement about what I believe to happen in the future.

So I do want to talk a bit about the technology here, because something you can have is a speculative-asset bubble that when it pops, you are still left with a usable technology. I mean that is the story, to some degree, of the dot-com boom of the late ’90s. It does leave us with the wide adoption of the internet, a lot of companies that are tremendous and important companies today. And so I do think it is important, in terms of how you project this going forward, whether or not you think this technology works. And I’ve been a little more, I think, sympathetic than you have to the idea that some of these technologies are real. But partially because I’ve been more sympathetic to it, I want to elicit some of the critique you make.

And I guess, let’s start at the base layer. I think the base case for crypto — and it’s pretty similar for the currencies and the NFTs, in a way — is that the ability to have verifiable, digitally scarce goods allows you to do all kinds of economic things that — that is simply a functionality the internet needs. And we have it in the physical world. It’s come into the internet. Is this the technology that allows you to say, I own this thing on the internet? And being able to own a thing on the internet is simply going to be valuable, even if a bunch of current instantiations of it pop and fail along the way.

DAN OLSON: Is there a theoretical future version of this stuff that does what it claims? Maybe. I don’t think any of the current implementations have the throughput. I don’t think they have the transaction speed. I don’t think they have the processing capacity. I don’t think they have the storage capacity. I don’t think they have the flexibility that is necessary in order to actually create a meaningful, generic ownership object for digital goods.

And so basically, what we’re seeing in practice is just this immense fracturing around these problems of capacity. So your verifiable ownership of something on Ethereum only makes sense when you’re interacting in the context of Ethereum. There’s no reason for that to be respected or applicable to anything outside of the Ethereum ecosystem. And as a consequence like, it just ends up becoming the same as if I own a mount in “World of Warcraft,” if I own a trading card on Steam, if I have a special user badge on a web forum. You own that thing that has contextual relevance but is not actually universally verifiable and universally applicable. It’s not like a physical object that you can take with you places. It can only go into places that it is permitted to go, which would be within the Ethereum ecosystem.

EZRA KLEIN: Sometimes I have the feeling, when I dig into the technology here, of, either I am very dumb, or something very strange has happened, because I keep seeing use cases that seem more or less solved, to me, framed as tremendous technological innovations. I’ll give an example. There’s a Harvard Business Review piece by Steve Kaczynski and Scott Duke Kominers. The headline is “How NFTs Create Value.” And this got passed around by people I respect as the single best, quickest, shortest explanation of exactly what it says — how NFTs create value.

So one of the things about having digitally scarce goods is, you can be the good. It can be your identity. If we can give you your own signifier on the chain, then we know who you are, or we know that you own this thing. And either the who you are or the thing you own can open other doors. And so they write that what makes NFTs special is that it’s not only something you can own, but, quote, “NFTs can function like membership cards or tickets, providing access to events, exclusive merchandise, and special discounts, as well as serving as digital keys to online spaces where holders can engage with each other,” end quote.

But I read that. And that’s just a password. Like, we do this all the time. I can subscribe to somebody’s Patreon, and then I get a password. And I could be on their Discord server, or I could get some gear from them, or I could participate in their Ask Me Anything or whatever. And there’s a slightly weird idea that has been floating around for a while — and I’ve actually bought into, but I’ve been buying into less as I’ve thought about it more — than identity and access are these very unsolved problems on the internet. But they actually don’t strike me, when I really think about it, as so unsolved. So that piece of the technology — I’m not 100 percent sure what the point of it is.

DAN OLSON: Yeah, it’s an interesting dimension of it. You do get a lot of this, like, oh, we’ve solved this problem. And you turn around and look at it more granularly. And it’s like, well, was that a problem that needed to be solved, or was that a problem that we had, in fact, failed to solve?

This idea of access passes and keys and whatnot basically relies on this sort of, wouldn’t it be cool if? Wouldn’t it be cool if your bake — your Bored Ape acted as an access pass to a bunch of things, there was a whole ecosystem of services that interacted with it in interesting ways?

And you can spin a story around that. But then there’s just the actual practical question. That would be interesting if things function that way. But then you back up and look at it. And it’s like, OK. Well, why are things so fractured in the real world? Why did single sign-on through Facebook fail? Facebook and Google. Why are people actually starting to reject single sign-on as a solution? Why do we have 50 different streaming services now?

And it’s like, oh, because you end up with these centralized corporations that — they don’t want to buy into a generic class of object. They don’t want to build something that will key off of someone else’s token. They’re going to build a thing that keys off of their own token.

So you’re going to have your Pepsi NFT that’s going to have relevance within the Pepsi ecosystem. And even if it’s a generic Ethereum asset, no one else is going to have anything interact with it in any meaningful or substantive way. So when you boil it down, yeah, all you’ve wound up with is a Pepsi account.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: So let me get at some other pieces of the technology that are worth, I think, scrutinizing. There is a claim that crypto is deeply privacy-enhancing and that it’s going to solve one of the central failures of the current internet, which is that the current internet is murder on privacy. Your view is that it’s privacy-destroying. Tell me why.

DAN OLSON: So there are — the currently popular chains, so really, Ethereum. So if we’re talking about Ethereum, which is currently dominant in the marketplace, and the Ethereum clones — so Solana, Cardano — they lay bare so much information about you in ways that are currently only obfuscated by the tools being bad.

So if you find somebody’s wallet address, you can see all of the interactions that that wallet has made — everything that’s come into it, everything that’s gone out of it, every contract that it has done a transaction with. All of that is open. You want to see how many people are interacting with a specific contract that does a certain thing? You can just pull that.

So all of the stuff that Facebook, Google, Amazon — that they actually care about — what are people looking at? What are people interacting with? How much money are they spending on it? How are they moving things around? How are they behaving, economically? All of that information is just there for them to harvest.

And then drilling down just to the personal layer, Molly White, the author and maintainer of “Web3 Is Going Great” — she had a great blog post. The example she uses is, OK, you go on a Tinder date, and then you crypto-Venmo your date your half of the bill.

That interaction has now given this rando that you have met once the thing that they need to dig into all of your recent economic transactions. And so they can see all of the other dates you’ve had where you crypto-Venmoed your half of the meal. Your exes, your estranged parents — they can basically stalk you through your economic activity.

And it requires this layer of, like, OK, I, as a person, in order to protect myself from the prying eyes of people that I interact with, need to take my online presence, and I need to fracture it into not just a bunch of accounts — so it’s not just like, OK, here’s my Twitter account. Here’s my Facebook account. What do I say on which? It’s, which economic interactions do I make with which wallet, because the history of these wallets is visible?

Am I getting extra cash from a side gig that I don’t want my abusive partner to know about, because I’m trying to save up a little bit of money in order to like, move out? Questions like that become so much more fraught in this hypothetical crypto ecosystem because of how public your transactions are.

And so while the wallets themselves are pseudonymous, it really doesn’t take much effort in order to come to just very basic logical conclusions about, like, OK, on the 21st of every month, this wallet sends $2,000 over to this wallet. And then that wallet doesn’t really engage with anything, so that is clearly just the savings account of this person. And we can see exactly how much that person is saving up.

And then we can just monitor that wallet to see when it starts interacting with other stuff. And then we can deduce what those are. Oh, look. This person — they’re sending deposit money to a real-estate — to an apartment complex. I think they’re planning on moving out.

EZRA KLEIN: And I should note here, because it’s worth saying it — there are ways you can get around this. You can tumble your Bitcoin. But it then makes the whole way of operating in the economy incredibly complicated.

DAN OLSON: Incredibly complicated. And it basically means is like, OK, if you want to safely interact with this hypothetical crypto future, you need to learn how to launder your own money just to keep you safe from — money laundering just needs to be a cultural norm, that everybody launders their money, so that it’s not suspicious that, like, oh, yeah, all of my stuff has been going through Tornado because that’s just what everybody does.

And of course, the outcomes of that — if everybody is laundering their own money just in order to vaguely anonymize their routine transactions to make themselves slightly less trackable, that opens a whole new world of perverse incentives.

EZRA KLEIN: So there’s another critique you make, which is, again, a bit counterintuitive, which is that the entire structure here, the entire culture of crypto, promises decentralization. But your view is that, in practice, it would centralize.

DAN OLSON: Yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: Why?

DAN OLSON: Just structural incentives. So if we use Bitcoin, as an example, Bitcoin is actually like, pretty strongly centralized, in the scheme of things, because you have this capital requirement in order to engage in Bitcoin mining. You need these big rigs. You need these warehouses full of application-specific integrated circuits, ASICs, Bitcoin mining machines. So you need these warehouses full of this.

Well, so now you’re operating at an industrial scale. And once you’re operating at an industrial scale, there’s only so many other people out there who are going to be capable of doing that as well. And you can just call them up on the phone and be like, hey, what if we merge? What if we just form an informal partnership? What if we set up a cartel where it’s like, we’re still independent companies, but we’re coordinating with each other?

Because if we compete aggressively with each other, we’re just going to drive each other’s costs up. But if we cooperate, if we collaborate, then we can keep our costs down, which means that both of us reap better rewards. And we just need to get two, three, four, five other people on the phone to sign in on this. And suddenly, we now, as a collective, as a centralized collective, control 60 percent of the market, 70 percent of the market, 80 percent of the mining pool.

And this is the stuff that just ends up happening because our economic system gravitates towards monopolization. Like, everybody in school is pitched on capitalism as competition. But capitalism incentivizes and gravitates towards monopolization.

And building capitalism to crypto version isn’t going to change that incentive, and in many ways — observable ways — hyperincentivizes it, because, like, hey, this diminishing returns, escalating processing costs on mining Bitcoin — it’s in our interest to cooperate with one another in order to slow that down in order to lower our costs. And if we lower our costs, we increase our returns.

EZRA KLEIN: There’s also the other side of it. So that’s the centralization on the miners, the big institutional players. There’s also this idea of the centralization on the user. It moves a lot of technical risk onto the individual. So right now, my internet world is fractured across a lot of different companies. And I outsource my needs to them in different ways. My bank is responsible for keeping my financial information safe. And they employ people to do that.

So the constant thing happening in NFTs and Bitcoin is, people get their money and their digital goods stolen. And when they get their money and their digital goods stolen, that’s on them. Or if they simply lose their password and can never access their $200 million of Bitcoin again, that’s on them, too.

And it’s funny to call that decentralization, because, in fact, what it is is centralization on you, the individual. You have to be very good at managing your digital life, because otherwise you’re going to fall for a phishing scam, or you’re going to lose your password, whereas if I lose my password or fall for a scam, it’s actually partially on the financial companies I work with to help me through that. I pay them, in part, to keep that from being too catastrophic if it happens. And they do a better or worse job.

But part of the — the very idea of crypto is that there actually is nobody there, and it’s supposed to be decentralized, and nobody has power over it. But that means, if you screw up, it’s all on you. And that is a kind of centralization that I don’t think is talked about that way.

DAN OLSON: Yeah, this is a thing that I’ve gone on about on Twitter, is the fact that decentralization gets just thrown around willy-nilly, despite the fact that it’s being used to apply to all of these different contexts. So it’s like, political decentralization, economic decentralization, data decentralization.

But it’s like, OK, well, the economic stuff is just — that’s getting centralized because of monopoly forces. And data decentralization is actually the total opposite, because you’re asking me to pour all of this information, all of this identity into this singular bucket of my crypto wallet or a small handful of crypto wallets that interact with each other.

And you have all of these myths about — well, not even necessarily myths, people working on trying to develop protocols that it’s like, we can express your degrees as non-transferable, non-fungible tokens. And so your wallet would contain your credentials. And so you could apply for a job just by linking your wallet. And then it basically autofills all of your relevant information, because people would just be drawing on this data protocol.

And it’s like, yeah, but I really, really, really don’t want to have all of my credentials tied to a single account. I don’t want to have all of my work history tied to a single account. I don’t want all of my economic history tied to a single account. And I especially don’t want all three of those things to be the same thing.

EZRA KLEIN: One thing this gets at — and I found this when I talk about some of these things with crypto folks — is, you’ll start hearing about all the ways to solve the problem. But they’re very complicated. They require increasingly high levels of sophistication. Now, one thing that should make you think — it’s what I think — is that that will just mean middlemen come into the game, who simplify it for you and take on the risk —

DAN OLSON: Yeah, because that’s what we’re seeing right now.

EZRA KLEIN: — because that’s what happens, right? That’s what OpenSea is and Coinbase and everybody else. But that then destroys decentralization. If you want to keep decentralization, you can’t have all these middlemen. But across all of this — the contracts, the sign-ons, the making sure you’re not using the wrong money so you can’t be tracked on the chain. The whole thing — it’s just a lot of complexity.

And something I’ve learned covering financial institutions and transactions is, complexity is dangerous. Complexity is where markets get warped. Whoever has the money to dominate the complexity, to understand the complexity, can screw you over. People don’t read the terms and services they click on on everything they’re doing on the internet. Most of us don’t read the little cookie pop-ups that come up.

And so this idea that we’re going to have this world where everything is smart contracts and so on that self-execute, everything or things we own that can just be moved around, but that we’re not going to get screwed over because we didn’t read the contract or didn’t understand it, seems wrong to me. And you —

DAN OLSON: Very.

EZRA KLEIN: — And you tell an interesting story about this around the “Squid Game” NFTs.

DAN OLSON: Yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: Could you talk about that?

DAN OLSON: So the “Squid Game” scam — in the pantheon of fraud, it is my “Mona Lisa.” I love it so much. It’s just, as a connoisseur of grift, the “Squid Game” token scam is just a masterpiece. It’s so beautiful. So they create this meme coin based off of the current hit thing.

So “Squid Game” on Netflix is big. It’s popular. It’s really popular on social media. The aesthetics of it are spreading across the internet. Lots of people are doing cosplay characters. Lots of people are doing Halloween costumes around it. It’s the thing that everybody is talking about.

So these anonymous folks make a meme coin. Like, they basically clone Doge or whatever and create a meme coin around “Squid Game.” And the trick in it is that they say that it’s like, the token itself is going to be gamified, that if you want to trade squid coin you need to have these marble coins.

And the whitepaper is actually a fascinating read, because it’s all written in character. So it’s all this language like, in order to acquire marble tokens, you will need to demonstrate that you are a good person. And there’s no indication of how this would mechanically behave at all. It’s just all this vague, florid language. And it’s great.

And then the technological trick at the core of squid coin was that the tokens couldn’t be traded unless you had this accompanying other token called marble. But the marble tokens were never available. And so the squid tokens are untradable. They are useless dead weight. You can buy them, but you can’t sell them. And if you can’t sell them, it means that once people realize they can’t be sold, the value just rapidly plummets to zero.

So what happens is, the squid token creators — they generate this huge block of tokens. They sell them all off in a gold rush to all of these people who are like, oh, is this official? Is this the next big thing? Oh, look. The price is going up very rapidly. Well, I got to get in on this, because this is — it’s gone up 3,000 percent in two days. The sky is the limit.

And two days later, it went to zero as the truth came out and people actually dug into it and realized, like, wait a second. I can’t sell my tokens. Why can’t I sell my tokens? What’s going on? And it’s like, well, you need to burn marble tokens in order to actually transfer squid tokens. Well, I don’t have any marble tokens. When are we getting the marble tokens? Where are the marble tokens going to come from? And then the social-media accounts get deleted. The website disappears. And it just all goes black. And it’s like, bye.

EZRA KLEIN: So what was the scam here at the center? How did the folks making squid coins get their money out of the coins?

DAN OLSON: By selling the initial block of coins.

EZRA KLEIN: Got it. So the initial block — they just got Ether or whatever it might have been. And their money —

DAN OLSON: Yeah, I think it was BNC or something. Yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: Their money was never denominated in squid coins at all.

DAN OLSON: No, no. They created it out of thin air.

EZRA KLEIN: So the key thing here is that, in a way, there was no fraud.

DAN OLSON: Yeah, people got exactly what they bought. Yes.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah, these were people who already knew how to trade crypto.

DAN OLSON: Yes.

EZRA KLEIN: And it’s just, they didn’t understand the contract. And it seems to me, there’s all this idea of trustless money, trustless contracts. You can do this without trusting people. But I think something you see, if you take complexity seriously and if you take terms and services and structure seriously, is, actually, you do need to trust people not to screw you over, because if you don’t have trust, then simply operating in an economy or a society takes a completely unmanageable level of constant verification.

DAN OLSON: Yeah, the risk management of dealing with everyday life, in a modern society, is unreasonable if you can’t trust anyone, because there’s going to be things that you’re going to have to interact with that are just outside your wheelhouse. It’s unreasonable to expect that somebody who has spent years and years of their lives learning how to perform delicate heart surgery is also going to have the free time to be fluent in Solidity and able to audit a smart contract and also then be aware of all these other things, other things.

At a certain point, as a complex society, we need trusted people that we can just turn to and be like, hey, can you sum this up for me? Can you tell me what this does? Because I don’t have time to figure it out for myself. But you do. So if you do that, I’ll sum up this other thing for you. I’ll have expertise over here.

And that’s just a very fundamental trust relationship that we need in order to not have just this absolute Wild West of scams, because if you take out that trust layer, if you can’t trust anyone, if you have to constantly verify absolutely everything that you deal with, you’re just going to get worn out.

And I would point directly to cookie pop-ups and terms of service. If every single site that you open is popping up with, like, hey, do you want to manage your cookie settings? Eventually, you just get worn out, and you stop paying attention to it at all. And that makes you vulnerable. And crypto starts at 10 times that level of complexity and intensity and saturation of just dense, difficult-to-comprehend information that makes it very, very, very easy for malicious actors to hide stuff inside of that, to hide land mines in the field.

EZRA KLEIN: So as we come to a close here, I want to try out one more optimistic scenario on you, which is, one interpretation of all of this is, look, it’s a speculative bubble, but there’s an important technology here. When the bubble pops, the technology will remain. I think you’re — appropriately have some skepticism of that.

But what about the reverse, that there actually isn’t that important a technology here? But what there is is a culture, that — take out some of the V.C.s and some of the other actors who are clearly just making big bets. There are a lot of people, as we said at the top, who want to participate, a lot of people angry at how the web looks, how it has gone. There are a lot of people who enjoy being in crypto — and I’ve heard this a lot, enough that I don’t discount it — who enjoy being in these Discords and in these projects because it feels different to them.

And cultures have their own power. Cultures impose norms. They impose criticism. You can look at a lot of religions where you don’t believe in the core religious claims as an effective culture built around a technology that doesn’t actually work, right? You’re not actually getting judged by that God, but the belief in the thing keeps a lot of people cooperating, punishing each other in ways that allow for remarkable feats to be performed.

And maybe crypto is that. Maybe the technology is functionally an artifact, a symbol, an organizing device, a metaphor, but that what’s being built around it, the thing where people want to create this different web — that there’s something there that actually is going to be more potent than a lot of people realize now.

DAN OLSON: I would like to believe that that’s the path that can take. So the optimistic read on that is that there is a hungering for authentic human interaction, there is a hungering for community, there’s a hungering for connection that people are currently finding solace inside crypto. Like, at the moment, crypto, as an ecosystem, is providing that, because it’s this high-energy engagement sphere where everybody is just jacked up on the sense of participating in something new.

And that gives people a reason to come together, and that that zeitgeist can be captured and redirected into better technologies, better incentives — you know, this idea that it’s like, oh, it’s getting people talking about decentralization. It’s getting people talking about challenging systemic hegemonies.

And I would like to believe that that’s the way that it can go. But my cynicism still comes through on, the narratives themselves matter. The goals matter. The aims matter. And I think there’s this hitch in all of that of, well, there’s the well-meaning, it’s brought people together. It’s created community.

But what are those communities doing? What are the values of those communities? What are they prioritizing? What are they aiming to do? And I think there’s just a very — there’s a real risk in getting optimistic about what we’re going to be able to, in turn, do with communities that have been so deeply indoctrinated into this WAGMI, NGMI mentality.

EZRA KLEIN: Right. And a way of saying that, maybe, is, it’s easy enough to talk about the idea that maybe the technology survives a bust, right? Your video is called “The Line Goes Up,” that the technology survives the line going down. But if the communities don’t survive the line going down, if there’s a crash, and people feel burned, and they can’t believe this is a ground floor of riches for them.

I mean, I’m not —you’ve spent a lot more time in NFT communities than I have. But I think the question I have is, are people in these communities because they like being part of something where the line is going up, and that’s part of what makes a community fun? Because I work in politics, partially. And I could tell you that losing campaigns don’t attract as many excited volunteers. And I wonder about that here. I wonder if these communities can survive the line going down. If they can, maybe there’s something here. But if they can’t, then it’s unlikely to persist.

DAN OLSON: Yeah, I mean that’s a big question mark on the future. And it’s difficult, and it’s complicated, and there’s a lot of very real human lives entwined in it with all the mess and complexity that that implies. And this soup of well-meaning people who are trying to do good in the world with a technology that they don’t fully understand, and people who very much understand the technology and are trying to use it to leverage control.

And they are able to use the unknown and the future as pressure points to get people to buy into schemes that they can use to make unfathomable amounts of money off of the backs of commercial people who believe that they’re becoming investors to leverage themselves out of the awful place that the economy has put them in.

And will some of the community survive? Yes. Some of the communities I’ve been involved in are just so cutthroat and just so mercenary that, absolutely, they’ll survive, because they’ve got that Wall Street grindset, and they’re amoral, and they don’t care. And they will absolutely keep going, because our systems reward assholes. But then there’s a lot of others that I think will absolutely just crash and fail and disperse. And it’ll be heartbreaking to watch, because you know, they believed it.

EZRA KLEIN: So let’s end on that happy note. Always our final question. What are three books you would recommend to the audience?

DAN OLSON: I’m going to be really basic, and I’m going to say “The Power Broker” by Robert Caro. Massive tome. If it takes you two years to read it, don’t feel bad. But it’s Pulitzer Prize-winning biography of Robert Moses, who is the guy who destroyed New York City.

But as a critique of the intersection of structure, infrastructure, culture, power, politics, absolutely unmatched volume of work and a, sadly, forever relevant discussion of the nature of power in society and the way that that interacts with the physical spaces that we exist in and the way that physical spaces can be used as a lever against people.

A fiction recommendation — “The Tombs of Atuan” by Ursula K. Le Guin. It’s her second book in the Earthsea Cycle, a heartbreaking little story about a girl who realizes that she is the false prophet of a dead god. But very emotionally applicable thing. And third one — “Persuasive Games” by Ian Bogost, which is about rhetoric and interactive media.

EZRA KLEIN: Dan Olson, thank you very much.

DAN OLSON: Thank you for having me.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: “The Ezra Klein Show” is a production of New York Times Opinion. It is produced by Rogé Karma, Annie Galvin and Jeff Geld. This episode was fact-checked by Michelle Harris, Mary Marge Locker and Kate Sinclair. Original music by Isaac Jones. Mixing and engineering by Jeff Geld. Our executive producer is Irene Noguchi. And special thanks to Shannon Busta, Kristina Samulewski and Kristin Lin, and also to my colleague Kevin Roose, who helped us think through some of the ideas here.

**Load-Date:** April 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Trump Promotes Low Unemployment and Rising Wages in State of the Union***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y4K-KJC1-JBG3-60RC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 4, 2020 Tuesday 00:54 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS; economy

**Length:** 1200 words

**Byline:** Jim Tankersley

**Highlight:** The president emphasized a “blue collar” boom in his speech to Congress. But workers in those industries have seen a slowdown — or even losses — in jobs.

**Body**

The president emphasized a “blue collar” boom in his speech to Congress. But workers in those industries have seen a slowdown — or even losses — in jobs.

WASHINGTON — President Trump used his State of the Union address on Tuesday to tick off a laundry list of economic gains, citing record low unemployment for women, higher incomes for households and a “blue collar” boom that he said is underway across America.

The speech showcased what will be Mr. Trump’s primary message as he heads into a re-election campaign that he hopes will be a referendum on the United States economy. But it also overstated the strength of an economic expansion that has slowed or stalled for parts of his base.

“Jobs are booming. Incomes are soaring. Poverty is plummeting,” Mr. Trump said. “America’s fortunes are on the rise.” He added, “I am thrilled to report to you tonight that our economy is the best it has ever been.”

The economic expansion has now reached its 11th year, a record for the modern era of economic statistics in the United States. Unemployment sank to 3.5 percent in December, down from 4.7 percent when Mr. Trump took office. Workers’ wages are growing, particularly for those [*in the jobs that pay the least*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker), like retail clerks and restaurant workers. The stock market, which is one of the president’s favorite gauges of economic success, is up about 20 percent from a year ago.

Forty percent of Americans say they are better off financially than they were at the same time last year — double the number who say they are worse off, according to [*a survey conducted last month*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker) for The New York Times by the online research firm SurveyMonkey. That is the brightest economic outlook respondents have expressed in the three years the survey has been conducted.   [*Independent voters*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker), a particularly crucial electoral bloc, reported a surge in confidence in the latest survey.

And yet the economy grew faster under several of Mr. Trump’s predecessors than it has on his watch. When he bragged of the economy’s strength on Tuesday, Mr. Trump frequently cited “record” low rates of unemployment and poverty, which are in part attributable to the low and falling rates he inherited from former President Barack Obama.

The economy’s improvement has also slowed on several fronts since last year, particularly in the president’s favored blue-collar sectors like mining and manufacturing.

Mr. Trump declared in his [*2019 State of the Union speech*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker) that “an economic miracle is taking place in the United States, and the only thing that can stop it are foolish wars, politics or ridiculous partisan investigations.”

Over the last year, the president’s economic policies have not delivered anything close to the miracle he had promised to white ***working-class*** voters in the industrial Midwest. Combined employment in construction, manufacturing and mining grew more slowly last year than at almost any other point in the current expansion.

Job growth has slowed sharply — from 2.6 percent at the start of 2019 to 1.3 percent at the end of the year — in so-called middle-wage sectors that include mining, construction and transportation, according to calculations by Nick Bunker, an economist at the Indeed Hiring Lab. That blue-collar slowdown is driving the deceleration of job growth across the United States economy.

Mr. Trump’s policies have also not revived employment in coal mining, as he promised; the sector lost 1,000 jobs nationwide in 2019, according to the Labor Department. Primary metals manufacturing, which includes the steel and aluminum industries that Mr. Trump claimed to have restored with tariffs, shed about 12,000 jobs in 2019.

Employment growth in manufacturing, which Mr. Trump promoted in [*his speech last year*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker), slowed to fewer than 50,000 jobs in 2019 — the worst rate of his presidency and the second worst of the long recovery from recession.

Mr. Trump nodded implicitly to that slowdown in his speech on Tuesday night. Last year, he [*claimed, incorrectly, that the United States*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker) had created 600,000 factory jobs during his tenure. On Tuesday, he revised that number down to “half a million,” which is the correct figure.

Many economists blame the economy’s deceleration on the trade wars Mr. Trump has waged with China and other countries that send steel, aluminum, washing machines and solar panels to the United States.

[*Economic growth slowed*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker) to 2.3 percent last year, according to data released last month by the Commerce Department. That is a percentage point less than what Mr. Trump’s advisers predicted for the year. Across Mr. Trump’s three years in office, growth has never reached the 3 percent rate that administration forecasters have projected. It has fallen well short of Mr. Trump’s campaign promises of 4, 5 or even 6 percent annual rates.

Independent economists expect only modest growth this year from the [*initial trade deal that Mr. Trump reached with China*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker) and the   [*revamped North American trade pact*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker) that he signed last week.

And while Mr. Trump signed a large tax cut in 2017, it has [*failed to produce the sustained investment boom*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker) that he and Republicans promised. After surging in 2018 following a cut in the corporate income tax rate, business investment shrank for the final three quarters of 2019.

Investment has now grown more slowly in the quarters after the tax cut than it did in the eight years, including the end of the Great Recession, under Mr. Obama.

Mr. Trump’s only mention of business investment was in reference to opportunity zones, a creation of the 2017 tax law that bestowed tax incentives on investors who put money into projects in so-called distressed communities. He did not directly mention the corporate rate cuts that were the centerpiece of the 2017 law, nor the investment decline.

Mr. Trump did not propose a new round of tax cuts, as his advisers had hinted he might. His most substantial economic policy proposal was to call on Congress to pass a bipartisan family leave law that has been championed by his daughter Ivanka Trump.

The president was unequivocal in saying that his policies had fundamentally transformed the economy.

“The days of our country being used, taken advantage of and even scorned by other nations are long behind us,” he said. “Gone, too, are the broken promises, jobless recoveries, tired platitudes and constant excuses for the depletion of American wealth, power and prestige.”

Other analysts say Mr. Trump has benefited from a historically anomalous economic stimulus while unemployment is low. The Federal Reserve ended a slow march of interest rate increases last year and [*slashed rates instead*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker), spurring growth and stock gains. Combined with military and other federal spending increases that bipartisan majorities in Congress passed and Mr. Trump signed into law, the tax cuts have helped to   [*swell the federal budget deficit to $1 trillion*](https://www.frbatlanta.org/chcs/wage-growth-tracker) a year.

Mr. Trump did not mention the Fed, a frequent target of his criticism, or the growing deficit in his speech.

PHOTO: “I am thrilled to report to you tonight that our economy is the best it has ever been,” President Trump said in his State of the Union address on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Senate Runoffs Reflect Changes In Old Red State***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61NY-KXR1-JBG3-64WX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 4, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1741 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Martin and Astead W. Herndon

**Body**

A reliably red state for almost two decades, Georgia no longer resembles its Deep South neighbors. President Trump and Joe Biden head there Monday to help rally the bases.

With President Trump touching down in North Georgia on Monday to court white rural voters and President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. rallying support from a diverse electorate in Atlanta, the high-stakes Senate runoffs are concluding with a test of how much the politics have shifted in a state that no longer resembles its Deep South neighbors.

Should the two challengers win Tuesday and hand Democrats control of the Senate, it will be with the same multiracial and heavily metropolitan support that propelled Mr. Biden to victory in Georgia and nationally. And if the Republican incumbents prevail, it will be because they pile up margins in conservative regions, just as Mr. Trump did.

That's a marked change from the 2000 election, when George W. Bush won decisively in the Atlanta suburbs to capture the state and Democrats still ran competitively with right-of-center voters in much of rural North and South Georgia.

After resisting the tide of Republicanism longer than in other parts of the South -- it didn't elect its first G.O.P. governor until 2002 -- Georgia became a reliably red state in the nearly two decades since. But now, it's fast becoming a political microcosm of the country.

Although Georgia still skews slightly to the right of America's political center, it has become politically competitive for the same demographic reasons the country is closely divided: Democrats have become dominant in big cities and suburban areas but they suffer steep losses in the lightly-populated regions that once elected governors, senators and, in Georgia, a native-born president, Jimmy Carter.

''Georgia is now a reflection of the country,'' said Keith Mason, a former chief of staff to Zell Miller, the late Democratic governor and U.S. senator from a small town in North Georgia. Mr. Miller helped hold off Republican realignment in the state in the 1990s only to accelerate it in the early 2000s when he crossed party lines to endorse Mr. Bush's re-election.

Conservative Democrats like Mr. Miller are rare, as are the sort of liberal-to-moderate Republicans who were also once found in Georgia. Today, though, the standard-bearers of the two parties in the state reflect thoroughly nationalized parties.

After nominating a string of candidates for statewide office who they hoped would be palatable to rural whites, only to keep losing, Democrats elevated three candidates in the past two years whose views placed them in the mainstream of the national party and whose profiles represented the party's broader coalition.

Stacey Abrams, a Black former state representative whose district includes portions of Atlanta, fell 55,000 votes short of being elected governor in 2018; Jon Ossoff is a white, 33-year-old documentary filmmaker from a prosperous Atlanta family; and the Rev. Raphael Warnock grew up in impoverished circumstances in Savannah before becoming pastor at the country's most storied Black church, Ebenezer Baptist in Atlanta.

''It looks nothing like the party of the '90s and early 2000s,'' said Jennifer Jordan, a Democratic state senator. She recalled how the former governor Roy Barnes, a Democrat who succeeded Mr. Miller in 1999, ''used to brag about his N.R.A. affiliation.

The Senate hopefuls are embracing the change. ''Think about how far we've come, Macon, that your standard bearers in these races are the young Jewish journalist, son of an immigrant, and a Black pastor who holds Dr. King's pulpit at Ebenezer Baptist Church,'' Mr. Ossoff said during a recent drive-in rally in the central Georgia city.The two candidates are also gladly accepting help from their national party, something Georgia Democrats once shied away from. In addition to Mr. Biden's Monday visit, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris was campaigning in Savannah on Sunday.

It was no accident that Republicans steered Mr. Trump away from greater Atlanta in his two trips to the state during the runoffs: In December, he visited Valdosta, in South Georgia, and on Monday he will appear before voters in Dalton, which is far closer to Tennessee than the state capital.

Yet even bringing the president back to Georgia at all marked a risk for Republicans, after weeks in which he roiled G.O.P. politics in the state. He demonstrated his willingness to intervene once again this weekend: in an extraordinary phone call on Saturday, Mr. Trump pleaded with Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger to find enough votes to reverse his loss in the state, The Washington Post reported.

Although today's Georgia candidates are a better fit for the current Democratic Party, and may more easily energize the young and nonwhite voters who make up its base, they have struggled in much of the state's rural areas. Mr. Biden was able to defy this trend in his November victory, outperforming Ms. Abrams's 2018 showing and Mr. Ossoff's November performance in some of the state's most conservative redoubts.

''That was enough to win the state by 12,000 votes,'' said Michael Thurmond, the chief executive of DeKalb County. ''And it shows why we need to do better reaching ***working-class*** white voters.'' (The president-elect also ran better than Ms. Abrams and Mr. Ossoff in much of metropolitan Atlanta.)

If the Democrats have shifted away from putting forward candidates like the Mr. Miller and former Senator Sam Nunn, another centrist from small-town Georgia, Republicans have turned to elevating candidates much like their national leader: David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler are wealthy business executives with little political experience.

And just as with Mr. Trump, the attempts by the two incumbents to rebrand themselves as populists to appeal to rural Georgians have had the effect of alienating many suburban voters who were once steadfast Republicans but now recoil from the party of Trump.

Had Mr. Perdue run just slightly better in the former Republican pillar of Cobb County, for example, he could have reached 50 percent statewide in November and avoided a runoff. But he didn't even garner 44 percent in the county, which encompasses the northwest suburbs of Atlanta, after winning it six years ago with more than 55 percent of the vote.

''We're more Trumpian, more populist than the Johnny Isakson party,'' said Ralph Reed, a former state Republican chair and conservative Christian activist, referring to the conservative-but-courtly former senator whose resignation prompted the appointment of Ms. Loeffler. ''Both parties changed because the grass roots in both parties want more.''

Taken together, this has created a state that's nearing 50-50 parity and fostered a style of politics in which mobilization takes precedence over persuasion, because the bright lines between party and region have left few Georgians up for grabs.

''There are very few swing voters,'' said Ms. Abrams, now a voting rights activist. She said that this was particularly the case in a general election runoff when turnout typically falls and ''you are trying to convince the core of your base to come back a second time in a pretty short period.''

Still, Ms. Abrams acknowledged that ''electoral politics tends to lag behind demographic changes.''

The demographics, though, account for much of the reason that the state has grown more politically competitive.

There has been a population explosion around Atlanta, thanks to an influx of Asian, African and Hispanic immigrants as well as a migration of native-born Americans, white and Black alike, who have moved to the region because of family ties, the relatively affordable cost of living and expansive job opportunities.

Although long identified with Coca-Cola and Delta Air Lines, the city has become a corporate behemoth, home to companies like UPS and Home Depot as well as to the American headquarters of the carmakers Mercedes and Porsche.

Atlanta itself has long been a mecca for African-Americans but the entire metropolitan region is now diverse, and counties that were once heavily white and solidly Republican are now multiracial bulwarks of Democratic strength.

In 2000, for example, Al Gore received only 31 percent of the vote in Henry County, an exurban Atlanta community that was once dominated by farmland, including that of the former segregationist Senator Herman Talmadge. In November, Mr. Biden won almost 60 percent of the vote in the county, and the jurisdiction elected a Black sheriff for the first time.

Ms. Jordan, the state senator who represents a suburban Atlanta seat, said the population changes would have made Georgia more closely contested this decade but ''Trump put a turbo booster on it'' in large part because he energized such strong opposition among women.

Sheron Smith, 59, who attended Mr. Ossoff's drive-in rally in Macon, said her own activism illustrated how the state had changed. Ms. Smith said she was always politically liberal, but did not get involved in organizing until 2016, when Mr. Trump's election prompted her to join a progressive women's group in town.

''I think a lot of people were like me,'' Ms. Smith said, ''and after 2016 we thought: 'I have to do more. I can't just sit on my hands. I have to get involved.' And that energy has just stuck around. I want to be involved now.''

This engagement has prompted a full reversal of the old formula, in which Republicans hoped their overwhelming support in the suburbs would offset the Democrats' historical rural strength.

''It's a total 180 in terms of strategy,'' said Mr. Thurmond, the DeKalb County executive, recalling the hotly-contested 1980 Senate race in which political junkies stayed up late watching the metro Atlanta returns -- except then it was to see if Mack Mattingly, a Republican, could claim enough votes in the region to overcome Mr. Talmadge's rural strength.

Four decades later, Georgia is close to evenly split again -- but in ways that better reflect the Sun Belt than the Old South.

Jim Hobart, a Republican pollster reared in Georgia, said his home state was most politically similar to another battleground that Mr. Biden narrowly carried: Arizona.

''Both have increasingly large minority populations and are dominated by one large media market,'' said Mr. Hobart, alluding to greater Atlanta and Phoenix.

Georgia, he added, is ''a purple state now.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/03/us/politics/georgia-senate-trump.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/03/us/politics/georgia-senate-trump.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, above, campaigned in Georgia over the weekend for the Rev. Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff. Georgia Democrats once kept their distance from the national party, but today, ''it looks nothing like the party of the '90s and early 2000s,'' a state senator said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A20)

**Load-Date:** January 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Coronavirus Briefing: What Happened Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YV3-MN71-DXY4-X2KM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 5, 2020 Tuesday 21:18 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1272 words

**Byline:** Patrick J. Lyons

**Highlight:** Some children are developing a mysterious illness that appears to be linked to the coronavirus.

**Body**

Some children are developing a mysterious illness that appears to be linked to the coronavirus.

This is the Coronavirus Briefing, an informed guide to the global outbreak. [*Sign up here to get the briefing by email*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

* The White House announced it would soon [*wind down*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) its coronavirus task force.

1. As outbreaks shutter packing plants, [*meat is getting scarcer*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) in grocery aisles and drive-throughs.
2. A Paris fishmonger who became ill in December [*had the coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), weeks before it was known to be present in Europe.
3. Get the [*latest updates here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), plus   [*maps*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), a   [*tracker for U.S. metro areas*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), and   [*full coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

A rare condition cropping up in children may be linked to Covid-19

More than two dozen children have been admitted to a New York hospital in recent weeks with a [*mysterious illness that appears to be linked to the coronavirus*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

The condition, which has also shown up in children in Europe, shares symptoms with Kawasaki disease, a rare and puzzling pediatric illness involving inflammation of the blood vessels. But many of the children have gone into shock — a complication not usually associated with Kawasaki disease.

Some doctors suspect that what they are seeing is a massive, harmful overreaction to Covid-19 by the body’s immune system, an indication that the virus’s risk to children may be greater than anticipated. While none of the children have died, some have needed ventilators.

New York City’s health department put out a bulletin on Monday warning health care providers and parents to keep an eye out for the symptoms, which include fever, a rash, reddened tongues, vomiting and diarrhea. Doctors in Britain, Italy and Spain [*have also been warned to look out for the condition*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) in children.

Can children spread the virus? Contrary to popular belief, the answer seems to be yes. Fewer children than adults catch the virus, and their cases tend to be mild. But two new studies suggest that they [*can transmit the infection*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) just as readily, in part because they tend to have many more contacts in a day, especially at school.

A way to test school reopenings: Two Norwegian medical researchers have proposed a randomized clinical trial [*to see whether it’s safe to open schools again*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

They suggest opening one district’s schools for a couple of weeks with half the usual number of students and six-foot social distancing, while a neighboring district stays closed. All students and teachers would be tested for the virus beforehand and afterward.

If transmission didn&#39;t increase in the reopened schools, the trial would be repeated with more students and less distance each time, until, with luck, the schools could reopen normally.

The Times is providing free access to [*much of our coronavirus coverage*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), and our   [*Coronavirus Briefing newsletter*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) — like all of our newsletters — is free. Please consider   [*supporting our journalism with a subscription*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

The virus task force’s days may be numbered

The White House is planning to [*wind down its coronavirus task force*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) in the next few weeks, even though the pandemic continues to rage in the U.S.

“We’re having conversations about that, and about what the proper time is for the task force to complete its work,” Vice President Mike Pence said on Monday. He added that the panel may shut down by early June.

It is not clear what, if anything, would replace it. A group led by Jared Kushner, President Trump’s son-in-law and senior adviser, that has been acting as something of a shadow task force is likely to continue.

Mr. Trump has often brushed aside his task force’s advice, and many states are defying its recommendations about when it would be safe to reopen. The panel’s meetings were canceled on Saturday and Monday, and Mr. Trump has stopped arraying its members around him at public appearances.

Even so, the task force has been the closest thing the White House had to a coordinated national response to the pandemic. Disbanding would probably intensify the widespread questions about the administration’s handling of the crisis.

How the pandemic looks from one neighborhood street

Illness, financial strain and rising tension: A journey down several blocks in Hazleton, Pa., tells the story of the virus in America, [*our reporter Michael Powell writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

The virus spread quickly among the area’s residents, many of whom work shoulder to shoulder in factories and warehouses for Amazon, Tootsie Roll, American Eagle or Auto Zone that have stayed open. Life in ***working-class*** Hazleton is often lived on a thin economic margin, and many people had to go on working even as co-workers fell ill and some took the virus home with them.

Rafael Benjamin, a good-natured man who rarely missed a day of work, had a job at a Cargill plant that packages meat in plastic wrap. He was six days away from retirement when he fell ill.

“Seventeen years he worked there, ready for retirement, and now he’s dead,” his son Larry said. “The virus took him away.”

Reopenings

* Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo offered a [*plan for reopening*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) New York State region by region as each shows progress on key metrics.

1. California will [*allow some stores to reopen*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) on Friday, and individual counties will be allowed to relax restrictions further if they take precautions.
2. In India, chaos erupted [*at liquor stores*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) as they reopened for the first time in weeks.
3. Taiwan [*has begun to hold its professional baseball season*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), but with no fans in the stadiums and with players’ temperatures checked several times a day.

[*Here’s a roundup of restrictions in all 50 states*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

What you can do

[*Watch something new.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) With productions on hold, TV writers have become TV watchers. We asked 11 of them which shows they are bingeing.

[*Listen.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) When much of your life is effectively on pause, it’s a good opportunity to listen to those who are close to you — and those you wish were closer.

[*Check on your stimulus check.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) If you are eligible but have yet to receive a payment, here’s what to do.

What else we’re following

* A team of scientists has developed an experimental prototype for a fairly quick, cheap test to diagnose the coronavirus [*using a gene-editing technology known as Crispr*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing). The test can give results as simply as a pregnancy test.

1. Pfizer and BioNTech [*began human trials*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) in the United States of a possible coronavirus vaccine. If successful, the vaccine could be ready for emergency use as early as September.
2. A fund-raising conference organized by the European Union brought pledges from countries around the world to fund the production of a vaccine. The U.S. [*didn’t contribute*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).
3. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan is urging the world to fight the epidemic using a Japanese-made medication [*that may cause birth defects*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).
4. Irish people are [*donating money to Native American tribes*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) hit hard by the virus, inspired by a 173-year-old act of kindness from the Choctaw people during the potato famine.
5. Many employees who are working from home are happier, are more efficient and [*want to continue the benefits*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing) when the pandemic ends.

What you’re doing

I uncovered a box of family photographs and have been digitizing the oldest and most fragile, sending the images to my siblings who I haven’t seen for months. Some of the photographs date back to the mid 19th century. We identify the people in the pictures and share stories. This has led me to start working on a family tree.

— Cathy Rosa Klimaszewski, Groton, N.Y.

Let us know how you’re dealing with the outbreak. [*Send us a response here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing), and we may feature it in an upcoming newsletter.

[*Sign up here to get the briefing by email*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/coronavirus-briefing).

Lara Takenaga and Jonathan Wolfe helped write today’s newsletter.

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