



## Pregnant women take legal vanguard

Abortion lawsuits pile up from those denied the procedure in home states

BY CAROLINE KITCHENER

Kate Cox caught the attention of the nation last week when she asked a Texas judge for permission to end her pregnancy.

Three days later, a pregnant woman filed suit anonymously in Kentucky, arguing that the state's near-total abortion ban violates her constitutional right to privacy and self-determination.

And across Texas, Tennessee and Idaho, several dozen women who had previously experienced pregnancy complications are awaiting decisions in a string of cases that could expand the health exceptions in their state abortion bans.

"I was condemned to endure both physical and emotional torture, knowing that I was going to deliver a stillborn," said Nicole Blackmon, one of the plaintiffs suing Tennessee, when the lawsuit was announced in September. "I want some good to come out of my ordeal, so I am joining this case."

The burst of lawsuits that put pregnant women front and center reflects a shift in approach by the abortion rights movement, which has long brought challenges through claims by clinics and doctors who remain affected by abortion restrictions beyond the narrow window during which patients

SEE ABORTION ON A4



LOAY AYYOUB FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Women mourn their loved ones in front of the morgue at Abu Youssef al-Najjar Hospital in Rafah in the Gaza Strip on Thursday. U.S. officials have encouraged Israel to be more precise in conducting airstrikes in Gaza, to minimize civilian casualties.

## Race retains a place as students apply to colleges

BY NICK ANDERSON

Walking the streets of England as a Latina teenager, Estefany Cepeda Fana recalled getting "weird looks" around town and even hearing someone call her the n-word. But Cepeda resolved to embrace her multiracial identity as a native of the Dominican Republic.

That experience in a study-abroad program became material

Supreme Court rejected affirmative action, but essays still can hold sway

for her college essay.

"I quickly realized that being Dominican was what made me special and I shouldn't hide that," the 18-year-old from Paterson,

N.J., wrote for the Common Application. "I washed my hair and let my curls shine. . . . I knew I belonged because I worked hard to get there."

Cepeda's essay was one of many this fall that showed an enduring — albeit limited — role for race in college admissions despite the landmark ruling from the Supreme Court in June that rejected affirmative action at selective schools. Even as the court

majority struck down programs that had allowed race to be a factor in selection of an incoming class, the ruling acknowledged that applicants may continue to write about how race affected their lives "through discrimination, inspiration, or otherwise."

With that green light, counselors and colleges are encouraging applicants more than ever to explore their racial and ethnic

SEE COLLEGE ON A20

## Wide use of 'dumb bombs' in Gaza

U.S. ANALYSIS MAY EXPLAIN HIGH TOLL

Almost half of munitions used by Israel unguided

BY JOHN HUDSON, LOUISA LOVELUCK, VICTORIA BISSET AND KAREN DEYOUNG

Almost half of the munitions Israel has used in Gaza since the war began have been unguided bombs, a U.S. intelligence assessment has found, a ratio that some arms experts say helps explain the conflict's enormous civilian death toll. The revelation comes as U.S. and Israeli officials engage in intensifying conversations about the sequencing of military operations in the two-month conflict.

The Israel Defense Forces has fired more than 29,000 air-to-ground munitions into the Palestinian enclave since Oct. 7, and only 55 to 60 percent of them have been precision-guided, according to a new assessment from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. The rest were what are known as "dumb bombs," said two people familiar with the assessment who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the matter.

SEE ISRAEL ON A12

Media award: Two sponsors withdraw after essay on Gaza. C1

## Ancient DNA sheds light on dogs bred for wool

BY CAROLYN Y. JOHNSON

Ancient DNA from the pelt of a fluffy white dog named Mutton is revealing new details about the woolly dog, an extinct breed that was cared for and raised by the women of the Coast Salish tribal nations in the Pacific Northwest. The small dogs — called "sqwemá:y," "ske'-ha," and "sqwbay" in some Coast Salish languages — were fed a special diet of fish or elk, and they were shorn like sheep, their wool woven into special blankets and textiles.

For thousands of years, woolly dogs were cherished as family members and raised on islands or kept in pens to ensure they didn't interbreed with other dogs, according to Michael Pavel, an elder of the Skokomish-Twana tribe and one of the authors of the study, published Thursday in the journal Science. The last woolly dogs disappeared around the end of the 19th century, but they have been kept alive in stories passed down by Coast Salish elders.

The new analysis of DNA from Mutton's pelt, which is housed at

Beloved canines were deeply woven into Northwest tribal culture

the Smithsonian Institution, confirms the traditional knowledge of Coast Salish people.

Woolly dogs split from other dogs in North America somewhere between 1,900 and 4,800 years ago, the data show. Mutton had only 16 percent ancestry from European dogs — a tiny contribution that, to researchers who study ancient dog DNA, signifies the care with which they were raised even decades after European settlers arrived.

"It's not just a dog — it's a relative. It has enormous spiritual power, conveyed in its wool," Pavel said. "Imagine being able to receive the gift of wool fiber, being able to learn to weave that into yarn, into an entity, or a blanket or robe that you could wrap yourself in the coldest of winter, and feel the warmth of

SEE DOG ON A7



KAREN CARR/SMITHSONIAN

A full-body reconstruction of Mutton shows how the woolly dog would have stood alongside Arctic dogs and spitz breeds.

### RIISING INDIA, TOXIC TECH



SHUBHADEEP MUKHERJEE ILLUSTRATION FOR THE POST; J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP; SIMON DAWSON/BLOOMBERG NEWS/GETTY IMAGES; MBELL/GETTY IMAGES

## Covert operation at home seeks to discredit Modi's critics abroad

Pro-government influencers boost claims against U.S.-based detractors

BY GERRY SHIH, CLARA ENCE MORSE AND PRANSHU VERMA

NEW DELHI — Since 2020, an opaque organization calling itself the Disinfo Lab has published lengthy dossiers and social media posts claiming to reveal the personal relationships and funding sources behind U.S.-based critics of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Disinfo Lab has combined fact-based research with unsub-

stantiated claims to paint U.S. government figures, researchers, humanitarian groups and Indian American rights activists as part of a conspiracy, purportedly led by global Islamic groups and billionaire George Soros, to undermine India.

In each instance, these allegations have gone viral on Indian social media after they were amplified by pro-Modi influencers, who at times used the group's findings to validate their own positions. Its reports have been

cited by Indian officials on television and presented on Capitol Hill. Despite its reach, the Disinfo Lab does not disclose its affiliation, describing itself on its website as a "separate legal entity" that seeks to offer "completely unbiased research."

In reality, however, the Disinfo Lab was set up and is run by an Indian intelligence officer to research and discredit foreign critics of the Modi government, according to three people who

SEE INDIA ON A10

### ELECTION 2024

## 'Dictator' rhetoric widens the divide

Trump's backers laugh off 'Day One' comments as scholars voice alarm

BY MARIANNE LEVINE AND ISAAC ARNSDORF

CORALVILLE, IOWA — Clyde Carson was in the audience of the Fox News town hall with Donald Trump last week when host Sean Hannity asked the former president to rule out abusing power as retribution. "Except for Day One," Trump replied, volunteering that, "after that, I'm not a dictator."

"A lot of us Trump people get it, but he was trying to fool with the media. He did that on purpose," said Carson, a 53-year-old caucus captain from Davenport attending Trump's speech here on Wednesday. "He just done that because he knew the news would go crazy with it."

Many of Trump's supporters here, in an area where the former president is holding a campaign event Wednesday evening, said they appreciated his comments and did not take them to be a literal declaration of an intent to govern as a dictator. Trump in recent days has returned to the

SEE TRUMP ON A6

Michigan: Trump leads GOP field by more than 4 to 1, poll finds. A6

### IN THE NEWS

**Ukraine clears E.U. hurdle** The bloc agreed on membership talks in a sign of support for the embattled country as winter looms. A9

**Leaving downtown** The tentative plan to move the Capitals and Wizards to Northern Virginia has raised concerns about how fans would get to a new arena. B1

#### THE NATION

**The House** passed a defense spending bill lacking most GOP culture-war demands. A2  
**Rudy Giuliani** declined to take the stand in his election worker defamation damages trial. A4

#### THE WORLD

**As he seeks** another term, Vladimir Putin said he believes Russia will win in Ukraine. A8  
**Pope Francis** called for a binding global treaty regulating artificial intelligence. A14

#### THE ECONOMY

**The latest fad** in bargain hunting is "bin stores," which offer returned items from well-known retailers at deep discounts. A15  
**Pressure on the** real estate market eased as average mortgage rates dropped back below 7 percent. A20

#### THE REGION

**Virginia's** Supreme Court revived a lawsuit lodged by a teacher who was fired for refusing to use a transgender student's preferred pronouns. B1  
**The Maryland** Health Commission approved a new labor and delivery center in Pr. George's. B1

#### STYLE

**Netflix's** "The Crown" ends with Charles's wedding, an occasion that distills many of the paradoxes of Queen Elizabeth II. C1

#### WEEKEND

**Food writer** Tim Carman recaps his favorite local restaurants of the past year.

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