



ANDREW SENG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Lives Lost on 2 Cruel Days

Levester Thompson Jr., right, in a photo held by his wife, was one of 1,550 New Yorkers who died of the virus April 6 and 7. Page A16.

FLAWS HINDERING
ANTIBODY TESTING

Procedure Is Crucial Tool
for Reopening U.S.

This article is by Steve Eder, Megan Twohey and Apoorva Mandavilli.

A law firm in Scottsdale, Ariz., tested employees who hoped, with the prick of a finger, to learn if they might be immune. In Laredo, Texas, community leaders secured 20,000 of the new tests to gauge how many residents had been infected. In Chicago, a hospital screened firefighters to help determine whether they could safely stay on the job.

In recent weeks, the United States has seen the first rollout of blood tests for coronavirus antibodies, widely heralded as crucial tools to assess the reach of the pandemic in the United States, restart the economy and reintegrate society.

But for all their promise, the tests — intended to signal whether people may have built immunity to the virus — are already raising alarms.

Officials fear the effort may prove as problematic as the earlier launch of diagnostic tests that failed to monitor which Americans, and how many, had been infected or developed the disease the virus causes. Criticized for a tragically slow and rigid oversight of those tests months ago, the federal government is now faulted by public health officials and scientists for greenlighting the antibody tests too quickly and without adequate scrutiny.

The Food and Drug Administration has allowed about 90 companies, many based in China, to sell tests that have not gotten government vetting, saying the pan-

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City Dwellers Weigh Saying Goodbye to All That

By SABRINA TAVERNISE and SARAH MERVOSH

Even before the coronavirus, Nina Brajovic wasn’t so sure about her life in New York. As a consultant for PricewaterhouseCoopers, she spent most weeks out of town traveling for work. She often wondered whether she could do her same job for cheaper — and more easily — while based in her hometown, Pittsburgh.

Over the past month, she has gotten a sneak peek of that life, moving back in with her parents to avoid the wall-to-wall density of New York and working out of her childhood bedroom. She is now savoring life’s slowness, eating her father’s soup and watching movies on an L-shaped couch with her mom.

“Part of it feels like, why am I

Crisis Ignites a Desire
for Open Spaces, and
Cheaper Rents

even living in New York?” said Ms. Brajovic, 24, who pays \$1,860 in rent each month for her share of an apartment with two roommates in Manhattan. “Why am I always paying all of this rent?”

With her lease up for renewal, she is contemplating whether to make the move more permanent. “I have no idea what I am going to do,” said Ms. Brajovic. “But it is a thought in my mind: the potential of not going back.”

The pandemic has been particularly devastating to America’s biggest cities, as the virus has found

fertile ground in the density that is otherwise prized. And it comes as the country’s major urban centers were already losing their appeal for many Americans, as skyrocketing rents and changes in the labor market have pushed the country’s youngest adults to suburbs and smaller cities often far from the coasts.

The country’s three largest metropolitan areas, New York, Los Angeles and Chicago, all lost population in the past several years, according to an analysis by William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution. Even slightly smaller metro areas, like Houston, Washington, D.C., and Miami grew more slowly than before. In all, growth in the country’s major metropolitan areas fell by nearly half over the course of the

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FROM LEFT: JUAN ARREDONDO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; LYNDON FRENCH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; LUCY NICHOLSON/REUTERS

From left: commuters at Broadway Junction in the Brooklyn borough of New York; Chicago’s downtown; the freeways of Los Angeles. Each city has lost population over the past several years.

A Provocateur Who Put the Words ‘China Virus’ in Trump’s Mouth

By MATTHEW ROSENBERG and KATIE ROGERS

WASHINGTON — Shortly before midnight on Friday, and just hours after he had taken to Twitter to encourage Americans to “liberate” three Democratic-governed states from stay-at-home orders, President Trump reopened his Twitter app and went on another brief tear. He retweeted 11 posts by Charlie Kirk, a young right-

wing provocateur with ties to the Trump family and a social media presence that attracts far more attention than some mainstream news organizations.

The tweets by Mr. Kirk, 26, who runs Turning Point USA, a conservative student group, hit just the right marks for the president. One tweet accused the World Health Organization of covering up the coronavirus outbreak, and up-braided Democrats for opposing the president’s decision to cut the

Young Leader, Fudging
Facts, Fuels the Right

group’s funding. Another claimed Democrats were appeasing Beijing and not doing enough to help Americans left jobless by the pandemic. A few covered some of the president’s longstanding grievances, such as the conviction of

Roger Stone and claims of voter fraud. A well-worn conspiracy theory about Hunter Biden’s dealings with China even made an appearance.

Never mind that the W.H.O. — which Mr. Kirk called “the Wuhan Health Organization,” after the city where the pandemic began — issued warnings about the virus early and often, and that a number of the other tweets similarly mis-

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Inside the Nursing Home
Where 17 Bodies Piled Up

Troubled Facility in Western New Jersey
Struggled Even Before Contagion

This article is by Tracey Tully, Brian M. Rosenthal, Matthew Goldstein and Robert Gebeloff.

When the coronavirus outbreak hit one of the largest and most troubled nursing homes in the Northeast, coughing and feverish residents were segregated into a wing known as South 2. The sick quickly filled the beds there, so another wing, West 3, was also turned into a quarantine ward.

But the virus kept finding frail and older residents, and one culprit became clear: The workers themselves were likely spreading it as they moved between rooms and floors, outfitted with little or no protective equipment.

The nursing home, Andover Subacute and Rehabilitation Center II in Andover, N.J., which has 543 beds, was chronically short of staff and masks, and over the last two years it had received poor grades from federal and state inspectors. Residents were crowded three to a room, and as the outbreak worsened, so did sanitary conditions. Spilled food littered the floors.

Workers said they hurriedly made their rounds, dispensing medicine, changing bedsheets, feeding those who could not feed themselves and doing other tasks that brought them into close contact with residents.

Some workers bought rudimentary face shields from a recreation supervisor who purchased a

box online for \$160. By last week, employees were pleading for help from the government and for donations of personal protective equipment in Facebook posts.

But it was too late. After receiving an anonymous tip last Monday, the police found 17 bodies in bags in a small holding room at the Andover facility.

The startling discovery illustrated the toll that the coronavirus outbreak has taken on the nation’s nursing homes and other congregate facilities that house society’s most vulnerable, including older people and those with mental and physical disabilities.

By Sunday, at least 70 Andover residents had died and dozens of the 420 remaining residents and staff members had either tested positive for the virus or were sick with fevers, coughs or both, according to county officials.

The coronavirus crisis has killed more than 7,000 people at nursing homes across the country, The New York Times has determined, and has even ravaged facilities with sterling reputations.

But it has been especially devastating at nursing homes like Andover that have long come under criticism for quality of care, inadequate staffing and questionable business practices.

This examination by The Times of what happened at Andover is based on interviews with current and former workers, administra-

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Official Silence
Abets Outbreak
In Putin’s Russia

By ANDREW HIGGINS

MOSCOW — Nearly as big as California but served by only a handful of mostly decrepit Soviet-era hospitals, the remote northern Russian region of Komi is a coronavirus petri dish for the horrors lying in wait for the world’s largest country.

Amid growing evidence that the pathogen had already breached Komi’s feeble defenses, the local authorities moved vigorously last week to contain the crisis: The police summoned critics of the regional government to ask how they knew about an outbreak in a hospital at a time when officials in Komi were insisting nobody had been infected.

Among those called in for questioning was Pavel Andreev, the director of 7x7 Komi, an independent online journal that revealed last month how a surgeon in a Komi state hospital sick with Covid-19 had infected patients.

Mr. Andreev said the police officer who led the interrogation mainly wanted to know about a comment the media director had posted online that said, “It is impossible to trust the state, even in hospitals.” Mr. Andreev, who has not been charged or even asked to take down his post, said the encounter was not so much menacing as baffling: The cat is already out of the bag so “why waste time and energy on this?” he asked.

The police intervention was carried out at the behest of Komi’s health minister, who was fired last week for his mishandling of the pandemic. It highlights one of Russia’s biggest obstacles as it struggles to control the spread of the virus in its vast and often ramshackle hinterland: a lumbering bureaucratic machine geared first and foremost to protecting officials, even after they lose their jobs, not safeguarding the public or its health.

Unlike China — which routinely arrests government critics or sim-

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BRIAN SPURLOCK/USA TODAY SPORTS, VIA REUTERS

Leagues in an idled \$71 billion industry face many obstacles.

Sports Yearning
For a Comeback
Despite the Risk

This article is by Joe Drape, Ken Belson and Billy Witz.

A Major League Baseball season to be played entirely in the Arizona desert without fans, and with teams isolating themselves from the outside world.

The N.B.A. taking over a hotel on the Las Vegas Strip so its stars can dine and dunk in their own bubble — but only after the league gets access to instant coronavirus tests.

Mixed-martial-arts fights live on TV from a private island . . . somewhere.

More than a month into the coronavirus shutdown, the American sports industrial complex is getting creative, or perhaps desperate, searching for a moonshot that might bring professional athletics back to a nation largely cooped up at home and suffering from collective cabin fever.

Fans are clamoring for something, anything, to distract from the pandemic and restore sports to the rhythm of American life; even Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, the presidential adviser on infectious diseases, recently mused about seeing the Washington Nationals defend their World Series title.

Meanwhile, owners, executives and athletes — and all the related businesses and workers who de-

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BUSINESS B1-6

Driven Toward a Free Fall

Uber and Lyft started the year with optimism. Now the ride-hailing rivals are just trying to survive.

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A New World Backstage

Production has ground to a halt, leaving many people without work and others finishing projects remotely.

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INTERNATIONAL A17

Deadly Shooting in Canada

At least 16 people were killed, including a police officer, after a 12-hour rampage throughout Nova Scotia, the police said. The gunman also died.

Fighting Samsung From Above

Kim Yong-hee, a union activist, has been atop an 82-foot-tall traffic camera tower in South Korea for over 300 days.

NATIONAL A18-19

Oklahoma City Looks Back

On the 25th anniversary of a bombing that killed 168 people, some worry that the national memory is fading.

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SPORTSMONDAY D1-5

More on a Teenager’s Struggle

A post by Coco Gauff drew attention over the word “depressed.” Her parents said they saw something else.

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Youth Sports in Limbo

Will parents and children be eager to return to team sports once the threat of the pandemic has passed?

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OBITUARIES B7-8, D6

Former Treasury Secretary

Paul H. O’Neill was heading into retirement when he was asked to take the job in 2000. He was fired less than two years later by President George W. Bush. He was 84.

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Modernist Figurative Painter

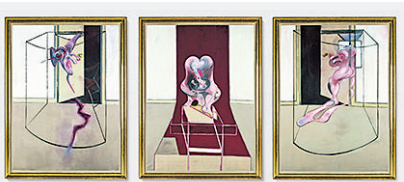
William Bailey swathed his nudes and still lifes of eggs, vases, bottles and bowls in a breathless, deceptively serene atmosphere heavy with mystery.

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EDITORIAL, OP-ED A20-21

Bernie Sanders

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ARTS C1-7

Art Auctions Go Digital

Sotheby’s, Christie’s and Phillips are stepping up online selling. The sale of a 1981 triptych, above, by Francis Bacon has been delayed.

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