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The New York Times

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Envisioning the demise of Europe



Thomas L. Friedman

OPINION

PARIS Ever since World War II, the liberal global order that has spread more freedom and prosperity around the world than at any other time in history has been held up by two pillars: the United States of America and the United Nations of Europe, now known as the European Union.

Both of these centers of free markets, free people and free ideas are being shaken today by rural and beyond-the-suburbs insurgencies of largely white working-poor and anxious middle classes, which have not

France is pivotal in holding the European Union together. Things are not looking good.

generally benefited from the surges in globalization, immigration and technology that have lifted superstar cities like London, Paris and San Francisco and their multicultural populations.

Having just seen the shocking sight of Parisian stores boarded up right

before Christmas to protect against rioting along the Champs-Élysées by some of France's yellow-vested protesters; after being told in Rome a few days earlier that Italy, a founding member of the European Union, could conceivably shuck off both the European Union and the euro one day under its new bizarre far-left/far-right governing coalition; after watching Britain become paralyzed over how to commit economic suicide by leaving the European Union; and after watching President Trump actually cheer for the breakup of the European Union rather than for its good health, it is obvious to me that we're at a critical hinge of history.

The core challenge for both the United States and the European Union is the same: These rapid accelerations in technology and globalization have brought many more immigrants into many more remote corners of their societies — public housing in Paris today is dominated by immigrants — at the same time as many long-frozen social mores have changed — like acceptance of gay marriage and transgender rights — and as average work no longer returns an average wage that can sustain an average middle-

The New York Times publishes opinion from a wide range of perspectives in hopes of promoting constructive debate about consequential questions.



VERONIQUE DE VIGUERIE/GETTY IMAGES

New reality for French leader “Yellow Vest” protesters clashing with the police last weekend in Paris. Emmanuel Macron was elected president last year on a promise to bring a revolution in the economy and labor market, but his direction seems certain to change after weeks of demonstrations against his policies. *PAGE 4*

Rich get no perks in Japan's jails

TOKYO

Detention of Nissan boss shows stark difference in treatment vs. the West

BY MOTOKO RICH
AND JACK EWING

Five months ago, Carlos Ghosn, a multi-millionaire executive credited with reviving Nissan Motors, hosted the wedding of his daughter Caroline on Naoshima, a rarefied island enclave of art and sculpture. The celebration began with the cracking open of a barrel of sake, an elegant and traditional way in Japan to toast good fortune.

Now, Mr. Ghosn is living in a Tokyo jail cell, sleeping on a tatami mat and futon, unable to communicate with his daughter or any family member, as investigators explore possible financial wrongdoing related to his nearly 20-year career at Nissan.

Mr. Ghosn has been indicted on a charge of violating financial reporting laws by understating his compensation; he is being held as prosecutors question him daily. Nissan, which accused Mr. Ghosn, its former chairman, and a board

member, Greg Kelly, of colluding in financial chicanery, has been ensnared by the same inquiry and was indicted on a charge of violating reporting laws.

The treatment of such a prominent foreign defendant has been revelatory for people who see Japan as a model in Asia for doing business. Mr. Ghosn's arrest on Nov. 19 has exposed stark differences in how crimes are pursued and suspects are handled in Japan and in Western democracies.

Mr. Ghosn, who ran a global auto empire that included Nissan, Mitsubishi and the French carmaker Renault, was taken into custody just after his corporate jet landed at Haneda Airport in Tokyo. His arrest was seen as extraordinary given his position and history with Nissan.

It turns out that he has been treated much like any suspect in Japan.

A citizen of Brazil, France and Lebanon, Mr. Ghosn faces government lawyers, for hours, on his own. He is not allowed a lawyer during interrogation. Prosecutors can question him for weeks without charges, and can extend his detention with a routine court request. Last week, on the day he was indicted, Mr. Ghosn was rearrested on allegations of additional wrongdoing. A day later, he was ordered held, again without bail, for 10 more days.



EUGENE HOSHINO/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carlos Ghosn is being held in Tokyo as prosecutors question him daily. Investigators are exploring possible financial wrongdoing related to his nearly 20-year career at Nissan.

There is some reason to see Mr. Ghosn, 64, as a flight risk. He is wealthy; he has no known family in Japan; and neither Lebanon nor Brazil extradites its own citizens, offering him a plausible place to seek refuge.

He is being held in a small room and can be visited only by diplomats or his

Japanese lawyer. He is allowed to request blankets and books, but all requests are reviewed by officials and can be rejected. Sheets of writing paper, for instance, have been denied.

Prosecutors are likely to hold Mr. Ghosn and Mr. Kelly, who were indicted *JAPAN, PAGE 8*

Cables show E.U. anxiety over Trump and Russia

WASHINGTON

Hacked communications reveal fears about nuclear weapons in Crimea

BY DAVID E. SANGER
AND STEVEN ERLANGER

Hackers infiltrated the European Union's diplomatic communications network for years, downloading thousands of cables that reveal concerns about an unpredictable Trump administration and struggles to deal with Russia, China and the risk that Iran would revive its nuclear program.

In one cable, European diplomats described the July 16 meeting between President Trump and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia in Helsinki, Finland, as “successful (at least for Putin).”

Another cable, written after a separate meeting also on July 16, relayed a detailed report and analysis of a discussion between European officials and President Xi Jinping of China, who was quoted comparing Mr. Trump's bullying of Beijing to a “no-rules freestyle boxing match.”

The techniques that the hackers deployed over a three-year period resembled those long used by an elite unit of China's People's Liberation Army. The cables were copied from the secure network and posted to an open internet site that the hackers set up in the course of their attack, according to Area 1, the cybersecurity company that discovered the breach.

Area 1, founded by three former officials of the National Security Agency and based in California, made more than 1,100 of the hacked European Union cables available to The New York Times. The White House National Security Council did not have an immediate comment.

The compromised material provides insight into Europe's struggle to understand the political turmoil engulfing three continents. It includes memorandums of conversations with leaders in Saudi Arabia, Israel and other countries that were shared across the European Union.

But it also revealed the huge appetite by hackers to sweep up even the most obscure details of international negotiations.

The intruders also infiltrated the networks of the United Nations, the American labor organization A.F.L.-C.I.O., and ministries of foreign affairs and finance worldwide.

Some of the United Nations materials focus on months in 2016, when North Korea was actively launching missiles, and appear to include references to private meetings of the world body's secretary general and his deputies with Asian leaders.

Some of the more than 100 organiza- *EUROPE, PAGE 5*

The people of Mbomo tell their tales



PIETER HENKET

In “Congo Tales,” a new book about the second-largest tropical forest in the world, the stories of the people of the Mbomo region come alive.

BY LOVIA GYARKYE
AND PIETER HENKET

“Congo Tales,” a new book published by Prestel, began as a call to action to save the Odzala-Kokoua National Park in the heart of the Congo Basin, which is the second-largest tropical forest in the world after the Amazon, from the threats of climate change.

It soon became a book about the stories of the people who live there.

A team including Pieter Henket, a Dutch photographer; Eva Vonk, a Dutch producer; Steve Regis “Kovo” N'Sondé, a Congolese artist and philosopher; his brother Wilfried N'Sondé, a Congolese writer and musician; and a group of conservationists and researchers spent five years in the basin. There, they collected and translated the tales of the people of the Mbomo region. The stories were then edited by the N'Sondé brothers, a job suited to the pair who grew up with stories passed down from their grandmother.

“These stories, through the values and symbols they carry, are our legacy,”

Kovo N'Sondé said. “When I say our, I don't only mean Congolese citizens or Bantu peoples, I mean mankind. These stories are all about wisdom, knowledge, ethical and aesthetic principles.”

A project of this nature is bound to draw scrutiny and face skepticism about exploiting native peoples and rituals. But this collaboration offers an opportunity to grapple with what an ethical approach to storytelling might look like. “Storytelling is such a powerful thing with which we pass on information from generation to generation,” Vonk said. “Any authenticity I have gained is just by listening and not trying to explain.”

Henket, who photographed the community members' re-enactments of the stories, viewed his presence as more about offering technical expertise, such as lighting and composition. “What I wanted to do with the Mbomo people was to really let them tell the stories how they wanted to see it,” he said.

Here are Henket's comments on some of the photographs in the book. *CONGO, PAGE 2*

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The people of Mbomo tell their tales



ANIMALS, TOTEMS AND SYMBOLS All Mbomo families have their own totem animals that represent them. We asked the kids about their family's totem animal and how they would express it. After a week of shooting, the whole village got involved and everyone wanted to be a part of it. This girl came with this simple leaf and put it on top of her head and we asked "What are you?" and she said, "I'm a bird."



THE LITTLE FISH AND THE CROCODILE This story is about a fish and a crocodile becoming best friends. One day the fish says to the crocodile, would you come over and stay at my house tonight? So the crocodile stays and they have an amazing night. But then the crocodile eats the babies of the fish and so the fish says to the crocodile, I thought we were best friends. I wanted to do a picture in the river with all the children as if they were little fish eggs. These are most of the children of the people who were involved in the project. The difficult part is deciding what parts of the story are important to tell. With photography you have to choose moments. I wanted to somehow show the fish eggs and I thought it would be a beautiful composition to have all these children sitting in the river bank.



THE ELDERS I took a portrait of the eldest people in the village because there is a saying that when the old people die it's like a library of stories burning down. That whole concept on its own is already beautiful so we wanted to build on that.



THE WOMAN IN THE MOON We wanted to keep this story, which symbolizes how the days of the week were established, light and very much fantasy, so we created this wooden moon. All the kids wanted to be a part of this picture, and they started to come out of the forest with their own hats and their own masks. It adds to the whole goal of them telling their own stories instead of telling them to do this or do that.



THE WOMAN WHO TRADED HER BABY FOR HONEY This story about a woman trying to escape an abusive relationship is very much about female power. The casting process was super fun for this one because while we were shooting there were always a few people who stayed around us. These girls, who were in that group, were tough cool girls, and I thought they would fit perfectly for this powerful image.

‘Laverne & Shirley’ star was also a successful director

PENNY MARSHALL
1943-2018

BY ANITA GATES

Penny Marshall, the nasal-voiced co-star of the slapstick sitcom “Laverne & Shirley” and later the chronically self-deprecating director of hit films like “Big” and “A League of Their Own,” died on Monday at her home in Los Angeles. She was 75.

Her publicist, Michelle Bega, said the cause was complications of diabetes. Ms. Marshall had in recent years been treated for lung cancer, discovered in 2009, and a brain tumor. She announced in 2013 that the cancer was in remission.

Ms. Marshall became the first woman to direct a feature film that grossed more than \$100 million when she made “Big” (1988). That movie, a comedy about a 12-year-old boy who magically turns into an adult (Tom Hanks) and then has to navigate the grown-up world, was as popular with critics as it was with audiences.

The Washington Post said it had “the zip and exuberance of a classic romantic comedy.” The Los Angeles Times described it as “a refreshingly grown-up comedy” directed “with verve and impeccable judgment.” Mr. Hanks received his first Oscar nomination for his performance.

Four years later she repeated her box-office success with “A League of Their Own,” a sentimentally spunky comedy about a wartime women’s baseball league with an ensemble cast that included Madonna, Geena Davis, Rosie O’Donnell and Mr. Hanks.

In between, she directed “Awakenings” (1990), a medical drama star-

ring Robert De Niro as a patient coming out of an encephalitic trance and Robin Williams as the neurologist who helps him. “Awakenings,” based on a book by Oliver Sacks, was only moderately successful financially, but Mr. De Niro received an Academy Award nomination.

A writer for Cosmopolitan magazine once commented that Ms. Marshall “got into directing the ‘easy’ way — by becoming a television superstar first.” That was a reference to her seven seasons (1976-83) as Laverne DeFazio, the brasher (yet possibly more vulnerable) of two young roommates, brewery assembly-line workers, on the hit ABC comedy series “Laverne & Shirley,” set in 1950s and ‘60s Milwaukee.

In Hollywood, Ms. Marshall had a reputation for instinctive directing, which could mean endless retakes. But she was also known for treating filmmaking as a team effort rather than a dictatorship.

That may or may not have been a function of her self-effacing personality, which colleagues and interviewers often commented on. But in 1992, Ms. Marshall confessed to The New York Times Magazine that she wasn’t completely guleless.

“I have my own way of functioning,” she said. “My personality is, I whine. It’s how I feel inside. I guess it’s how I use being female, too. I touch a lot to get my way and say, ‘Pleease, do it over here.’ So it can be an advantage — the anti-director.”

That attitude was also an essential aspect of her humor. When Vanity Fair asked her to identify her greatest regret, she said, “That when I was a size 0, there was no size 0.”

Carole Penny Marshall was born on Oct. 15, 1943, in New York. Her father,



Penny Marshall, left, and Cindy Williams as the title characters in the sitcom “Laverne & Shirley.” Ms. Marshall’s success on the show paved the way for her directing career.

Anthony, was an industrial filmmaker, and her mother, Marjorie (Ward) Marshall, taught dance. The family name had been changed from Masciarelli.

Ms. Marshall attended the University of New Mexico, where she met and married Michael Henry, a college football player. They had a daughter, but the marriage lasted only two years, and Ms. Marshall headed for California, where her older brother, Garry, had become a successful comedy writer.

She made her film debut in “The Savage Seven,” a 1968 biker-gang drama, and had a small part the same year in a romantic comedy starring Debbie Reynolds and James Garner, “How Sweet It Is!”

That series grew out of a 1975 episode of “Happy Days,” in which Laverne (Ms. Marshall) and Shirley Feeney (Cindy Williams), two fast blue-collar girls, turned up at the local hangout as blind dates for Richie Cunningham and Fonzie, the two lead characters.

When “Laverne & Shirley” ended in 1983, after considerable on-set conflict between the co-stars and a final season without Ms. Williams, it was the first time in 12 years that Ms. Marshall had not had at least a relatively steady job on a television series.

She began making a handful of films and television appearances. Then actress Whoopi Goldberg, a friend, asked her to take over for a director she wasn’t getting along with on “Jumpin’ Jack Flash” (1986), a comic spy caper. (Ms. Marshall had directed a few episodes of “Laverne & Shirley.”) The movie was far from an unqualified success, but it led to “Big.”

Ms. Marshall’s two films after “A League of Their Own” were not as well received. “Renaissance Man” (1994), starring Danny DeVito as an adman turned teacher of Army recruits, was savaged by critics and earned only about \$24 million, considerably less than it cost to make, in the United States (in contrast, “Big” earned almost \$115 million). “The Preacher’s Wife” (1996), a remake of the heartwarming 1947 fantasy romance “The Bishop’s Wife,” starred Denzel Washington and Whitney Houston. Critics found it likable but weak, and it brought in just under \$50 million domestically.

Ms. Marshall did not direct again until 2001. “Riding in Cars With Boys,” a saga of teenage motherhood starring Drew Barrymore, earned mostly positive reviews but was a box-office disappoint-

ment. It was the last film Ms. Marshall directed. Her farewell to television direction was a 2011 episode of the multiple-personalities series “United States of Tara.”

In 2012 she published a best-selling memoir, “My Mother Was Nuts,” which began in her characteristically self-effacing way:

“I’m not someone who’s had to deal with much personal drama outside of the usual: growing up with parents who hated each other, two marriages and divorces, the ups and downs of various relationships, raising a daughter and watching friends crack up and overdose. There was the cancer thing, too. As you can see, though, there’s nothing out of the ordinary, nothing that most people don’t go through, nothing that says, ‘Penny, you were lucky to get through that one.’ ”

Her final screen appearance was on the new version of “The Odd Couple,” in a November 2016 episode that was a tribute to her brother, and featured cameos by stars from his many hit series.

Ms. Marshall, who lived in the Hollywood Hills section of Los Angeles, is survived by her older sister, Ronny; a daughter, the actress Tracy Reiner; and three grandchildren.

Critics sometimes accused Ms. Marshall of being overly sentimental, but she never apologized for that side of her work.

“I like something that tells a story or that tells me something I didn’t know,” she told The San Diego Union-Tribune in 1992 when asked about her taste in films. “It should have humor in it — or it should have heart.”

“And if it doesn’t,” she added, with what the reporter described as a sly grin, “I’ll make it have heart.”

K-pop fans disrupt flights to look at idols

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

They board airliners, only to then leave, causing rest of passengers to exit

BY CHOE SANG-HUN

As if air travel did not have enough nuisances, some K-pop fans have invented a new one: They board planes just to get a closer look at their favorite stars and then disembark, canceling their flights just before the gate closes.

Screaming fans jostling each other to take a peek at South Korean stars have become a regular scene at airports across Asia. But recently some have become bolder, booking first-class seats that get them near enough to snap pictures and ask for autographs in V.I.P. lounges or aboard the planes themselves. They then leave the flight and cancel their ticket.

These fans have caused disruptions at several Asian airports recently, and the incidents have angered passengers and airline officials alike: Security regulations require all passengers to leave the plane and repeat security checks whenever anyone voluntarily leaves a flight before takeoff.

Regulations require all on board to repeat security checks.

On Saturday, a Korean Air flight from Hong Kong to Incheon International Airport, which serves Seoul, was delayed for an hour because three fans boarded to get a glimpse of the boy band Wanna One. About 360 other passengers also had to leave the plane with their carry-on luggage.

Korean Air said in a statement on Tuesday that it had seen 35 such incidents at Incheon this year, adding that the number would amount “to hundreds if all airlines are included.”

The airline said that it would increase financial penalties in an effort to fight the practice. Although Korean Air tickets that are not used are generally refundable, the airline currently charges “no-show” penalties of 50,000 to 120,000 won, or about \$45 to \$105.

Beginning Jan. 1, Korean Air said, passengers who cancel some international bookings after going through the departure process will be charged an additional 200,000 won.

The airline said the increase was necessary because of “recent chaos.”

Airlines based in North America and Europe offer some refundable fares, which tend to be the most expensive, but most tickets are nonrefundable.

There have been a few publicized cases of people booking tickets that can be refunded or changed without charge to gain access to airlines’ executive lounges without ever flying. In 2014, Lufthansa won a court judgment against a man who had used that trick 36 times to eat dinner in its lounges.

Most airlines have policies prohibiting the purchase of a ticket that the buyer does not intend to use, and some have software to weed out scammers.

GRACE AND CHARACTER

Joséphine Collection



CHAUMET
PARIS

— L'art de la joaillerie depuis 1780 —

World

Mexico’s Trump strategy: Warning on China

MEXICO CITY

If U.S. won’t help develop Central America, it may look to Beijing for funds

BY AZAM AHMED
AND ELISABETH MALKIN

Mexico's new government has a strategy for dealing with President Trump. Don't anger him. Don't cave in to him. Try to get him to help fund an ambitious investment plan to stem migration by creating jobs in Central America.

And if Mr. Trump cannot be persuaded, Mexican officials said in interviews, they would remind him that there is another player in the region willing to step into the vacuum: China.

That, in a nut shell, is the approach the Mexican government is betting can defuse the standoff over the thousands of migrants amassed at its border with the United States, hoping to make it across.

Mexico's plan to try to raise money to develop Central America and southern Mexico was announced last week, when Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the country's new president, introduced what he called a “Marshall Plan” — after the blueprint for rebuilding Europe after World War II — to address the root causes of Central American migration: a \$30 billion initiative to invest in the region and welcome migrants into Mexico with visas, health care and employment.

This approach would represent a break with Mr. López Obrador's predecessor, who considered giving in to Mr. Trump's demands and allowing people seeking asylum in the United States to remain in Mexico while they wait.

And Mexico's new plan is, in many respects, the opposite of Mr. Trump's vow to crack down on migration, which includes building a wall, deploying the military and cutting aid to Central America.

In speaking about the contours of their new policy, Mexican officials told The New York Times that they would not force a confrontation with Mr. Trump by demanding that he accept the migrants onto American soil; that would only anger the American president, and he would not do it anyway, they said.

But at the same time, they said they were not going to strike a deal with the United States to keep asylum seekers on the Mexican side of the border. That would allow Mr. Trump to claim a victory Mexican officials are not willing to give him. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity because they did not want to aggravate already strained relationships with the Trump administration.

Instead, they want to change the focus of the conversation to expanding the economy of Central America and the south of their country by marshaling



MAURICIO LIMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A sports center in Tijuana, Mexico, that has become a shelter for migrants. Thousands of Central American migrants have amassed at the border with the United States.

public and private investment to build infrastructure, develop the energy sector and create jobs in the region so people do not have to stream north in the first place.

They acknowledge that it may be difficult to persuade the Trump administration to invest large sums in the region, a proposal they have only recently broached with American officials.

“Both sides are laying down their frameworks and their points of view as to how they should proceed.”

But they are hoping the perceived threat of China's growing presence in the region can be used as leverage to bring the United States on board.

While it is unclear how much more China would be willing to invest in the region, in recent years it has increased its presence throughout Latin America, financing infrastructure projects, tightening ties with governments and even persuading a handful of Central Ameri-

can nations to switch their diplomatic recognition of Taiwan to China — a sticking point with the Americans.

The Mexican strategy to rely on the United States' concerns about China's expanding influence in the region reflects a growing sense in Mexico that it can no longer take cooperation with the United States for granted.

Both the White House and the State Department declined to comment on the Mexican proposal.

“For a long time there has been this competition within Latin America for influence, where China is willing to invest billions in infrastructure and energy that the United States simply isn't,” said Duncan Wood, the director of the Mexico Institute at the Wilson Center.

The proposal is also a reflection of the distinct personalities of Mr. López Obrador and Mr. Trump: Both are mavericks — albeit on opposite sides of the political spectrum — and both are willing to break with long-established conventions.

“Partly because of Trump and partly because of Andrés Manuel, there is an opening there,” Mr. Wood said.

Unlike his predecessor, Mr. López Obrador is willing to chart an independent course in his response to the Trump administration — partly because of Mr. Trump's hard line on migration and partly out of a conviction that the only way to tackle the matter is to go after its root causes.

And to do that, Mexico will look for help wherever it can find it, including China, which has already expressed an interest in Mr. López Obrador's plan to lay hundreds of miles of track for a tourist train in the Yucatán Peninsula — a project widely opposed by environmental advocates.

Of course, that does not mean Mexico will make a sharp turn to China, given its longstanding relationship with the United States. Nor does floating the idea that China may participate make Mexico's costly proposal any more plausible.

“The money is just not there,” said Mark Feierstein, the former senior director for Western Hemisphere affairs at the National Security Council during the Obama administration. He noted that the United States was spending more than \$650 million a year in Central

America's Northern Triangle, which is composed of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

But that may be beside the point.

“If nothing else, it is a good bargaining chip,” said Doris Meissner, a senior fellow at the Migration Policy Institute in Washington, of the idea that China could increase its investment in the region. “Both sides are laying down their frameworks and their points of view as to how they should proceed.”

The idea that China could increase its influence in Mexico emerged even before Mr. López Obrador came into office.

“I heard from senior Mexican officials during the transition that if the United States is not going to treat Mexico with respect, don't be surprised if you see a Chinese submarine in a Mexican port,” said Juan Gonzalez, who was an adviser to Vice President Joseph R. Biden on Central America.

“I think it was hyperbolic,” he said of the outgoing officials' warning, before adding, “I think Mexico sees increased political risk coming from the political process in the United States, and they are diversifying their interests.”

‘Yellow Vests’ confront French leader with a new reality

PARIS

BY ALISSA J. RUBIN

Emmanuel Macron's presidency was battling a crisis less than two weeks ago, blindsided by the gathering strength and fury of the “Yellow Vest” protests sweeping the country. On the streets of Paris, demonstrators shouted for Mr. Macron's resignation or denounced him as an arrogant president of the rich.

Now, after last weekend's protests turned out to be smaller and more restrained — partly because of quick economic relief promised by Mr. Macron, as well as a shift in the national mood following a terror attack in Strasbourg — he seems to have gotten a reprieve. The survival of his presidency may no longer be at stake, but its shape and direction seem certain to change.

Mr. Macron was elected in 2017 in part on his promise to bring a revolution to France — in the economy, in the job market, in France's social welfare model. He has already confronted unions, rewritten labor laws and cut taxes for companies and the rich, in the name of spurring economic growth.

But even if the ultimate impact of the Yellow Vests is hard to foresee, the movement has already forced Mr. Macron to backtrack on some tax increases and move to put more money in the pockets of the poorest workers. It also will force him to rethink his coming proposals to change laws on pensions and unemployment, politicians, pollsters and economists said.

“The consequence is that there is a before the Yellow Vests and an after, and he cannot continue his reforms at the speed of a TGV,” said Bruno Cautrès, a political scientist at the university Sciences Po, referring to France's 200-plus-mile-per-hour trains.

“He will have to change not only his approach but the content,” said Mr. Cautrès, who like many others say that the Yellow Vests movement is fueled by mix of financial inequality, failures in France's electoral system and frustration from a sense of being unheard.

Taking to the streets and the highway

entrances to towns and villages, and the free-for-all space of the internet, the Yellow Vests describe to anyone who will listen their sense that France's leaders are ignoring them. They take their name from the fluorescent jackets that motorists are required to keep in their vehicles for emergencies.

Many mayors and other elected officials who have begun reaching out to local Yellow Vest members say Mr. Macron has little choice but to accept the project of trying to respond to the movement.

They say that the emergence of the Yellow Vests reflects enduring economic and political problems in the French system, but also that Mr. Macron has himself to blame.

He came to the presidency without ever having been elected to political office. But rather than recognizing that he lacked an ear to the ground, critics say, Mr. Macron eschewed meetings with elected officials and refused offers by unions to work with him.

Instead he surrounded himself with advisers who may have been smart but shared a naïveté about the changes that real people could accept.

Mr. Macron did little to help himself in that regard, said Jérôme Fourquet, the head of opinion polling at IFOP. “The politics that he carried out, ending the tax on large fortunes, diminishing the housing subsidy, and going ahead with a hike in the fuel tax combined with some of his comments, like ‘to find a job you just have to cross the street,’ all of this focused the criticisms on him,” he said. “But in part it was unjustified because it was an accumulation of anger that built up over a long time,” he added.

Richard Ramos, a member of Parliament from Loiret in central France, where he still serves as a City Council member, generally supports Mr. Macron. But like many mayors, he said that Mr. Macron had erred by not listening to local politicians before he moved ahead with his economic plans and his cancellation of a surtax paid by France's wealthiest people.

Mr. Ramos said most Yellow Vest members he had encountered were wage earners or small-business owners



JEAN-FRANÇOIS BADIAS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

The survival of Emmanuel Macron's presidency may no longer be at stake, but after protests its direction seems certain to change.

who want to pay their employees more but cannot afford to.

He gathered a group of Yellow Vest members together at a local restaurant over a bowl of soup last week to watch the president's nationally televised speech that promised relief to the protesters. Some said they could see the president had understood their message, but others were not satisfied.

“This crisis of confidence cannot be resolved with a 13-minute speech by the president,” Mr. Ramos said.

“But what makes it complicated is that the Yellow Vests do not recognize us any more as representatives of the nation,” he added. “They say to us, ‘You don't listen to us.’ So before we can even talk, we have to renew their confidence.”

Everyone seems to have advice for

the president: on his personal style, on how to make citizens feel like he is hearing them, on how to formulate policy.

“You cannot do a project, build something without sharing it, creating it with the people who live there,” said Joséphine Kollmannsberger, the mayor of the small town of Plaisir, who was among a group of mayors who met with Mr. Macron this month. “And I think the president has to function like that with the French people, otherwise he's not going to pull through.”

Some people are reminding Mr. Macron that although he won the election, in some respects he does not represent the majority.

Mr. Cautrès, the political scientist, sees Mr. Macron's election as a paradox of French democracy, in which legiti-

mately elected politicians may not necessarily enjoy majority support.

In France, presidential candidates compete in two rounds of voting, and the top two vote-getters in the first ballot face each other in a runoff. In the first round Mr. Macron won 24 percent of the vote, primarily from people who really believed in his reforms, but in the second round, when he was up against the far-right leader Marine Le Pen, he got 66 percent.

However, many voters among his second-round supporters were casting ballots against Ms. Le Pen, not for Mr. Macron and his agenda. That made his mandate for an overhaul shallow at best. He zoomed ahead anyway.

“He said ‘revolution,’ but many people did not agree,” Mr. Cautrès said.

Since taking office on Dec. 1, Mr. López Obrador has done nothing if not shake up the establishment.

He has announced the cancellation of the construction of a new airport, a multibillion-dollar project that was well underway, and temporarily suspended new auctions for oil exploration in Mexico. He has also cut salaries for government employees and proposed a measure to dismantle a much-vaunted education overhaul.

As he did on the campaign trail, Mr. López Obrador has focused on domestic issues — an inward-looking vision that differs from recent Mexican presidents who saw the global stage as the nation's future.

But the migrant crisis forced its way to the top of the agenda, proving a frustrating first test for Mr. López Obrador.

The arrival of thousands of migrants traveling in caravans from Honduras and other Central American countries raised the profile of an existing problem, increasing the stakes and forcing Mr. López Obrador to decide how to manage it just days after taking office.

For decades, Mexico kept its head down as hundreds of thousands of migrants — many of them Mexican — made their way into the United States. But in recent years, the nation's status as a transit country has changed.

Mexico is becoming a destination, not just a portal to the United States. Every year, more people apply for asylum in Mexico, and many more choose to stay and seek work.

A bottleneck in the United States has meant that thousands of migrants are stuck waiting months at the border for their initial asylum interview with the American authorities.

In 2014, at the urging of the Obama administration, Mexico adopted a tough policing strategy along its southern border with Guatemala that essentially amounted to detention and deportation. But that also failed to curtail the flow of migrants.

Today, with about 10,000 migrants having entered Mexico in caravans that focused global media attention on their plight, mass roundups and deportations are not an option, officials say.

Nor is striking a deal with the Trump administration to host the migrants indefinitely.

So Mr. López Obrador's government is trying to fold them into Mexican society — and raise money to invest in projects that would boost employment and prosperity in the region.

“It's not enough just to point out that the causes of migration have to be dealt with,” said Marcelo Ebrard, Mexico's foreign secretary, adding that Mexico wants to counter the idea “that the best way to confront migration is through exclusion and control.”

This is, in part, a recognition that Mexico forms a part of a busy migration corridor and that, with or without help from the United States, it has to deal with the issue.

So now pressure on him has intensified to change his style and his proposals. Otherwise, pollsters and local politicians say, larger protests likely loom, with a reproach at the ballot box that risks sending the far right to power.

A poll released Sunday by IFOP for the Journal du Dimanche found that if the first round of the election held in 2017 were held today, Mr. Macron would do slightly better than he had then, but that Ms. Le Pen would do significantly better, pulling ahead of Mr. Macron in the first round, and that the two would again face a runoff.

Although Mr. Macron announced on Dec. 10 a program of tax breaks and spending to help the poorest workers and those on fixed incomes, and had already halted a planned increase in the fuel tax, he has not backtracked on his most consequential reform to date: an overhaul of the labor code. Nor has he retreated on the package of tax changes that included eliminating a surcharge paid by the very wealthy.

The left has berated him for failing to reinstate the wealth tax while the right has taken comfort in his standing firm on the changes he already has made.

For Philippe Aghion, an economist who worked with Mr. Macron during the campaign and who teaches at Sciences Po, the problem is that reforming the labor market, which injects uncertainties into people's lives, should not be done without helping the middle class and working poor.

Now Mr. Macron must do more to prove that he has the concerns of the Yellow Vests in mind, Mr. Aghion said. He said the president should be more generous on unemployment insurance, for example, and ignore advisers who are telling him to decrease it over time.

The Yellow Vests are not going away. Pierre-Étienne Billot, 40, who was protesting with the Yellow Vests in Paris last weekend, said that for Mr. Macron the Yellow Vests were “a bit like head lice” that require multiple treatments.

“One day they will come back,” Mr. Billot said. “He will not be able to get rid of them.”

Aurelien Breeden contributed reporting.

Measure would protect Israel from boycotts

WASHINGTON

Critics of the legislation say the bill infringes on First Amendment rights

BY EMILY COCHRANE

Just days away from a partial shutdown of the United States government, lawmakers are weighing adding a contentious measure to a stymied spending package that would keep American companies from participating in boycotts — primarily against Israel — that are being carried out by international organizations.

Critics of the legislation, including the American Civil Liberties Union and a number of Palestinian rights organizations, say the bill infringes on First Amendment rights and is part of a broader effort on the state and federal levels to suppress support for efforts to boycott, divest investments from and place sanctions on Israel, a movement known as B.D.S.

“The crux of it is silencing one side of the Israel-Palestine conflict,” said Manar Waheed, the senior legislative and advocacy counsel for the A.C.L.U. “Anything that creates a penalty for any First Amendment-related activities is an infringement of the First Amendment.”

The bill, known as the Israel Anti-Boycott Act, is one of several pieces of pet legislation that lawmakers are advocating in the final days of the session, hoping to add to a package of seven spending bills that need to pass to keep the government fully funded past Friday. President Trump had said repeatedly that he would not sign any spending bills unless they contained at least \$5 billion to begin building a wall on the border with Mexico, but the White House signaled on Tuesday that President Trump might be ready to capitulate on the demand.

As the package languishes, lawmakers see an opportunity to give their bills life before the current Congress ends this month.

Other pieces of legislation that could be added include the so-called Blue Water Bill, which would allow Vietnam-era sailors who say they were exposed to Agent Orange as they served offshore to receive the same health benefits as those who were exposed on land. Other



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIN SCHAFF FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



Above, Senator Benjamin L. Cardin, Democrat of Maryland, a sponsor of the Israel Anti-Boycott Act. Left, Senator Richard C. Shelby, chairman of the Appropriations Committee, has objected to unrelated bills clinging to his panel's work.

lawmakers are seeking to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act, which was extended with a brief stopgap spending bill two weeks ago.

But so far, the White House and congressional Democrats have not been able to compromise on wider spending legislation, so none of the bills have a moving vehicle to latch onto.

Republicans worked to create a package that would allow Mr. Trump to declare victory in retreat, but they came up empty, unable to forge a plan that would satisfy a president intent on fulfilling a signature campaign promise and Democrats emboldened by an impending takeover of the House. Instead, on Tuesday evening, Senator Richard C. Shelby, the Alabama Republican who leads the Senate Appropriations Committee, told reporters that Senate Republicans were preparing a short-term bill that would keep the government funded through February.

A stopgap bill would essentially push the government spending fight into the new year, when Democrats will assume control of the House and Mr. Trump's negotiating leverage — already on the

wane — will be considerably weakened.

Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the White House press secretary, offered the first glimmers of a way out of the impasse in an interview Tuesday morning on Fox News, in which she said Mr. Trump — who only a week ago said he would be proud to force a shutdown over wall funding — did not want to see government funding lapse. She said the president was open to spending options short of the \$5 billion lump sum he has demanded and would find “different funding sources” to finance the wall.

Mr. Shelby has objected to unrelated bills clinging to his committee's work, arguing that their inclusion could be another hindrance to final passage. But among lawmakers eager to notch one more legislative victory in a historically unproductive session of Congress, there is still hope that a few more bills could slip through.

“People are looking for whatever vehicle is available that is moving out the door — there isn't much left,” said Sue Walitsky, a spokeswoman for Senator Benjamin L. Cardin, Democrat of Maryland and a sponsor of the Israel Anti-

Boycott Act. “We're counting down days and hours.”

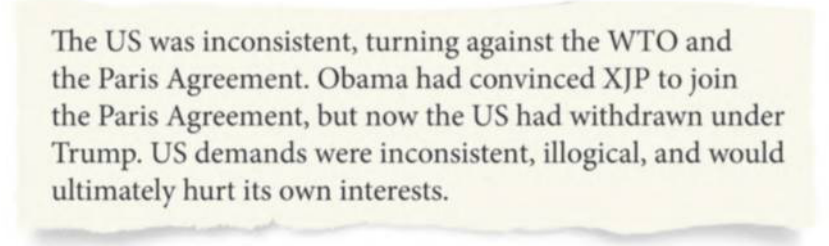
The act would expand amendments first added to the Export Administration Act in 1977, initially to protect American companies from the Arab League boycott of Israel.

Supporters of the measure dispute critics who say it would stifle pro-Palestinian activism.

“These kinds of First Amendment issues were not raised in '77,” said Stuart E. Eizenstat, the chief White House domestic policy adviser during the Carter administration when the amendments were negotiated. “Since it's come up here, in many ways, this legislation is stronger in protecting First Amendment rights because it explicitly indicates that political views are protected.”

The bill sponsored by Mr. Cardin and Senator Rob Portman, Republican of Ohio, was conceived after the United Nations Human Rights Council announced that it would create a database of companies that have business in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, whose governance and status have been in dispute since the Arab-Israeli War of 1967.

Cables reveal E.U. anxiety



Part of a cable describing a meeting between European officials and Xi Jinping, the Chinese president. More than 1,100 cables were made available to The New York Times.

EUROPE, FROM PAGE 1

tions and institutions were targeted years ago. But many were not aware of the breach until a few days ago, when some were alerted by Area 1.

The cables include extensive reports by European diplomats of Russia's moves to undermine Ukraine, including a warning on Feb. 8 that Crimea, which Moscow annexed four years ago, had been turned into a “hot-zone where nuclear warheads might have already been deployed.” American officials say they have not seen evidence yet of nuclear warheads in Crimea.

The European diplomats' account of their private meeting in July with Mr. Xi quoted the Chinese president vowing that his country “would not submit to bullying” from the United States, “even if a trade war hurt everybody.”

“China was not a backward country anymore,” the European note taker described Mr. Xi as saying.

In their conversations with American officials after the Helsinki meeting, European diplomats described efforts by the White House to engage in damage control after Mr. Trump had gone off-script during a joint news conference with Mr. Putin.

Mr. Trump appeared to agree to allow Russians to question former American diplomats in exchange for the American interrogation of Russians who had been indicted by Robert S. Mueller III, the special counsel.

According to a July 20 document describing their private exchanges, White House officials assured the Europeans that Mr. Trump's agreement would be “nipped down” to prevent the questioning of Americans.

A March 7 cable summarized the difficulties in relations between the United States and the European Union that had developed during the Trump administration. In it, a senior European official in Washington spoke of “messaging efforts” to deal “with the negative attitude to the E.U. in the beginning, which had created a lot of insecurity.”

The official, Caroline Vicini, deputy head of the European Union mission in Washington, recommended that diplomats from the 28 member nations describe the United States as “our most important partner” even as it stood up to Mr. Trump “in areas where we dis-

agreed with the U.S. (e.g., on climate, trade, Iran nuclear deal).”

The cable also recommended working around Mr. Trump by dealing directly with Congress, and urged European diplomats in Washington to emphasize member state interest when pushing on a host of issues, including trade, renewable energy and Brexit.

A spokeswoman for the European Union's office in Washington declined to comment.

The trove of European cables is reminiscent of the WikiLeaks publication of 250,000 State Department cables in 2010. But they are not as extensive and consist of low-level classified documents that were labeled limited and restricted.

The more secretive communications — including a level known as “très secret” — were kept on a separate system that is being upgraded and replaced, according to European officials. And ca-

“There is no doubt this campaign is connected to the Chinese government.”

bles that focused on decisions about world powers' 2015 nuclear deal with Iran — from which Mr. Trump withdrew the United States in May — are walled off from the internet in an entirely different system.

Unlike WikiLeaks in 2010 or the Russian hack of the Democratic National Committee and other Democratic Party leaders in 2016, the cyberattack on the European Union made no effort to publish the stolen material.

It also displayed the remarkably poor protection of routine exchanges among European Union officials after years of embarrassing government leaks around the world.

In this case, the cables were exposed after a run-of-the-mill “phishing” campaign aimed at diplomats in Cyprus pierced the island nation's systems, said Oren Falkowitz, the chief executive of Area 1.

“People talk about sophisticated hackers, but there was nothing really sophisticated about this,” Mr. Falkowitz said. After getting into the Cyprus sys-

tem, the hackers had access to passwords that were needed to connect to the European Union's entire database of exchanges.

Area 1's investigators said they believed the hackers worked for the Strategic Support Force of the People's Liberation Army, part of an organization that emerged from the Chinese signals intelligence agency that was once called 3PLA.

“After over a decade of experience countering Chinese cyberoperations and extensive technical analysis, there is no doubt this campaign is connected to the Chinese government,” said Blake Darche, one of the Area 1's experts.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington did not return calls for comment.

After burrowing into the European network, called COREU (or Courtesy), the hackers had the run of communications linking the European Union's 28 countries, on diverse topics such as trade and tariffs, terrorism and summaries of summit meetings. It included vital subjects and insignificant ones.

Many of the reports were the ordinary business of diplomacy — weekly reports from missions in places like Kosovo, Serbia, Albania, Russia, China, Ukraine and Washington, and included descriptions of conversations with leaders and other diplomats or visits to non-European countries.

Among the cables were requests for authorization to finance exports to Iran, as well as details of efforts throughout 2018 to continue economic arrangements that might entice Tehran to comply with the terms of the 2015 nuclear agreement's terms, even after Mr. Trump abandoned it.

There was much analysis in the cables of foreign policy and of Europe's strategies on issues of trade, counterterrorism, migration and enlargement that could be picked apart by China and other countries looking for an advantage.

Asked about the hack, the United States National Security Agency said it was still examining the discovery of the European trove. But the former senior intelligence official said that the European Union had been warned, repeatedly, that its aging communications system was highly vulnerable to hacking by China, Russia, Iran and other nations.

The official said the warnings were usually received with a shrug.

European officials said they are now trying to overhaul their outdated and vulnerable networks.

They insisted that confidential, secret and “très secret” material is handled differently than the cables seized by the hackers and noted that a new system, known as EC3IS, is being developed to handle the more sensitive documents that are shared among diplomats.

David E. Sanger reported from Washington, and Steven Erlanger from Brussels.

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THE MOST FABULOUS JEWELS IN THE WORLD

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STYLE

The biggest fake news in fashion



Vanessa Friedman

UNBUTTONED

Over and over again, in articles and conferences and interviews, authoritative industry members declare it with absolute certainty. It appears as gospel in outlets as varied as Fast Company and The Guardian. It played a prominent part in a feature-length documen-

tary.

What is it? The definitive, and damning, pronouncement that the fashion industry is the second-most-polluting industry in the world. It's so shocking, so catchy and so easy to believe. There's only one problem.

"It is not factually true," said Jason Kibbey, the chief executive of the Sustainable Apparel Coalition.

At the close of a year when lies and so-called alternative facts have dominated the conversation; when "misinformation" was chosen as the word of the year by Dictionary.com; and when the reduction of difficult issues to the most tweetable black-and-white assertions has distorted perception, it's time to put an end to this particular eco-myth once and for all. Only then can we really grapple with the actual problem in all its complicated, multi-faceted reality.

There is no question that there are major issues around sustainability and clothes. That fashion brands bear enormous responsibility for carbon emissions and chemical runoff and landfill gluts around the world. That mea culpas are absolutely merited.

There is no question that designers and executives need to think about their place in the natural and human supply chain, and how they can do the least harm.

And there's no question that it is simpler and more attention-grabbing to call yourself out for being the second-greatest polluter in the world than to label the textile-dyeing-and-finishing industry "the No. 1 polluter of clean water (after agriculture)," as a report in the journal Natural Science did in 2012.

But wait, that's more than just fashion; it could also include home wares and bedding. How, then, to parse fashion's real share and what it could mean?

There is no credible, verifiable source that will accept responsibility for the whole "second biggest" idea.

To trace the claim back to its origin is to play a game of telephone, hopping from link to link to quotation and never arriving. Which is perhaps why most of the people who first popularized the claim have finally started, with somewhat less fanfare, to try to take it back.

An article on the OneGreenPlanet site, for example, asserts that "the \$3 trillion fashion industry is the second most polluting industry, just behind



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY THE NEW YORK TIMES; STAN HONDA/APP/GETTY IMAGES (CLOTHING)

oil," and then links to a piece on the EcoWatch site, which then quotes Eileen Fisher, the designer who made sustainability part of the platform for her namesake brand and who has been given awards for her work in this space.

When queried, Ms. Fisher said she believed she originally got her information from "The True Cost," a 2015 film by Andrew Morgan, and that she believed it was also discussed by the Glasgow Caledonian Fair Fashion Center.

When Cara Smyth, the vice president of Glasgow Caledonian New York College, was asked, she also said she thought the claim derived from the film.

But when I asked Mr. Morgan, the director, where he got the fact back in 2015, he referred me to the organizers of the Copenhagen Fashion Summit, a conference on sustainable fashion, started in 2008. (I have been a speaker at the event.)

Jonas Eder-Hansen, the public affairs director of the Global Fashion Agenda, a forum on sustainability issues and fashion, which grew out of the Copenhagen Fashion Summit, said

It's not about what designer is leaving what brand, or fashion's stealth war on women. But you should pay attention.

he believed the original fact, oft repeated by Eva Kruse, the founder of G.F.A., had come from a report from the Deloitte consulting firm. That report surfaced in Denmark around 2012 but has since disappeared; when contacted, Deloitte was unclear about the identity of the report.

"I had my moment of fear that it came from me," said Linda Greer, a former senior scientist at the Natural Resources Defense Council. "About a decade ago, I was looking at industries that polluted in China, and fashion came up in regards to water. But it really depends what you are looking at."

That is in part why Ms. Fisher has started to recant. "I've been trying to stop saying it because my team has been saying internally that we can't confirm it," she said. "I think it's been about six months."

The Copenhagen Fashion Summit

founders have also been backpedaling, shifting "to more vague statements like 'one of the most resource-intensive industries,'" Mr. Eder-Hansen said.

In 2017, the G.F.A. published a report called the Pulse of Fashion that read at the beginning: "In fact, there is a lack of reliable facts to guide action. It is not enough to respond to unsubstantiated statements such as 'The global fashion industry is the second most polluting industry in the world.' Data and agreed-upon links between cause and effect are what spark ideas, create conviction, and sponsor action."

"But we still hear it," Mr. Eder-Hansen said. And each time they hear it, he said, "we try to say it's not accurate."

Alden Wicker, a journalist and the founder of the Ecocult blog, and one of the first to try to debunk the claim in a 2017 article on Racked, has been doing the same thing.

"I went on an emailing spree a month ago, emailing the first 10 websites that came up when I Googled 'fashion is the second-most-polluting industry,'" Ms. Wicker said. "One person responded."

Does it really matter if this exagger-

ation still stands? After all, as Ms. Greer said, "whether it's No. 2 or No. 5, the point is not totally bogus." If extremeness is what propels necessary action, does the end justify the means? Or does this push us further down the slippery slope of alternative facts on which we are currently sliding?

"We need some drama, otherwise we're just going down on the Titanic," Ms. Fisher said. "But untruths are not O.K."

The problem being, Mr. Eder-Hansen said, "we lose our credibility if we go around spreading hearsay, which is why having accurate data is so important."

Mr. Kibbey said that the sheer scale of "second largest" also masks the need for more granular data-gathering efforts — efforts that are key to quantifying fashion's impact in order to devise ways to ameliorate it. "I wish it would disappear," he said.

The truth is, we should have suspected from the beginning that this was too pat a formulation. The fashion industry is full of intricate, sometimes impossible-to-trace supply chains, and the data is too sparse to come up with a number like that.

So why did so many people fall for it, and why haven't the denials penetrated?

In part, for the same reason that so many people fall for other untruths: the gorgeous simplicity of the accusation; the way it plays into all the prejudices that exist around an industry often associated with indulgence and the culture of disposability; the way it pushes all the right buttons.

"Fashion is a consumer-facing industry," Ms. Greer said. "Cement and steel have two of the largest industrial carbon footprints, but most people don't buy steel and cement." They can't relate.

And unlike many of the distortions floating around in social media, this one didn't arise from malice aforethought, or result from anyone trying to perpetrate a scam or manipulate reality. It very likely comes from a good place: a desire to wake a global industry to the need to do better.

That is partly why, "whenever someone says it at a panel or conference, it's nearly impossible to challenge them," Ms. Wicker said. If you do, she added, you are "accused of negativity, or of apologizing for the fashion industry."

Yet what we do know should be bad enough on its own. Consider the following:

■ Nearly three-fifths of all clothing ends up in incinerators or landfills within a year of being produced.

■ More than 8 percent of global greenhouse-gas emissions is produced by the apparel and footwear industries.

■ And around 20 percent to 25 percent of globally produced chemical compounds are utilized in the textile-finishing industry.

That's pretty damning, as well as sourced. The first two pieces of data come from reports by McKinsey and Quantis; Ms. Greer passed on the third, via a textbook called the "Handbook of Textile Effluent Remediation," edited by Mohd Yusuf.

Although admittedly, if you're trying to capture the public imagination, that title could use a little work.

Open Thread: Ugly sweaters

Every week Vanessa Friedman, The Times's fashion director, answers a reader's fashion-related question in the Open Thread newsletter at nytimes.com/styles. You can send her a question at openthread@nytimes.com or via Twitter: @vvfriedman. Questions are edited and condensed.

We are invited to an "ugly sweater" party. I have proudly told the host and hostess that I own no ugly clothing. How do I swallow my pride, show up, fit in, yet retain my style? — Kurt, Minnesota

First you realize that "ugly sweater" is a misnomer. One person's ugly sweater, after all, is another's expression of joy. It's all in the eye of the beholder. Just remember that scene in "Bridget Jones's Diary" when Bridget (a.k.a. Renée Zellweger) meets the love of her life, Mark Darcy (a.k.a. Colin Firth), and he is tall, dark . . . and wearing a reindeer sweater.

The truth is, when most people say "ugly sweater," they really mean "hok-ey holiday sweater." It would honestly be more accurate to call the dress code "christmukkah kitsch," though in all these cases, accuracy is sacrificed to tradition. I know this because The New York Times actually just had its own "ugly sweater" contest, and I got to engage in a little fashion anthropology.

Anyway, it made me realize this: You should view this exercise not as one of humiliation, but creativity! Most people love getting dressed up for Halloween; this is the same thing by another name. In fact, start with a normal sweater, a snowflake one if you have it. (Ideally, it's not acrylic. For some reason acrylic has become synonymous with "ugly sweater," and I think this should be your line in the sand.) That's your base.

Then accessorize. Pin on some jingle bells or tree ornaments. I would avoid holly because it's prickly, but you could toss on some tinsel. Or just pompoms.

And know this: The winner of our contest actually wore an ugly jacket. Because, as our editor, Dean Baquet, said, "a sweater, in some ways, is an existential thing." Just go with it.

VANESSA FRIEDMAN



FABRIZIO COSTANTINI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES
All your sweaters are too chic, you say? Just add jingle bells.

Protests cut into Paris's golden retail season

The luxury-goods industry has been hit hard as shops close in the name of safety

BY ELIZABETH PATON

From the Champs Élysées to Avenue Montaigne and along the Rue St-Honoré, the glossiest and most glamorous shopping streets of central Paris are usually bustling on Saturdays in December.

Tourists and local residents alike, many of them wearing fur or cashmere and laden with bags, hurry into glittering temples of French heritage like Chanel and Dior, Longchamp and Ladurée to stock up on holiday gifts.

This year, that has changed.

Five straight weekends of demonstrations against President Emmanuel Macron and his economic policies by members of the so-called Yellow Vest movement have caused some of the worst civil unrest France has experienced in more than a decade. Storefronts have been smashed, cars have been set ablaze and some of Paris's best-known landmarks have been damaged.

The number of protesters dwindled significantly this past Saturday compared with previous weekends, but many shops were closed nonetheless in anticipation of further violence, including those of Gucci, Balenciaga and other brands owned by the French group Kering.

The luxury-goods industry, one of France's top export categories and a major driver of tourism in Paris, has been hit hard during its most important month of the year. A police lockdown and fears of widespread vandalism prompted executives at several high-profile companies to close their Paris stores, and their mouths, after some



BENOIT TESSIER/REUTERS

protesters seized on French fashion logos as symbols of inequality and elitism.

Some chief executives, however, did stick their heads above the parapet.

Jean-Philippe Hecquet, chief executive of Lanvin, said the company had closed its flagship store near the Champs-Élysées for three weekends for its employees' safety.

"This time of year is the most important selling period for Lanvin, with December counting for at least two regular months of full-price sales," Mr. Hecquet said. "One could say that our online business could cover our losses, but when it comes to shopping for luxury ready-to-wear, physical stores remain very important."

Dior, Burberry and Kering all declined to comment on how the protests were affecting sales. Chanel confirmed

only that its stores had been closed as a safety precaution, although Karl Lagerfeld, the creative director, said in an interview with New York magazine last week: "I like the moment we are living through, but not the 'yellow raincoats' in the street."

Some people in the industry expressed concerns that luxury brands could become targets in a workers' revolt against the increasingly unpopular Mr. Macron.

The protests have already taken a heavy toll. Retailers across all sectors have lost approximately 1 billion euros, about \$1.1 billion, since the protests began, according to the French Retail Federation.

Bruno Le Maire, the finance minister, has declared the riots "a catastrophe" for the French economy. Small retailers



THIBAUT CAMUS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Online sales count, but "when it comes to shopping for luxury ready-to-wear, physical stores remain very important."

— many of which have also been forced to close — reported revenue that was 20 percent to 40 percent below expectations this month, he said. Hotel reservations were down 25 percent, and restaurants in Paris had seen revenue collapse 20 percent to 50 percent depending on their location, he added.

Fears are growing that Paris could enter a sharp downturn similar to the one that followed the terrorist attacks of 2015.

"You don't want to shop at Louis Vuitton on the Champs-Élysées when cars

are burning on the street," said Mario Ortelli, managing partner of the luxury advisers Ortelli & Company. "You don't want to walk around with an Hermès bag when there's a violent protest happening."

Marc-Andre Kamel, the head of Bain's retail practice for Europe, Africa and the Middle East, said that while sales elsewhere might help luxury brands with global footprints offset the losses in Paris, wholesale department stores like Galeries Lafayette and Printemps were more likely to experience a blunt impact from the protests, since regional stores outside Paris are affected by disruption in other cities.

"It is a grim situation for those retailers," Mr. Kamel said. "Just how bad will be seen when sales figures are released early next year."

Riot police outside the Louis Vuitton flagship store on the Champs-Élysées in Paris, far left, and a worker reinforcing a shop window, near left.

Until the protests began, Mr. Kamel said, "it had been a relatively decent year" for luxury spending.

"For France as a brand, for luxury players, who are a major reason many people travel here, these are nerve-racking times," he added.

Yet a quiet sense of defiance was in evidence on some street corners.

Around the Place Vendôme, a hub of luxury jewelry shops and designer stores, rioters had smashed windows and built barricades on recent weekends. Many of the shops had boarded their windows up entirely, blocking everything inside from view.

Other stores, like Louis Vuitton, created giant, transparent barriers instead, allowing a showcase for sparkling Christmas trees framed by expensive shoes, handbags and accessories, a reminder that those dream purchases were still available, if out of reach for many.

Jean Cassegrain, the chief executive of Longchamp, said some of his Paris stores were closed and security had been added at others. But he emphasized that luxury brands were not the primary object of the protesters' ire.

"The protests did not target luxury stores specifically: bus stops, cafes, construction sites, cars were also damaged," he said. "This is a moment in the life of the city. Paris remains a great and enjoyable city for residents and for tourists."

Nevertheless, for an industry that builds itself on trading in branded aspiration and fantasy, the recent upheaval in luxury's capital city has undeniably tarnished that image. Just how badly will become clear in the coming weeks.

Business

‘Wolf culture’ drove Huawei, for good or ill

SHENZHEN, CHINA

Chinese tech giant favored hard-charging spirit in quest to dominate world

BY RAYMOND ZHONG

Earthquakes, terrorist attacks and low oxygen levels on Mount Everest could not hold them back.

As the Chinese tech giant Huawei expanded around the globe, supplying equipment to bring mobile phone and data service to the planet’s farthest reaches, its employees were urged on by a culture that celebrated daring feats in pursuit of new business.

They worked grueling hours. They were encouraged to bend certain company rules, as long as doing so enriched the company and not employees personally, according to Huawei workers interviewed by The New York Times.

Employees at the company and people who have studied it have a name for its hard-charging corporate spirit: “wolf culture.”

Now, the company’s aggressive ways have been cast in a new light. The United States has accused Meng Wanzhou, a top Huawei executive and daughter of its founder, of committing bank fraud to help the company’s business in Iran.

It is not clear precisely how Huawei’s culture shaped its dealings in Iran. But an intense will to get ahead, which helped propel it to the head of the global market for telecommunications network equipment, seems to have informed employees’ actions in previous cases that put the company under scrutiny.

Huawei workers have been accused of bribing government officials to win business in Africa, copying an American competitor’s source code and even stealing the fingertip of a robot in a T-Mobile lab in Bellevue, Wash. In 2015, Huawei’s founder and chief executive, Ren Zhengfei, said that as part of a company amnesty program, thousands of employees had admitted to violations ranging from fraudulent reporting of financial information to bribery.

In an emailed statement, a spokesman said that Huawei requires all employees to study and sign guidelines on business conduct every year. “At the heart of the guidelines is the principle of acting in accordance with all local laws and regulations,” said the spokesman, Joe Kelly. “Where employees are found to have acted outside these guidelines, the company takes decisive action which can include immediate termination of employment.”

Mr. Ren said in 2015 that Huawei had toughened its safeguards against employee misconduct. But the following year, in a speech that was emailed to employees, he acknowledged that many workers did not pay attention to internal rules and controls — perhaps, he said, because Huawei used to evaluate staff solely according to how much business they won.

More recently, in remarks that were emailed to employees, Mr. Ren said that it was important to enforce internal standards, but that this should not become a hindrance.

“If it blocks the business from producing grain, then we all starve to death,” he said, according to a transcript



GILLES SABRIE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Huawei advertisements at a mall in Beijing. The company was founded by an engineer in the People’s Liberation Army, and military values have long suffused its work culture.

of his comments on a Huawei website.

Ms. Meng’s arrest this month has darkened China’s relations with the United States, scrambling efforts by the two nations to ease a tense economic conflict. Washington has worked for years to undermine Huawei, regarding its products as potential vehicles for espionage and sabotage — something the company denies.

Security concerns about Huawei and other Chinese equipment providers are mounting among traditional allies of the United States.

At the annual meeting of spy chiefs of the so-called Five Eyes countries, Huawei was among the topics discussed by senior intelligence officers from Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, including Gina Haspel, the Central Intelligence Agency director, according to current and former officials. There was no formal agreement to seek a ban of Huawei, but the discussion shows the loose coordination Western security officials have pursued as they try to push the Chinese company out of agreements to build the next-generation mobile broadband networks, known as 5G, some of the officials said.

The pressure on the business is building. In Germany last week, Deutsche Telekom said it was taking seriously the “global discussion about the security of network elements from Chinese manu-

facturers.” On Monday, the Czech intelligence agency warned against the country working with Huawei and ZTE, another Chinese technology company.

Huawei was founded in the late 1980s, during the tumultuous early years of China’s capitalist revival. Mr. Ren was an engineer in the People’s Liberation Army for nearly a decade before starting Huawei, and military values — tenacity, dedication, drive — have long suffused the company.

Huawei workers have been accused of bribing officials, copying a rival’s source code and stealing part of a robot.

In the early years, squads of Huawei salesmen crisscrossed China in sport utility vehicles peddling the company’s telephone switches to post offices. Employees were given mattresses so they could nap while working late nights.

Company lore, as recounted in employee publications and admiring books by business professors, is heavy on stories of dogged staff members enduring physical hardship. They worked to keep telecom services running despite a terrorist attack in Mumbai and an earthquake in Algeria. They braved cold and sleeplessness to provide mobile coverage to climbers on Mount Everest.

Today, the working hours are still long at Huawei, although folding beds at work are more likely to be used for mid-day shut-eye than for all-nighters, according to three employees. Several Huawei staff members spoke to The New York Times on condition of anonymity, fearing reprisals.

New hires at Huawei take part in a boot camp-style training course that involves morning jogs and classes on the company’s culture. Employees also compose and perform skits that illustrate how they would persevere and serve their customers in difficult environs, such as war zones, according to three Huawei employees.

In a research lab in Huawei’s Shenzhen headquarters, a piece of framed calligraphy on the wall reads: “Sacrifice is a soldier’s highest cause. Victory is a soldier’s greatest contribution.”

This intense work environment is not universally admired in China. Internet users savaged Huawei after a 25-year-old employee died of encephalitis in 2006. A spate of employee suicides led to more outrage in the Chinese media.

When it comes to staff conduct at Huawei, there are “red lines” that cannot be crossed under any circumstances, four employees told The Times. These include disclosing company secrets and breaking laws and sanctions.

But in company parlance, there are also “yellow lines,” employees say. They

say they are encouraged to ignore certain internal rules, such as a ban on using gifts or other inducements to win customers, if it benefits the firm to do so.

For some people at Huawei, these lines may have become blurred as the company grew rapidly around the globe.

In 2002, Iraq’s government submitted to the United Nations a 12,000-page declaration on its weapons program, and Huawei was reported to have been named as one of dozens of foreign companies that broke an embargo and sold technology to Saddam Hussein’s regime.

The company denied at the time that it had supplied equipment to Iraq. It said it had bid on two telecom projects in the country in 1999, but withdrew for commercial reasons.

Another test came in 2003, when Huawei was sued by Cisco Systems, the American maker of computer network equipment, for allegedly copying its software and even language from its instruction manuals. The two sides settled out of court.

A decade later, T-Mobile said that Huawei employees had photographed and stolen a piece of a smartphone-testing robot named Tappy to help Huawei produce its own robot. Huawei acknowledged the transgressions and said the employees had been fired. A jury later awarded T-Mobile \$4.8 million in damages.

Allegations of impropriety of other kinds trailed Huawei’s expansion into Africa.

In Ghana, an anticorruption group said in 2012 that the company had sponsored the governing party’s election campaign in exchange for tax breaks. That year, a Huawei executive was also convicted in Algeria of bribing an official from a state-run telecom operator.

Huawei did not comment on the accusation in Ghana at the time. After the Algerian court ruling, the company said it took the court’s decision “seriously” and was reviewing the outcome.

In a 2013 New Year’s message that was published in an employee newspaper, Guo Ping, Huawei’s chief executive at the time, acknowledged that rapid growth had created problems and risks.

“Not long ago, high-speed growth was Huawei’s priority,” Mr. Guo said. “This helped Huawei mature quickly, but it also caused Huawei’s management to become negligent.”

Now, he said, “we must control the impulse to expand, and hold to account managers who spread themselves too thin.”

By then, Huawei had said it had halted expansion in one particularly sensitive market: Iran. Still, United States investigators now say the company broke the law in connection with its business there.

Huawei entered the Iranian market in 1999. Within a decade, the Chinese Embassy in Tehran was boasting that 130 cities in the country were connected to Huawei’s fiber optic network.

“The Iranian telecom market’s reliance on Huawei’s products is growing day by day,” a 2009 article on the embassy’s website said. “Huawei has become the Iranian telecom market’s main hardware supplier.”

Soon thereafter, the United Nations and the United States imposed new sanctions against Iran’s nuclear program. In 2011, Huawei said it would not sign new contracts in the country, citing the “complicated” situation there. It also said it would limit its business with existing customers.

The accusations against Ms. Meng, Huawei’s chief financial officer, stem from events in 2013.

According to an affidavit that was made public during Ms. Meng’s bail hearing, Huawei used a company called Skycom as an unofficial subsidiary for doing business in Iran.

The filing, which contains information provided by the United States, says that Ms. Meng concealed Skycom’s link to Huawei to reassure HSBC and other banks that Huawei was not violating American sanctions against Iran.

As a result, HSBC and its American subsidiary had cleared more than \$100 million in transactions with Skycom in Iran by 2014, the affidavit says.

Huawei still has a presence in Iran. At a cellphone bazaar in Tehran is a store that specializes in the company’s devices.

Inside, a shopkeeper, Hamed Hajipour, says Huawei’s phones are popular in Iran. Mr. Hajipour, 29, has even had his name tattooed in Chinese characters on his arm.

“I love everything about China,” he said. “It’s a great and powerful country.”

Thomas Erdbrink contributed reporting from Tehran; Edward Wong and Julian E. Barnes from Washington; and Hana de Goeij from Prague. Carolyn Zhang and Claire Fu contributed research.

A self-driving car for deliveries only

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.

As passenger service is slow to develop, autonomous industry tries other uses

BY CADE METZ

Last Thursday morning in the desert city of Scottsdale, Ariz., a tiny robotic car turned onto a neighborhood street and pulled up to a home with a Spanish-tile roof and synthetic grass in the front yard.

Not even half the size of a Volkswagen Beetle, the toylike vehicle had no driver and no passengers. Instead, it held six bags of groceries from the Fry’s Food Store down the road. One observer oohed and aahed over how cute the car seemed.

Designed by a start-up called Nuro, the vehicle was making a test run as part of a partnership with Fry’s on autonomous delivery service. Starting this week, Nuro said, two of these small electric cars will chug along local streets at no faster than 25 miles an hour to deliver groceries to nearby homes.

If it all looked a bit ridiculous, that’s because self-driving is still a technology in search of a purpose. With driverless passenger service from companies like Waymo, Uber and General Motors slow to become reality, the autonomous vehicle industry is casting about for practical uses — and hitting upon experiments like food deliveries from cars that make golf carts seem spacious.

Other start-ups are now moving self-driving technology off roads altogether and onto sidewalks, avoiding the risks of traffic. (There are regulatory hurdles here, too.) Postmates, a San Francisco delivery start-up, announced plans last week to offer a service that features a robotic shopping cart that runs along sidewalks and has digital eyes that blink every now and again. Still other companies are targeting long-haul trucking, in which driverless vehicles carry cases of beer and other goods, but not passengers.

“After maybe biting off more than they could chew, people are concentrating on one particular part of the problem they might be able to actually make money from,” said Tarin Ziyadeh, who worked on autonomous technologies at Apple and who recently left Voyage, a company that hopes to bring self-driving cars to retirement communities.

As a whole, autonomous vehicles are still three to four years from the point where they can make regular trips with no safety drivers, said Don Burnette, founder and chief executive of the driverless trucking company Kodiak Robotics. Autonomous passenger services, he added, are more like seven to 10 years away.

“The more people work on urban self-driving, the more they realize what a long road it is,” he said.

Nuro was founded in 2016 by Dave Ferguson and Jiajun Zhu, two key engineers from Google’s self-driving project, which eventually morphed into the Waymo autonomous vehicle business. (Both have the same parent company, Alphabet.) Nuro, which like Google is



CATLIN O'HARA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Starting this week, two small self-driving cars made by Nuro, a start-up, will chug along at no faster than 25 miles an hour to deliver groceries in Scottsdale, Ariz.

based in Mountain View, Calif., and has raised \$92 million in funding, decided to focus on creating tiny self-driving cars — they measure 104 inches long by 43 inches wide by 70 inches high — that would solely make local deliveries.

Mr. Ferguson said there was an opportunity to automate all the trips that Americans make to local stores for goods and services — like buying groceries and picking up laundry — citing statistics that these errands account for a significant portion of all car journeys.

“If we can reduce the cost of these deliveries and get them to you faster than you could make the trip yourself,” he

said, “there would be no reason for you to get in the car.”

While that endgame is nowhere close to reality, Mr. Ferguson said it was closer than autonomous passenger service. That’s because Nuro does not have to worry about the comfort and safety of anyone in the vehicle. And by making the delivery automobiles much smaller than a regular car, it can also increase the margin of error on the roads.

“There is a qualitative difference when you don’t have to worry about passengers,” he said.

The trouble is that when testing this technology, Nuro cannot put someone in

the mini-vehicle who can take over in case of emergency. So the start-up began with tests in full-size cars. It is now confident enough in its technology to put its tiny vehicles on public roads.

Mr. Ferguson, who often refers to Nuro’s minicars as rolling toasters, acknowledged that the idea can seem “weird.” But, he said, he ultimately sees them as a safer way of getting autonomous technology rolling.

Last Thursday, the Nuro cars looked even odder on second glance — because they were being trailed by regular-size vehicles. A dark Toyota Prius with a small wireless antenna perched on its rooftop was following just behind the self-driving robots. This was what the company calls a shadow car, which ferries technicians who can remotely take control of the robotic vehicle if anything goes wrong.

Nuro declined to discuss its financial arrangement with Fry’s. It said that a delivery today using its mini autonomous vehicles costs \$6. Once it removes most of the human labor from deliveries, Mr. Ferguson said, the company can reduce the cost further and eventually serve people who cannot afford deliveries today.

Even so, it was unclear how much demand there would be for the service. Joe Schott, 60, who saw the tiny Nuro car pass his bicycle on a recent afternoon, said it was ideal for his sister, who is disabled. “It’s hard for her to get groceries in and out of her car,” he said.

But Keri Diggins, 45, who shops at Fry’s and teaches sociology at a local college, questioned how much the service would suit people who are elderly or

“After maybe biting off more than they could chew, people are concentrating on one particular part of the problem.”

physically impaired.

“A car can’t take the food to your doorstep,” she said.

When one of Nuro’s cars pulled up to the curb in Scottsdale last week, I noticed it had small motorcycle rearview mirrors on it, even though the mirrors serve no practical purpose. Federal regulations for low-speed vehicles require the use of rearview mirrors, Mr. Ferguson said.

“It’s easier for us just to put them on than to try to get exemptions,” he said.

To see how well the cars worked, I walked up to the vehicle and punched a PIN code into a small digital touch pad. The doors opened upward, revealing two compartments filled with grocery bags.

As I leaned forward to grab them, I hit my head on the open door. Then, reaching for the other bags, I hit my head again. It was a moment that showed how difficult it can be to design machines that interact with humans. In creating its robot, Nuro had not provided as much headroom as it should have — and people behave in inexplicable ways.

“We’ll take the blame for the first one,” Mr. Ferguson said with a smile. “The second one is on you.”

In a newer design, he added, the doors will open higher, so tall people will not hit their heads.

BUSINESS



MARK MAKELA/REUTERS



BRENDAN SMALOWSKI/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

The King of Prussia mall in Pennsylvania, left, and the Federal Reserve in Washington. Consumer spending, the primary form of economic activity in the United States, has been growing at a healthy pace, up 0.6 percent in October.

The Fed’s challenge: Deciphering 2 economies

WASHINGTON

Stock market investors are worried, but U.S. growth remains strong

BY BINYAMIN APPELBAUM

The challenge confronting the United States Federal Reserve as it meets this week is a tale of two economies. Wall Street investors are behaving as if the economic expansion is in grave danger, while the best available figures show that the American economy has continued to grow at a healthy pace.

The disconnect is visible on other Wall Streets across the United States.

Dorice Soroka, who runs a small company at Wall Street and Myrtle Lane in Daytona Beach, Fla., said her revenue had finally reached the level she last saw in 2006. “And that was unhealthy growth,” Ms. Soroka said of the years before the crisis. “This is much more healthy.”

Peoples State Bank, on East Wall Street in Eagle River, Wis., is also prospering.

“Our market areas remain economically healthy,” said Scott M. Cattanach, the president of PSB Holdings, which

operates nine branches in central and northern Wisconsin. The bank recently reported that profits rose 28 percent in the third quarter, and demand for development loans remained strong in the fourth quarter.

Katy Brooks, the president of the Bend, Ore., Chamber of Commerce — whose offices sit on Wall Street — said the region’s tech companies were trying to fill more than 400 vacancies.

The Fed on Wednesday was widely expected to recognize the continued strength of the economy by announcing a quarter-point increase in its benchmark interest rate after a two-day meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee. But the central bank is also expected to tip its hat to queasy investors by emphasizing that future rate increases will depend on continued economic growth.

That would amount to an acknowledgment that 2018 has been a very good year on Wall Streets across the United States — but that there is growing reason to worry about the coming year.

“While the domestic economy remains healthy, the external backdrop has worsened,” said Michael Gapen, chief United States economist at Barclays, referring to a recent weakening of international economic growth, particularly in Europe and China. Mr. Gapen said financial conditions in the United

States had also tightened sufficiently for the Fed to worry about the broader economic effect.

Equity markets jitterbugged on Tuesday, rising and falling and rising again. Oil prices continued to fall, and President Trump renewed his Twitter attacks on the Fed, urging it to “feel the market” and not make “yet another mistake.”

The expected rate increase, which would lift the benchmark rate into a range between 2.25 and 2.5 percent, would mark the fifth consecutive quarter that the Fed has decided to raise borrowing costs. The benchmark rate now sits close to the bottom of what most Fed officials regard as a neutral zone in which the Fed would neither be encouraging nor discouraging economic activity.

The Fed will also publish a set of economic projections by the members of the committee, which comprises the Fed’s board of governors and the presidents of the 12 regional reserve banks. In the last round of forecasts, published in September, most Fed officials predicted that the central bank would raise rates three times in 2019.

Shaving those predictions would underscore the Fed’s doubts about the economy’s trajectory.

There is still a lot of good news. The economy has been expanding for almost a decade, the unemployment rate of 3.7

percent is the lowest in a half a century, job growth remains strong and wages are beginning to rise faster.

Consumer spending, the primary form of economic activity in the United States, has been growing at a healthy pace, up 0.6 percent in October. “What we know about Main Street is they’re spending like banshees on Christmas stuff, and that’s because we’ve seen a real increase in wages at the low end of the spectrum,” said Diane Swonk, the chief economist at Grant Thornton.

“What we know about Main Street is they’re spending like banshees on Christmas stuff.”

But the good news is not great news, at least by historical standards. Some economists see evidence that there is still considerable slack in the labor market, and it appears increasingly likely that inflation will fall short of the Fed’s 2 percent target for the seventh straight year.

Ms. Swonk, who expected the Fed to raise rates on Wednesday, said the central bank was trying to strike a delicate balance by wrapping up its post-crisis campaign to stimulate the economy by holding down interest rates to encour-

age consumer and business borrowing.

“There is good news, and that’s what the Fed is acknowledging by raising rates,” she said. “They don’t think that’s going to crush the economy.”

The fragility of the economy is visible in the anxiety of investors. Between 2004 and 2006, the Fed raised rates at 17 consecutive policy meetings — from 1 to 5.25 percent — without noticeably dampening the euphoria on Wall Street. In recent years, markets have treated each quarter-point increase in the Fed’s benchmark rate as a significant threat to growth.

But the fragility is also visible far from New York’s financial district.

Ms. Soroka, in Daytona Beach, runs a company that gathers information on development projects, allowing contractors and workers to identify potential opportunities.

The company, Builders Exchange and Reprographics, employed eight people before the crisis. Ms. Soroka cut half of those jobs during the crisis, and she has not hired anyone as revenue has recovered. In part, she said, technology has reduced her need for workers. Local governments increasingly post the information she needs on websites, eliminating the need for people to collect documents in person.

But Ms. Soroka said she also remained nervous about investing in her

company. Even in the 10th year of an economic expansion — one of the longest periods of growth in American history — she said she was reluctant to spend on office decorations, or buy new equipment.

“I tiptoe into things,” she said, “because I don’t know how sustainable this is going to be.”

The Fed’s interest rate increases have added a new reason for anxiety. Higher borrowing costs appear to be pinching housing, as sales of new and existing homes have softened in recent months. The government reported Tuesday that housing starts increased in November, but the change was driven by a rise in multifamily construction, which tends to vary month to month.

Ms. Soroka said that developers in the Central Florida region that she watches closely are showing signs of increased caution.

For example, she said, developers appear to be breaking projects into a larger number of phases, so the initial increment of construction is smaller. A developer might obtain permits for a 500-lot subdivision, she said, but begin with a section of 50 homes.

“I know a lot of business owners who are thinking about being a little more liquid, which means that money is not going into the economy,” she said. “They’re just holding it.”

No perks for the rich in Japan’s jails

JAPAN, FROM PAGE 1

on the same charge, until they believe they will win a conviction. In part, their methods are aimed at wresting confessions from suspects. About 90 percent of indicted suspects in Japan confess to a crime before trial.

“I think it reflects differences in the societies and cultures and the views of criminal justice,” said David Litt, an American professor of law at Keio University in Tokyo. “We have a view in the United States and Anglo-American systems where we have the greatest respect for the autonomy of individuals.”

In Japan, Mr. Litt said, “there is a deference to the authorities and to what they say.”

Mr. Ghosn’s arrest has been the talk of expatriates who see a possible chilling effect on foreigners willing to work in Japan. “If you start throwing people in jail for doing something in the gray area,” said Stephen Givens, an American lawyer in Tokyo who has been following the case, “everybody lays awake at night worrying that they’re next to hear the police knock on the door.”

Critics who say the Japanese system is biased against defendants have focused on its high conviction rates, but even in the United States, 90 percent of defendants indicted on a charge of a white-collar crime in federal court were found guilty in 2017, according to the most recent Justice Department figures. Japan also is not the only democracy that restricts a defendant’s access to counsel or holds suspects for weeks or months without charges.

German law allows suspects to be held for months if a judge rules that they might flee, obstruct justice or pose a danger to society. Rupert Stadler, the chief executive of Volkswagen’s Audi division, was held for almost five months without bail this year after he was heard on a wiretap making statements that prosecutors interpreted as an attempt to obstruct an investigation into emissions cheating.

The right to have a lawyer present during questioning is not sacrosanct across democratic countries.

In France, defendants can have a lawyer present during interrogations, but the lawyer is not allowed to interrupt — although in practice, they sometimes do, and they are allowed to ask questions when investigators are finished.

In the Netherlands, lawyers were not allowed in the interrogation room until last year, when the rights of defendants were expanded. As in France, lawyers in

the Netherlands are not supposed to interfere with interrogations but can interrupt under certain conditions, such as if the defendant becomes too fatigued or distraught to answer questions.

In the United States, lawyers for witnesses and defendants are not permitted into federal grand jury proceedings, where suspects are indicted. Lawyers must wait outside the courtroom, and witnesses and defendants can leave the proceedings for counsel.

In Japan, detained suspects can meet with their lawyers outside of interrogations. Yoichi Kitamura, a lawyer for Mr. Kelly, who is an American citizen, visits his client daily. He said Mr. Kelly has denied any criminal wrongdoing. Neither Mr. Ghosn nor his lawyer, Motonari Otsuru, have commented on the charges. Aubrey Harwell Jr., a longtime Nashville lawyer who also represents Mr. Kelly, has not yet been allowed to speak to him.



NISSAN MOTOR CO., VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Nissan executive Greg Kelly was allowed a pillow in his Tokyo jail cell because of a chronic health condition.

“That’s how the system works when they decide to go after you,” said Nicholas Benes, a director at the Board Director Training Institute of Japan, a non-profit group that focuses on corporate governance. “They are keeping you that long to force you to admit to wrongdoing and make the prosecutors’ lives easy.”

Although a confession alone is not sufficient to secure an indictment, suspects come under pressure not only from prosecutors, but from judges who make bail decisions.

During the time when suspects are held but not yet charged, judges rarely grant bail. If a suspect does not confess, “sometimes the court does not approve bail,” said Yasuyuki Takai, a former prosecutor turned defense lawyer who

advised Takafumi Horie, an internet tycoon who was found guilty of violating securities laws in a notorious trial a decade ago.

“If a suspect keeps denying the charges and insisting on their innocence, judges in Japan would worry that the suspect might destroy evidence if they are granted bail,” Mr. Takai said.

Mr. Ghosn and Mr. Kelly are not the first corporate defendants who have been jailed for weeks without charges.

In 2015, Julie Hamp, an American who at the time was the head of communications for Toyota Motor, was arrested and held for two and a half weeks in detention in Tokyo on suspicion she had illegally imported the painkiller Oxycodone. She was released without charge and left Japan soon after.

In 2012, three executives from Olympus, the optical equipment maker, were arrested and detained for nearly six weeks after a wide-ranging investigation of accounting fraud at the company. All three were convicted although they received suspended sentences and served no prison time.

Mr. Horie, a larger-than-life Japanese entrepreneur, spent three months in detention before he was charged with securities fraud. After a six-month trial, he was convicted in 2007 and sentenced to two years and six months in prison. He served 21 months before he was paroled.

Mr. Horie was held in the same detention center as Mr. Ghosn. In a blog published in 2010, Mr. Horie described how prosecutors pressed him to recall incidents entirely from memory and denied his requests to consult his company schedule or emails.

“Now I can say what their intention was,” Mr. Horie wrote. “Once I started describing vague memories, they could adjust it to fit their story. As my memory was unclear, it was easy to manipulate. If I had some discrepancies in my daily conversations with prosecutors, they could check it against all the email records.”

“Anyone would have doubts about their own memory or feel guilty,” Mr. Horie wrote, “if a prosecutor says ‘that’s not what you said yesterday. You’re telling a lie!’”

Life in detention was meager, Mr. Horie wrote. He slept in a 50-square-foot room with a toilet. Detainees could bathe twice a week in winter — three times in summer — and order items like toothpaste and shampoo once a week. A doctor visited inmates weekly.

Breakfast was miso soup and rice

cooked with barley. Mr. Horie was allowed to order bento lunches from a specially vetted shop but they were “not so tasty, to be honest.”

A senior Japanese government official said the prosecutors’ detention center provided each suspect with an air-conditioned cell. He said Mr. Ghosn was not being treated unjustly and that prosecutors were following Japanese laws. A spokesman for Japan’s Ministry of Justice said officials at all correctional facilities in Japan “try to respect inmates’ human rights.”

Mr. Kitamura, Mr. Kelly’s lawyer, said each detainee was given a futon mattress to place atop a tatami mat and typically are not allowed pillows. Mr. Kelly was granted permission to have a pillow, Mr. Kitamura said, because of a chronic health condition.

One Japanese couple who spent months in detention last year sent Mr. Ghosn jackets to keep warm this winter. Junko and Yasunori Kagoike, operators of a kindergarten in Osaka that was embroiled in an influence-peddling scandal linked to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, spent 10 months in an Osaka jail on charges of fraud. In November, they sent a Uniqlo fleece jacket and a down vest to Mr. Ghosn.

Mrs. Kagoike said she received a receipt from the detention center confirming the jackets were delivered and she was asked to pick up the shopping bag. She did not know if Mr. Ghosn was given the jackets.

In an effort to contact Mr. Ghosn and Mr. Kelly, The New York Times sent letters to both men at the detention center, and included three blank sheets of paper and a stamped envelope with each letter.

Officials at the detention center wrote back, confirming receipt of the letters. They requested that the blank sheets of paper be retrieved or they would be returned to The Times, cash on delivery.

Japan has been sensitive to how its justice system has been portrayed and tried to deflect criticism surrounding the Ghosn case as Western insensitivity. Shin Kukimoto, the deputy head of the Tokyo prosecutor’s office, last month defended the treatment of Mr. Ghosn and Mr. Kelly. “Each country has its own history and culture, and systems,” he said. “I wonder if it’s appropriate to criticize our systems just because ours is different from others.”

Hisako Ueno and Makiko Inoue contributed reporting from Tokyo. David Shimer contributed reporting from Brussels.



BULENT KILIC/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Praying in Istanbul for Jamal Khashoggi, the Washington Post contributing columnist.

Not just Khashoggi: Killings of journalists surge in 2018

BY RICK GLADSTONE

Reprisal killings of journalists because of their work nearly doubled in 2018, bringing the total number of journalists killed on the job to the highest point in three years, a press advocacy group reported on Wednesday.

The October killing of the Washington Post contributing columnist Jamal Khashoggi by a Saudi hit squad in Turkey may have been the most prominent case, but journalists were targeted for death all over the world this year — including in the United States, where a gunman killed five people in a Maryland newsroom.

At least 53 journalists were killed worldwide, according to a database compiled by the Committee to Protect Journalists, a New York-based organization that keeps detailed records of deaths and imprisonments in the news profession.

Of those journalists, the database showed that at least 34 had been killed because of their work, compared with 18 in 2017. The database covered killings between Jan. 1 and Dec. 14.

More journalists were killed than in any year since 2015, when the total was 73, the database showed. At least 50 journalists were killed in 2016 and 47 in 2017.

The Committee to Protect Journalists monitors three categories of journalist deaths on the job: reprisal killings, deaths in combat or crossfire, and

deaths on other hazardous assignments, such as riots.

The latest findings reinforced what press advocates have described as an increasingly dangerous and repressive climate for journalists nearly everywhere. The deadliest country for journalists in 2018 was Afghanistan, where 13 were killed. That is the most in any year for Afghanistan since the Committee to Protect Journalists began keeping detailed track of journalist deaths globally in 1992.

The findings were released a week after the group issued an annual tally of jailed journalists that showed at least 250 were behind bars in 2018 for the third consecutive year.

The increase in killings this year after two years of decline, combined with the data on jailings, amounts to “a profound global crisis in press freedom,” the Committee to Protect Journalists said in a statement.

The group blamed the crisis partly on what it called a “lack of international leadership on journalists’ rights and safety,” pointing to the killing of Mr. Khashoggi as a prime example.

The Committee to Protect Journalists said the atmosphere of lethal danger was underscored in June at The Capital Gazette in Annapolis, Md., where a gunman with a grudge against the newspaper killed four journalists and a sales associate. It was the deadliest single attack on the news media in recent American history.

THE YEAR IN SPORTS

The performances were incredible, brave and, in the World Series, exhausting



ARNOLD WIEGMANN/REUTERS

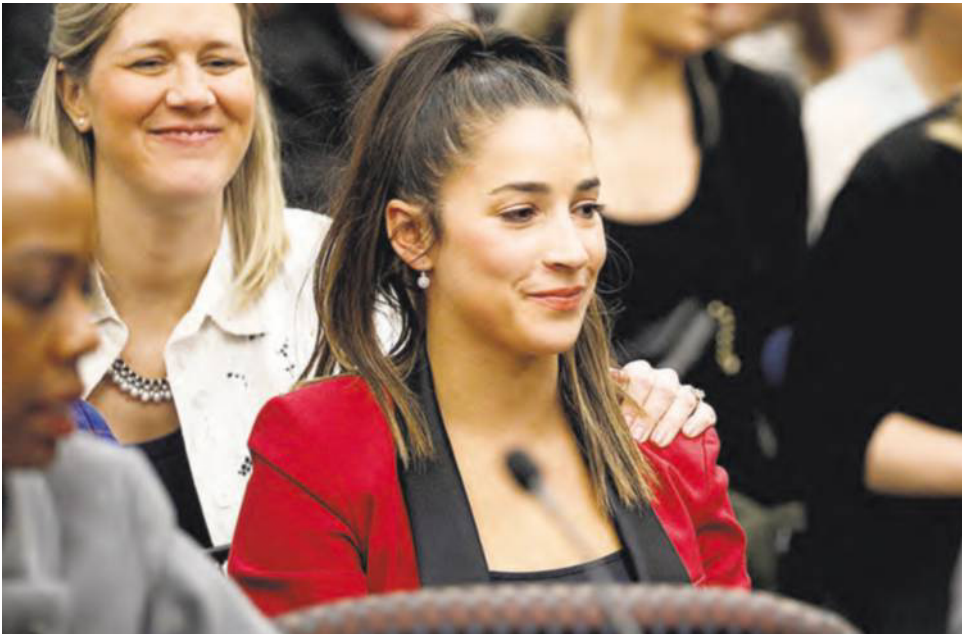


CHRISTOPHE ENA/ASSOCIATED PRESS



KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Staking a claim
Left, Sandi Morris, an American pole-vaulter, competing in Switzerland in August. This column, from top, Ada Hegerberg won the inaugural women's Ballon d'Or award in Paris; Serena Williams came back from pregnancy to reach the finals in two Grand Slams; and Aly Raisman, an Olympic gold medalist in gymnastics, confronted her abuser, Lawrence G. Nassar, in a Michigan courtroom.



BRENDAN MCDERMID/REUTERS

Stunning accomplishments, wrenching moments

GLOBAL SPORTS

Amid many highs, emotional days of reckoning in court

BY CHRISTOPHER CLAREY

It was a year of fitful but undeniable progress for women in sports as they ascended to places in the executive suite, in the commentary booth and on the awards podium they had never reached before.

There was a decision to award equal prize money in professional surfing and moves to give equal pay to women's and men's national soccer teams in Norway and New Zealand, which will likely lead to others' following suit. Women from South Korea and North Korea joined forces to compete in hockey at the Winter Olympics and in other sports at the Asian Games.

Serena Williams came back from pregnancy to reach two Grand Slam finals at age 36 and pushed hard for tennis to make more allowances for working mothers.

Many of the breakthroughs in 2018, as is so often the case, were overdue. None were more emotionally wrenching than the scene in a Michigan courtroom in January as more than 150 sexual-assault victims confronted their abuser, Lawrence G. Nassar, the former team doctor for U.S.A. Gymnastics and an employee of Michigan State University. He had been committing his crimes for more than 20 years.

One by one over several days at Nassar's sentencing hearing, the women rose and delivered their victim impact statements. Some were prominent athletes. Some were not, but all shared a common cause, emboldened in part by the #MeToo movement.

"Imagine feeling like you have no power and no voice," Aly Raisman, an Olympic gold medalist in gymnastics from the United States, said in court. "Well, you know what, Larry? I have

both power and voice, and I am only beginning to just use them. All these brave women have power, and we will use our voices to make sure you get what you deserve: a life of suffering spent replaying the words delivered by this powerful army of survivors."

After all the goals and the touch-downs in 2018, that moment in Michigan far removed from any playing field is the memory that lingers: a searing reminder of all that can go horribly wrong as athletes, parents and administrators chase sporting excellence.

"How can this continue to go on for as long as it did, and why did so many adults enable it?" said Julie Foudy, former captain of the United States women's soccer team.

"At all levels, at U.S.A. Gymnastics, Michigan State, the U.S.O.C., there was an adult in the room who could have stopped it and they never did, and that's something that's hard to wrap your brain around."

The fallout has been significant with the resignation of Lou Anna K. Simon, the Michigan State president, and the move by the United States Olympic Committee to initiate decertification of U.S.A. Gymnastics and build a new federation.

Far from the United States, the Afghan government is investigating allegations, reported by The Guardian, that players on Afghanistan's women's soccer team were abused sexually and physically by male coaches and officials. The challenge now is to create long-term safeguards.

"I would love to believe there will never be a bad guy, but there are going to be bad guys and bad girls," said Sarah Hirshland, the new chief executive of the United States Olympic Committee. "And we have to make sure that when there are, we very quickly have systems in place to find them, weed them out and get rid of them."

Hirshland, appointed in July, is a symbol of systemic change as the first noninterim female chief executive at the committee. A former golf executive who has yet to attend an Olympic Games, her appointment was linked to the Nassar fallout, reflecting the need to bring in a

leader from outside the Olympic world to scrutinize and reform the culture (and the organization's image).

She was not alone in that regard. The Dallas Mavericks of the N.B.A. brought in Cynthia Marshall as chief executive after a Sports Illustrated article revealed sexual harassment and misconduct in the team's front office. Until Marshall's arrival, the Mavericks had no women in executive positions, but Marshall has subsequently hired and promoted several, bringing the gender balance close to 50 percent.

Reaching that figure remains more goal than reality for many sports organizations. But the number of high-profile female leaders in sports is creeping upward, and none is more prominent than Susanna Dinnage, who last month was named to replace Richard Scudamore as chief executive of the Premier League, the leading men's domestic soccer league and one of the world's top sports properties.

"I think it's absolutely a great sign,

from the rear in her tight two-piece competition uniform, pole in hand.

Morris had approved the image's use in part because the promoters had told her they wanted to show her bib number with her name on it: female pole-vaulters wear their bibs on their backs. The promoters, under pressure, eventually chose to stop using the image and to continue promoting the February meet with a picture of Tomas Stanek, a German shot-putter, facing forward with his arms outstretched.

"I can understand why people who are not familiar with athletics would see that billboard and immediately think, 'Oh my gosh, why are you showing that woman from this angle?'" Morris said. "But to me, it was just a picture of me standing there getting ready to compete in a uniform I chose."

But even if Morris says she does not believe there was overt sexism in this case, she recognizes that the debate is important and a sign of change: a growing resistance to objectifying female

The struggle for equality continues, but women's voices could be clearly heard above the din.

but again it's slow in coming," Foudy said. "As we've seen in companies and studies, when you have a diversity of thought around the table, the company performs better. They think differently. They are more progressive. They think openly, and you're not seeing that on all levels."

There were also less-formal signs of a shift in thinking about women in sports.

The practice of using models, known as grid girls, at Formula One ceremonies was ended by the sport's owners, though some race organizers did not comply with the ban.

And Sandi Morris, one of the world's best pole-vaulters, was at home in Fayetteville, Ark., last month when she received a message from her agent in Europe that she had gone viral in Germany.

It turned out that a billboard being used to promote a coming indoor meet in Düsseldorf had drawn concerns about sexism because it showed her

athletes in a microcosm where it remains widespread.

"I'm not naïve to the fact that sexism is everywhere in sport," she said. "If you just get on YouTube and type in women's pole vault, the first thing you will probably see is one of our butts flying over the bar in an up-close image."

"It's really hard, honestly, I'm from a conservative family, and so when I think about my parents wanting to find video of me, I just dread it. I'm like, 'Oh my gosh, Mom. Just don't go on YouTube, O.K.? I will send you the link to whatever you want to see.'"

Morris said it was disappointing to think that her appearance was more interesting to the public than the vaulting ability she had spent her life perfecting.

"Even though this meet had, I know, good intentions, I think that it will be a good lesson for anyone really who's in marketing when they go to image choice," she said. "Imagine that the per-

son in the photo is a male. Would you still use this picture?"

There were also calls for an end to double standards this month when Ada Hegerberg was announced as the winner of the inaugural women's Ballon d'Or award in Paris. In the midst of this breakthrough moment for women's sports, she was asked by the French D.J. Martin Solveig if she knew how to twerk.

Hegerberg curtly said no and looked taken aback. But she later said that she did not perceive the comment as sexist, was not upset and that Solveig had apologized for what he termed "a joke, probably a bad one."

"It's not so much the dance that shocked me," said Roxana Maracineanu, an Olympic medalist in swimming who is France's new minister for youth and sport. "It was more remarks I heard in the crowd, like 'On top of that, she's pretty!'"

In Maracineanu's view, work remains to be done in changing attitudes toward women's sports: in improving the tone and volume of coverage, and in increasing the number of female coaches and officials as well as athletes. She will get a chance when the Women's World Cup of soccer is played in France next year.

FIFA, the sport's global governing body, has vowed to make the 2019 edition the biggest and best ever. But at the same time it has allowed the finals of two major men's competitions — the Copa América and the Concacaf Gold Cup — to be played on July 7, the same day as the women's final.

"FIFA talks a good game of, 'Oh, we're going to optimize and commercialize and build the market,' and then they come out two weeks later with this," Foudy said.

The struggle for equality, and occasional priority, continues, but there is no doubt that women's voices could be heard above the sporting din in 2018.

Nowhere more powerfully than in Michigan.

"Leave your pain here," Rosemarie Aquilina, the judge in the Nassar case, said to one of the victims as she opened the courtroom to those who wished to speak. "And go out and do your magnificent things."

THE YEAR IN SPORTS



Goals
Above, Cristiano Ronaldo went airborne as he scored a goal for Real Madrid in a Champions League match against Juventus in Turin, Italy. Right, Benjamin Pavard of France celebrated after scoring against Argentina in the World Cup round of 16 in Kazan, Russia.



Champions
Left, a shot by Jocelyn Lamoreux-Davidson of the United States slipped past Shannon Szabados of Canada, clinching the gold medal in women's hockey at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea. Below, Arike Ogunbowale of Notre Dame celebrated after scoring the winning basket against Mississippi State in the N.C.A.A. women's final.



BY CHRISTOPHER CLAREY

GAME OF THE YEAR (ROUND BALL)
Wild momentum swings. Breakneck pace. Spectacular, long-range, back-to-back goals from Angel di Maria and Benjamin Pavard. A breakout performance from Kylian Mbappé. More knockout-round misery for Lionel Messi. France's 4-3 victory over Argentina in the World Cup round of 16 in Kazan, Russia, just about had it all, and it set France on the right course to win it all.

GAME OF THE YEAR (PROLATE SPHEROID)
The Los Angeles Rams' 54-51 regular-season victory over the Kansas City Chiefs was the ultimate expression of the new-age N.F.L., where rule changes have given offenses license to run — and above all, pass — wild. But even the defenses came up with three touchdowns in this free-for-all in which the Chiefs became the first N.F.L. team to score 50 points and lose. Super Bowl rematch, please.

MARATHON OF THE YEAR (ROAD)
On the relatively flat course in Berlin, Eliud Kipchoge took the record-breaking to a new level, smashing the men's marathon mark by 78 seconds. He won in 2 hours 1 minute 39 seconds: all the more remarkable considering that he ran the last 10 miles by himself.

MARATHON OF THE YEAR (FIELD)
It was the longest game in World Series history, requiring 18 innings, 18 pitchers and seven hours and 20 minutes. Game 3 between the Boston Red Sox and Los Angeles Dodgers finally ended with a game-winning home run from the Dodgers' Max Muncy that turned out to be a consolation prize. The Red Sox would win the Series 4-1.

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR (INDIVIDUAL)
Once more concerned with getting healthy enough to play with his children without pain, Tiger Woods was healthy enough to win again in 2018. His victory at the Tour Championship at age 42 was his first tour victory in five years, and he was a contender throughout the season as the sport and the public re-embraced him after all his private and public struggles.

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR (TEAM)
Down 2-0 early in the second half to Japan, it looked as if Belgium's World Cup was about to be over. Instead, Belgium staged the biggest knockout-round comeback in 52 years. Its last goal, by the substitute Nacer Chadli, came in the final seconds to give the Red Devils a 3-2 victory.

BOUNCEBACK OF THE YEAR
In August, the French decathlete Kévin Mayer, the overwhelming favorite for gold at the European track and field championships, fouled out of the long

jump and withdrew, despondent. In September, he returned to action at the Decastar meet and broke Ashton Eaton's 2015 world record by 81 points.

UPSET OF THE YEAR
The top skiers already had finished the women's super-G at the Pyeongchang Olympics. NBC announced that Anna Veith had defended her title and shifted to other programming. But that was before Ester Ledecka, much better known as a snowboarder, stole the spotlight and snatched the gold, winning the race by one-hundredth of a second from the 26th start position. "It must be some mistake," said a shocked Ledecka, who went on to complete a unique Winter Olympics double by winning the parallel giant slalom in snowboarding, too.

RACE OF THE YEAR (ON LAND)
In frigid Pyeongchang, the French biathlon star Martin Fourcade took command early in the 15-kilometer mass start event, lost the lead, regained it and then required a photo finish to hold off Simon Schenpp by less than the length of Fourcade's foot. "If you don't like biathlon today," said Fourcade, "you never will."

RACE OF THE YEAR (AT SEA)
After more than eight months and 45,000 nautical miles, the Volvo Ocean Race came down to the final few miles of the short final leg from Goteborg, Sweden, to The Hague. Dongfeng Race Team ended up the champions by winning the trophy by just 16 minutes, becoming the first Chinese-flagged team to win one of sailing's most prestigious races.

DOUBLES TEAM OF THE YEAR
Europe routed the United States at another Ryder Cup, and the routers in chief were the first-time pairing of the friends Tommy Fleetwood and Francesco Molinari. The English-Italian team made birdies and backslaps routine as they became the first European pairing to go 4-0 at a single Ryder Cup, beating Tiger Woods three times and celebrating with a morning-after video. "Moliwood forever," Fleetwood said. The Americans surely disagree.

INNOVATION OF THE YEAR
Love it or loathe it, the video assistant referee system changed the game and the conversation in its first World Cup. Penalty kicks were way up. Red cards were way down. And by December, the Union of European Football Associations was announcing that it was fast-tracking the system to be used in the Champions League knockout round. The system is here to stay, and personally, I love it.

GOAL OF THE YEAR (ON ICE)
A phenomenal gold-medal women's hockey game between the archrivals



LINDSEY VONN



TIGER WOODS



STEVE GUERDAT



LEXI THOMPSON



RAFAEL NADAL



JUAN MARTIN DEL POTRO

THE YEAR IN SPORTS



SEAN M. HAFEEY/GETTY IMAGES

Numbers
Above, teammates waited for Max Muncy, far left, of the Los Angeles Dodgers after his 18th-inning home run to defeat the Boston Red Sox in Game 3 of the World Series. Right, Todd Gurley of the Los Angeles Rams fended off Dorian O'Daniel of the Kansas City Chiefs during a game that the Rams won, 54-51.



KELVIN KUO/ASSOCIATED PRESS



SAM GREENWOOD/GETTY IMAGES

Triumphs
Left, Tiger Woods in the third round of the Tour Championship in Atlanta, which he went on to win in his first tour victory in five years. Below, Ester Ledecka of the Czech Republic, who won the women's super-G at the Winter Olympics by one-hundredth of a second. She later won the parallel giant slalom in snowboarding.



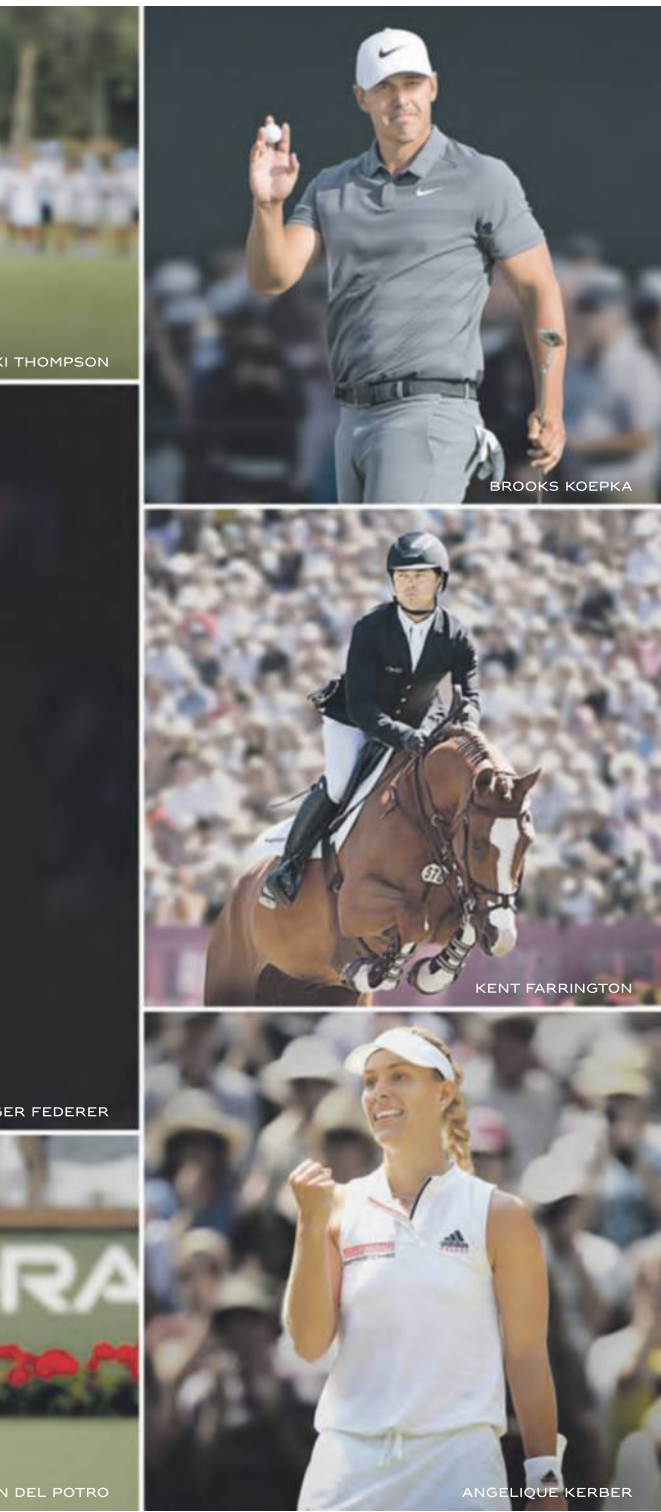
FABRICE COFFRINI/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

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OYSTER PERPETUAL DATEJUST 41



Canada and the United States was decided by a shootout goal worthy of the occasion from Jocelyne Lamoureux-Davidson. She faked a wrist shot, feinted left, then darted right and slipped the puck past the lunging Canadian goalkeeper Shannon Szabados. The Americans were Olympic champions for the first time since 1988 and watched the goal on repeat at their late-night celebration.

GOAL OF THE YEAR (ON GRASS)
Pavard's half volley from 20 yards out against Argentina was a bolt-from-the-blue master strike from a French defender who had never scored a professional goal with his foot. It leveled the score at 2-2 and changed the course of France's World Cup campaign (and Pavard's life).

GOAL OF THE YEAR (IN FLIGHT)
Overhead kick? Bicycle kick? Scissors kick? Whatever you call it, Cristiano Ronaldo's second goal against Juventus in Real Madrid's 3-0 victory in the first leg of their Champions League quarterfinal in April was a thing of pure beauty: just a shade more spectacular than Gareth Bale's similar strike in the final. Come September, Ronaldo was playing for Juventus.

MEANINGLESS GOAL OF THE YEAR
Toni Kroos's curving, precision-guided free kick gave Germany a last-gasp 2-1 victory over Sweden and new hope in round-robin play at the World Cup. But the Germans, the defending champions, still finished last in their group and failed to advance.

SAVE OF THE YEAR
Igor Akinfeev, Russia's goalkeeper, guessed wrong on Iago Aspas's penalty kick: diving right and a little early, if you're a stickler for the rules. But there was no second-guessing his reflexes as he extended his left leg high and somehow deflected the down-the-middle shot to secure victory over Spain and one of the biggest knockout-round upsets in World Cup history.

GAFFE OF THE YEAR
Goalkeeper blunders were contagious in the Champions League, and Loris Karius made two that cost Liverpool goals in its 3-1 loss to Real Madrid in the final. But at least Karius had an excellent excuse: a potential concussion early in the second half after a collision with Sergio Ramos. The Bayern Munich goalkeeper Sven Ulreich was in apparently perfect health in the semifinals when he ventured out to collect a ball with the score tied at 1-1, only to realize that he could not grab it with his hands. His desperation kick turned into a whiff and Real Madrid's Karim Benzema scored one of the easiest goals of his life.

PASS OF THE YEAR
In March, when the Los Angeles Lakers were LeBron James's adversary instead of his employer, James palmed

the ball and feigned a throw to his Cleveland teammate Kyle Korver. Everyone took the bait but Ante Zizic, who caught James's dazzler of a no-look pass and dunked. Even Laker fans applauded. Consider it foreshadowing.

SHOT OF THE YEAR (WITH A RACKET)
With the fifth set deadlocked at 24-24 between Kevin Anderson and John Isner, no end was in sight in the semifinals of Wimbledon. But then Anderson slipped on the grass, rose to his feet and slapped a forehand with his nondominant left hand to keep a rally alive. He won it and went on to break Isner's serve before holding his own to reach his first final at the All England Club.

SHOT OF THE YEAR (WITH A BALL)
Even off balance and tightly guarded, Arike Ogunbowale of Notre Dame still found a way to make her last-second three pointer to defeat Mississippi State and win the N.C.A.A. women's basketball title. Only two days earlier, she had made another game-winning shot to defeat UConn in the semifinals.

MEANINGLESS SHOT OF THE YEAR
Stephen Curry and the Golden State Warriors can work wonders from long range. But Curry's impromptu, no-look backward, one-handed flip from half court was particularly magical, even in a practice session.

CELEBRATION OF THE YEAR
Roma upset Barcelona 3-0 in the second leg in Rome to reach the Champions League semifinals and overcome a 4-1 first-leg deficit. It was a stunning comeback, and Roma's owner, James Pallotta, marked the moment much later in the evening by jumping into a fountain in the Piazza del Popolo. "I have a history of going one step too far, going all the way back to college," he told the BBC after being fined 450 euros, or \$510, by the city of Rome for his illicit swim. Pallotta, an American who made a fortune as a hedge fund manager, had no problem paying up. He then pledged €230,000 to the restoration of a different fountain near the Pantheon. Site of a future late-night dip?

PREMATURE CELEBRATION OF THE YEAR
England's World Cup run inspired Teddy Allen, a fan, to get a large tattoo of the striker Harry Kane along with the words "World Cup Winners 2018." England lost in the semifinals.

PREMATURE CELEBRATION OF A CELEBRATION (OF THE YEAR)
When Hirving Lozano scored what turned out to be the game-winning goal for Mexico over Germany, initial reports indicated that celebrations in Mexico City had set off an actual earthquake. That set off headlines and awe worldwide. Some scientists later debunked the claim, but there is no doubt that Mexico rocked Germany's world.

THE YEAR IN SPORTS

Snapshots from 2018

While the year was full of noteworthy sporting accomplishments, photographers also found the loveliness in quieter moments.

Simona Halep of Romania, right, broke her racket during her first-round match against Kaia Kanepi of Estonia at the United States Open in August. Halep, the No. 1 women's player, lost the match. At far right, a crowd reacted to Tiger Woods at the United States Open in June.



BEN SOLOMON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



NICOLE BENVENIO/THE NEW YORK TIMES



ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Oddvar Bra, above, an Olympic medalist who is one of Norway's most famous cross-country skiers, working the hills near Furnes, Norway, in January. Bra, 67, has retired from competition.

At right, Miu Suzuki of Japan performing with her partner, Ryuichi Kihara, during the Winter Olympics in South Korea in February.



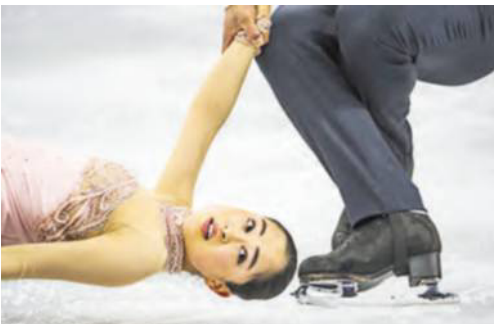
KO SASAKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

At left, players in the National High School Baseball Championship held at Koshien Stadium in Nishinomiya, Japan, in August. The tournament was first held in 1915.

Below, fixing the grounds at the 2018 Belmont Stakes in Elmont, N.Y, in June. Justify won, completing the Triple Crown.



EMMA HOWELLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES



CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES



PETE KIEHART FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Young soccer players, left, from Aubervilliers, France, relaxing between games during a tournament in May; and, right, Michael Thomas, a safety with the New York Giants, visiting a school in Manhattan in September.



KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Liubov Nikitina of Russia, a freestyle skier, looked as if she was performing inside a snow globe during the Winter Olympics.



JAMES HILL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Buffalo Bills fans, below, during the N.F.L. draft in April. The team chose the quarterback Josh Allen with its first pick. Below at right, Geoffrey Kamworor of Kenya, the 2017 New York City Marathon winner, running in Central Park in November. He finished third in this year's race.



COOPER NEILL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES




KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Colin O'Brady, right, with most of the gear for his attempt to become the first person to walk 1,100 miles across Antarctica unsupported. He reached the South Pole on Dec. 12 and is scheduled to finish next month.




TAMARA MERINO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES




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OFFICIAL WATCH
SCUDERIA FERRARI

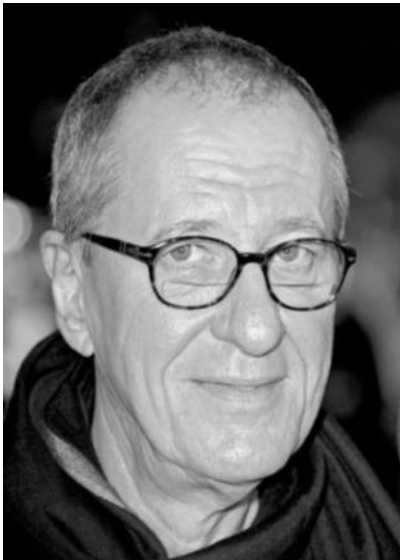
Opinion

The cost of telling a #MeToo story in Australia

Why Yael Stone is terrified to talk about Geoffrey Rush.

Bari Weiss

Yael Stone is scared. We are in New York City, at a ramen place near her apartment in Astoria, Queens, and Ms. Stone, who stars in “Orange Is the New Black,” has barely touched her soup. She tells me she hasn’t been sleeping for the better part of a year. It’s not just her 6-month-old baby who’s keeping her up, but her decision to come forward for the first time and speak to me about her experiences with Geoffrey Rush, one of the most powerful actors in her native Australia. Most women who go public with #MeToo stories are fearful for obvious reasons. There is the pain of reliving traumatic experiences. There is the rage of not being believed. And there is sometimes the discomfort of admitting, as Ms. Stone readily does, that she didn’t say “no” and at times even encouraged some of his behavior. She did so, she says, out of fear of offending a mentor and friend. But Ms. Stone isn’t just afraid of the emotional consequences of talking about her allegations against Mr. Rush, her onetime hero, including that he danced naked in front of her in their dressing room, used a mirror to watch her while she showered and sent her occasionally erotic text messages while she was 25 years old and starring opposite Mr. Rush, then 59, on stage in “The Diary of a Madman” in 2010 and 2011. She is worried that Australia’s defamation laws will drag her into a legal and financial quagmire. In the United States, the legal burden is on the person who claims to have been defamed: He or she must prove that the allegations are false. In Australia, in the area of libel law, it’s the opposite. The burden is on the publisher to prove that the allegations against the plaintiff are true. In addition, public figures who sue for libel in the United States must prove that the



Geoffrey Rush in 2011.

publisher acted with reckless disregard of the truth, even if the statements prove false. Mr. Rush said in a statement that Ms. Stone’s allegations “are incorrect and in some instances have been taken completely out of context.” But, he added, “clearly Yael has been upset on occasion by the spirited enthusiasm I generally bring to my work. I sincerely and deeply regret if I have caused her any distress. This, most certainly, has never been my intention.” “I know I have truth on my side,” Ms. Stone told me during a phone call last week. And yet, “you can see in all of my communications with you that there’s an element of terror.” The same power dynamics present in #MeToo stories, she said, “are reflected in a legal system that favors the person with a good deal more money and a good deal more influence and power.” Australia’s defamation laws help explain why the #MeToo movement, while managing to take down some of the most powerful men in the entertainment and media industry in the United States, has not taken off there. “Australia is the only Western democracy without an explicit constitutional protection for freedom of speech,” Matt Collins, a defamation lawyer and the president of the Victorian Bar, told me. “People say that Sydney is the libel capital of the world,” he added. The upshot: Not only is it easier for a plaintiff to win a defamation suit in Australia, but people are far less likely to blow the whistle on misconduct, knowing what the legal (and therefore financial) consequences might be. Indeed, if a law firm had not volunteered to represent Ms. Stone pro bono, she said, there is no way she would have been able to come forward. But that financial support goes only so far. Crucially, if the actress is sued and loses, she will be personally responsible for the damages. That Ms. Stone is willing to take such a risk indicates how strongly she feels about the matter. “I think the fact that she’s speaking

about this now is incredibly courageous,” said Brenna Hobson, who was the general manager of the company that produced “Diary of a Madman” and has known Mr. Rush for more than two decades. “The use of defamation cases against women with sexual harassment complaints is having a huge chilling effect,” said Kate Jenkins, the Australian government’s sex discrimination commissioner. “Women I speak to all over the country are absolutely adamant that they cannot complain because it risks absolutely everything for them.” An Australian filmmaker named Sophie Mathisen put it more bluntly: “The question in our current context is not, Do you want to come forward and speak on behalf of other women? The question is, Do you want to come forward and set yourself on fire publicly?”

WOMAN ON FIRE

For the past year in Australia, the particular woman on fire has been an actress named Eryn Jean Norvill — someone who never wanted to come forward at all. In late 2017, two front-page articles in The Daily Telegraph reported on Geoffrey Rush’s “inappropriate behavior” during a 2015-16 production of “King Lear” by the Sydney Theater Company. The paper, which memorably dubbed Mr. Rush “King Leer,” didn’t name the young actress who claimed he had harassed her. Mr. Rush adamantly denied the allegation and accused the paper of making “false, pejorative and demeaning claims.” He sued the publisher, Rupert Murdoch’s Nationwide News, and the articles were removed from the paper’s website. When Nationwide News submitted its defense, it identified the actress as Ms. Norvill, who played Cordelia opposite Mr. Rush, and her name became a matter of public record. And so for the past several months, Ms. Norvill has been in the headlines as a leading witness in the case, despite the fact that she had complained to the theater company about Mr. Rush’s behavior informally and confidentially. “What mattered to The Daily Telegraph here was their front page. She didn’t matter,” David Marr, a journalist for The Guardian, told me. Still, we have learned much from Ms. Norvill’s testimony. She said that she felt variously “trapped,” “frightened,” “shocked” and “confused” during the play’s run. She claimed Mr. Rush “deliberately” touched her breast onstage, sent her suggestive text messages, called her “yummy” and more. “I was at the bottom of the rung in terms of hierarchy and Geoffrey was definitely at the top,” she told the court. “I wanted to be a part of his world and we were also playing father and daughter. I felt as though if I was to speak or reprimand his behavior, I would jeopardize the relationship, that tenderness, the closeness that is needed in those two roles.” “I had the least power,” she said. “What was I supposed to do?”

‘STRANGE INTIMACIES IN THE DRESSING ROOM’

For most Americans, Geoffrey Rush is the guy who teaches Colin Firth not to stutter in “The King’s Speech.” In Australia, he is a theater-industry kingpin, capable of making a career. He was long the president of the Australian equivalent of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and he was named Australian of the Year in 2012. Yael Stone worshiped him. She said, “He has managed to draw a long bow between his training at Lecoq as a clown all the way through to understanding the internal workings of someone like David Helfgott, for which he won the Academy Award for ‘Shine.’” Even now, she calls him a “national treasure.” In 2010, Ms. Stone was offered the role of a lifetime: to play opposite Mr. Rush in “The Diary of a Madman,” to run first in Sydney and then at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York. “It was the biggest break I had ever had,” she said. “This wasn’t a stepping-stone. It was a leap across the river.” But things were “weird” from the start of their intensive two-week rehearsal process. Ms. Stone confided in a number of family members and friends who were close to her at the time, and several of them told me in interviews that they remembered many details of her account. Three people who worked on the play also confirmed many aspects of her story. First there were the texts. They were both affectionate and flirtatious, flowery and yet occasionally vulgar, and would come until the wee hours of the night. Ms. Stone showed a number to me but asked me not to quote from them. Part of her discomfort is probably because, as she put it, she “enthusiastically and willingly” bantered back. “I was so flattered that someone like that would spend their time texting me into the very early hours of the morning,” she said. “Gradually the text messages became more sexual in nature, but always encased in this very



CELESTE SLOMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

highfalutin intellectual language.” “I’m embarrassed by the ways I participated,” Ms. Stone told me. “I certainly wouldn’t engage as the person I am now in the way I did when I was 25.” It wasn’t just the texts. There were, she says, “strange intimacies in the dressing room.” Sometimes he would ask her to remove his contact lenses, say, or take off his sweaty costume at intermission. When she would sleep between matinee and evening performances in the cramped space underneath their makeup desks he would join her uninvited. Then there was the day he held a mirror above her shower. The shared dressing room had two shower cubicles next to each other. After the show one evening, Ms. Stone said, “I remember I looked up to see there was a small shaving mirror over the top of the partition between the showers and he was using it to look down at my naked body. I believe that it was meant with a playful intention, but the effect was that I felt there was nowhere for me to feel safe and unobserved.” “I saw it,” another person who worked on the play and asked to remain anonymous told me about the mirror incident. “It was very close quarters and I had a direct view of the showers. After the show that night, I heard Yael scream and tell him to stop.” “I certainly talked about it with Yael afterward. It was one instance of her feeling psychologically and physically intimidated by him,” the person said.

Ms. Stone herself does not remember screaming. Indeed, she laughed at the idea that she would have risked upsetting Mr. Rush in any way. “I said some words to the effect of, ‘Bugger off, Geoffrey.’ I was walking a very delicate line where I needed to manage these uncomfortable moments but never, never offend him.” “There was no part of my brain considering speaking to anyone in any official capacity. This was a huge star,” she said. “What were they going to do? Fire Geoffrey and keep me?” Ms. Hobson, the general manager, said the play’s director, Neil Armfield, knew that something had transpired. “What I did know at the time was that Neil Armfield had spoken to Geoffrey about not walking in on Yael in the shower,” she told me from Scotland. Mr. Armfield says he knew nothing of that particular incident, but wrote in a response to me, “I was aware that Yael had felt some discomfort in sharing the dressing room with Geoffrey. I offered that Yael should move to another dressing room but my memory is that she declined.” A similar dynamic played out, Ms. Stone said, when Mr. Rush danced before her in a “playful, clownish manner” while he was “totally naked” one evening while she was removing her makeup. She found a way to respond with “an attitude of, ‘Oh, you’re a very naughty boy.’” “I didn’t want him to think I was no fun, that I was one of those people who couldn’t take a joke,” Ms. Stone said. A person who witnessed the incident recalled, as Ms. Stone did, that it straddled a familiar line. “It was, I suppose, again that line between comical and obscene,” the person said. When, later, at an awards show connected to the play Mr. Rush touched Ms. Stone’s back “in a very

sensual manner” that was “unwanted and sustained” — a significant enough violation that he wrote to her and apologized the next day, calling it “uncalled-for but had to” — she made nothing of it. In a year of Hollywood horror stories, Ms. Stone’s experience does not rank among the worst. But it took its toll. “My level of anxiety was very high,” she said. She told the man she was dating at the time that she was scared to go out with Mr. Rush after the show “because I was nervous about what was expected of me.” Others noticed Ms. Stone’s anxiety. “The play for me was tainted with a certain discomfort because of the dynamic between Geoffrey and Yael — not knowing what exactly was going on or how to respond,” said another person who worked on the show and asked not to be named. Ms. Stone has been keeping a diary since she was 12, and her entries from the time confirm her memories. On Jan. 21, 2011, she wrote of a “new friend who fascinates and delights me (with equal parts revulsion and horror).” By February, she had written, “I’ve never hated acting so much.”

LOSING FRIENDS

Last month, nearly a year since Mr. Rush filed suit against Nationwide News, the court finished hearing arguments in the defamation case. The judge is supposed to deliver his decision in the new year. Back when the case began, Ms. Stone said she “swore I would never come forward. My intention was to keep it private.” Instead of going public, Ms. Stone wrote the actor an email on December 11, 2017. Subject line: “Challenging times.” The email is self-aware and generous. “I’m sure that this moment is extremely challenging and my thoughts these last few weeks have come to you many times. I hope you are ok. I worry about you, about Jane and the kids,” it begins, and then goes on to tell him that she was made uncomfortable by him during the play. “In the name of years of friendship I wanted to share with you what I have always been afraid to say,” she wrote. “I hope it’s possible for you to receive this in the spirit that it is meant. With a view toward healing.” She never heard back. Now, she said, “I feel a responsibility to speak, but I know it will cost me friendships.” She hates the idea of hurting a mentor, someone who even helped her get a visa to work in the United States by writing a letter on her behalf. “If Geoffrey had written back and said I’m sorry and offered to work with me to inspire positive change in our industry, it may have transformed both



DAN HIMBRECHTS/AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATED PRESS, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

Eryn Jean Norvill, center, an Australian actress, leaving federal court in Sydney, Australia, after giving evidence in a defamation trial brought by the actor Geoffrey Rush.

OPINION

The New York Times

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

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YO, PUTIN

The Russian leader is down with rappers’ freedom of expression. To a point.

It was somewhat curious when Vladimir Putin came out, sort of, in defense of Russian rappers whose concerts have been canceled in cities across Russia in recent weeks. Curious, because Mr. Putin’s image in the West is not of someone who would be sympathetic to angry, obscene, uncensored rap viewed by tens of millions of youths and despised by parents and local authorities.

Yet when the canceled concerts were raised at a meeting of his Council for Culture and Art, Mr. Putin — who has himself borrowed on occasion from Russia’s rich lexicon of deletable expletives — argued that obscenity was part of the culture, and that, in any case, it would be counterproductive to try to block a form of poetry and music that was all over the internet.

The “sort of” interjected above was from the president’s argument that of the three pillars on which, he said, rap rests — sex, drugs and protest — drugs are indeed worrisome. “That is a path to degrading the nation,” he declared. “If it is impossible to stop, then we need to lead, and in an appropriate way, direct.”

Mr. Putin did not elaborate on what forms that might take, which is unfortunate, since it would be interesting to hear some authoritarian rap cooked up in the Kremlin. Actually, there is existing material he could use — one macho hit by the rapper Slava KPSS (“Glory to the CPSU,” the Communist Party of the Soviet Union) has as its refrain “Vladimir Putin.”

Russian rap is enormously popular with the new generation of Russians. In August 2017, Slava KPSS (Vyacheslav Mashnov) beat the veteran rapper Oxxxymiron (Miron Fyodorov) in a keenly awaited rap battle that got more than 10 million views on YouTube within 24 hours. Last month, the arrest of the rapper Husky in the southern city of Krasnodar prompted mass protests. After his concert was canceled because the authorities deemed his lyrics offensive, he climbed onto the roof of a car and tried to do his show there. He was arrested and sentenced to 12 days for hooliganism, but the public outcry was so big that he was quickly released.

At the culture council meeting, a prominent Russian music producer, Igor I. Matvienko, was a bit more unforgiving than Mr. Putin, citing what he called “problems in the development of musical popular culture, if you can call it culture,” posed by the growing popularity of rap and hip-hop in Russia.

“If before it was marginal, today, believe me, unfortunately it cannot be compared to the movies, theater or classical music,” Mr. Matvienko said, speaking of Russian rap and reminding his audience that the genre originated in the United States. He added, somewhat fatalistically, “It’s what our youth listen to.”

These are not forces the Kremlin wants to take on, at least so long as Mr. Putin himself remains relatively unscathed by the rappers, even if they are anti-establishment and raw. His response to the council smacked more of letting a sleeping dog lie than any appreciation of hip-hop.

Though older generations everywhere get worked up over radical developments in art, music and cultural forms — recall how American parents reacted to Elvis Presley, the Beatles, hippies and beat poets — the arts have a powerful history as a political force in Russia and the Soviet Union.

Artists, writers and musicians outside the official culture canons were a powerful opposition to the Communist Party, and the less official the more potent. Mr. Putin has to be aware of the power, for example, of the folk singer Vladimir Vysotsky, who became an underground icon in the 1970s with his songs about the hard plight of ordinary people. And Leningrad, where he grew up, was home to some of the most popular Russian rock bands that arose in the wake of Beatlemania.

But it is also a venerable Russian tradition for the state to try to shape and control culture. Lenin taught that every artist has the right to be free, followed by the usual Soviet qualification. “However, we are Communists and we must not stand with folded hands and let chaos develop as it pleases,” Lenin wrote. “We must systemically guide this process and form its result.”

Mr. Putin’s “lead and direct” suggested that authoritarian delusions die hard. It didn’t work then, and it would be far more futile in the age of the internet and social media. And as Russia’s rappers have argued, the country’s grave drug problem is not their doing, and censoring it out of their work won’t solve it.

Russia’s information warfare

Renée DiResta

The Russian disinformation operations that affected the 2016 United States presidential election are by no means over. Indeed, as two new reports produced for the Senate Intelligence Committee make clear, Russian interference through social media — contrary to the suggestion of many prominent tech executives — is a chronic, widespread and identifiable condition that we must now aggressively manage.

The Senate committee asked two research teams, one of which I led, to investigate the full scope of the recent multiyear Russian operation to influence American opinion executed by a company called the Internet Research Agency. The Senate provided us with data attributed to the agency’s operations given to the Senate by Facebook, Twitter and Alphabet (Google’s parent

company), companies whose platforms were manipulated for that purpose.

Our report, announced by the committee on Monday, concludes that Russia was able to masquerade successfully as a collection of American media entities, managing fake personas and developing communities of hundreds of thousands, building influence over a period of years and using it to manipulate and exploit existing political and societal divisions. While Russia is hardly the only geopolitical actor with a well-thumbed disinformation playbook, a look at the data — which concerned the Internet Research Agency’s operation over the last three years — reveals its enthusiasm for and commitment to modern information warfare.

Regardless of what any tech executives may have said, the data indicate that this was not a small-scale problem fixable by tweaking a platform’s advertising purchase policy. Rather, it was a cross-platform attack that made use of numerous features on each social

network and that spanned the entire social ecosystem.

Tech executives have also stressed that Russian disinformation efforts were a small percentage of the total content on any individual platform

The U.S. Senate gave my research team data from social media companies. The picture that emerges is grim.

beloved by internet marketers, is apropos here: A vulnerable few contract an initial “infection” that then spreads exponentially through the broader population, ultimately enabling the infection to “jump” into

entirely different populations (including offline populations, in this case).

In official statements to Congress, tech executives have said that they found it beyond their capabilities to assess whether Russia created content intended to discourage anyone from voting. We have determined that Russia did create such content. It propagated lies about voting rules and processes, attempted to steer voters toward third-party candidates and created stories that advocated not voting.

Our analysis underscores the fact that such influence operations are not specific to one platform, one malign actor or one targeted group. This is a global problem. The consolidation of the online social ecosystem into a few major platforms means that propagandists have ready audiences; they need only blanket a handful of services to reach hundreds of millions of people. And precision targeting, made possible by a decade of gathering detailed user behavior data (in the service of selling ads), means that it is easy and inexpensive to reach any targeted group.

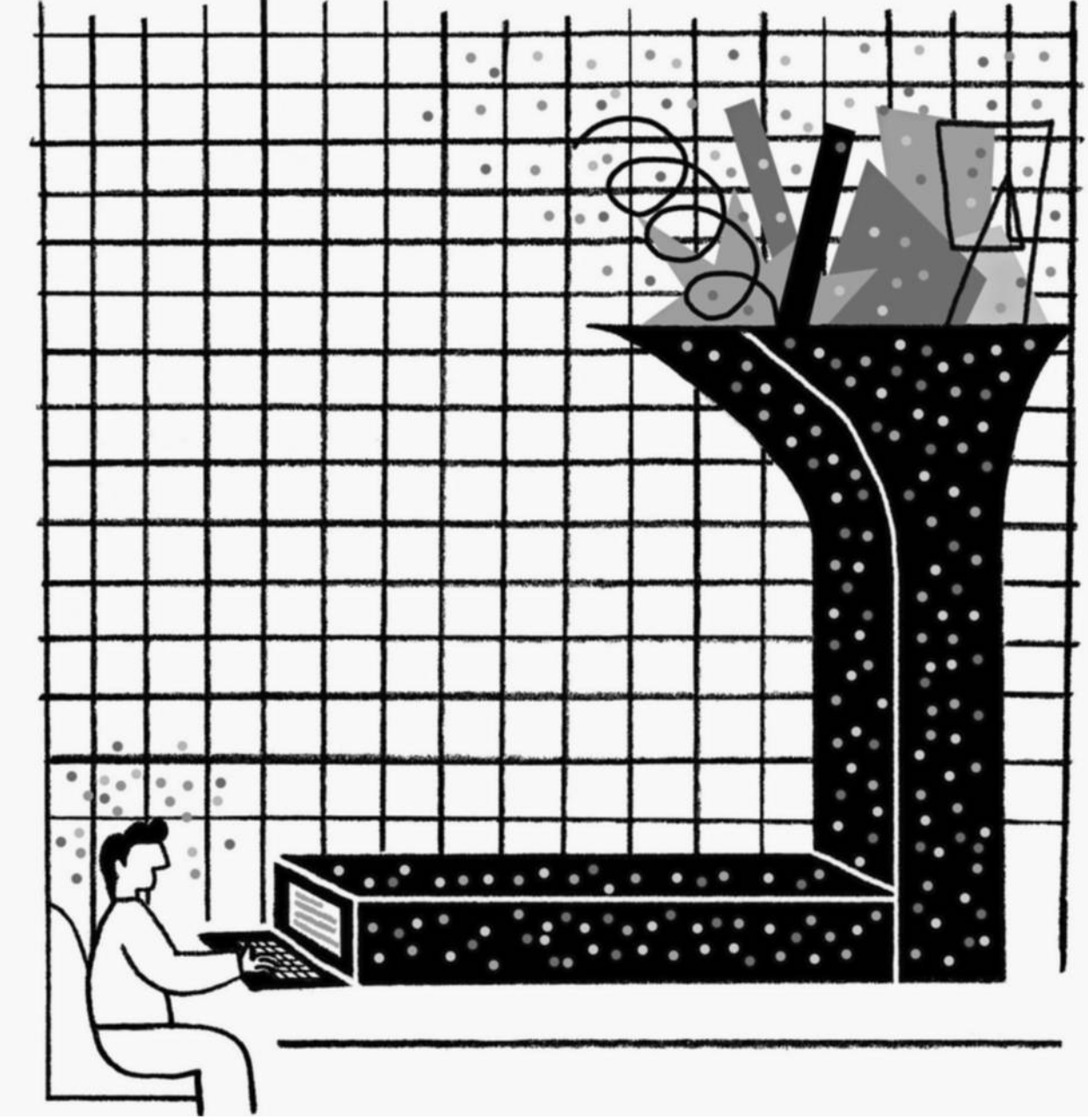
Ultimately, the biggest lesson from the Senate committee’s request for our investigation of Russian interference is the troubling absence of adequate structures for collaboration among multiple stakeholders, private and public alike, to establish solutions and appropriate oversight.

The hard truth is that the problem of disinformation campaigns will never be fixed; it’s a constantly evolving arms race. But it can — and must — be managed. This will require that social media platforms, independent researchers and the government work together as partners in the fight. We cannot rely on — nor should we place the full burden on — the social media platforms themselves.

The landscape of disinformation is, frankly, a grim one. Russia has already signaled its intention to continue information operations. Terrorists strategically counter attempts to kick them off popular platforms. Domestic ideologues adopt the manipulative distribution tactics used by foreign propagandists.

But there is some cause for hope. With our report (and that of others) on the Internet Research Agency data, we now have a far more complete picture of what happened with Russian disinformation efforts from 2014 to 2017. There is heightened public interest in the topic, the social platforms are actively participating in trying to find solutions and the government’s investigation is fueling a conversation about regulation. Senator Mark Warner, Democrat of Virginia, has even proposed a comprehensive new cyberdoctrine. With discipline, rigor and broad collaboration, we can meet this challenge, establishing standards, protocols and governance that will defend the integrity of our information.

RENÉE DIRESTA is the director of research at New Knowledge, a cybersecurity company that monitors disinformation.



JENICE KIM

Carbon innovation, not regulation

John Barrasso

Leaders from nearly 200 countries met in Katowice, Poland, last week and agreed to rules to carry out the Paris climate accord.

Now that the 22,000 delegates have returned home, there are three truths they need to recognize to make actual progress in the hard work of lowering carbon dioxide emissions across the globe.

The first is, the climate is changing and we, collectively, have a responsibility to do something about it. Second, the United States and the world will continue to rely on affordable and abundant fossil fuels, including coal, to power our economies for decades to come. And third, innovation, not new taxes or punishing global agreements, is the ultimate solution.

People across the world are rejecting the idea that carbon taxes and raising the cost of energy is the answer to lowering emissions. In France, the government just suspended a planned fuel tax increase after some of its citizens took to the streets in protest. And in the United States, the results of November elections showed that these plans and other government interventions are just as unpopular.

Voters in Washington State rejected the creation of an expensive tax on carbon emissions. In Colorado, a ballot measure to severely restrict drilling was defeated. And in Arizona, voters rejected a mandate to make the state’s utilities much more dependent on renewable energy by 2030 — regardless of the cost to consumers. All three of these states elected liberal Democrats to Congress on election night.

The United States is currently on track to reduce emissions to 17 percent below 2005 levels by 2025, according to

one recent analysis. That’s roughly two-thirds of the way to the original United States target under the Paris climate agreement.

The nation is leading the way not because of punishing regulations, restrictive laws or carbon taxes but because of innovation and advanced technology, especially in the energy sector.

Over the past decade, American energy-related carbon dioxide emissions have been falling. Technology breakthroughs have led to an American energy renaissance and a growing economy. As our economy has strengthened, we have lowered emissions.

While the United States cut its emissions in 2017, global emissions moved in the opposite direction. Emission levels increased in China and India, and even rose in the European Union in 2017.

Making energy as clean as we can, as fast as we can, without raising costs to consumers will be accomplished

through investment, invention and innovation.

As chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, I am working across party lines to support the development of new technologies that will further decrease America’s carbon emissions.

People across the world are rejecting the idea that carbon taxes are the answer to lowering emissions.

global electricity of wind power and more than five times the amount of solar energy.

Washington needs to make it simpler for innovators who are building state-of-

the-art nuclear reactors. These advancements in nuclear energy will create jobs, lower costs and contribute to America’s energy security without additional carbon emissions.

Groundbreaking new research in the area of carbon utilization to turn emissions into productive commodities, and even direct air capture of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, also hold keys to major emission reductions. We have made meaningful progress on bipartisan legislation to help researchers engaged in cutting-edge carbon capture and utilization technologies.

The legislation supports efforts to find profitable uses for the captured carbon dioxide. The legislation will also simplify the process for building carbon dioxide pipelines, so that we can safely move the gas to where it is needed.

A leading commercial use of captured carbon dioxide is a process called enhanced oil recovery. By injecting carbon dioxide into an otherwise unproductive well, oil can be economically extracted. This is good for the environment and the economy — producing more American energy and sequestering carbon dioxide underground.

In addition to being used for enhanced oil recovery, carbon has the potential to be repurposed in building materials, medical supplies and manufactured goods.

Citizens around the world will continue to reject climate policies that cost them personally, either by direct taxation or by undermining the competitiveness of their own economies.

The sooner the world’s leaders accept this reality, the sooner we will be able to put new and lasting solutions in place.



VOG, VIA GETTY IMAGES

The dome being hoisted onto the reactor building during construction of a nuclear power plant in Fangcheng, China. The reactor will be put into service in 2022.



Envisioning the demise of Europe

FRIEDMAN, FROM PAGE 15
class lifestyle.

The middle classes that powered the growth of the United States and the European Union in the 20th century were built on something called a “high-wage, middle-skilled job.” But robotics and artificial intelligence and outsourcing and Chinese imports have wiped out a lot of middle-skilled routine white-collar and blue-collar work.

Now there are high-wage, high-skilled jobs and low-wage, low-skilled jobs. But high-wage, middle-skilled jobs are vanishing, leaving a considerable cohort of people with stagnant incomes and burning resentments at the globalized city slickers who they think look down at them and have mastered the nonroutine skills required for a high-wage job today.

When you simultaneously challenge all these things that anchor people — their sense of home, their job security, their prospects for growth and the social norms that, for better or worse, defined their lives — and then amp it all up with social networks, you can get a really ferocious blowback, as France’s president, Emmanuel Macron, saw across his country.

On Nov. 24, The Guardian published an illuminating collection of voices from Yellow Vest protesters in Paris that told their stories.

There was Florence, 55, who worked for an airfreight company outside Paris, who said of Macron, “When he appears on television we have the impression he is uncomfortable with normal people, that there is a certain contempt for us.”

There was Bruno Binelli, 66, a retired carpenter from Lyon, reacting to Macron’s raising the taxes on diesel to combat climate change, leading to fuel costs that hit people in the countryside particularly hard because they have only cars to get around: “I have a little diesel van and I don’t have the money to buy a new one, especially as I’m about to retire. We have the feeling those from the countryside are forgotten.”

And there was Marie Lemoine, 62, a schoolteacher from Provins, who said she was neither “right or left,” explaining: “I’m here for my children and grandchildren and all those people left crying by the 15th of the month because they’ve gone into the red. . . . Macron is

our Louis XVI, and we know what happened to him. He ended up at the guillotine.”

It is going to take extraordinary leadership for the U.S., Britain and the E.U. to come up with a strategy for these grievances.

It has to balance the need for economic growth and redistribution, the need to take care of those who have been left behind without burdening future generations, the need for free-flowing borders to attract new talent and ideas, and the need to prevent people from feeling like strangers in their own homes.

But that leadership is not present. I get why a slim majority of U.K. citizens voted for Brexit — *as it was sold to them*. They were told they could curb all the stuff they didn’t like — such as a flood of 2.2 million foreign E.U. workers — and still keep all the stuff they liked — mainly Britain’s free access to the E.U. market — and give up nothing. But it was all a lie.

And to now watch the Conservative Party hacks who pushed that lie, led by Boris Johnson, continue to demand that their prime minister deliver this fantasy Brexit in the face of the reality that it’s impossible — and in the face of how bad even the second-best option will be — is to watch a once-sane country write a suicide note in a moment of irrationality and then argue endlessly over how to carry it out — death by hanging, poison or a gunshot to the head. They’ve got to reconsider. Disconnecting in a connected world is nuts.

Macron, by contrast, dared to do the right things to unlock growth in France, at the right time, “but he did not understand the difference between being right and doing it right,” a French economist, Ludovic Subran, told me. And he did not understand how his policies differently affected “the beer drinkers and the wine drinkers.”

Macron set up a totally imperial presidency, built around a tiny team — “they were like a commando unit,” Le

Monde writer Alain Frachon remarked to me.

Macron pushed through four vital structural fixes that fostered growth: pro-investment tax reforms, reduced pensions for the bloated railway union, relaxed labor rules to make it easier to fire and hire workers, and big new public investments in skills and education for the most disadvantaged.

But because Macron’s party didn’t exist until he ran for president, it had no mayors to connect locally with the people and feel their pulse. So Macron was stunned when his royalist, let-them-eat cake, top-down approach produced a vicious backlash after he cut taxes for the wealthy and corporations and sought to pay for some of it with taxes on diesel fuel and pensions — without exempting the rural working classes, which have no mass transit and need to drive everywhere. Feeling humiliated, they donned their yellow vests, drove into the heart of Paris and other cities and lashed out: “Can you hear us now?”

Macron “thought he was governing Singapore, not France — a revolutionary country,” added Frachon. “He made every political mistake. He did not miss one.”



President Emmanuel Macron of France in Brussels last week.

Telling a #MeToo Story in Australia

WEISS, FROM PAGE 13
of our lives for the better,” she said. “I despair that I am now in this situation.” And yet, Ms. Stone adds, “I do believe it’s a matter of significance to the public.”

“I also understand it might be confusing and look strange that I maintained a friendship with someone for so long who treated me in a way that made me feel uncomfortable. But there is the reality of professional influence and the reality of a complicated friendship, which ultimately was corroded by a sexual dynamic. But it was still a friendship.”

Ms. Stone remains sympathetic to Mr. Rush, in a way. “The current system is built around the very famous and talented such that there is a lot of

yes. There is not a lot of no. And that can encourage certain behaviors and that can happen incrementally over time to the point where a person may have not heard the word no in a long time. And it might not be their fault,” she said. “We need compassion for that confusion.”

Again and again, she returned in our conversations to the themes of compassion and change.

“The possibility of redemption must always be on the table,” she said. “Not all #MeToo stories are the same. Each dynamic is different. For some, a criminal process is essential. In my case, I’m not interested in punishment. I am looking to change my industry and to work toward healing and growth.”

That healing, however, is only possi-

ble when the truth is recognized — when inappropriate behavior is not waved away because the rehearsal room is somehow unique as a “place of play and experiment,” as the director, Mr. Armfield, said on Australia’s “Q and A” television program in October.

Some things are straightforward. “I’ve been in that particular dressing room in Sydney on many occasions with many wonderfully talented actors and many wonderfully talented clowns,” Ms. Stone told me. “And people have made me belly laugh till I couldn’t breathe. Never once has someone needed to show me their penis to do that.”

BARI WEISS is an Op-Ed staff editor and writer.

Conservatism’s monstrous endgame



Paul Krugman

The midterm elections were, to an important extent, a referendum on the Affordable Care Act; health care, not Donald Trump, dominated Democratic campaigning. And voters delivered a clear verdict: They want Obamacare’s achievements, the way it expanded coverage to roughly 20 million people who would otherwise have been uninsured, to be sustained.

But on Friday, Reed O’Connor, a partisan Republican judge known for “weaponizing” his judicial power, declared the A.C.A. as a whole — protection for pre-existing conditions, subsidies to help families afford coverage, and the Medicaid expansion — unconstitutional. Legal experts from both right and left ridiculed his reasoning and described his ruling as “raw political activism.” And that ruling probably won’t be sustained by higher courts.

But don’t be too sure that his sabotage will be overturned. O’Connor’s abuse of power may be unusually crude, but that sort of behavior is becoming increasingly common. And it’s not just health care, nor is it just the courts. What Nancy Pelosi called the “monstrous endgame” of the Republican assault on health care is just the leading edge of an attack on multiple fronts, as the G.O.P.

tries to overturn the will of the voters and undermine democracy in general.

For while we may congratulate ourselves on the strength of our political institutions, in the end institutions consist of people and fulfill their roles only as long as the people in them respect their intended purpose. Rule of law depends not just on what is written down, but also on the behavior of those who interpret and enforce that rule.

If these people don’t regard themselves as servants of the law first, partisans second, if they won’t subordinate their political goals to their duty to preserve the system, laws become meaningless and only power matters.

And what we’re seeing in America — what we’ve actually been seeing for years, although much of the news media

Apparatchiks are trying to corrode the foundations of American democracy.

and political establishment has refused to acknowledge it — is an invasion of our institutions by right-wing partisans whose loyalty is to party, not principle. This invasion is corroding the Republic, and the corrosion is already very far advanced.

I say “right-wing” advisedly. There are bad people in both parties, as there are in all walks of life. But the parties are structurally different. The Democratic Party is a loose coalition of interest groups, but the modern Republican Party is dominated by “movement conservatism,” a monolithic structure held together by big money — often deployed stealthily — and the closed intellectual ecosystem of Fox News and other partisan media. And the people

who rise within this movement are, to a far greater degree than those on the other side, apparatchiks, political loyalists who can be counted on not to stray from the party line.

Republicans have been stuffing the courts with such people for decades; O’Connor was appointed by George W. Bush. That’s why his ruling, no matter how bad the legal reasoning, wasn’t a big surprise. The only question was whether he would imagine himself able to get away with such a travesty. Obviously he did, and he may well have been right.

But as I said, it’s not just the courts. Even as Trump and his allies spin fantasies about sabotage by the “deep state,” the reality is that a growing number of positions in government agencies are being occupied by right-wing partisans who care nothing, or actively oppose, their agencies’ missions.

The same takeover by apparatchiks is taking place in politics. Remember when the role of the Senate was supposed to be to “advise and consent”? Under Republican control it’s just plain consent — there is almost literally nothing Trump can do, up to and including clear evidence of corruption and criminality, that will induce senators from his party to exercise any kind of oversight.

So how do people who think and behave this way respond when the public rejects their agenda? They attempt to use their power to overrule the democratic process. When Democrats threaten to win elections, they rig the voting process, as they did in Georgia. When Democrats win despite election rigging, they strip the offices Democrats win of power, as they did in Wisconsin. When Democratic policies prevail despite all of that, they use apparatchik-stuffed courts to strike down legislation on the flimsiest of grounds.

As David Frum, the author of “Trumpocracy,” warned a year ago: “If conservatives become convinced that they cannot win democratically, they will not abandon conservatism. They will reject democracy.” That’s happening as we speak. So Pelosi was right about Reed O’Connor’s ruling being a symptom of a “monstrous endgame,” but the game in question isn’t just about perpetuating the assault on health care, it’s about assaulting democracy in general. And the current state of the endgame is probably just the beginning; the worst, I fear, is yet to come.



TIMOTHY A. CLARY/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

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Sports

A coach who leaned too much on past glories

On Soccer

BY RORY SMITH

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND José Mourinho was almost out of time. He had only a few hours before Manchester United's power brokers would begin to discuss, in private, the prospect of drawing the curtain on his reign as the club's manager. He had less than two days before it would all be over.

He did not know that, not for certain, as he sat in front of the news media at Anfield on Sunday evening. He has been around for long enough to have had an inkling of what was coming, though. To have had a sense that defeat at Liverpool may have been one defeat too many, that the gap between United, sixth in the Premier League, and its old rival, perched at the top, had grown too wide.

Mourinho looked, then, a man in need of comfort, and solace. There has been precious little of it in these last few months, as Manchester United's season has lurched from disappointment into despair. There has always been a crisis around the corner: that is the way it is, at a club this size, and it is the way Mourinho makes it, too. On Tuesday, the club ended that crisis and released Mourinho.

All season, there had only been one place Mourinho could go for escape: a place where he is never questioned, where he is the lord of all he surveys, where he has an answer for even the most searching of questions. At Anfield, on Sunday, he went there again: talking about how great he was in the past.

Mourinho's former glories have been a theme this season: how frequently they are mentioned has tended to exist in inverse proportion to how well Manchester United is playing. It was after a 3-0 defeat at home to Tottenham in August that Mourinho demanded more "respect, respect, respect," and took time to remind everyone that he had won more Premier League titles himself than all of the other 19 managers in the division put together. "Two for them, three for me," he said.



PETER POWELL/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK

With the team languishing in sixth place in the Premier League, Manchester United has fired its manager, José Mourinho.

It was after his team conceded a late equalizer to Chelsea that he responded to the taunts of the home crowd by raising three fingers, one for each of those Premier League titles. It was as his team was being humbled at home to Juventus that he made the same gesture to the Italian team's fans, this time, in reference to the three trophies he had won as manager of Inter Milan, their great rival.

There was defiance in those gestures, in those words. Mourinho's addiction to the past may have been compulsive, reflexive, but at least he was coming out fighting.

At first, anyway. The more Mourinho played the trump card, the more it started to look like the most transparent of bluffs. On Sunday, when he played it again, it seemed more than anything an act of desperation: Mour-

inho holed up in his last refuge, surrounded by his memories, clutching his mementos close to him, firing wildly into the dark.

When he compared Liverpool — the team that had just condemned him to yet another loss and forced him to endure yet another humiliation — to the F.C. Porto team that made his name and announced his greatness to the world, there was, at least, a semblance of logic. Liverpool, like Porto, he said, is "fast, intense, aggressive, physical; they have an objective."

By the time he was name-checking the players he had worked with at Real Madrid — "young" versions of Cristiano Ronaldo and Ángel Di María and Gonzalo Higuaín — it had taken on the air of a LinkedIn profile. He rounded the whole thing off with a gratuitous mention of Inter, the team he turned

into European champions. He was no longer talking about the merits of Jürgen Klopp's Liverpool team.

As ever with Mourinho, none of this was intended as praise for a superior opponent; there is, after all, no club Mourinho takes more joy in belittling than Liverpool. No, it was something else, the same thing it has always been: a reminder of all that he has achieved, all that he has won.

And yet, as United's season drifted, as Mourinho has meticulously constructed a set of alternative facts in which he is not to blame for that failure but the ultimate victim of it, his terminable regurgitation of his own greatness has not served to remind anyone of the heights he once scaled, but acted as proof of how far he has fallen.

Mourinho's calling card has always been that he is a winner. That is what

separates him from those of his peers who talk sanctimoniously about philosophy or who take pleasure in the journey. He has mocked them mercilessly, from that "specialist in failure" jibe at Arsène Wenger to his barbed remarks about Klopp and Mauricio Pochettino in the last year or so.

Winning is what persuaded United to invite him in back in 2016. There were misgivings about the chaos that tends to follow him, but United felt it had little choice. Manchester City had hired Pep Guardiola, Liverpool Klopp, Chelsea Antonio Conte. It needed a guarantee of success. Enter José.

He did win, picking up the Europa League and the Carabao Cup in his first season, but those were not the trophies United had envisaged him delivering. Mourinho, for neither the first nor the last time, would be hung by his own words: he had previously insisted he would not celebrate winning the second-tier Europa League. It was beneath him.

How gleefully he clung on to that triumph, though, became a metaphor for his reign. Mourinho spent some \$440 million on players, yet complained that Manchester United — among the richest clubs in the world — did not have the finances to compete with its rivals. That may have been true of Manchester City. It was less obviously true of, say, Tottenham, three places above United in the league.

His relationships with his players, one by one, broke down. Paul Pogba was the most high profile — Mourinho would tell Ed Woodward, the club's chief executive, that he had tried everything, from criticizing him privately to criticizing him publicly, but could not find a way to get the best out of the World Cup-winning France midfielder — but Pogba was not the only one.

Luke Shaw, Anthony Martial, Eric Bailly, Marcus Rashford — pretty much everyone drew his ire sooner or later. He bemoaned how little character, how little grit, these young players had. "Spoiled brats," he called them. He could not inspire them, motivate them, as easily as he once had.

After the loss at Liverpool, the club felt enough was enough. It will appoint a manager, most likely a former player — expected to be Ole Gunnar Solskjær — to see it through to the end of the

season, and then move for a permanent replacement. Pochettino has long been the primary target.

Pochettino is not a winner, of course. He has won no trophies at all as a manager, as Mourinho has noted.

That he is so appealing nonetheless is telling. It is important that he is willing to work within a structure, rather than expecting the whole club to be overhauled in line with his whims. It is important that he sees the benefits in promoting youth, does not meet the slightest of setbacks by demanding to see the bank balance, and seems to be able to find common ground with very rich, very talented young men.

Pochettino — like Klopp, or Maurizio Sarri, or Guardiola — does that. He stands for something: a way of running a club, a way of playing the game. His beliefs, sincerely held, can be packaged, presented and, ultimately, sold.

Attractive soccer can be marketed across the globe; it can draw in new fans and retain the affection of old ones.

Mourinho does not offer that. By the end, his United had no discernible character, strictly limited aesthetic appeal. It was as much the approach that condemned him as the results, and it is precisely that which will make him unpalatable to those clubs that once courted him relentlessly when he decides he is ready to return to work.

The drama, the tension, the scheming might all be worth it, if the product on the field were compelling. If it were not, it would be too high a price to pay. That is not to say he will not work again, or that he is finished at the elite level: Real Madrid, no less, believes for reasons best known to Florentino Pérez that Mourinho can lead the rejuvenation of that club.

But it is hard to avoid the suspicion that wherever he goes next, what he provides is no longer what owners and executives want, or what clubs or players need. No matter how glittering his list of achievements, no matter how comforting his past, José Mourinho is almost out of time.

NON SEQUITUR



SUDOKU

			1	8				
	8					3		
1		9	2				5	6
				6	9			
	7							
			2	7		1	9	
							8	
2	5						4	

Fill the grid so that every row, column 3x3 box and shaded 3x3 box contains each of the numbers 1 to 9 exactly once.

For solving tips and more puzzles: www.nytimes.com/sudoku

Solution	No. 1912
4 9 1 5 3 6 8 7 2	
3 5 8 1 7 2 6 4 9	
2 7 6 9 4 8 3 1 5	
6 3 4 2 1 7 9 5 8	
7 8 2 4 9 5 1 3 6	
9 1 5 6 8 3 4 2 7	
1 2 7 3 6 9 5 8 4	
5 4 9 8 2 1 7 6 3	
8 6 3 7 5 4 2 9 1	

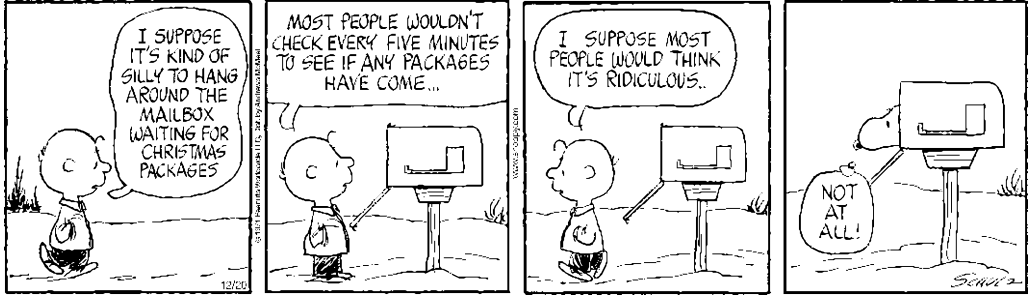
JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles. One letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

WNEUD
PRIVE
VGENOR
ARROTO

Yesterday's Jumbles: SAUSA CHAOS FEDORA BURRAP
Answer: The grand opening of the rec center's new pool — CAUSED A SPLASH!

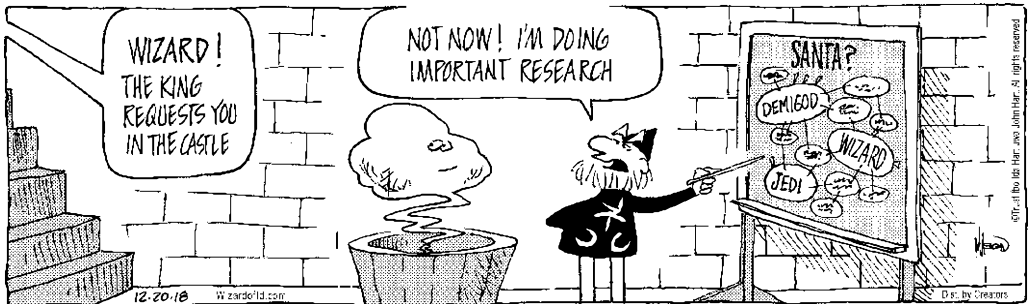
PEANUTS



GARFIELD



WIZARD of ID



KENKEN

1-		12x	2÷
3		8x	
3-			9+

Fill the grids with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 4x4 grid will use the digits 1-4. A 6x6 grid will use 1-6.

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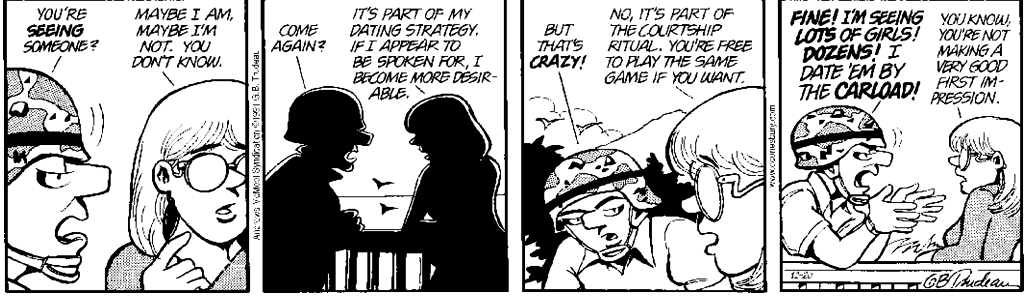
Answers to Previous Puzzles

12x	1-	4-	9+
5-	1-		3
	10+	20x	1-
2÷			5-
		18x	
11+	2	1-	

3	1	4	2
4	2	1	3
2	4	3	1
1	3	2	4

5	6	3	4	1	2
2	5	1	6	3	4
1	4	5	2	6	3
4	1	6	3	2	5
3	2	4	1	5	6
6	3	2	5	4	1

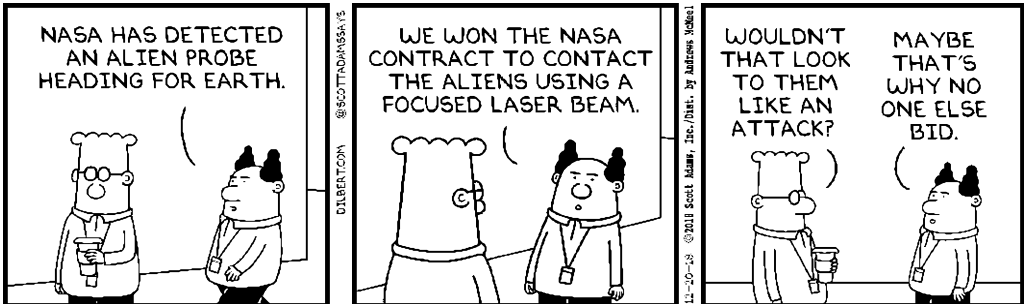
DOONESBURY CLASSIC 1991



CALVIN AND HOBBS



DILBERT



CROSSWORD | Edited by Will Shortz

Across

- Prophet who said "Zion roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem"
- Upscale hotel features
- Sweeney, leading character in "Anything Goes"
- Actress Aïmeé
- Approach in handling something
- Afternoon affairs
- Place for a picnic along a highway
- Choice of routes?
- See 21-Down
- From birth
- Result of some sunburn I had?
- Potato Head part

Down

- "Ready about! Hard 1"
- "According to the grapevine ..."
- With 38-Across, what a two-letter answer is in a crossword, usually ... or a hint to 20-, 24-, 44- and 51-Across
- Home to the Rohingya
- See 35-Across
- Like lizards and fish
- River through Flanders
- Pouch holder, for short
- Declaration concerning British geography?
- Ancient markets
- Egg ____
- Nitrous oxide?
- Time of valor, in a Winston Churchill speech

Solution to December 19 Puzzle

SLUG	SPLITS	NBA
OENO	ALETAP	ARC
TVPG	SEAAIR	TAN
SYCOPHANT	ETUDE	
BEADS	HAIR	
SAGAN	PODCAST	
OZAR	ICEAGE	LEO
OUR	ANAGRAM	TMP
ORB	REBORN	ASIS
BEATERS	ANTSY	
GOAT	SPORK	
THEOC	THEILTON	
AIM	OLEARY	ERGO
FDA	DEARIE	TERR
TEN	EASELS	SEEM

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15				16			
17					18				19			
	20			21								
		22						23				
24	25			26	27	28	29					
30				31				32		33	34	
35				36				37				
39		40	41		42					43		
		44		45				46	47			
48	49							50				
51				52	53	54	55			56		
57										58		59
60				61				62				
63				64				65				

PUZZLE BY RUTH BLOOMFIELD MARGOLIN

- Wray of "King Kong" fame
- Whips
- Gatherer of intelligence?
- Variety of ray
- 1997 Nicolas Cage thriller
- With 22-Across, a triumphant cry
- Comic ____ (typeface)
- Ray of fast-food fame
- Six of one and half a dozen of the other, say?
- Like the outer matryoshka doll
- Time for a mint julep in Louisville
- "Do you mind?"
- Concorde, e.g., for short
- Dormant
- Sporty Spiders, informally
- In a cheery manner
- Drag racing org.
- Top of a fund drive thermometer
- Trumpet accessory
- "Wonder Woman" antagonist
- Carpentry tool
- Revolutionary figure

Culture

‘Aquaman’ by way of an underdog

The director James Wan talks about the unsung superhero of his new film

BY DAVE ITZKOFF

“Aquaman” is an improbable movie, which in many ways makes James Wan the ideal person to direct it.

The latest chapter in the Warner Bros. series based on DC comic book superheroes, “Aquaman” provides an origin story for this much-maligned undersea adventurer (played by Jason Momoa of “Game of Thrones”) as he teams up with Mera (Amber Heard) against the nefarious Orm (Patrick Wilson) for control of Atlantis.

Now, the kaleidoscopic and willfully offbeat “Aquaman” finds itself bearing the weight of the larger DC franchise, which continues to be perceived as an also-ran to Marvel. Aside from “Wonder Woman,” the series has struggled to find an entry that’s excited audiences and critics, even as it rakes in millions of dollars.

Wan, 41, a spirited, quick-talking filmmaker with a plume of reddish-purple dye in his hair, is used to being an underdog. Born in Malaysia and raised in Australia, he found early success with his genre-redefining 2004 horror feature, “Saw.” But he struggled for years to find a worthy follow-up before re-establishing himself with hit supernatural thrillers like “Insidious” and “The Conjuring.” That led him to mainstream Hollywood blockbusters like “Furious 7” (the seventh entry in the “Fast & Furious” series) and finally to “Aquaman.”

On a recent visit to New York, Wan spoke about the unusual trajectory that brought him to Atlantis and the unexpected pressure now on the film. These are edited excerpts from that conversation.

Aquaman is a well-known superhero, if not a widely respected one. His powers — swimming fast, talking to fish — surely paled next to Superman’s. Was he important to you, growing up?

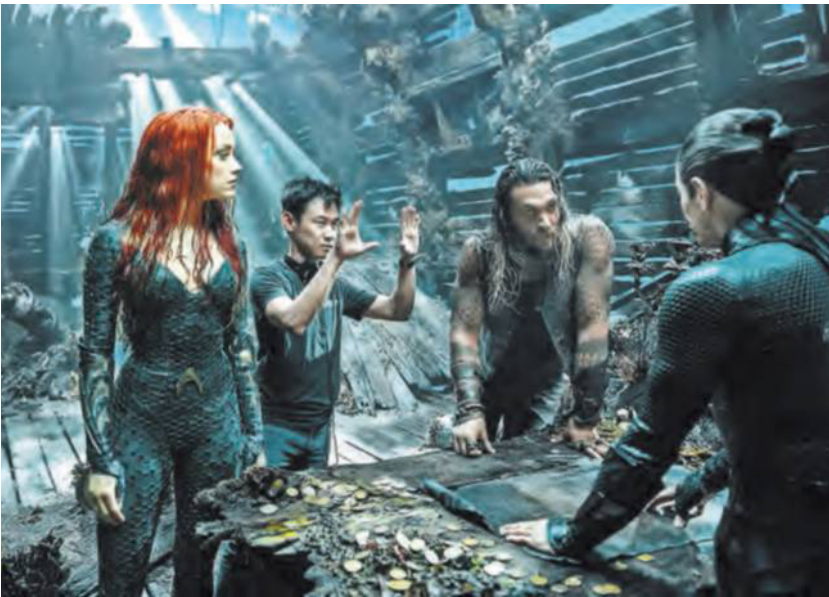
I did grow up reading comic books, but his books weren’t the ones I read. Later, as I got older, it became apparent that people out there were making fun of him. Sure, he was somewhat disrespected and made the joke of the superhero world. But I always found him endearing.

How did the movie first become a possibility for you?

Having made “The Conjuring,” I was part of the Warner Bros. family, and I knew they were doing their DC thing. I spoke with Kevin Tsujihara [the Warner Bros. chairman and chief executive] at a premiere and I said, “I’m interested in the properties that you have at DC.” A few months later, I was in a general meeting with DC and they floated two properties that didn’t have filmmakers on board: the Flash and Aquaman.

Why did you choose Aquaman?

I felt the Flash had been done before. It had been on TV twice at that point. The one that had not been done was Aquaman. I realized, wow, his character resides in this crazy, big world, and I could do something very interesting with it. I look up to people like Spielberg, Cameron, Lucas, John Carpenter.



JASIN BOLAND/WARNER BROS. AND DC COMICS



MICHAEL TACKETT/WARNER BROS.



BRYAN DERBALLA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Above, James Wan, and below, second from left at top, directing Amber Heard, Jason Momoa and Willem Dafoe in “Aquaman.” Bottom, Patrick Wilson in “The Conjuring.”

I’m a fan of genre filmmaking, naturally. So I thought I could make “Aquaman” a genre film, meaning a horror monster movie. DC basically said, yes, you can make Aquaman versus sea monsters if that’s what you want.

How were you selected to direct “Furious 7”? Was that an important step in being considered for other big-budget projects like “Aquaman”?

Believe me, “Furious 7” was difficult to make, if not the toughest of my career. But that movie really allowed people to look at me as a more complete filmmaker.

“The Conjuring” hadn’t come out yet, but Chris Morgan, the producer-writer of the “Fast & Furious” franchise at the time, had seen “The Conjuring” and he loved it. Around that point, Justin Lin was finishing “Fast & Furious 6,” and I think he just needed a break. He wasn’t going to come back to do “7.” So they were kind of scrambling. I talked about what I wanted to bring from my horror filmmaking into the “Fast & Furious” world. By that, I meant I wanted to create suspenseful, tension-filled set pieces. And they were excited with what I had to say.

You broke through professionally with the original “Saw” movie, which seems like every filmmaker’s dream. But what happened next?

“Saw” exploded in a big way and created this big, big franchise. But then I couldn’t seem to get out from under its shadow. I only directed the first one, but my name became synonymous with “Saw” and therefore all the nega-

tive connotations — I became the father of torture porn. I went off and did “Dead Silence” and “Death Sentence,” two movies that worked hard to break away from the image of “Saw” and ultimately did not work, from a commercial standpoint. That was two strikes against my name and I’m thinking, am I in director’s jail? All the projects that were coming my way were just copycat projects that weren’t special for me. And so, I just held out. Then my buddy Leigh Whannell and I just thought, screw all this. Let’s go back to our low-budget filmmaking roots. That was when we made “Insidious.”

Were there any lessons from this frustrating period?

I learned what it means to be artistic and commercial at the same time. It made me very aware of the projects I need to do. It needs to be artistically fulfilling, but it needs to have commerciality as well. I’m always walking that tightrope: I know I need to make a movie that works financially, because in Hollywood, that’s how you get your next film.

“Aquaman” is obviously a piece of a larger franchise. Did you still feel you were able to put your stamp on it?

It’s pretty crazy. For as big a movie as “Aquaman” is, I could not have had more freedom. I had all the big tools and the budget to paint on a really big canvas, but with the freedom I had on, let’s say, “Saw” or “Insidious.” So if the movie works, or doesn’t work, I have no one to blame but myself.

Did you have any say in the casting of Jason Momoa and Amber Heard, who were introduced in previous DC movies?

Even though Zack [Snyder] was making “Justice League,” I was kept in the loop by DC and Warner Bros., and they really wanted my input into the two leads. The great thing about casting Jason is, any jokey perception that people have of Aquaman goes right out the window. He completely nullifies any disrespect that people have for this character. Everybody knows how tough and strong Jason Momoa is. I wanted to show people the more light-hearted side of him, the goofy side of him. I worked very hard to pull it out of him, and Jason would be the first to say that I took him out of his comfort zones, quite a few times. [Laughs.]

It’s no secret that, though they were commercially successful, DC films like “Justice League,” “Suicide Squad” and “Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice” were creative and critical disappointments. Did that response affect your approach to “Aquaman”?

I was definitely aware of that. The irony is, I picked “Aquaman” because I thought, here’s a superhero I can make that is fully under the radar. No one’s going to [care] about this film. I can just do whatever I want. Make it easy with no pressure. Fast-forward to three years later and now there’s a massive spotlight on it. So, to answer your question, obviously there was a sense of pressure. But I try not to let any of that cloud my vision for the film. I just plow ahead and continue to make the movie I wanted to make.

So creating an underwater universe that’s vivid and multicolored, that’s not a response to the drab, darker

palettes of previous DC movies?

If people go back and watch “Furious 7,” they’ll see how bright and colorful that movie is. Beautiful blue skies, beautiful beaches. People associate me, primarily, with my horror films, and they expect a darker look than “Aquaman.” That serves a narrative that people are trying to get at as well, like I’m reacting to the criticism of

these films. My biggest inspiration is actually from the comic book. The comic book is just full of magical creatures and weird and wonderful worlds, and the only way to do an “Aquaman” movie justice is to pay homage to the 70 years’ worth of source material.

There are many scenes that take place entirely underwater, which

creates lots of challenges for you. How did you film these sequences?

There really aren’t a lot of visual cues from existing films to pull from. That was exciting for me, because I get to create a new world. In terms of the technicality of it: It was a pain. The actors would be suited up in their costumes, and placed inside these really awkward, uncomfortable rigs. Then visual effects would come in and add the flowing hair, the floating costumes and capes, and then paint in the entire world. A simple scene of two people talking underwater would just take days and days to shoot.

Looking ahead to other DC movies like “Shazam!,” “Wonder Woman 1984” and “Birds of Prey,” what’s your sense of where Warner Bros. wants to take the franchise next?

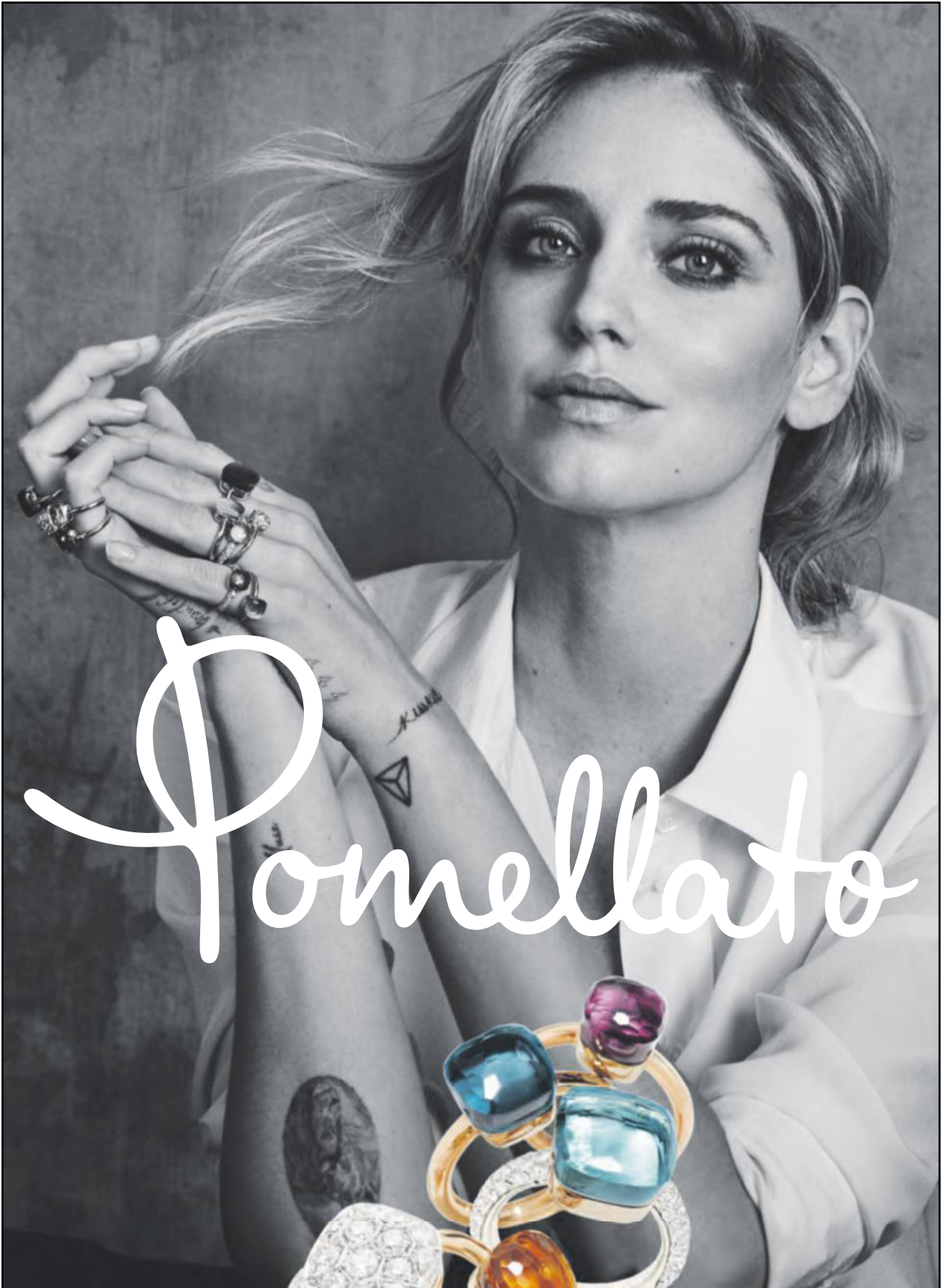
I don’t know what the bigger picture is. But I think it’s really cool to take chances with the lesser-known characters and story lines. It’s good if all the other films have their own flavor, so they don’t force them to feel the same.

So you don’t necessarily want a role in steering the larger DC movie operations?

It’s taken me so long just to finish this movie. [Laughs.] I don’t want to think about somebody else’s movie at this point. I just want to survive this one.

You’re one of very few nonwhite directors who’s been able to make a studio movie at this scale. What’s needed to ensure that other filmmakers from diverse backgrounds get these opportunities?

I think the willingness to take chances on different kinds of films and filmmakers. I never thought, for the life of me, that I would ever see a movie like “Crazy Rich Asians,” where the cast is Asian, and for the movie to do well and be well received, it’s incredible. It starts at the top, the willingness to reach out to these filmmakers and take chances. I get it — when you’re making a movie that’s really big and expensive, they want filmmakers that have proven track records. But there’s really no excuses for not looking at more diverse filmmakers.



CHIARA FERRAGNI
Fashion Entrepreneur

NUDO COLLECTION

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CULTURE

Overnight sensation, after 23 years

The novelist Sigrid Nunez finds her profile raised by a prestigious prize

BY ALEXANDRA ALTER

Early in Sigrid Nunez's novel "The Friend," a group of writers gather at a memorial for a well-known novelist who has committed suicide. Most have come not to grieve or pay their respects, but to network and gossip about literary prizes and money and to dissect the latest review of a certain widely detested author.

"If reading really does increase empathy, as we are constantly being told that it does," the novel's narrator, an unnamed novelist, observes, "it appears that writing also takes some away."

It's quite an admission to make about one's chosen vocation, but it's far from the most cutting observation Nunez makes in "The Friend," which takes frequent, unflinching aim at the backstabbing, status-obsessed literary world. "Writers really are like vampires," a character declares. Another author compares the publishing industry to "a sinking raft that too many people are trying to get onto."

Then there's the memorable moment when the narrator opens an email advertisement for a literary wall calendar featuring 12 authors posing nude — a detail that Nunez insists isn't that far-fetched.

"I can imagine it — well, I did imagine it," Nunez said in a recent interview of the (still, thankfully, fictional) naked author calendar. "Maybe we'll see it."

And yet despite her acid critique of writers and their discontents, or perhaps because of her dead-on depiction, Nunez has won over the literary world with "The Friend." The novel, an acerbic but often poignant exploration of love, friendship, death, grief, art and literature, received this year's National Book Award for fiction and drew euphoric reviews from critics, who hailed it as a subtle, unassuming masterpiece.

The rapturous reception has stunned Nunez, 67, who has been quietly publishing books for the past 23 years.

She's the kind of writer the heroine of "The Friend" laments doesn't exist anymore — one who views writing as a sacred calling rather than an exercise in self-promotion. So Nunez was a bit surprised to be cast into the spotlight, embraced as a breakout literary star and titanic talent, more than two decades after she published her debut novel.

"I became a writer because it was something I could do alone and hidden in my room," Nunez said, perched on a stool at the counter of a coffee shop.

That's more or less what she's been doing for the last three decades. Ever since she was young, she's never wanted to do anything else: "I just wanted to do one thing well, and that was the thing."

A DISTANCE FROM THE SCENE

Growing up in the 1950s in the housing projects of the New York City borough of Staten Island, the daughter of a German mother and a Panamanian-Chinese father, Nunez was an imaginative child who turned to books for solace and escape.



CLEMENT PASCAL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Her father worked seven days a week, as a kitchen worker and in restaurants, and her mother took care of the household. She studied English at Barnard College and later got her master's in fine arts from Columbia University. After graduating, she worked at The New York Review of Books as an editorial assistant to the editor, Robert B. Silvers. Through her work at the Review, she got to know Susan Sontag, and became close to her later when she began dating Sontag's son. That friendship gave Nunez an up-close glimpse of the life of a professional writer, and she realized that Sontag's fame, and the attention and obligations that came with it, held no appeal for her.

"It was very clear to me that even if I wanted something like that, I could never handle it," she said. "I wanted quiet."

Nunez has hardly been laboring in obscurity — she's published eight books, and she won several literary awards before the receiving the National Book Award, including the Whiting Award and the Rome Prize. Her work is beloved by fellow novelists (more than a decade ago, Gary Shteyngart called her "one of the most dizzyingly accomplished of our writers"). But she's kept a deliberate distance from the literary scene, which gives her "a certain amount of freedom and outsidership," she said. She maintains a sort of stoic silence online, and has no social media accounts.

For better or worse, it's also kept her somewhat under the radar, while many of her peers have ascended to prominence.

"The way that she sets herself apart, you might not notice, but that's what

she's doing," said the novelist Alexander Chee. "It definitely costs her. It's not easy to live that way."

It's old-fashioned and romantic, she knows, but Nunez still views writing the way Edna O'Brien characterized it, as a lifelong vocation akin to being a nun or a

"The way that she sets herself apart, you might not notice, but that's what she's doing. It definitely costs her."

priest. Like the narrator of "The Friend," who's distressed by the eroding place of literature in society, Nunez worries that we've lost that notion of writing as a lofty art worth pursuing for its own sake.

She never married or had children, a



BRYAN THOMAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Sigrid Nunez in a New York park, left, and in November at the National Book Awards ceremony, above, where her novel "The Friend" was honored.

choice she said that has allowed her to focus on her writing and avoid worrying about her financial situation. She's had the same apartment near Union Square since the 1980s. To supplement her writing income, she teaches at colleges. "I've never had a real job. I've been living like a grad student forever," she said.

'A WRITER OF UNCOMMON TALENT'

In her fiction, Nunez has experimented with genres and themes — she's written a fictional biography of Virginia Wolff's pet marmoset ("Mitz"), a novel about a 13-year-old boy who survives a global flu pandemic ("Salvation City") and a memoir about Sontag ("Sempre Susan"). But most of her books are marked by a spare, intimate, confessional tone. In her 1995 debut novel, "A Feather on the Breath of God," she wrote about her youth and coming-of-age. (The New York Times anointed her a formidable new voice, calling the book "a forceful novel by a writer of uncommon talent.") There were also elements of auto-fiction in "The Last of Her Kind," which features two young women who are roommates at Barnard College in 1968, and "For Rouenna," which is narrated by an unnamed writer partly modeled on Nunez, who strikes up a friendship with a military nurse who served in Vietnam.

"The Friend" is perhaps her most autobiographical work since her debut novel, though she didn't set out to write it that way. About a year and a half ago, she decided to write a novel about a woman who is grieving for a friend who killed himself, a subject she was drawn to because so many people she knew seemed to be contemplating or discussing suicide. While she was working on it, one of her friends, a writer, jumped from the Golden Gate Bridge to his death, she said.

She didn't plan to make her narrator a writer who resembles her, but details from her life seeped in. "I had no interest in writing about a writer, really, but all these years I've spent so much time thinking about writing and the teaching of writing that it came very naturally," she said.

In the novel, the narrator adopts her

dead friend's 180-pound Great Dane, Apollo, an unlikely companion she grows to love deeply despite the fact that she's a "cat person" who lives in a tiny New York apartment. Nunez is also a self-declared cat person (though she has had "stepdogs," and like the narrator, has had several beloved cats, and a bunny who would lie in front of her speakers when she played classical music).

AN UNEXPECTED BREAKOUT

When "The Friend" came out in February, Nunez and her publisher, Riverhead, weren't expecting a best seller. Riverhead ordered a first printing of 10,500.

Still, Sarah McGrath, Nunez's editor, hoped the book would resonate with animal lovers and draw a bigger audience than her earlier books.

"She's writing about grief and loss and death and relationships, these are serious earnest subjects, yet she's doing it with humor, and that's such a hard thing to achieve," she said. "For a book that is so wise and rich with literary allusions, it's actually very accessible, and I did think this was a book that could help her find her readers."

In November, after she won the National Book Award for fiction, one of the literary world's most prestigious prizes, thousands of new readers found her. Riverhead, which had already reprinted the book earlier this year when word of mouth began to build, quickly ordered another 20,000 copies, bringing the total number of copies in circulation to 40,000.

Even as she was on stage accepting her award in front of more than 700 people — a moment that would mark the pinnacle of most authors' careers — Nunez sounded eager to get back to her writing.

"I became a writer not because I was seeking community but rather because I thought it was something I could do alone," she told the crowd. "How lucky to have discovered that writing books made the miraculous possible, to be removed from the world, and to be a part of the world at the same time."

Easy to come by, hard to explain

BOOK REVIEW

The Patch

By John McPhee. 242 pp. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. \$26.

BY CRAIG TAYLOR

Here is the seventh collection of essays by John McPhee, his 33rd book and perhaps his eleventh-billionth word of published prose. This far into a prolific career, it may be a good time to finally unmask the 87-year-old as a one-trick pony. In "The Patch," he again shamelessly employs his go-to strategy: crafting sentences so energetic and structurally sound that he can introduce apparently unappealing subjects, even ones that look to be encased in a cruddy veneer of boringness, and persuade you to care about them. He's been working this angle since the 1950s; it's a good thing we're finally onto him now.

Reading McPhee's back catalog prompts uncomfortable questions, like "Why am I suddenly compelled to know more about plate tectonics or the engine rooms of the merchant marine?" In "The Patch," it's "Why am I suddenly invested in McPhee's quest to pluck golf balls from local rivers using a telescoping rod called an Orange Trapper?"

At this stage in life, McPhee is no longer writing stories that take him hiking with blistered feet through the Glacier Peak Wilderness, and when he canoes, he paddles through "The Patch" of the title essay aware of his so far "uneroded" balance. He mentions cycling, but his exercise still seems to derive from sentence construction, prying out lazy words, rummaging through dictionaries and wringing suspense from unlikely moments, as when he extends his Orange Trapper.

It "quivers, wandlike." He reaches and reaches and finally snatches up a golf ball before fleeing the approaching greenskeeper "at a speed so blazing that I probably could not duplicate it if I were to try now, but that was years ago, when I was 80."

McPhee finds surprising poetry in the material at hand, as in his list of found golf balls emblazoned with the names of mutual funds; the shanked Titleists of the 1 percent sink into his beloved Merrimack, Delaware and Connecticut Rivers. The Northeast has changed and is always changing, from the rivers to the pine forests to the earth's crust below. Nature, in McPhee's journalism, can be preserved only until it's threatened again.

So why is he interested in this telescoping rod? Why the 18-wheeled trucks of the title essay in his earlier book "Uncommon Carriers"? Why did he dedicate so many words to oranges in the brilliantly titled "Oranges"? "Compulsions are easy to come by and hard to explain," McPhee admits in this new collection. Over the years, with generosity, he's shared them. "I have never spent time with anyone who was more aware of the natural world." This is how McPhee described a mineral engineer in one of his finest books, "Encounters With the Arch-druid," adding, "He seemed to find in the land and landscape . . . an expression of almost everything he had come to believe about that world." With time, the description now shines back on its author.

"The Patch" is billed as a "covert memoir," but McPhee has smuggled excerpts from his life into most of his books. "When you are deciding what to leave out, begin with the author," he warned students in his recent writing memoir, "Draft No. 4." "If you see yourself prancing around between subject and reader, get lost." Never a known prancer, McPhee has instead



CHRIS CASH

drifted gracefully alongside his interviewees, in motion and in communion, in canoes and the cabs of trucks, listening with an almost obsolete respect to both sides of our various divides: to the mineral engineer and the environmentalist. "The Patch" is just another chapter in a continuing memoir of generous curiosity.

It's McPhee's way to prod landscape and people until an avalanche of the verifiable tumbles into his notebooks. He is never one to simply walk through a meadow when the path passes "heather, lupine, horsemint, daisies and wild licorice." The color and fragrance of his writing could easily turn sickly if they didn't yield up the world with such precision, if they weren't deployed in the service of greater meaning.

Case in point: In the first and best essay in this collection, he vividly introduces the latest thing-you-didn't-know-you-cared-about: the chain pickerel, a fish with a "culinary quality . . . in inverse proportion to its size." As expected, McPhee describes an explosive "slime dart" that treads water "in much the way that a hummingbird treads air." But he ensures that the essay is as much about the legacy of his dying father. The image of a fish "as voracious as insurance companies, as greedy as banks" lingers like a splash, but the lasting impression is that of a patient lying in a hospital bed while his son tells him what he caught that morning with the old man's bamboo fishing pole.

About the only essay in this collection that McPhee can't elevate is an account of a lacrosse game pitting the University of Denver against Syracuse. McPhee is, thankfully, human in the face of a few daunting subjects. Even with his faultless sentences, research and structure, the subject remains, with earthbound obstinacy, a game of lacrosse.

The second half of the book comprises an experiment called an "album quilt," a montage of "fragments" from pieces done across the years, a mix of buffed and whittled snippets in which Joan Baez leads to Thomas Wolfe, and a profile of Barbra Streisand gives way to a disquisition on oared ships, and young Time magazine McPhee alternates with wise New Yorker McPhee. With 250,000 words available, McPhee says he cut 75 percent. He was left surveying a stack of heartwood.

For someone who filled his recent book on the craft of writing with diagrams of circles and arrows resembling halftime football strategies, "The Patch" is a departure. At first it looks like a revelation in looseness, as if McPhee had simply riffled through his voluminous back catalog. In his introduction to the album quilt, McPhee assures readers, "With 56 three-by-five cards on a large smooth table, I reached an arrangement of passages in an intentionally various, random and subjective manner." I accept the subjective; the random not so much. I'd believe him more if the book didn't end with two essays placed with intent. The first is a remembrance of Robert Bingham, his longtime editor at The New Yorker, a chance to convey Bingham's love for language and its finest practitioners. The second describes a journey to McPhee's beloved Alaska and the northern landscape's ability to broaden both a writer and a person. McPhee might like you to believe these two cards happened to cling together, but my hunch is that "The Patch" is surreptitiously structured, un-planned. After years of elevating his prose with patience and organization, the craftsman just can't help himself. I suspect it's all he knows.

Craig Taylor, editor of the literary magazine Five Dials, is the author of "Londoners."

TRAVEL

Bridging the distance in Japan

THE 52 PLACES TRAVELER

BY JADA YUAN

I had spent some 39 years of my life believing I knew how to walk, but click-clacking down the streets of Kinoshaki, Japan, in geta sandals, I wasn't so sure anymore.

Over my clothes, I wore a yukata robe, or lightweight cotton kimono, that had been so complicated to put on that it came with illustrated instructions. A staff member from my traditional Japanese inn, Tsukimotoya Ryokan, tugged and tied it into place. "No, no, no," said the woman, who was half my height, as she put the right-side flap over the left. Then she reversed them, nodded, and cinched it all together with an obi, "O.K., O.K. O.K."

As I ventured outside, I heard loud, assured click-clacking behind me — two women in the same outfit that I was wearing. They were sisters from Singapore and moved like gazelles in their getas. I wobbled behind them and then nearly lost my footing as I took in the scene near the lantern-lit Otani River winding through the city.

People come from all over to soak in Kinoshaki's seven onsen, or public hot spring baths, and pretty much everyone walks around in a robe all day. The city is one big inn. The ryokan you stay in is your individual room, and the streets are like the inn's corridors. It's all very romantic until it hails and rains.

I had come to Kinoshaki, on the western coast of Honshu, Japan's biggest island, on a kind of pilgrimage. As a Japanese friend wrote in an email, "Don't they have that Buddha that's only unveiled to the public every 33 years?"

The morning after I'd arrived, I took the Kinoshaki Ropeway (a cable car) high up Mount Taishi to the Onsenji temple, home to the 1,300-year-old statue of Kannon, the goddess of mercy in the Buddhist tradition. Kannon has 11 faces, 10 in a crown to signify her wisdom, and was carved from the top of a mystical tree. This April began her unveiling, which will last for three years, until she goes back into hiding for another 30 years.

Midway up the ropeway, hail started coming down, and I rushed inside the temple. There, with the help of a translator, I spoke with Ogawa Yusho, the resi-

dent monk, who was born in the temple and is now raising his family there. He'd grown up hearing the legend of Dochi Shonin, a priest who arrived in the eighth century and prayed for 1,000 days for the health of the people here — and on the 1,000th day, an onsen sprung from the ground. It is said to be Mandara-yu, the oldest of the seven on Kinoshaki's onsen circuit.

Before modern medicine, ill people would trek to Onsenji temple, pray to the spirit of Dochi Shonin, and then bathe, naked, with a wooden ladle in the hot springs.

Once there, the ritual is to strip down, shower while sitting and then soak in the healing waters, surrounded by bodies of all shapes and sizes. (Onsen are divided into all-male and all-female sides.) I was struck with the ease of nudity, how young girls splashed around with their mothers and big sisters and grandmothers, and what an impact that must make on their self-image, to know that bodies are all different and we all have one. The hot spring water warmed away the foul weather.

As I left, I put on my yukata, thinking of the words I'd heard in the ryokan: left-side over right, "O.K., O.K., O.K.," and stepped out into the thoroughfare that seemed like a reversal of time. The onsen were a little hot for me, but I could walk around in a robe forever.

ADVENTURES IN SEAFOOD

His name was Sushi Tiger. He was 76 and he'd been studying the art of cutting raw fish for 50 years. Why didn't I come in and take a seat?

I was the only person in his narrow restaurant, breaking a cardinal travelers' rule to follow crowds to the best food. But I'd already been wandering the streets of Kanazawa, the capital city of the Ishikawa Prefecture, for 20 minutes in search of sushi, and a kind young man had brought me here, so who was I to mess with fate?

Sushi Tiger, who also goes by Takashi, wrapped a twisted white bandanna around his forehead as he prepared my dinner. He spoke little English and I spoke almost no Japanese, so we communicated by writing on napkins, pointing at a sign with pictures of sushi and using Google Translate. At one point he brought out a book of cartoons used for teaching English to schoolchildren and taught me a few Japanese phrases,



Clockwise from top left: A Shinto shrine above the town of Izushi, Japan; lantern floats used in parades at the Wajima Kiriko Art Museum on the Noto Peninsula; terraced rice paddies, also on the peninsula; a street scene in Kinoshaki, famous for snow crabs.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JADA YUAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

while serving me sake. I was glad to be his only customer.

In my Kinoshaki ryokan, at lavish kaiseki dinners, the learning curve was steeper. I'd sit down to a tray filled with 20 little plates and no one who spoke English to guide me through them. What

order was I supposed to eat them in? Did any of them get dipped in soy sauce? So I'd try first and ask questions later. It turns out I am not a fan of preserved fish eggs melded into a rectangular cake, but I'm O.K. with tender fish intestines.

The big reason Kinoshaki has such a thriving tourism business in winter is that snow crab season starts in November and lasts only a few months.

People come for the crab — good ones can sell for up to \$300 — and stay for the onsen.

A location that's hard to beat

CHECK IN

BY JOHN L. DORMAN

THE TRAFALGAR ST. JAMES, LONDON

RATES

Start at 299 pounds, or about \$385.

BASICS

After an extensive renovation, the Trafalgar St. James, formerly known as the Trafalgar hotel, reopened in August 2017 as part of Hilton's Curio Collection. The 131-room property has a storied past: it housed the offices of the Cunard Steamship Company in the early 20th century, and in 1912 it was one of the first places where news of the Titanic's sinking became public.

LOCATION

The hotel sits on the southwest side of

the Trafalgar Square adjacent to Spring Gardens, a short, brick-lined street near the Charing Cross railroad station. With the National Gallery across the street and its proximity to Buckingham Palace, Green Park, Piccadilly Circus and the West End theaters, the Trafalgar St. James offers one of the most enviable locations in central London.

THE ROOM

Upon entering my Trafalgar King Room, I was greeted with a photo of a youthful Mick Jagger, a nice cultural touch. A large flat-screen television and a Nespresso machine sat on the long dresser in the front of the room. On one of the night stands, there was a personal tablet where I could easily check the temperature, order room service and browse a guide to the city. The only drawback? The view from the window was of a nondescript office building, not the hotel's more historic surroundings.

THE BATHROOM

White wall tiles projected a retro look, while the vessel sink and a nearby mounted magnifying mirror added modern elements. The shower was spacious and slightly elevated from the floor, a design that helped prevent water leakage. There were an abundance of bathroom products by Molton Brown.

AMENITIES

There is free Wi-Fi throughout the hotel, which also has a 24-hour fitness center. Every room contains a fully stocked minibar offering a variety of bottled waters, sodas and juices, which are all complimentary, a nice surprise.

DINING

The Trafalgar dining rooms, with views of its namesake Trafalgar Square, have a beautiful brasserie and all-day dining options. The first-floor bar, with its plush bar stools, was classy and inviting. My breakfast, which featured pancakes and bacon with raspberries (£10), was delicious. The Rooftop, accessible from the sixth floor, offers a separate bar and small-plate menu with alfresco and indoor seating, accentuated by dramatic views of Trafalgar Square and the London skyline. Cocktails, ranging from an Espresso Martini (East London Vodka, coffee liqueur and espresso) to a Negroni, start at £11.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The Trafalgar St. James capitalizes on its prime location, providing personalized service and a high level of style. With subway access only a few feet away, London's cultural gems never seemed so close.

The Trafalgar St. James, Curio Collection by Hilton, 2 Spring Gardens, London; trafalgarstjames.com.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM LYNN

The Rooftop bar features a view of Trafalgar Square and the London skyline.

How to keep food allergies in line

BY SHIVANI VORA

I am severely allergic to gluten and also have a mild dairy allergy, and even though I'm a frequent traveler, it's not always obvious to me which dishes have either (or both!) when I'm in a new place and eating unfamiliar foods.

Dr. Alyson Pidich, the medical director of the Ash Center, in New York City, and a food allergy specialist, is allergic to shellfish and knows firsthand that even so-called safe foods can have trace allergens that can make you ill.

So what's a food allergy sufferer and world traveler to do? Here are some of Dr. Pidich's tips.

CARRY A FOOD ALLERGY CARD It should list your allergies in the language or lan-

guages spoken at your destination. Make sure that your cards list which foods you can't eat, rather than just stating what you're allergic to.

ORDER WITH CAUTION This may sound obvious, but in an ideal situation, you always travel with food allergy cards and the people serving you understand what you're not allowed to eat. Certain foods and drinks — particularly sauces, salad dressings, soups and cocktails — hide common allergens such as wheat, nuts, dairy and shellfish.

TRAVEL WITH A FOOD STASH Dr. Pidich recommends packing snacks and a few meal replacement options on your trip, if you can. Consider packing nonperishable snacks that are safe for carry-ons,

like powdered protein shakes, low-sodium jerky and dried fruits.

CONSIDER A HOTEL ROOM OR AN AIRBNB WITH A KITCHEN This means you can prepare some meals for yourself, and it also cuts down on the stress of not being able to find allergy-safe food.

DON'T FORGET YOUR ALLERGY MEDICINE You'll want medicine in case you have an uncomfortable reaction like hives or itching, but you shouldn't assume you can buy what you need locally. Dr. Pidich said it is better to pack, in your carry-on, medicine you already know and have used. Finally, make sure you familiarize yourself with your destination's rules and regulations about prescription (and nonprescription) medication.

The New York Times

Hard Truths

An exhibition of prize-winning photography from The New York Times.

Tomás Munita for The New York Times

Nov. 22, 2018–Jan. 27, 2019

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Hard Truths has been co-curated by David Furst of The New York Times and Arthur Ollman from the Foundation for the Exhibition of Photography in collaboration with Cercle Cité and Ville de Luxembourg.

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