

EXCLUSIVITY
STAY THE NIGHT
AT A PRIVATE CLUB

PAGE 15 | TRAVEL



CREATIVE HOW-TO
MAKING CHANGE,
DECADES LATER

PAGE 13 | CULTURE



THE HUSTLE CULTURE
WORK. WORK SOME MORE.
AND KEEP ON WORKING.

PAGE 6 | BUSINESS

The New York Times

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Showdown in Venezuela is a bad idea

Alejandro Velasco

OPINION

An African proverb captures the growing concern about a geopolitical showdown between world powers over Venezuela: “When elephants fight, it’s the grass that suffers.”

As in most proxy conflicts, Venezuela is a spoil in a larger prize. For the United States, it represents an opportunity to control the agenda in the region, sideline Russian influence and ensure that China takes a back seat. In a fight among elephants, it’s Venezuelans who stand to lose.

But Venezuelans have already lost so much. For years they have suffered under an economy in free-fall and a government in chaos. The scale of the crisis is staggering: an inflation rate that has surpassed 1 million percent, a historic economic contraction, plummeting oil production, an exodus of

Trump wants to reassert U.S. influence, but his approach undermines the possibility of a peaceful transition.

more than three million people. Today, the risk is that as geopolitical concerns sideline Venezuelans’ daily plight, a dire situation may become worse. By pursuing sudden, all-or-nothing regime change against Nicolás Maduro and in favor of the opposition leader Juan Guaidó, the United States has turned a regional crisis into a global power struggle. Why now?

Some say oil. The country sits atop the world’s largest proven reserves of crude, which is closer to the United States than most other major suppliers. Senator Marco Rubio of Florida and John Bolton, President Trump’s national security adviser, have boasted that a Guaidó presidency would mean a windfall for United States oil companies.

But even at the height of tensions when Hugo Chávez was Venezuela’s president, oil shipments to the United States never stopped. Even now, companies like Chevron and Halliburton continue to operate in the country. Before sanctions announced last week on the state-owned oil company, Petróleos de Venezuela, or PDVSA, Venezuela received as much as \$8 of every \$10 in oil sales from the United States. The reality is that Venezuela depends on the United States far more than the other way around.

Some claim democracy has driven the Trump administration to intervene. But when President Juan Orlando Hernández of Honduras stole the election in 2017, the United States offered

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



DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

President Trump delivering his State of the Union speech to Congress. He did not give an inch on the issues that have divided Washington during his presidency.

Defying rabbis, she’s running left

TEL AVIV

Candidate in Israel trying to open minds of secular voters and ultra-Orthodox

BY DAVID M. HALBFINGER

It is primary season in Israel, and the creaky Labor Party, hemorrhaging support and desperate to project energy and vitality, has invited its 44 candidates for Parliament to a college campus in Tel Aviv for a night billed as speed dating with hundreds of voters.

At the front of a classroom sit an array of typical center-left candidates — a longtime incumbent, a well-known journalist, a leader of the Druze minority — and one who is like no candidate ever seen at this kind of gathering: an ultra-Orthodox woman.

The woman, Michal Zernowitski, grew up in a religious party that does not allow female candidates.

The political parties supported by most of her neighbors in Elad, a bastion of ultra-Orthodoxy, belong to the right-wing governing coalition that she abhors.

Ms. Zernowitski, 38, has chosen a different path. It is hard to imagine a more

arduous one. And yet she seems to relish the steep uphill climb.

Again and again, as the audiences move from room to room, Ms. Zernowitski waits her turn, smiles, stands and delivers a five-minute stump speech designed to turn heads and open minds.

She rails against the state-funded but privately run ultra-Orthodox, or Haredi, education system, where, she says, “your background” and “who you know” determine “who gets into the good schools.” She recounts how she became a trailblazer as an ultrareligious woman in tech, but laments how her children are stuck “in the same place I was before.”

She blasts the Haredi parties, which she says are a half-century behind the times on women’s rights, gay rights and many other issues, and the right-wing government over which those parties hold outsized sway, because she says it ignores problems affecting Haredi communities for fear of antagonizing its coalition partners.

And she explains, like an emissary from another planet, to urban hipsters who may never have talked with their black hat- or wig-wearing neighbors, that a “revolution” is underway among the ultra-Orthodox: The “new Haredim” — younger, worldlier people who use smartphones and commute to diverse workplaces in the big cities — are hun-



CORINNA KERN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Michal Zernowitski said Israel’s ultra-Orthodox political parties were a half-century behind the times. She is facing long odds to be a Labor Party candidate for Parliament.

gry for change, dying to engage with and be embraced by broader Israeli society, and ready like never before to break ranks at the ballot box.

“There’s a huge gap between what the ultra-Orthodox establishment is doing and what the people want,” Ms. Zernowitski says.

A man rises with a question for all five candidates: How can we bring more people with skullcaps into Labor? He means: Is there a way we can bring more of the Orthodox into such a heavily secular party, given that religious observance generally goes hand-in-hand

ISRAEL, PAGE 2

Trump calls for peace, but barbs still flying

NEWS ANALYSIS
WASHINGTON

State of the Union speech has sections that echo the president’s rallies

BY MARK LANDLER

Standing before a diverse new class of House Democrats, in the shadow of their new female speaker, President Trump showed how he plans to govern in a divided Washington.

The answer, judging by his words, is no differently than he did before.

Mr. Trump briefly acknowledged Nancy Pelosi as “Madam Speaker,” but dispensed with even perfunctory congratulations. He ignored the midterm elections that swept the Republican Party out of power in the House. And he vowed that the United States would “never be a socialist country,” likening the progressive Democrats in the chamber to Nicolás Maduro, the discredited leader of Venezuela.

The president did issue a call for bipartisan cooperation, and he invoked the heroism of World War II to celebrate a shared history. But on the issues that have divided Washington during Mr. Trump’s turbulent presidency, he did not give an inch.

Whether it was the border wall, which he insisted would be built; abortion, where he tried to fan conservative anger over comments made by Virginia’s governor; or the investigations of his presidential campaign’s ties to Russia, which he dismissed as “ridiculous” and “partisan,” Mr. Trump chose to appeal to his political base, rather than trying to build bridges to Democrats.

“If there is going to be peace and legislation,” he declared, setting out the terms of his engagement with Congress, “there cannot be war and investigation. It just doesn’t work that way!”

Save for the majesty of the setting, the president’s adherence to his script and a single unscripted moment when Mr. Trump tipped his hat to the scores of Democratic women elected to Congress last November, parts of this State of the Union speech could have been drawn from one of his “Make America Great Again” rallies.

Mr. Trump warned of a new wave of invading caravans from Central America, spoke of grisly crimes committed by illegal immigrants and accused what he said were wealthy politicians who oppose his immigration policies — pre-

TRUMP, PAGE 4

IMMIGRANTS IN THE GALLERY

Some of the 20 immigrants who attended President Trump’s State of the Union address face deportation. PAGE 4

REBUTTAL FOCUSES ON VOTING RIGHTS

Stacey Abrams, who ran for governor of Georgia, stressed ballot access in the Democratic response. PAGE 4

A serious player in the world of comic books

ANGOUÛME, FRANCE

In France, the art form is having a golden age and gaining in respect

BY SEB EMINA

It’s a big year for comic book anniversaries. Batman’s 80th is this year, and Asterix is turning 60. But at the Angoulême International Comics Festival in France, there was a sense that the form’s best days may be yet to come — in the French-speaking world, at least.

“It’s a kind of golden age,” said Jean-Luc Fromental, a comic book author who also runs a graphic-novel imprint for the publisher Denoël. “There has never been so much talent. There have never been so many interesting books published.”

There are now more comic books published annually in France and Belgium than ever before, according to the festi-



THEOPHILE TROSSAT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

An exhibition for the artist Rutu Modan at the Angoulême International Comics Festival in France. The event is a cornerstone of the comics industry in both France and Belgium.

val’s artistic director, Stéphane Beaujean. “The market has risen from 700 books per year in the 1990s to 5,000 this year,” he said in an interview. “I don’t know any cultural industry which has had that kind of increase.”

Research by the market research company GfK, released to coincide with the festival last month, showed that turnover in the comic book industry in those two countries alone reached 510 million euros, or around \$580 million, in 2018.

The bumper year in France and Belgium contrasts with a mixed situation worldwide. Comichron, a website that reports on comic book sales in the United States, where the market is worth around \$1 billion, says that sales there are declining.

But in terms of respect and recognition, comics are on the way up. In July, “Sabrina,” by the American artist Nick Drnaso, became the first graphic novel to be nominated for the Man Booker Prize, Britain’s most prestigious literary award. “March: Book Three,” a graphic

COMICS, PAGE 2

The truth is worth it.

The New York Times



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PAGE TWO



“In America, it’s about the pop culture,” the American comic book artist Terry Moore said about comics events. “In France, I’m seeing that it’s about books, books, books.”

France takes its comics seriously

COMICS, FROM PAGE 1
novel about the civil rights movement, won the National Book Award for Young People’s Literature in 2016.

In Angoulême, a city about 280 miles southwest of Paris, comic books aren’t merely an annual preoccupation. Visitors arriving by train are greeted outside the station by an obelisk honoring René Goscinny, one of the creators of Asterix. There is a comics museum and a comics library.

The festival, spread out in venues across the city, featured comic books on just about every conceivable subject — the life of Jules Verne, the wines of Burgundy, erotic stories set in space. There was even one whose main character is a gym sock. The St-Martial church was repurposed as a shop specializing in comic book titles for Christian readers, whether modern spiritual tales or retellings of Bible stories.

The Angoulême event is unusual in its embrace of comics from around the world, including, but not limited to, those from the three traditions that dominate the form here: French-Belgian, American and Japanese manga.

“It’s the only place in the world where you can see all the comics created in the world,” said Beaujean, the festival artistic director, who this year doubled the size of an area where publishers can buy rights to international titles.

Books featuring classic characters like Donald Duck, Wonder Woman and Tintin were available in both freshly printed form and as secondhand rarities. And while occasional encounters with men in superhero outfits are unavoidable at an event like this, Angoulême has a very different atmosphere from its American counterparts such as Comic-Con.

“In America, it’s about the pop cul-



Emil Ferris, an American comic book author, receiving the Fauve d’Or award for best comic book for her debut graphic novel, “My Favorite Thing Is Monsters.”

ture, which would include everything from Marvel movies to Lego,” said the American comic book artist Terry Moore, the author of a 26-year-old series, “Strangers in Paradise.” In

The Angoulême international festival is “the only place in the world where you can see all the comics created in the world.”

France, I’m seeing that it’s about books, books, books,” he said.

France’s culture minister, Franck Riester, gave a speech at the festival comparing the event’s role in the world of comics to that of the Cannes Film Festi-

val in cinema, and Jean-Michel Blanquer, the education minister, visited on Thursday. The attendance by government officials underscored the way the “ninth art,” as comic books are sometimes referred to in France, is not a niche pursuit but a mainstream activity.

The Angoulême festival announces a number of prizes each year, their recipients chosen by fellow comics artists. This year, for the first time, women won both of the festival’s biggest awards. A jury of seven artists selected the debut graphic novel by the American author Emil Ferris, “My Favorite Thing Is Monsters,” as winner of the Fauve d’Or, or Golden Wildcat award, for the year’s best book.

The Japanese Manga artist Rumiko

Takahashi won the Grand Prix, the festival’s lifetime achievement award. Takahashi began publishing manga comics in 1978 and her books, including “Inuyasha,” about a time-traveling school-girl, have sold more than 200 million copies. She is only the second woman to win the prize.

Angoulême is a cornerstone of the comics industry in France and Belgium, but some in the field say the exuberant headlines conceal a more complex picture. A common refrain is that the huge increase in titles has meant that, while there’s more money in the industry, there are also a greater number of authors grasping for a share of it.

Benoît Peeters, an author of comic books who has also written a biography of the philosopher Jacques Derrida, said in an interview that despite the increase in overall readership, “the sales of each book, except for those like Asterix and manga, are going down.”

Peeters founded an organization called The General State of Comics to lobby publishers and the French government to defend the interests of comic book artists.

He said that publishers were hedging their bets by signing up for too many books, with smaller titles often receiving inadequate support as a result. “I think the publishers need to make some choices,” he said. “When they choose a book they have to defend it and promote it.”

But in France, at least, comic books were taken seriously as an art form, Peeters said.

“When I was a young author I came from a more literary world,” he said. “People said, ‘What are you doing with comics? You are a clever person. You should work with movies or literature.’ Now, nobody would say that.”

French organ maestro who challenged tradition

JEAN GUILLOU
1930-2019

BY MICHAEL COOPER

Jean Guillou, a French organ master whose modern-sounding compositions, unusual transcriptions and idiosyncratic performances challenged centuries of tradition and were preserved on more than 100 recordings, died on Jan. 26 in Paris. He was 88.

His death was announced by his music publisher, Schott Music.

Mr. Guillou never lost the capacity to shock in a career of nearly eight decades, from his beginnings as a church organist while still a child through the half-century he spent in one of the most important organ posts in France, at the church of St. Eustache in Paris.

He bucked performance traditions; transcribed music by composers who could seem an odd fit for the organ (including Stravinsky, who had dismissed the organ by saying that “the monster never breathes”); wrote ambitious organ works; and helped design new organs that challenged conceptions of how the instrument should look and sound.

Critics, and other organists, sometimes harrumphed at the interpretive liberties and flights of fancy that Mr. Guillou took in a time in which the trend was toward historical fidelity.

After a performance at the Riverside Church in New York in 1982, the New York Times critic Allen Hughes, while praising Mr. Guillou’s “astonishingly fleet” fingers, complained in his review that Mr. Guillou had “let his enthusiasm for organ gadgetry and color possibilities take precedence over the rhythmic solidity and interpretive scale and poise that make for art in performance.”

But his flamboyant style was a revelation to many. Michael Barone, the host of Pipedreams, an American Public Media radio program, recalled that Riverside performance as thrilling.

“When he would sit at the organ, it was almost as if the organ would explode or burst into flames,” Mr. Barone said. “He would reach deep into the depths of the spirit of music, and he challenged the dynamic and technical capabilities of the instrument.”

Mr. Guillou shrugged off the criticism. Stephen Tharp, an organist who studied with him, said Mr. Guillou had “played the organ repertoire with ideas that were very individual, and he did so without apology.”

He recalled Mr. Guillou telling him, “If you’re still upset with anything that happens in the organ world, you haven’t spent enough time in it.”



Jean Guillou at the console of the organ at the church of St. Eustache in Paris in 2010. Mr. Guillou helped design organs and made more than 100 recordings.

Defying rabbis, ultra-Orthodox woman is running left

ISRAEL, FROM PAGE 1
with right-wing beliefs? A woman sitting nearby jumps in: “If Labor wants to change its image,” she says, “it’s Michal.”

At the very top, Israeli politics is consumed with the fate of Benjamin Netanyahu, the embattled prime minister, in April’s elections. But at the local level, the identity politics that divides Israelis in myriad ways — Arab and Jewish; Ashkenazi and Mizrahi; pro- and anti-settlement; secular and religious; left, right and center — has been producing unexpected results, nowhere more so than among the Jewish religious right.

In Beit Shemesh, a fast-growing ultra-Orthodox center, thousands ignored their rabbis’ orders and helped elect a woman mayor in October. In Bnei Brak, where Ms. Zernowitski was raised, Mr. Netanyahu’s Likud party won two seats, a signal achievement on a City Council long dominated by Haredi parties. And in Telzstone, a tiny Haredi enclave on the outskirts of Jerusalem, an upstart who took on the rabbis’ anointed candidate in a special mayoral election last month earned 40 percent of the vote — a seismic shift, despite falling short, for a population that has long exerted power by voting in lock step.

The overwhelming majority of ultra-Orthodox still identify with right-wing policies, experts say. But those who do not are making their presence felt: In April’s elections, Adina Bar-Shalom, the daughter of the founder of one of the main Haredi parties, is running for Parliament on a social justice platform and is expected to join a centrist ticket.

Ms. Zernowitski — who in keeping

with modesty strictures wears a wig, but one so subtle it is impossible to notice — sees herself as embodying the generational yearnings of ultra-Orthodox voters who, unlike forebears who saw the land of Israel as holy but were uncertain about the state, want to feel more fully a part of the country of which they are citizens. “They’re trying to integrate into Israel and leave their ghettos,” she said.

As an advocate for women, too, she has an added motivation to break out of the confines of the Haredi world. After she finished a radio interview recently, she said, the station brought on a sitting Haredi lawmaker who said that women did not belong in politics just as they did not belong working at a garbage dump, “because politics is garbage.”

Actually getting elected, however, would require something approaching a miracle: Ms. Zernowitski’s chosen party, Labor, is a shambles. Some polls show it winning just seven seats in the Parliament, the Knesset, down from 18 in the current government; one new poll suggested it might not win any seats at all.

In the primaries, any newcomer would be lucky to earn a winnable spot on the party’s ranked list among the returning incumbents, and many are battling for the chance.

So Ms. Zernowitski talks up the “tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands” of modern Haredi voters she says are waiting for a candidate like her — and begs Labor voters to take a leap of faith. “I believe that if you open the door, these people will come and vote,” she says.



Michal Zernowitski sees herself as embodying the yearnings of younger ultra-Orthodox voters. “They’re trying to integrate into Israel and leave their ghettos,” she said.

The experts say she is unlikely to test that premise.

“She has no chance,” declared Gilad Malach, an expert on the ultra-Orthodox at the Israel Democracy Institute. But he said Ms. Zernowitski, if ahead of the curve, was nonetheless onto something: The Haredi parties are calcified and vulnerable to breakaway voters, he said.

“On the day that an ultra-Orthodox representative will be successful outside the classic political parties,” he said, “there’s a chance more people will choose that party because it works.”

At a Labor candidates’ night in Jeru-

salem, Ms. Zernowitski addressed a roomful of activists and retirees who snapped up her brochures. Afterward, Izzy Almog, 81, holding his cane, smiled up at her from his seat.

“Don’t be offended, but I don’t know what your chances are,” he said. “But you’re a long-term investment.”

Ms. Zernowitski has been around politics long enough to know how tough it can be. As a youngster she knocked on doors for one of the biggest Haredi parties. She even protested against the Oslo peace accords.

But in her 20s she came to regret the

divisiveness she said the right wing was sowing. Both Arabs and the ultra-Orthodox are often scapegoated, she said. And the Palestinians, she said, deserve self-determination: Leaders of both sides “should go into a room and not come out till they have a deal.”

Her passion, however, is for addressing her own community’s ills: Schools where children are taught Torah and Talmud but not math, science or history. When they become adults, they find they are incapable of holding down a job.

“Economically, the only solution is to give it up,” she says — to leave the ultra-Orthodox lifestyle — “but most Haredim don’t want to give it up.”

“People are saying, ‘We don’t want the next generation to end up like us,’ where at 18 you have to go learn 12 years of an education in six months,” she said, driving to Tel Aviv at the wheel of her Hyundai hybrid. “But when we get to the politicians, there’s nobody to speak to,” she added, referring to Haredi lawmakers.

“It’s not only that they don’t support us,” she said. “They’re against us. They want everything to stay the same, because they have a lot of power and they don’t want to let their power go.”

Ms. Zernowitski was part of the first class of women at a technical college for the ultra-Orthodox. She learned coding, got a job in tech and moved up from developer to project manager over 15 years. She married a lawyer and is raising four children, ages 2 to 11.

But her trajectory easily could have been different, she said, citing the stereotype of religious women with big broods and low-paying jobs, if any:

“That could’ve been me. I could’ve been the preschool teacher with 10 kids.”

At the speed-dating event in Tel Aviv, the responses to Ms. Zernowitski were sympathetic until someone brought up public transportation on the Sabbath, which the ultra-Orthodox oppose but many nonreligious Israelis support.

“I think everyone wants Shabbat to be a little different,” she began.

“Don’t kid yourself!” a woman shouted from the back, and the room erupted in approval.

One of her passions is addressing schools where children are taught Torah and Talmud but not math, science or history.

Ms. Zernowitski kept her poise, waited for the shouts to subside, then explained that each town should be able to decide for itself, but that there should at least be minimal Saturday transit service for those who need or want it.

As the last of the crowd filtered out, Ms. Zernowitski was mobbed. Her sign-up sheet had 28 new names. Women in jeans and leggings — clothing she wouldn’t be seen in — clamored to say hello, as did young men.

Finally, with all the other candidates long gone and a janitor hovering outside, Amiram Alon, 18, ran out of questions.

“You’re the newest thing in the party,” he told her. “You’ve got my vote.”

Irit Pazner Garshowitz contributed reporting.

World



Óscar Arias Sánchez, shown in 2017, was twice the president of Costa Rica. In response to the allegation against him, he said had never “disrespected the will of any woman.”

Nobel winner accused of assault

SAN JOSÉ, COSTA RICA

Legacy is endangered for Óscar Arias Sánchez, who tried to stop civil wars

BY FRANCES ROBLES

A psychiatrist and antinuclear activist has accused Óscar Arias Sánchez, the Nobel laureate and former Costa Rican president, of sexually assaulting her four years ago, bringing the #MeToo movement to one of Latin America's most revered statesmen.

Mr. Arias was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987 for having brokered a plan to end civil wars in Central America. He remains the most powerful figure in Costa Rica, which he led twice and where he continues to run a foundation that promotes peace and democracy.

The sexual assault allegation could deliver a serious blow to his legacy.

The accuser, Alexandra Arce von Herold, has filed a criminal complaint with federal prosecutors and gave a statement under penalty of perjury asking them to charge Mr. Arias with sexual assault. She provided a copy of the 10-page complaint to The New York Times, which shows she had met with prosecutors for nearly three hours. Dr. Arce did not seek civil damages.

A nuclear disarmament activist, Dr. Arce often met with the former president, who was an important supporter of the cause. She said she was at Mr. Arias's home in late 2014 to discuss an upcoming event in Vienna when he came up behind her, touched her breasts and shoved his hands up her skirt, penetrating her with his fingers.

She left, distraught, and told a number



DANIELE VOLPE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Alexandra Arce von Herold, a psychiatrist and antinuclear activist, said she was groped by Mr. Arias at his home in 2014.

of people what had happened, at times in tears. Among them were colleagues and her brother, who said that for weeks afterward, “it was like she had PTSD. She didn't feel safe.”

In a statement emailed by his lawyer, Rodolfo Brenes, Mr. Arias said he was innocent and would defend himself in court.

“I deny categorically the accusations made against me,” he said. “I have never acted in a way that disrespected the will of any woman.”

Mr. Arias is also facing unrelated accusations of criminal malfeasance in connection with his 2008 decision to approve a Canadian company's gold mining project in an ecological corridor before environmental studies had been completed.

“Politics today is a conspiracy of insinuations,” Mr. Arias wrote in an op-ed column last month in response to the malfeasance charge.

Thinking back to the afternoon when she said Mr. Arias had grabbed her, Dr. Arce said she regretted not having fought back. She was in shock, she said. She had first met Mr. Arias through her

mother, a former legislator in his party, and had visited his house with her mother in the past.

“I just froze, and I didn't know what to do,” she said in an interview. “I was so much in shock. That had never happened to me before.”

Dr. Arce said the only thing that occurred to her at the time was to cry out: “You're married!”

She said she made up an excuse about having an appointment at the National Assembly and hurried out. She was in such a panic, she said, that she actually went to the National Assembly, even though she had no meeting scheduled.

There, Dr. Arce met a member of Congress she knew and told her what had just happened, she said.

That legislator's aide, who did not want his name published because he did not wish to get entangled in a scandal involving such an influential person, confirmed the account to The Times. The aide said Dr. Arce had been teary-eyed and nervous.

That same day, Dr. Arce also called her boyfriend, who lives in France, and told him.

“I immediately trusted Alex,” the boyfriend, Jean Marie Collin, said in an interview. “I never had a doubt about what she told me.”

Dr. Arce also said she told her brother, her father, and several other people in the nuclear disarmament movement. Her complaint, filed on Monday, says she spoke to 15 people. One of those people, with whom Dr. Arce shared the story during the meeting in Vienna, told The Times that Dr. Arce had been in tears when she spoke about it.

“She didn't go into details about what exactly happened, and we didn't ask her,” Dr. Arce's brother, Manuel Arce, said in an interview.

Her father died shortly afterward and

she fell into a depression. Mr. Collin said Dr. Arce often did not want to be touched, even by him.

Dr. Arce said she did not go public earlier because, before the #MeToo movement led to a period of reckoning in the United States, where famous men suddenly found themselves having to answer for allegations of sexual harassment and assaults that took place even decades earlier, the notion of making such a serious allegation against someone so powerful seemed unimaginable.

“I just froze, and I didn't know what to do. I was so much in shock. That had never happened to me before.”

She said that seeing women accuse powerful men like Harvey Weinstein and Bill Cosby of sexual harassment and sexual assault was inspiring. But it was watching the young gymnasts testify one after the other about sexual assault by a United States Olympic team doctor, Larry Nassar, that clinched her decision to come forward, she said.

“All the other women, that did, that helped me,” said Dr. Arce, who works at a state hospital in San José, Costa Rica's capital. “So I thought maybe, maybe, I can help other people, too.”

Dr. Arce said she had hesitated to come forward also out of fear of alienating Mr. Arias, an important contact in the disarmament crusade.

“The cause was more important than anything else,” she said.

But she finally decided that other young activists who work with Mr. Arias could be at risk.

“It's the right thing to do,” she said, “even if it destroys me.”

What is the Irish backstop, and why is it tied to Brexit?

LONDON

Measure aims to guarantee no border between Ireland and Northern Ireland

BY RICHARD PÉREZ-PEÑA

The Irish backstop.

Convenient shorthand for a devilishly complex subject. It sounds almost like a fence, but the issue is about not having a fence at all — an apt paradox for a problem that may not have a solution.

And it has become one of the overriding sticking points in Brexit, Britain's halting, seemingly interminable effort to leave the European Union.

Government officials debate it daily, in London and on the Continent, and ordinary Britons and Irish people are discussing it, too, if only to say that they don't understand what it means.

WHY IS A BACKSTOP NEEDED?

In short, it is a way to avoid building a physical border, with checkpoints for goods, on the boundary between Ireland, a European Union member country, and Northern Ireland, a part of the United Kingdom.

Simple, right? In fact, achieving that goal when Britain leaves the bloc, and doing it in a way that satisfies both the British Parliament and European negotiators, turns out to be a bit like trying to solve a jigsaw puzzle while blindfolded.

DON'T COUNTRIES CHECK IMPORTS?

Goods crossing from one nation to another often have to undergo checks for two main reasons: to make sure that the importer pays customs duties or tariffs, and to make sure that the merchandise meets the importing country's standards. (Think of it this way: Did you pay the tariff on that toaster, or car, or sausage? And is it safe to use, or drive, or eat?)

However, the European Union has done away with all of that inside the bloc, eliminating barriers — both physical and like the examples above — that might impede trade between its 28 member countries.

Instead, the member nations have a customs union, meaning that they do not charge tariffs on one another's products. And they have a single market, sharing a single set of product standards.

In addition, the 1998 Good Friday agreement that helped end sectarian violence in Northern Ireland guaranteed that there would not be a hard border between that part of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Officials in Ireland, in Northern Ireland and in the rest of the European Union all insist that must not change, and no faction in the British Parliament wants it to change.

WHAT WILL CHANGE?

Britain is scheduled to leave the European Union on March 29, but under the agreement that Prime Minister Theresa May has negotiated with Brussels, there would be no immediate change in trade. Britain would remain in both the customs union and the single market until at least the end of 2020, during which Brussels and London would attempt to negotiate a permanent trade relationship.

At that point, if no deal has been reached, either the transition period could be extended until 2022 or the Irish backstop could come into effect. The backstop could also come into play if an agreement has still not been reached by 2022. Mrs. May is scheduled to meet

with European Union leaders on Thursday to discuss changes to Irish border arrangements.

A long-term trade deal with the European Union could mean leaving both the customs union and the single market, which is what Mrs. May proposes and what the hard-line pro-Brexit faction wants. Britain would be able to strike trade deals with other parts of the world, and to opt out of European standards.

Under current rules, that would mean checking goods flowing across the Irish border. And with today's technology, that would require physical barriers and border checks.

So, as it stands, Mrs. May's pact with the European Union provides that if Britain and the European Union cannot agree on a long-term trade arrangement that deals with the Irish border question, then either at the end of 2020 or at the end of 2022, the backstop would kick in.

SO WHAT IS THE BACKSTOP?

The backstop provision says that as long as there is no long-term trade pact, Britain would remain in the European customs union, and Northern Ireland would also be bound by many rules of the single market.

European leaders not only demanded the backstop, but they also insisted that it have no expiration date.

Britain could therefore be outside the European Union, with no voice in shaping its rules, but remain closely tied to the bloc indefinitely. To Mrs. May's hard-line, pro-Brexit colleagues, that is a nightmare scenario that could leave Britain permanently powerless to determine its own trade destiny.

The prime minister could ignore the pro-Brexit factions in her party and cut a deal with the Labour Party for a “soft” Brexit that would, at minimum, leave Britain in the customs union. But that would risk alienating those who voted in the referendum to leave, and it would risk tearing the Conservatives apart, an outcome that many believe is Mrs. May's greatest fear.

European officials have suggested that Britain could largely avoid the single market standards by having only Northern Ireland abide by those listed in the backstop, while a different set of rules could be adopted for the rest of the country. British lawmakers have rejected that out of hand because they say that it would create a virtual border in the Irish Sea, cutting off Northern Ireland from the rest of the United Kingdom and moving it closer to unification with the Republic of Ireland.

Mrs. May argues that the backstop might never go into effect, and that, even if it did, it would not be in place for long. Her government envisions a system that would allow customs and standards checks without actually stopping and inspecting trucks or people at the Irish border — technology that does not yet exist.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Last month, Parliament rejected Mrs. May's agreement by a crushing margin, 432 to 202. Primarily because of the backstop, 118 of the 317 lawmakers from her Conservative Party voted against it, as did all 10 of the Democratic Unionists of Northern Ireland, whose support Mrs. May relies upon for her parliamentary majority.

On Tuesday, Parliament voted to direct the prime minister to return to European negotiators and demand an expiration date to the backstop, or a clause that would allow Britain to withdraw from it without the bloc's approval.

Brussels has insisted that it will not budge.

Cave in Siberia was home to a lost branch of humanity

BY CARL ZIMMER

Over the past decade, the Denisova Cave in Siberia has yielded some of the most fascinating fossils ever found. To the naked eye, they are not much to look at — a few teeth, bits of bone.

But the fossils contain DNA dating back tens of thousands of years. That genetic material shows that Denisovans were a distinct branch of human evolution, a lost lineage.

At some point in the distant past, the Denisovans disappeared — but not before interbreeding with modern humans. Today, people in places like East Asia and New Guinea still carry fragments of Denisovan DNA.

One of the biggest obstacles to understanding the Denisovans is their age. Standard methods for dating these fossils have left scientists perplexed.

“Everyone said, ‘These Denisovans, we have no idea how old they are,’” said Katerina Douka, an archaeologist at the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History, in Germany.

Over the past six years, Dr. Douka and other experts have been creating a sort of history of the Denisova Cave. They have dated 103 layers of sediment on the cave floor, as well as 50 items found in them, including bones, pieces of charcoal and tools.

The scientists unveiled this chronology in a pair of papers published on Wednesday. That timeline shows that

humans occupied the cave for perhaps as long as 300,000 years. And it raises some intriguing hints that Denisovans may have been capable of sophisticated thought, on par with modern humans.

In an accompanying commentary, Robin Dennell of the University of Exeter in England wrote that Dr. Douka and her colleagues have created “a rigorous and compelling timeline.”

Denisova Cave sits about 30 yards above the Anuy River in Russia. The cave has a large main chamber with a high ceiling; from there, passageways lead to smaller chambers. Over the past few hundred thousand years, sediment has slowly built up on the cave floor.

In the 1970s, Russian scientists began digging into that sediment, finding fossils of animals like hyenas and bears, fragments of humanlike bones and thousands of stone tools, as well as bracelets, beads and other ornaments.

In 2010, researchers at the Max Planck Institute of Evolutionary Anthropology announced they had found DNA in teeth and bones from the cave. In addition to Denisovan DNA, they found a few bone fragments that contained Neanderthal DNA.

By comparing the mutations in this DNA, the scientists got a better sense of how Denisovans and Neanderthals fit into the human family tree.

As it turned out, modern humans share a common ancestor with Denisovans and Neanderthals that lived

roughly 600,000 years ago. Later — approximately 400,000 years ago — the Neanderthal and Denisovan lineages split.

Since the digging began, Russian researchers have carefully mapped the sedimentary layers in which they found bones and tools. They tried to estimate the ages of the layers, but “the dates were all over the place,” Dr. Douka said.

She and her colleagues at the University of Oxford in England are experts on determining the age of carbon. Researchers from the University of Wollongong in Australia tried an alternate method called optical dating.

The researchers combined results from the two methods to assemble a single chronology of the cave.

The findings are largely in agreement: “It's definitely a unified story,” said Zenobia Jacobs, an archaeologist at the University of Wollongong.

The earliest signs of human life in the cave — simple stone tools — are more than 287,000 years old. The tools alone cannot tell us if those first people were Denisovans or Neanderthals. But they are not the style known to be made by Neanderthals, suggesting Denisovans may have been the creators.

It's not until about 200,000 years ago that the oldest Denisovan DNA comes to light. The researchers estimated it to be between 185,000 and 217,000 years old.

A Neanderthal DNA sample comes from a layer that formed between



SERGEY ZELINSKI/RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Researchers in the Denisova Cave in Siberia, including Katerina Douka, second from left. They found that humans occupied the cave for perhaps as long as 300,000 years.

172,000 and 205,000 years ago.

In the millennia that followed, both Denisovans and Neanderthals left more genetic evidence in the cave. It may have been continually occupied for thousands of years by one group, then abandoned and reoccupied by others.

But Neanderthals and Denisovans must have overlapped at least once during those tens of thousands of years.

In August, researchers reported a

bone fragment from a girl whose mother was a Neanderthal and father was a Denisovan. In the new study, researchers estimate that this hybrid child lived between 79,100 and 118,100 years ago. The researchers found no Neanderthal remains in more recent layers of the cave floor — only Denisovan. A Denisovan tooth dates back to between 55,300 and 84,100 years ago; a Denisovan chip of bone is 51,600 to 76,200 years old.

WORLD

Trump calls for peace, but the barbs still fly

TRUMP, FROM PAGE 1

sumably including Ms. Pelosi — of favoring open borders while “living their lives behind walls and gates and guards.”

“No issue better illustrates the divide between America’s working class and political class than illegal immigration,” he said.

In front of him, however, the divide was between the mostly male Republicans, who applauded his red-meat lines, and the Democrats, many of them women, who were clad in white to signify the women’s suffrage movement.

Mr. Trump delighted in his role as the dismantler of Democratic legacies: he boasted of eliminating a “very unpopular” provision of Obamacare, withdrawing the United States from the “disastrous Iran nuclear deal” and renegotiating the “catastrophe known as Nafta.”

As for how the Republicans and Democrats might work together, Mr. Trump revived his proposal for infrastructure legislation, calling it “not an option” but a “necessity.” But he offered no details and breezed through the proposal, which is less popular among Republicans, in barely three lines, half as much time as he gave his campaign to reduce the price of prescription drugs.

Even Mr. Trump’s conciliatory phrases carried a partisan sting. He said, for example, “the agenda I will lay out this evening is not a Republican agenda or a Democrat agenda,” using a shortened form of Democratic that some Republicans favor as a mild slur against the opposing party.

For a president whose party lost 40 seats in the House three months ago, and who just lost a battle with Ms. Pelosi over the partial shutdown of the government for 35 days, Mr. Trump behaved like the insurgent who rode into Washington two years ago with a congressional majority and a mandate to upend the establishment.

He claimed credit for a long list of economic and national security achievements, some of which were almost comically exaggerated. “If I had not been elected president of the United States,” he said, “we would right now, in my opinion, be in a major war with North Korea.” In addressing Congress on Tuesday,



TOM BRENNER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Some Democrats dressed in white to signify the women’s suffrage movement. In his speech, Mr. Trump delighted in his role as the dismantler of Democratic legacies.

Mr. Trump found himself in an identical position to his three predecessors, Barack Obama, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton — facing a hostile Congress after a devastating midterm defeat.

How each confronted the moment offers a window into their presidencies; together, they stand as a stark contrast to the current occupant of the Oval Office.

In 1995, Mr. Clinton responded to the Republican Revolution of the previous November by pivoting to the center and giving credence to the small-government agenda of Newt Gingrich and his fellow warriors. He admitted to missteps in his first two years in office, which had allowed his Republican opponents to caricature him as a tax-and-spend liberal.

Mr. Clinton sketched a vision of a leaner, more efficient government, with fewer regulations and a reformed welfare system. The conservative commentator, William Kristol, marveled that it was “most conservative State of the Union by a Democratic president in history.”

Twelve years later, Mr. Bush opened his State of the Union address with a

warm tribute to Ms. Pelosi, who assumed the speaker’s gavel for the first time after Democrats swept to power in the House in 2006. He spoke of the pride her late father, Thomas D’Alesandro Jr., a congressman from Maryland, would have felt in seeing his “only daughter, Nancy, presiding tonight.”

It was a grace note for Mr. Bush, who was fighting to salvage his legacy after

Immigrant guests underscore a debate

Two women who worked for Trump while illegally in U.S. attended his address

BY MIRIAM JORDAN

As President Trump delivered his State of the Union address, two guests sitting in the gallery and listening closely were immigrants he has long known. They cleaned Mr. Trump’s cottage at his golf club in Bedminster, N.J., despite lacking legal status in the United States.

Victorina Morales and Sandra Diaz were among some 20 immigrants, many of them facing possible deportation, on the list of guests seated in the secure gallery for the annual address.

Even as the president wrapped his speech in a theme of national unity, he made immigration — his signature issue — central to it, as divisive as it may be. His determination to build a wall along the United States-Mexico border led recently to a 35-day government shutdown, and ahead of the next government funding deadline, on Feb. 15, there is still no deal in sight.

“I never imagined I would set foot in such an important place,” Ms. Morales, 46, a native of Guatemala who worked at Mr. Trump’s golf resort for five years, said after the speech. “I was an immigrant representing many immigrants in this country who don’t want to show their faces because of what the president says. I was there for the 11 million undocumented.”

Ms. Diaz, 47, a native of Costa Rica who is now a legal resident of the United States, said she “felt like Cinderella” attending the speech. But sitting in full view of the Trump family, whom she had seen frequently at Bedminster, and seeing the president deliver his address, she said, she had hoped he would have kinder words for undocumented immigrants.

“It was hard to be face to face with him and realize he didn’t change his position, especially for those of us who helped his businesses prosper,” she said. “I had the trust to be inside his home and serve him.”

But the two former housekeepers, invited by a pair of Democratic lawmakers, represent just one side of the fractious immigration debate: Among those Mr. Trump invited were a daughter, a granddaughter and a great-granddaughter of Gerald and Sharon David, a Nevada couple killed in their home last month. An immigrant from Central America who was believed to be in the country illegally has been charged in the case.

Republican lawmakers chose guests on Tuesday whose experiences they believe bolstered their calls for a crack-down on illegal immigration and fortification of the southern border.

Michael C. Burgess, a Republican lawmaker from Texas, hosted Chris Odette, whose daughter, Christia, 13, was struck and killed as she was crossing the street in 2014 by a vehicle driven by an undocumented immigrant who had no driver’s license. The driver was freed on



Sandra Diaz, left, a Costa Rica native, was disappointed that President Trump didn’t have kinder words for immigrants. Victorina Morales, a Guatemala native, said she represented immigrants who don’t want to show their faces because of what the president says.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER GREGORY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

bail and evaded immigration authorities when they went to arrest him, said Mr. Odette, a resident of Rockwall, Tex.

“It is important to me to hear that the president is doing something to address the immigration issue,” Mr. Odette said. “People who keep trying to block it don’t seem to care because they are not touched by the loss.”

Senator Marsha Blackburn and Representative Tim Burchett, both Tennessee Republicans, invited the parents of Pierce Corcoran, 22, who died in a head-on vehicle collision in December with an undocumented immigrant in the Knoxville area.

One immigrant at the address said, “It was hard to be face to face with him and realize he didn’t change his position.”

Also among the Republican invitees were leaders of the United States Border Patrol union, which has been a staunch backer of the president and his plan for a wall on the border.

Democratic lawmakers, for their part, hosted immigrants who have been targeted by the Trump administration’s more vigorous immigration enforcement policies, including mothers separated from their children under the “zero-tolerance” border policy, which was suspended in late June amid widespread public outrage.

Albertina Contreras and Yakelin Garcia, a Guatemalan mother and daughter invited by Senator Jeff Merkley of Ore-

gon, were separated at the border on May 24 and were unable to communicate for more than a month before being reunited on July 12. Having fled domestic violence, they are living in Murfreesboro, Tenn., while they fight in court to remain in the United States.

“I want to live here and get papers. It is a privilege to be here,” said Yakelin, who wore a black-and-white dress and a matching blazer for the occasion, which coincided with her 12th birthday.

Gerald Michaud, 47, has been living in the Brooklyn borough of New York City under Temporary Protected Status since an earthquake ravaged his native Haiti in 2010. The program enables him to live and work in the United States, but the Trump administration has moved to cancel the program later this year for Haitians, Salvadorans and others.

“I am proud to represent more than 300,000 immigrants who would like a permanent solution,” said Mr. Michaud, who is a wheelchair attendant at La Guardia Airport and teaches martial arts to at-risk youths.

The State of the Union address has long been a platform for presidents to report on key issues and seek congressional support. This is not the first time that it has been used to make a statement about the nation’s lingering divisions over immigration. In 2016, President Barack Obama invited a Syrian refugee to his State of the Union address to send the message that refugees were not a threat to the United States.

But what will distinguish this year’s speech from past years’ is the sheer number of invitees whose immigration

status is uncertain because of the president’s policies.

The attorney general of California, Xavier Becerra, delivered the Democrats’ Spanish-language response to Mr. Trump’s address. That, too, focused in part on immigration. “Tonight was about convincing us that, from here on out, the deceit and dysfunction would stop and that cooperation would begin,” Mr. Becerra said. “What we heard was the same tired refrain of building walls.”

As for Ms. Morales and Ms. Diaz, the former housekeepers at the president’s golf club, Tuesday night marked a first. Until recently, neither had been to Washington before, let alone attended a joint session of Congress. Their appearance began with an invitation to Ms. Morales from Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman of New Jersey.

“This year, there is no issue more important than the way this administration is using immigrants as an excuse to build a wall that doesn’t work,” said Ms. Watson Coleman, who represents the district where Ms. Morales resides.

In recent weeks, the two women have been meeting with members of Congress and aides all over Capitol Hill, hoping to spur an investigation into the difference between the president’s harsh words on immigration and his companies’ own hiring policies.

“We wanted to highlight the hypocrisy of the administration,” said Jimmy Gomez, the Democratic congressman from Los Angeles who invited Ms. Diaz. “The president demonizes immigrants, documented and undocumented, and also relies heavily on them.”

Democrats’ rebuttal focuses on voting rights

WASHINGTON

BY SHERYL GAY STOLBERG

Stacey Abrams, who narrowly lost her race in November to be Georgia’s governor, delivered the Democrats’ official response to President Trump’s State of the Union address night by outlining the party’s vision for lower health care costs and a more inclusive immigration policy, and pressing her case that access to the voting booth should be easier, not harder.

“Let’s be clear: Voter suppression is real,” Ms. Abrams said, speaking from Atlanta and surrounded by supporters. “From making it harder to register and stay on the rolls to moving and closing polling places to rejecting lawful ballots, we can no longer ignore these threats to democracy.”

Ms. Abrams’ loss in November dashed hopes that she would become the first African-American female governor, and the way she lost rankled her and her supporters, amid charges of voter suppression and ballot-rigging. Her emphasis on voting rights in the speech fit the theme she struck when she conceded to her Republican rival, Brian Kemp, who supervised the election as Georgia’s secretary of state. But it also dovetailed with the goals of the new House Democratic majority, whose leaders have included language intended to expand voter registration in the first bill they introduced when they took control of the chamber last month.

The issue is also deeply personal for Ms. Abrams. The election prompted her to start an advocacy group, Fair Fight Action, dedicated to expanding voting rights.

“This is the next battle for our democracy, one where all eligible citizens can have their say about the vision we want for our country,” she said. “We must reject the cynicism that says allowing every eligible vote to be cast and counted is a ‘power grab.’ Americans understand that these are the values our brave men and women in uniform and our veterans risk their lives to defend.”

The “power grab” comment was a direct reference to Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the majority leader, who used that phrase to denounce House Democratic legislation to expand access to the voting booth.

The Democrats’ selection of Ms. Abrams signals that the party intends for her to play a prominent role in national politics, and already some Democratic leaders are imploring her to challenge Senator David Perdue, Republican of Georgia, a close ally of Mr. Trump who is up for re-election in 2020.

She began her speech with a message about faith and family: Her librarian mother and father, a shipyard worker, both became United Methodist ministers. The family had only one car, Ms. Abrams said, “so sometimes my dad had to hitchhike and walk long stretches during the 30-mile trip home from the

midterm elections that served as a referendum on the Iraq War and his bungled handling of Hurricane Katrina. Mr. Trump, by contrast, appeared to rush his opening remarks to deny Ms. Pelosi the chance to introduce him.

Mr. Obama’s speech in 2011 came days after former Representative Gabrielle Giffords was nearly killed in a mass shooting in Tucson — a tragedy that muted the normally partisan tone. Mr. Obama seized on the fleeting comity to declare, “each of us is part of something greater — something more consequential than party or political preference.”

Like Mr. Bush and Mr. Clinton, he appealed to Republicans to find common ground — in his case behind a national project to make the United States more competitive in a rapidly changing global economy.

“This is our generation’s Sputnik moment,” Mr. Obama said, urging Americans to “out-innovate, out-educate, and out-build the rest of the world.”

Mr. Trump referred to outspending and out-innovating major competitors, too, but he put it in the context of building nuclear weapons, after explaining why he pulled the United States out of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.

For presidents, State of the Union speeches rarely grease the wheels of bipartisanship. Mr. Clinton clashed repeatedly with Republicans after their congressional takeover, outmaneuvering Mr. Gingrich after he precipitated a government shutdown, though he made a historic deal on welfare reform that set the stage for his re-election in 1996.

Mr. Bush stuck to his troop surge in Iraq, reaping unexpected gains. But with the exception of a deal with the Democrats late in his term on the fiscal crisis, his legislative agenda was over by the time he spoke in 2007.

Mr. Obama’s call for bipartisanship went nowhere in the Republican Senate, where the leader, Senator Mitch McConnell, vowed to make Mr. Obama a one-term president. He failed to strike a grand bargain on fiscal policy with Speaker John A. Boehner, with both sides blaming the other for bad faith in the failed negotiation.

shipyards.” One rainy night, she said, he gave away his jacket to a homeless man.

It was an anecdote meant to showcase Democrats’ concern for working people — a theme that House Democrats have hammered home with their so-called For the People agenda of lowering prescription drug prices, passing an infrastructure measure and ending corruption in Washington. Ms. Abrams hit hard on those themes throughout her address.

“In Georgia and around the country, people are striving for a middle class where a salary truly equals economic security,” she said. “But instead, families’ hopes are being crushed by Republican leadership that ignores real life or just doesn’t understand it. Under the current administration, far too many hard-working Americans are falling behind, living paycheck to paycheck, most without labor unions to protect them from even worse harm.”



ALYSSA POINTER/ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION VIA AP
Stacey Abrams gave the Democratic rebuttal to the State of the Union address.

She also attacked Mr. Trump over his immigration policies.

“We know bipartisanship could craft a 21st-century immigration plan, but this administration chooses to cage children and tear families apart,” Ms. Abrams said. “Compassionate treatment at the border is not the same as open borders.”

Ms. Abrams was not the only one to counter Mr. Trump. Two presidential hopefuls — Senators Bernie Sanders, independent of Vermont (who has not yet announced his candidacy but is widely expected to), and Kamala Harris, Democrat of California — delivered their own responses.

Ms. Harris, a former prosecutor who in 2017 became the second black woman to serve in the Senate (after Carol Moseley Braun of Illinois) delivered an eight-minute address, livestreamed on her Facebook page before Mr. Trump took the rostrum in the House chamber. She took the president to task for policies that she said benefit the rich and powerful, and outlined her own vision for a politics of unity rather than division.

Like Ms. Harris, Mr. Sanders outlined a progressive vision, questioning why Mr. Trump had failed to mention climate change in his address, faulting his “disgraceful” immigration policies and complaining of the president, “He is trying to divide us up.”

Donor draws scrutiny in inaugural inquiry

WASHINGTON

Venture capitalist had pivoted to Trump after backing Clinton

BY KENNETH P. VOGEL, DAVID D. KIRKPATRICK AND MAGGIE HABERMAN

In the world of big-dollar political donors, Imaad Zuberi is notable less for the scale of his giving than for its baldly transactional nature. A supporter of President Barack Obama and then Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign who frequently posted pictures of himself alongside high-profile politicians, Mr. Zuberi, a California venture capitalist, abruptly pivoted after Donald J. Trump's victory.

Telling friends he needed to act quickly to balance out his political connections if he hoped to maintain access, he donated more than \$1.1 million to committees associated with Mr. Trump and the Republican Party in the three months after the 2016 election.

It seemed to work. Mr. Zuberi scored coveted invitations to a pair of black-tie dinners celebrating Mr. Trump's inauguration. In the process, he posted photos of himself with the president, as well as Mr. Trump's first chief of staff, Reince Priebus, and Mr. Trump's picks for Treasury secretary, Steven Mnuchin; housing and urban development secretary, Ben Carson; and defense secretary, Jim Mattis.

But the biggest donation of his post-election flurry — \$900,000 paid by Mr. Zuberi's California firm, Avenue Ventures, to Mr. Trump's inaugural committee — is now being scrutinized by federal prosecutors in the Southern District of New York as part of what appears to be an escalating investigation into the inauguration and its financing.

On Monday, the prosecutors served a subpoena on the inaugural committee, demanding that it turn over records detailing its finances, including all donations and expenditures, as well as perks like photo opportunities and V.I.P. receptions offered to major donors. Mr. Zuberi and Avenue Ventures were the only donors named in the subpoena.

The subpoena focused particularly on foreign money, which inaugural committees are legally prohibited from accepting. It requested records related to donations "made by or on behalf of foreign nationals," and the committee's procedures for preventing such donations.

Mr. Zuberi is an American citizen. The subpoena does not state the nature of prosecutors' interests in Mr. Zuberi or his company.

His spokesman, Steve Rabinowitz, said the money Mr. Zuberi had donated to the inaugural fund had been "all his money, his personal money, certainly not foreign money." Mr. Zuberi "has no business with the U.S. government, and there is nothing that the U.S. government can be particularly helpful to him with," Mr. Rabinowitz added.

In an interview, Mr. Zuberi said that his donations were "more of a networking thing," intended mostly to help him meet people who could help with a New York real estate investment fund.

"To open doors, I have to donate," he said. "It's just a fact of life." He added, "Not only did it not yield any business, but it actually backfired," because of the attention he has received since his donation was cited in the subpoena.

But Mr. Zuberi's activity around the time of the inauguration suggests that he quickly came into contact with a variety of people in Mr. Trump's orbit, some of whom, according to associates briefed on the conversations, discussed business opportunities with him. In the



President Trump on Pennsylvania Avenue after his swearing-in in 2017. A \$900,000 donation to Mr. Trump's inaugural committee is being scrutinized by prosecutors.

month after the election, Mr. Zuberi posted a photo on Facebook with Mr. Trump's incoming national security adviser, Michael T. Flynn, a few days before Mr. Zuberi indicated on Facebook that he had traveled to the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Rabinowitz said his client had merely bumped into Mr. Flynn at Trump Tower, and asked to take a selfie. "There was no meeting with Mike Flynn," Mr. Rabinowitz said.

Mr. Zuberi said he had briefly discussed the possibility of doing business with a pair of top Trump fund-raisers — Michael D. Cohen, Mr. Trump's former personal lawyer and fixer, and Elliott Broidy, a California investor.

Those conversations never progressed beyond the initial stages, according to Mr. Zuberi, who said he and Mr. Cohen had discussed a Manhattan real estate venture, while he and Mr. Broidy had discussed an artificial intelligence start-up.

"To open doors, I have to donate. It's just a fact of life. Not only did it not yield any business, but it actually backfired."

Nonetheless, prosecutors asked Mr. Cohen about his dealings with Mr. Zuberi after Mr. Cohen pleaded guilty late last year to a range of crimes and agreed to cooperate with various investigations. Mr. Cohen has spent more than 70 hours with investigators with the Manhattan prosecutors and the office of the special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III, investigating Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential election. Mr. Mueller referred the case to the New York prosecutors.

The federal investigation by prosecutors in Manhattan is different from one taking place in Brooklyn, the New York City borough, where federal prosecutors are also examining inaugural officials



The venture capitalist Imaad Zuberi received invitations to celebratory dinners.

and other entities that supported Mr. Trump.

The subpoena to the inaugural committee also asks for records related to the tech company Stripe, which processed payments by donors to the inaugural fund, including credit card transactions.

Based in San Francisco, Stripe is registered with the Treasury Department as a money services business and by law is required to keep an eye out for and report suspicious transactions. Most such businesses have highly automated programs designed to spot unusual transactions.

For instance, if a donor listed a residence in Texas, but used a credit card that had been issued overseas, Stripe's compliance officers might have raised questions about the true source of the funds.

The subpoena asks for communications between the inaugural committee and Stripe. It is not clear whether Stripe received a separate subpoena for its transaction or reporting records related to the inaugural fund. The company declined to comment.

One of Stripe's investors, Thrive Capital, is controlled by Josh Kushner, the younger brother of Jared Kushner, Mr. Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser. But there is no indication that investiga-

tors are interested in that connection.

The scrutiny of the inaugural committee underscores the degree to which the investigations surrounding Mr. Trump, once centered on potential ties to Russia's meddling in the 2016 presidential election, have expanded and splintered into multiple inquiries touching on a wide range of topics, including his business, his campaign, his inauguration and his presidency.

Mr. Rabinowitz said Mr. Zuberi "has never been contacted by the special counsel's office or by any U.S. attorney's office and has no knowledge of any of them having ever inquired about him."

Mr. Zuberi's donations were channeled through Caroline Wren, a veteran Republican fund-raiser who worked for the committee that funded the 2016 Republican National Convention in Cleveland, to which Mr. Zuberi donated \$100,000 in January 2017 — months after the convention — according to Mr. Rabinowitz.

Ms. Wren, who did not respond to requests for comment, also was Mr. Zuberi's point of contact for his inaugural donation. He was rewarded during the inaugural festivities with a seat at an elite candlelight dinner next to the Turkish foreign minister, Mevlut Cavusoglu. Mr. Zuberi said that he received 10 tickets to the dinner, and that while he could not remember if he gave one of them to Mr. Cavusoglu, he had been acquainted with the foreign minister before the dinner because he was pursuing a business project in Turkey.

At another dinner, for foreign diplomats in Washington, Mr. Zuberi was seated at a table headed by Senator John Cornyn, Republican of Texas, and including Howard Lorber, a New York business executive close to Mr. Trump, as well as diplomats from Cambodia, Cameroon and Bahrain, where Mr. Zuberi's private equity funds have had big investments. A photo from the event shows Mr. Zuberi in conversation with Mr. Trump and other guests.

Mr. Zuberi's company, Avenue Ventures, manages private equity funds but also often acts as a consultant or intermediary for investors. It has had offices in China and Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and its funds have reportedly invested in real estate in India and a resort in Bahrain. It has listed as advisers retired Gen. Wesley K. Clark, a Democratic presidential candidate in 2004, and Richard G. Olson, who was the ambassador to Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates.

Executives who do business in the Persian Gulf and a person close to Mr. Zuberi said his firm had done business or sought investments in several gulf countries, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, as well as in Turkey.

Maintaining access to the highest levels of American government has become an essential tool of Mr. Zuberi's private equity business, two people close to him said. His company often oversees investments in projects requiring government contracts or approval in the United States or more often abroad, and his American contacts create an appearance of influence that he uses to court investors and business partners.

In at least one case, his habit of trading on his political connections has veered into acting as an agent for a foreign government. In 2015, the scandal-plagued government of Sri Lanka paid a total of \$6.5 million to Mr. Zuberi and another company linked to him, for services that appear to have included seeking to influence the American government, the magazine Foreign Policy reported. Mr. Zuberi belatedly registered as a consultant to the government of Sri Lanka, as required by law under the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

Kenneth P. Vogel reported from Washington, David D. Kirkpatrick from London and Maggie Haberman from New York. Sharon LaFraniere, Katie Benner and Ben Protess contributed reporting.

Outbreak of measles puts focus on vaccinations

SEATTLE

50 cases of the disease have been reported in Washington State

BY KIRK JOHNSON

Measles, declared eliminated as a major public health threat in the United States almost 20 years ago, has re-emerged this winter in the Pacific Northwest and other states where parents have relatively broad leeway over whether to vaccinate their children.

Seventy-nine cases of measles have been reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention since the start of this year. Fifty cases of the highly contagious disease were in Washington State.

An outbreak of measles has also occurred in the Orthodox Jewish community in New York City, where 64 confirmed cases of measles were reported, mostly late last year. That outbreak began, the C.D.C. said, when a child who had not had a measles vaccination caught the virus on a visit to Israel, where a large outbreak of the disease was occurring.

But no place has been hit harder since January than Clark County, Wash., a corner of the metropolitan area near Portland, Ore. Clark County officials declared a medical emergency last month and say they have seen 49 cases — most of them in children under the age of 10.

Clark County has one of the lowest vaccination rates in Washington State. About 78 percent of the kindergarten through high school population is vaccinated, according to state figures. Along with other cities mainly in the West — including Seattle, Phoenix, Salt Lake City and Houston — Portland is considered a hot spot for families who choose not to vaccinate for medical, philosophical or religious reasons.

For measles, epidemiologists generally consider the threshold for preventing public measles outbreaks to be a vaccination rate of 93 percent or higher.

"If you have a population that is unvaccinated, it's like throwing a match into a can of gasoline," said Dr. Alan Melnick, Clark County's public health director. "Measles is exquisitely contagious and immunization rates have been dropping."



A vaccine for measles, mumps and rubella. Measles is highly contagious.

Measles can cause permanent neurological damage, deafness and in relatively rare cases, death. All states in the United States allow parents to exempt children from vaccination for medical reasons, and most also allow for a religious exemption, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

But 17 states, including Washington, Oregon, Colorado and Texas, have gone further, allowing parents to keep their children from being vaccinated for unspecified personal or philosophical reasons. Some may be connected to a broader anti-vaccination movement, including concerns that vaccines lead to autism, an idea that has been widely debunked.

"I'm very worried that these measles epidemics are becoming a new normal," said Dr. Peter Hotez, a co-director of the Texas Children's Hospital Center for Vaccine Development at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. He said that misinformation had been spread about vaccines, and that state lawmakers in some cases have allowed those claims to drive their decisions about legislation.

"The enablers are state legislators in those states, that have allowed themselves to be played," he said.

Dr. Melnick, the Clark County official, said he had heard recently from doctors that parents have been showing up in greater numbers seeking vaccinations since the outbreak emerged. A plan is also underway, he said, for a mass clinic to give free shots.

"We've already a child hospitalized; I hope it doesn't take a death or a real serious complication like encephalitis for people to change their minds," about vaccination, he said.

In 2018, 17 measles outbreaks were reported, mostly in pockets around the nation. In 2017, 75 cases were reported in Minnesota, in a Somali-American community with low vaccination coverage.

In Washington State's Legislature, a bipartisan group of lawmakers is pushing to reverse the state's rule allowing philosophical or personal exemptions to vaccination. A bill, filed in the midst of the measles outbreak, has yet to be voted on.

President's visits to Florida resort are adding up

WASHINGTON

BY KATIE ROGERS

The Government Accountability Office set out in 2017 to calculate the total cost to taxpayers of President Trump's trips to Mar-a-Lago, his resort in Palm Beach, Fla., but said in a report that it could come up with only a snapshot of the expenses because the Trump administration had not responded to requests for more information.

The agency ended up studying only four trips the president took over a one-month period in 2017 and found that government agencies, including the Defense Department and the Secret Service, spent some \$13.6 million — an average of over \$3 million for each trip — to transport and protect the president, with the bulk of the expenses going to cover the cost of military aircraft and boats during that time.

The tab, officials say, is most likely higher, since the total expenses that administration members racked up traveling, dining and staying at the resort are not known for the four trips, much less for the 218 days of his presidency that Mr. Trump has spent at one of his properties. Of that total, 78 of the days were spent at Mar-a-Lago.

The G.A.O. officials who compiled the report said the White House had not responded to three separate requests for information that might help them flesh



President Trump has spent 78 days of his presidency at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Fla. The trips in one month alone cost taxpayers \$13.6 million, a report said.

out travel costs, while the Secret Service and the Defense Department had not submitted regular accounting of expenses to Congress, as is required by the Presidential Protection Assistance Act of 1976.

As a result, the G.A.O. studied only trips Mr. Trump took from Feb. 3 through March 5, 2017, hoping to piece together the costs. On one of those trips, for example, the president hosted Shinzo Abe, the prime minister of Japan,

at Mar-a-Lago. At the time, a White House official said the president had paid for Mr. Abe and his wife's trip to Florida as a "gift."

Without the White House's cooperation, details of Mr. Trump's personal expenditures related to that trip could not be included in the report. "You could assume it's the total cost of \$13.6 million," Brian Lepore, the G.A.O.'s director of defense capabilities and management, said in an interview of the White House's

lack of response. "Plus something else."

Mr. Lepore emphasized that several agencies, including the Defense Department, the Secret Service and the Coast Guard, were able to furnish details and that the Defense Department and the Secret Service had agreed to deliver more detailed reports to Congress in the future. In the case of the Defense Department, the report found that there had been no process in place for reporting expenditures.

The White House did not respond to a request for comment on why it had not supplied information for the report.

Mr. Lepore said that the Obama White House, which underwent a similar review for trips President Barack Obama took to Chicago and West Palm Beach in 2013, met with G.A.O. officials but ultimately declined to release information. The Clinton White House, which faced a review in 1999, furnished cost information on President Bill Clinton's international trips to Africa, Chile and China.

"We'd certainly want to know the cost of lodging and meals and incidental expenses" incurred by staff members on trips to Mar-a-Lago, Mr. Lepore said.

Noah Bookbinder, the executive director of the ethics watchdog CREW, said that the report issued on Tuesday raised significant issues, particularly since it found that about \$60,000 had been pumped back into Mar-a-Lago during that time period.

"When the president travels to visit his properties, he is promoting those

businesses, offering them extensive free publicity as well as in some cases providing access and other perks to his paying customers," Mr. Bookbinder said. "Of course when the money is paid directly to a presidential property like Mar-a-Lago, those conflict-of-interest concerns intensify."

The Democratic lawmakers who requested the report also asked officials to examine the costs of protecting two of the president's sons, Eric and Donald Trump Jr., on three international trips taken in early 2017. The report found that the younger Trumps flew by commercial aircraft, and it cost the Secret Service about \$396,000, mostly in temporary duty costs, to protect them on trips to Uruguay, the Dominican Republic and the United Arab Emirates.

The Secret Service, which did not respond to a request for comment, is responsible for protecting the president's adult children unless they decline those protections, as Donald Trump Jr. has done on and off in the past.

The Democrats who requested the report, including Senators Dianne Feinstein of California and Gary Peters of Michigan, and Representative Elijah E. Cummings of Maryland, said they were alarmed by its findings. "This is part of a troubling pattern of wasteful spending and serious abuse of tax dollars by the administration," they said in a statement. "We will keep investigating this issue to ensure taxpayer dollars are being used effectively and appropriately."

Business

Merely liking your job is no longer enough

The young learn to love it, while working 18-hour days to get the boss rich

BY ERIN GRIFFITH

Never once at the start of my workweek — not in my morning coffee shop line; not in my crowded subway commute; not as I begin my bottomless inbox slog — have I paused, looked to the heavens and whispered: #ThankGodIt'sMonday.

Apparently, that makes me a traitor to my generation. I learned this during a series of recent visits to WeWork locations in New York, where the throw pillows implore busy tenants to “Do what you love.” Neon signs demand they “Hustle harder,” and murals spread the gospel of T.G.I.M. Even the cucumbers in WeWork's water coolers have an agenda. “Don't stop when you're tired,” someone recently carved into the floating vegetables' flesh. “Stop when you are done.” Kool-Aid drinking metaphors are rarely this literal.

Welcome to hustle culture. It is obsessed with striving, relentlessly positive, devoid of humor, and — once you notice it — impossible to escape. “Rise and Grind” is both the theme of a Nike ad campaign and the title of a book by a “Shark Tank” shark. New media upstarts like the Hustle, which produces a popular business newsletter and conference series, and One37pm, a content company created by the patron saint of hustling, Gary Vaynerchuk, glorify ambition not as a means to an end, but as a lifestyle.

“The current state of entrepreneurship is bigger than career,” reads the One37pm “About Us” page. “It's ambition, grit and hustle. It's a live performance that lights up your creativity . . . a sweat session that sends your endorphins coursing . . . a visionary who expands your way of thinking.” From this point of view, not only does one never stop hustling — one never exits a kind of work rapture, in which the chief purpose of exercising or attending a concert is to get inspiration that leads back to the desk.

Ryan Harwood, the chief executive of One37pm's parent company, told me that the site's content is aimed at a younger generation of people who are seeking permission to follow their dreams. “They want to know how to own their moment, at any given moment,” he said.

“Owning one's moment” is a clever way to rebrand “surviving the rat race.” In the new work culture, enduring or even merely liking one's job is not enough. Workers should *love* what they do, and then promote that love on social media, thus fusing their identities to that of their employers. Why else would LinkedIn build its own version of Snapchat Stories?

This is toil glamour, and it is going mainstream. Most visibly, WeWork — which investors recently valued at \$47 billion — is on its way to becoming the Starbucks of office culture. It has exported its brand of performative workaholicism to 27 countries, with 400,000 tenants, including workers from 30 percent of the Global Fortune 500.

In January, WeWork's founder, Adam Neumann, announced that his start-up



TAYLOR GALLERY

was rebranding itself as the We Company, to reflect an expansion into residential real estate and education. Describing the shift, Fast Company wrote: “Rather than just renting desks, the company aims to encompass all aspects of people's lives, in both physical and digital worlds.” The ideal client, one imagines, is someone so enamored of the WeWork office aesthetic — whip-cracking cucumbers and all — that she sleeps in a WeLive apartment, works out at a Rise by We gym, and sends her children to a WeGrow school.

From this vantage, “Office Space,” the Gen-X slacker paean that came out 20 years ago next month, feels like science fiction from a distant realm. It's almost impossible to imagine a start-up worker bee of today confessing, as protagonist

Peter Gibbons does, “It's not that I'm lazy. It's that I just don't care.” Workplace indifference just doesn't have a socially acceptable hashtag.

“IT'S GRIM AND EXPLOITATIVE”

It's not difficult to view hustle culture as a swindle. After all, persuading a generation of workers to beaver away is convenient for those at the top.

“The vast majority of people beating the drums of hustle-mania are not the people doing the actual work. They're the managers, financiers and owners,” said David Heinemeier Hansson, the co-founder of Basecamp, a software company. We spoke in October, as he was promoting his new book, “It Doesn't Have to Be Crazy at Work,” about creating healthy company cultures.

Mr. Heinemeier Hansson said that despite data showing long hours improve neither productivity nor creativity, myths about overwork persist because they justify the extreme wealth created for a small group of elite techies. “It's grim and exploitative,” he said.

Elon Musk, who stands to reap stock compensation upward of \$50 billion if his company, Tesla, meets certain performance levels, is a prime example of extolling work by the many that will primarily benefit him. He tweeted that there are easier places to work than Tesla, “but nobody ever changed the world on 40 hours a week.” The correct number of hours “varies per person,” he continued, but is “about 80 sustained, peaking about 100 at times. Pain level increases exponentially above 80.”

Mr. Musk, who has more than 24 million Twitter followers, further noted that if you love what you do, “it (mostly) doesn't feel like work.” Even he had to soften the lie of T.G.I.M. with a parenthetical.

Arguably, the technology industry started this culture of work zeal sometime around the turn of the millennium, when the likes of Google started to feed, massage and even play doctor to its employees. The perks were meant to help companies attract the best talent — and keep employees at their desks longer. It seemed enviable enough: Who wouldn't want an employer that literally took care of your dirty laundry?

But today, as tech culture infiltrates every corner of the business world, its hymns to the virtues of relentless work remind me of nothing so much as Soviet-era propaganda, which promoted impossible-seeming feats of worker productivity to motivate the labor force. One obvious difference, of course, is that those Stakhanovite posters had an *anti*-capitalist bent, criticizing the fat cats profiting from free enterprise. Today's messages glorify personal profit, even if bosses and investors — not workers — are the ones capturing most of the gains. Wage growth has been essentially stagnant for years.

For congregants of the Cathedral of Perpetual Hustle, spending time on anything that's nonwork related has become a reason to feel guilty. Jonathan Crawford, a San Francisco-based entrepreneur, told me that he had sacrificed his relationships and gained more than 40 pounds while working on Storenvy, his e-commerce start-up. If he socialized, it was at a networking event. If he read, it was a business book. He rarely did anything that didn't have a “direct R.O.I.,” or return on investment, for his company.

Mr. Crawford changed his lifestyle after he realized it made him miserable. Now, as an entrepreneur-in-residence at 500 Startups, an investment firm, he tells fellow founders to seek out non-work-related activities like reading fiction, watching movies or playing games. Somehow this comes off as radical advice. “It's oddly eye-opening to them because they didn't realize they saw themselves as a resource to be expended,” Mr. Crawford said.

A DEFENSE MECHANISM

The logical endpoint of excessively avid work, of course, is burnout. That is the subject of a recent viral essay by the BuzzFeed cultural critic Anne Helen Petersen, which thoughtfully addresses one of the incongruities of hustle-mania in the young. Namely: If millennials are supposedly lazy and entitled, how can they also be obsessed with killing it at their jobs?

Millennials, Ms. Petersen argues, are just desperately striving to meet their own high expectations. An entire generation was raised to expect that good grades and extracurricular overachievement would reward them with fulfilling jobs that feed their passions. Instead, they wound up with precarious, meaningless work and a mountain of student loan debt. And so posing as a rise-and-grinder, lusty for Monday mornings, starts to make sense as a defense mechanism.

Most jobs — even most good jobs! — are full of pointless drudgery. Most cor-

porations let us down in some way. And yet years after the HBO satire “Silicon Valley” made the vacuous mission statement “making the world a better place” a recurring punch line, many companies still cheerlead the virtues of work with high-minded messaging. For example, Spotify, a company that lets you listen to music, says that its mission is “to unlock the potential of human creativity.” Dropbox, which lets you upload files and stuff, says its purpose is “to unleash the world's creative energy by designing a more enlightened way of working.”

David Spencer, a professor of economics at Leeds University Business School in England, says that such posturing by companies, economists and politicians dates at least to the rise of mercantilism in 16th-century Europe. “There has been an ongoing struggle by employers to venerate work in ways that distract from its unappealing features,” he said. But such propaganda can backfire. In 17th-century England, work was lauded as a cure for vice, Mr. Spencer said, but the unrewarding truth just drove workers to drink more.

Internet companies may have miscalculated in encouraging employees to

“The vast majority of people beating the drums of hustle-mania are not the people doing the actual work.”

equate their work with their intrinsic value as human beings. After a long era of basking in positive esteem, the tech industry is experiencing a backlash both broad and fierce, on subjects from monopolistic behavior to spreading disinformation and inciting racial violence. And workers are discovering how much power they wield. In November, some 20,000 Googlers participated in a walk-out protesting the company's handling of sexual harassment.

Mr. Heinemeier Hansson cited the employee protests as evidence that millennial workers would eventually revolt against the culture of overwork. “People aren't going to stand for this,” he said, using an expletive, “or buy the propaganda that eternal bliss lies at monitoring your own bathroom breaks.” He was referring to an interview that the former chief executive of Yahoo, Marissa Mayer, gave in 2016, in which she said that working 130 hours a week was possible “if you're strategic about when you sleep, when you shower, and how often you go to the bathroom.”

Ultimately, workers must decide if they admire or reject this level of devotion. Ms. Mayer's comments were widely panned on social media when the interview ran, but since then, Quora users have eagerly shared their own strategies for mimicking her schedule. Likewise, Mr. Musk's “pain level” tweets drew plenty of critical takes, but they also garnered just as many accolades and requests for jobs.

The grim reality of 2019 is that begging a billionaire for employment via Twitter is not considered embarrassing, but a perfectly plausible way to get ahead. On some level, you have to respect the hustlers who see a dismal system and understand that success in it requires total, shameless buy-in. If we're doomed to toil until we die, we may as well pretend to like it. Even on Mondays.

Flush with cash, Russia plans to spend on infrastructure

BY ANDREW E. KRAMER

Russia has become a world-class saver. So much gold has piled up in its central bank that Russia surpassed China last year to become the world's fifth-largest holder of gold.

The International Monetary Fund often has to badger developing nations to bulk up foreign currency reserves. Russia has \$472 billion in reserves, more than the country's combined public and foreign debt of \$453 billion and nearly three times what the I.M.F. recommends.

Economists don't consider either of these eye-popping sums of savings a good thing. They reflect, in part, how investment has lagged in Russia and how Western sanctions have dulled its economy. But the lode is also making for an odd back-to-the-future moment of state-directed economic activity as Russia shifts policy and aims to spend about \$100 billion on big infrastructure projects.

The new drive, promoted last month at an economic forum paradoxically named for Yegor T. Gaidar, a former prime minister who championed privatization, is a full-throttle build-and-spend effort to rev Russia's way to stable growth. Oligarchs are among the business leaders who have been publicly ordered to rally, with moneyed enthusiasm, behind the plan.

Known by the mouthful National Goals and Strategic Objective of the Russian Federation Until 2024, the program is not called a “five-year plan,” the centralized tool that the Soviet Union relied on to set economic goals and direct state spending. But it will last five years, with the first outlays expected in the first half of this year.

“Nobody is hiding it now,” said Alek-

sandr Abramov, a professor at the Higher School of Economics who attended the forum. “State spending is the economic theme of 2019.”

Clemens Grafe, the chief Russia economist at Goldman Sachs, described it as “a very different development model” from what Russia has pursued for years under President Vladimir V. Putin. The government, he said, is shifting from encouraging consumer spending with

The nation's oligarchs have been publicly ordered to rally, with moneyed enthusiasm, behind the state plan.

public-sector pay increases to pouring money into roads, ports and hospitals.

Since 2014, the year of its disputed annexation of Crimea, which spurred Western reprisals, Russia has languished in recession or realized only minuscule growth. The economy grew 2.3 percent in 2018, the state statistics agency said on Monday.

At the same time, the Russian government and companies have accumulated vast savings. By law, taxes from the export of oil, which has been keeping the economy afloat, must be saved when the price is above \$40 per barrel, so money is ending up in sovereign wealth funds.

American and European sanctions have also, paradoxically, fattened Russia's piggy bank. The sanctions prevented the country's largest banks and oil companies from rolling over loans from Western banks, so companies paid down debt as it came due, a process known as deleveraging.

The result has been a piling up of savings and little investment. “They are pulling resources out of the economy,”



ANDREY RUDAKOV/BLOOMBERG

A steel plant in Lipetsk, Russia. The government is shifting from consumer spending to pouring money into roads and ports.

said Mr. Grafe, the Goldman economist. The goal of the new program is to increase capital investments to 25 percent of gross domestic product, from about 20 percent today.

Mr. Putin is promoting this, and his minister of finance, Anton G. Siluanov, told an audience of economists at the Gaidar Forum that the state was enforcing a new style of management.

“Our current situation is different from the previous six years in that we are now building a vertically integrated system of management,” Mr. Siluanov said. “It will come from the top and go to the bottom.”

Tweaks to tax, pension and budget policy will fund the investment projects. Russia last year reduced pension spending by elevating the retirement age by

five years and raised its value-added tax by two percentage points starting this year, to 20 percent, in shifts meant to free up money for infrastructure spending.

Parliament in recent months changed the law imposing a balanced primary budget, or the budget before interest costs, to allow a deficit of 0.5 percent of gross domestic product when oil prices

are above the \$40 per barrel reference price, a measure also intended to increase spending.

Government officials say they have been consulting business owners and requesting detailed investment plans. It's not clear whether this will go smoothly or advance with fear and bullying.

The Kremlin expects wealthy business leaders to respond to its policies with what it defines as patriotism — and to resist has been disastrous, financially and personally, for some.

Mikhail B. Khodorkovsky, once Russia's richest man, spent a decade in prison after financing the political opposition and arguing against higher oil taxes.

Just before the Gaidar Forum, Aleksei A. Mordashov, the principal shareholder and chairman of the Russian steel company Severstal, wrote in an opinion piece that he and fellow industrialists should join in willingly.

They should not “point to foreign difficulties and not delay investments and transforming your companies 'until better times,’” he wrote in Vedomosti, a Russian business newspaper.

Mr. Mordashov announced a plan to invest \$14 billion annually in his steel mills. Other Russian industrialists have also quietly increased their spending plans, suggesting the arm twisting is working.

Economists, though, are cautioning that greater government involvement in the economy is a rake Russia has stepped on before.

“They say: ‘The government has the money. The government will pay, for everything,’” said Yuri Danilov, a research fellow at the Russian Academy of Sciences. “This is a very detrimental school of thought.”

Food trucks adapt to a changing reality

As the rules tighten and tastes waver, they find new places to park

BY LINDA BAKER

Enticing hungry customers and luring celebrity backers, food trucks have been expanding in the United States for the last decade. But in pioneering cities like Austin, Tex., and Portland, Ore., the industry is feeling growing pains as fickle customers move on and regulators clamp down.

So entrepreneurs are finding new locations to park their mobile restaurants. Last October, a development team created a new dining concept in an up-and-coming neighborhood of Charleston, S.C. Called the Container Bar, it features a bar constructed from a shipping container with space for four food trucks that rotate daily.

“Charleston has a reputation of being a culinary mecca, but it is unique in that there are no spaces for food trucks to congregate,” said Brad Creger, one of three Container Bar owners. The others are Mike Veeck, president of the Charleston RiverDogs, a minor league baseball team, and the actor Bill Murray. “One need go no further than Austin or Portland to see how food trucks have evolved into the culinary culture,” Mr. Creger said. “Charleston is a little behind in that regard, but we’re catching up very quickly.”

Portland may be the aspirational model for many cities in the early stages of building a food cart scene. But being a pioneer has its own challenges. A surge in new construction over the past couple of years has forced the closing of several food cart pods on former parking lots. Concern about the closings came to a head last fall with the news that the city’s flagship food cart venue, the Alder Street pod, would be shuttered this summer to make way for the city’s first five-star hotel.

“One hundred and thirty food carts are under threat to vanish,” said Daniel Huerta, owner of the Portland food truck Churros Locos. “We are losing the culinary fabric that Portland is.”

Street food vendors have been in big cities for decades. But a newer breed of entrepreneurs surfaced around 10 years ago as a scrappy response to the recession — it is far easier to secure start-up capital for a cart than a restaurant. Since then, it has morphed into a nationwide urban development and culinary business phenomenon.

Revenue from food carts reached \$2.7 billion in 2017, according to a U.S. Chamber of Commerce study. But as the industry matures, challenges are emerging. In some areas, owners are building mini empires, adding second or third trucks as well as brick-and-mortar restaurants. But elsewhere, regulatory and market pressures are creating a tough operating environment for vendors. Oversaturation and changing culinary tastes are also concerns.

“For the first three years, it was great,” said Sarah Hannon, the former owner of the Midway Food Park in Austin, where the number of food carts grew 600 percent from 2010 to 2016. Ms. Hannon opened the park in 2013 and had 40 vendors on a waiting list at one point. But as the trend took off, other property owners realized they could “shave off a corner of their parking lot and give a food truck space,” she said.

Ms. Hannon charged \$1,500 a month; her competitors charged \$500. Last



Kirk Francis is a co-owner of Captain Cookie & the Milkman, a mobile bakery in Washington. The business has diversified into catering and brick-and-mortar bakeries.



The Container Bar in Charleston, S.C., a dining concept that incorporates a bar and four food trucks. It is backed by the actor Bill Murray and two other business partners.

year, she shuttered the 10-cart pod, turning it into an event space. “I think the food truck buzz has worn off,” she said. Kirk Francis, co-owner of Captain Cookie & the Milkman, a mobile bakery in Washington, echoed that sentiment. Mr. Francis and his wife, Juliann, started in 2012 with one truck; they added a second one a year later and two more the next year. During the first year of operation, business grew fivefold. The cart experienced 20 percent to 30 percent growth every year after that until last year, when sales were mostly flat. “Food trucks aren’t dying, but we are no longer a novelty,” Mr. Francis said.

The trend for curbside lunch vending is down 50 percent from its peak three years ago, he said, and to stay afloat, many carts — there are around 450 in the Washington area — have diversified into catering and events. In addition to the trucks and a catering operation, Mr. Francis operates two brick-and-mortar bakeries in Washington and is about to open another in Raleigh, N.C. Without his catering operation, Mr. Francis said, “we would be in a terrible situation right now.” Generally speaking, food trucks adhere to one of two business models. Austin and Portland are unusual in that

stationary carts are on private property. In most other cities, food trucks travel to different locations depending on the time of day and regulatory restrictions. As competition intensifies, these regulations have become a thorn in the side of many food truck operators, who say permit rules favor restaurants over trucks. Before 2013, the food truck industry in Washington was like “the wild West,” with limited oversight, Mr. Francis said. Over the years, owners started to organize, and the city started to crack down. Last spring, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs limited the number of food trucks that a single owner could enter in a lottery that determined which trucks could set up in the most coveted spots. Owners fought back. “We kicked up a scream and howl about how this was unfair, and we were able to get that changed back,” Mr. Francis said. The Illinois Supreme Court last month heard a case filed by Laura Pekarik, owner of the Cupcakes for Courage food truck in Chicago, who claimed that city laws favored brick-and-mortar restaurants over food trucks. The Institute for Justice, a nonprofit group that represented Ms. Pekarik, has five food truck cases pending, said the group’s senior communications director, J. Justin Wilson. “This is perhaps the most clear-cut case involving food trucks,” Mr. Wilson said, “because the city is willing to make the one argument that lurks behind all other anti-truck regulations — that a city can legally favor one type of business, restaurants, over another, food trucks.”

Bill McCaffrey, a spokesman for Chicago’s Department of Law, said that he could not comment about pending litigation, but that the city’s food truck ordinance had been upheld in two courts. “The regulations strike the right balance between the interests of food trucks and restaurants and create a healthy environment in which both can flourish,” he said. Responding to the wave of closings, Portland food cart advocates are seeking to change regulations by carving out a permanent space downtown for some of the soon-to-be-displaced Alder Street carts. Although this “culinary corridor” is still in the conceptual stages, it has won tacit support from business and civic leaders, many of whom view the carts as integral to tourism. Yet to be hashed out is who would decide who gets one of the limited spaces, and how the city would manage the space, said Randy Gragg, a local urban design advocate who, with Mr. Huerta and Brett Burmeister, founder of a local food carts blog, is championing the idea. In Charleston, the city is still trying to get its arms around the food truck industry as it relates to taxes, health and safety, Mr. Creger said. He added that the Container Bar’s food truck area was designed to provide a good customer experience, with seating and bathrooms. Having someone with the stature of Bill Murray as a partner does not hurt business, Mr. Creger said. “I call it ‘the Bill Murray effect.’ When he walks in, it’s like somebody turns it up 25 to 30 percent,” he said. “It’s great before he got there, and it’s even better after that.”

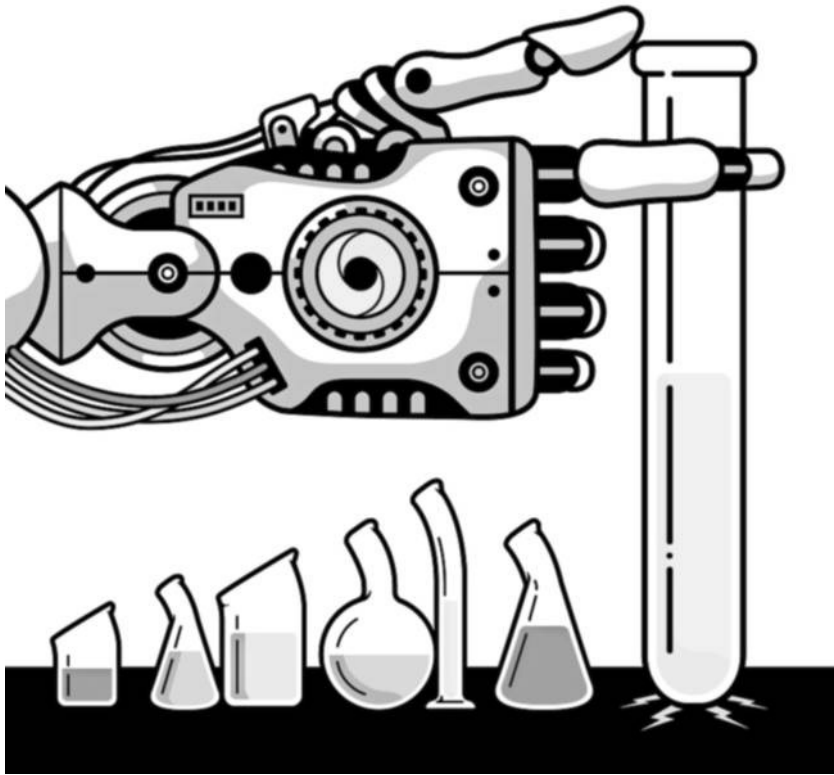
Making new medicines with a spoonful of A.I.

SAN FRANCISCO

BY CADE METZ

You can think of it as a World Cup of biochemical research. Every two years, hundreds of scientists enter a global competition. Tackling a biological puzzle they call “the protein folding problem,” they try to predict the three-dimensional shape of proteins in the human body. No one knows how to solve the problem. Even the winners only chip away at it. But a solution could streamline the way scientists create new medicines and fight disease. Mohammed AlQuraishi, a biologist who has dedicated his career to this kind of research, flew in early December to Cancun, Mexico, where academics were gathering to discuss the results of the latest contest. As he checked into his hotel, a five-star resort on the Caribbean, he was consumed by melancholy. The contest, the Critical Assessment of Structure Prediction, was not won by academics. It was won by DeepMind, the artificial intelligence lab owned by Alphabet, Google’s parent company. “I was surprised and deflated,” said Dr. AlQuraishi, a researcher at Harvard Medical School. “They were way out in front of everyone else.” DeepMind specializes in “deep learning,” a type of artificial intelligence that is rapidly changing drug discovery science. A growing number of companies are applying similar methods to other parts of the long, enormously complex process that produces new medicines. These A.I. techniques can speed up many aspects of drug discovery and, in some cases, perform tasks typically handled by scientists. “It is not that machines are going to

replace chemists,” said Derek Lowe, a longtime drug discovery researcher and the author of In the Pipeline, a widely read blog dedicated to drug discovery. “It’s that the chemists who use machines will replace those that don’t.” After the conference in Cancun, Dr. AlQuraishi described his experience in a blog post. The melancholy he felt after losing to DeepMind gave way to what he called “a more rational assessment of the value of scientific progress.” But he strongly criticized big pharmaceutical companies like Merck and Novartis, as well as his academic community, for not keeping pace. “The smartest and most ambitious researchers wanting to work on protein structure will look to DeepMind for opportunities instead of Merck or Novartis,” he wrote. “This fact should send chills down the spines of pharma executives, but it won’t, because they’re clueless, rudderless, and asleep at the helm.” The big pharma companies see the situation differently. Though Merck is not exploring protein folding because its researchers believe its potential impact would be years away, it is applying deep learning to other aspects of its drug discovery process. “We have to connect so many other dots,” said Juan Alvarez, associate vice president of computational and structural chemistry at Merck. In the spring of 2016, after making headlines with A.I. systems that played complex games like the ancient board game Go, DeepMind researchers were looking for new challenges. So they held a “hackathon” at company headquarters in London. Working with two other computer scientists, the DeepMind researcher Rich Evans homed in on protein folding. They found a game that simulated this scien-



tific task. They built a system that learned to play the game on its own, and the results were promising enough for DeepMind to greenlight a full-time research project. The protein folding problem asks a straightforward question: Can you predict the physical structure of a protein — its shape in three dimensions? If scientists can predict a protein’s shape, they can better determine how other molecules will “bind” to it — at-

tach to it, physically — and that is one way drugs are developed. A drug binds to particular proteins in your body and changes their behavior. In the latest contest, DeepMind made these predictions using “neural networks,” complex mathematical systems that can learn tasks by analyzing vast amounts of data. By analyzing thousands of proteins, a neural network can learn to predict the shape of others. DeepMind’s victory showed how the

future of biochemical research will increasingly be driven by machines and the people who oversee those machines. This kind of A.I. research benefits from enormous amounts of computing power, and DeepMind can lean on the massive computer data centers that underpin Google. The lab also employs many of the world’s top A.I. researchers, who know how to get the most out of this hardware. “It allows us to be much more creative, to try many more ideas, often in parallel,” said Demis Hassabis, the chief executive and a co-founder of DeepMind, which Google acquired for a reported \$650 million in 2014. Universities and big pharmaceutical companies are unlikely to match those resources. But thanks to cloud computing services offered by Google and other tech giants, the price of computing power continues to drop. Dr. AlQuraishi urged the life-sciences community to shift more attention toward the kind of A.I. work practiced by DeepMind. Some researchers are already moving in that direction. Many start-ups, like Atomwise in San Francisco and Recursion in Salt Lake City, are using the same artificial intelligence techniques to accelerate other aspects of drug discovery. Recursion, for instance, uses neural networks and other methods to analyze images of cells and learn how new drugs affect these cells. Big pharma companies are also beginning to explore these methods, sometimes in partnership with start-ups. “Everyone is trending up in this area,” said Jeremy Jenkins, the head of data science for chemical biology and therapeutics at Novartis. “It is like turning a big ship, and I think these methods will eventually scale to the size of our entire company.”

Millions locked up, and boss had the keys

Cryptocurrency investors are stuck after exchange says its chief has died

BY KAREN ZRAICK

A Canadian cryptocurrency exchange said it could not repay at almost \$200 million to clients after its chief executive died suddenly while visiting India. The company, Quadriga CX, said in court filings that the chief executive, Gerald W. Cotten, was the only person who knew the security keys and passwords needed to gain access to the funds. The Supreme Court of Nova Scotia has approved the company’s request for protection against creditors for 30 days and the appointment of the accounting firm Ernst & Young to sort out Quadriga’s finances and explore a possible sale. The company’s inability to release its clients’ money has created an uproar among angry — and highly suspicious — investors. Mr. Cotten, a co-founder of the company in 2013, died of complications from Crohn’s disease while traveling to open an orphanage, Quadriga said in an announcement posted to Facebook on Jan. 14. The note said that Mr. Cotten, 30, had died on Dec. 9. In an affidavit, his widow, Jennifer K. M. Robertson, wrote that her husband had run the business from an encrypted laptop, working mostly out of their home in Fall River, Nova Scotia. Ms. Robertson did not know the password or recovery key and could not find them written down anywhere “despite repeated and diligent searches,” she wrote. Ms. Robertson said she had also hired an expert to find the cryptocurrency in “cold wallets” stored offline, with little success. While other crypto-exchanges have lost their clients’ money, this appears to be the first one that has said it actually lost the keys to its accounts. Quadriga’s platform went offline on Jan. 28, and frustrated investors have taken to Reddit and Twitter to discuss their investigations into the company’s

Quadriga, a cryptocurrency exchange in Canada, had no discernible accounting system and no bank account.

claims and potential lawsuits. Some questioned whether Mr. Cotten had indeed died — or whether, perhaps, he had faked his death to pull off what is known as an exit scam. “The death came at a very odd time in the history of that company,” said Emin Gün Sirer, a professor at Cornell University and co-director of the Initiative for CryptoCurrencies and Contracts. He noted that various online sleuths had been searching the blockchain, a ledger that can be updated by decentralized networks, for evidence of where Quadriga had stored its assets, but had found none, which raised red flags. When it shut down, Quadriga’s platform had 363,000 users, and 115,000 of them had balances in their accounts totaling \$137 million in cryptocurrency and about \$53 million worth of Canadian currency, the court documents state. The exchange enabled trades of Bitcoin, Litecoin and Ether, plus other types of cryptocurrency. The largest user claim was valued at about \$70 million. Quadriga was one of 237 widely recognized public cryptocurrency exchanges worldwide, Dr. Sirer said. In terms of daily trade volume, it was ranked in the middle of the pack as of October, according to the website CoinMarketCap. The exchange kept currency in “hot wallets,” which were connected to the internet and could quickly fulfill withdrawal requests, and “cold wallets,” which were kept offline and stored physically, such as on a USB stick, making them more secure, according to court papers. Ms. Robertson wrote in her affidavit that after her husband’s death, his employees had tried to get into the cold wallets but had failed or found only small amounts of money. Other cryptocurrency investors, on social media and in interviews, questioned why a chief executive would be the sole point of access to such a vast sum. In an initial report to the court, Ernst & Young wrote that it was facing an extraordinary set of case facts. Quadriga had no discernible accounting system and no bank account, according to the filing. Mr. Cotten typically sent directions to release payments, which were made through third-party payment processors, to employees by email, and payment inflows and outflows “were not systematically tracked,” Ernst & Young wrote. The court papers state that the company has substantial assets in various cryptocurrencies and that unreleased bank drafts in the company’s name total about \$30 million, with \$375,000 in cash held by others. Several companies have come forward with offers to buy the business, which could be valuable to competitors, the papers state.

Sports

Dodger fan's death prompts cry for high nets

Team had not publicized case of 79-year-old woman struck in head by foul ball

BY TYLER KEPNER

Linda Goldbloom was 79 years old when she died Aug. 29 from a traumatic head injury. It had occurred four days earlier, when she was struck in the head by a foul ball while watching the Los Angeles Dodgers play the San Diego Padres at Dodger Stadium.

The ball sizzled over protective netting and into her loge-level seat behind home plate. Her daughter, Jana Brody, compared it to a bullet from a gun.

"I would love to see higher nets," Brody said in a telephone interview Tuesday. "The trajectory of the ball can only get hit so far until it starts to arc and come down and then be a more manageable ball to catch or whatever. But where she was sitting, there was no chance for it to lob over. It was a straight shot."

Brody, who was not with her parents at the game, said that she and her family were in shock after the accident. As the months went by, she wondered why the story had not come out. No telecast had followed the flight of the fatal foul ball, which was hit by a Padres batter during a tense ninth inning. The Dodgers had not publicized the accident, and the family had not contacted the news media.

But as Brody researched fan injuries, she noticed an article published last spring that mentioned only one known instance of a fan's being killed by a foul ball — 14-year-old Alan Fish, also at Dodger Stadium, in 1970. (The only other reported death of fan involving a ball occurred in 1943 when a man was hit by an overthrown ball from the field.)

Brody contacted the author of the piece, Willie Weinbaum of ESPN, to add her mother's name to the grim list.

Goldbloom's death — first reported by Weinbaum on Monday — occurred during the first season in which all 30 stadiums in Major League Baseball had netting that extended at least to the far edge of each dugout. But that netting did not protect Goldbloom, who sat beneath the press box behind home plate.

"I realized it was our responsibility to tell," Brody said. "Nobody knew. That



Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. Major league ballparks have extended the width of protective netting, but few have raised its height.



Linda Goldbloom at the Dodgers game last August where she was struck by a foul ball. She died four days later. A brother-in-law and sister-in-law were seated behind her.

was important to me to get just the awareness out — yes, the netting got widened, but it didn't go vertical, and that would have been a huge change for my mom if it went up, too."

When asked if the Dodgers might extend the netting to protect fans on the loge level where Goldbloom was seated, Joe Jareck, the Dodgers' senior director for public relations, said the team would not comment beyond a statement that expressed sympathy for Goldbloom. It said "the matter has been resolved" between the team and the family.

Major League Baseball in a statement Tuesday defended the safety of its ballparks by saying it had increased the "in-

ventory of protected seats." The statement asserted that teams were "constantly evaluating the coverage and design of their ballpark netting," though it stopped short of recommending that the netting be raised, as it is in Japan.

"You can see right through the nets, so what's the big deal?" Brody said. "I can't understand why it took so long for them to even widen it."

In December 2015, Commissioner Rob Manfred issued recommendations to all teams to install netting extending from the ends of the dugout closest to the plate to within 70 feet of the plate.

The Dodgers announced that day that they would comply, but some teams held

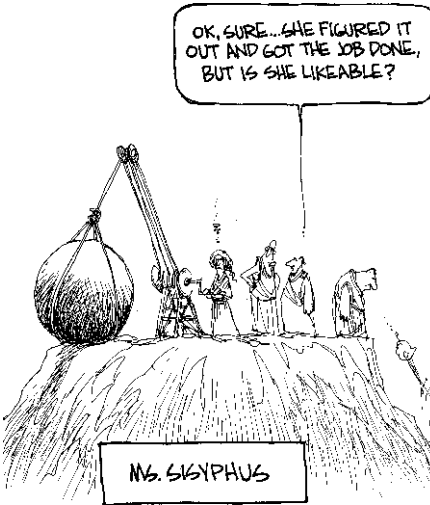
out, reluctant to alienate fans in expensive lower-level seats.

The New York Yankees were one of those teams but relented last January, a few months after a foul ball severely injured a toddler behind the third-base dugout.

A disclaimer in place since 1913 and printed on the back of every ticket in Major League Baseball warns of the "risk and danger inherent to the game" and the possibility of injury from, among other things, "thrown or batted balls."

But baseball has changed greatly since then, and the risk of injury to spectators has risen, mainly from the construction of new stadiums designed to

NON SEQUITUR



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SUDOKU

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

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

JUMBLE

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

HAFIT
HESOW
KMYISP
SIRALO

Yesterday's Jumbles: FACET SHIFT GLOOMY ORIGIN
Answer: The subdivision where they chose to build their dream home had — LOTS TO OFFER

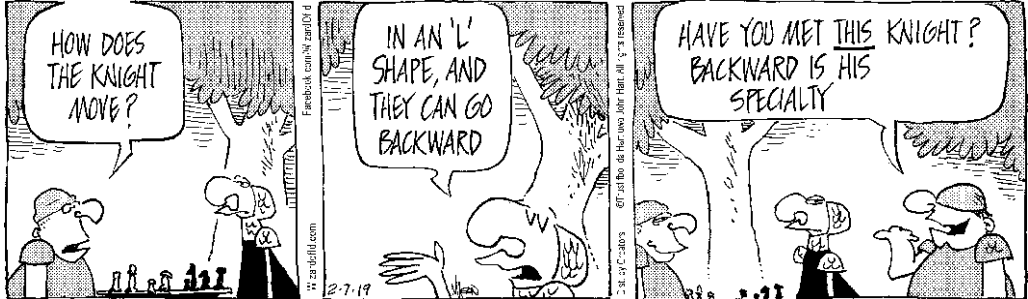
PEANUTS



GARFIELD



WIZARD of ID



KENKEN

1-	2-	8x
2÷		8+
3-		

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.

For solving tips and more KenKen puzzles: www.nytimes.com/kenken. For Feedback: nytimes@kenken.com

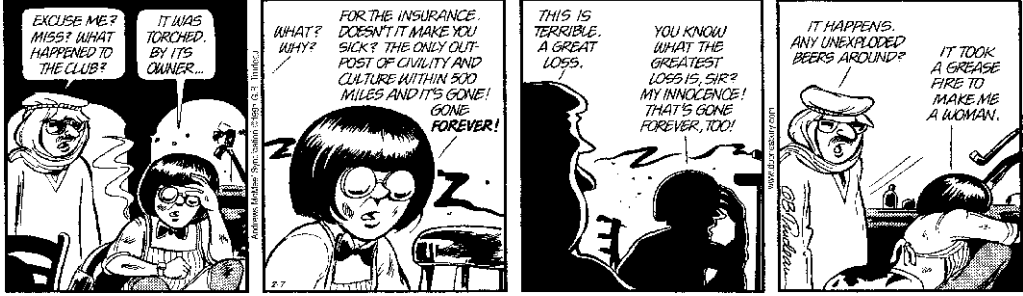
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Answers to Previous Puzzles

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

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

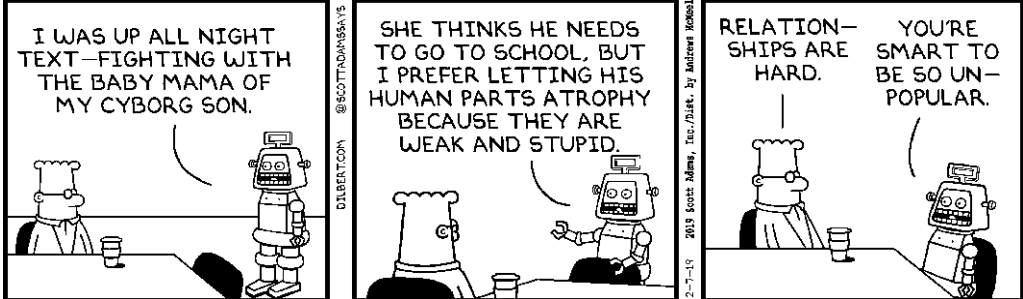
DOONESBURY CLASSIC 1991



CALVIN AND HOBBS



DILBERT



CROSSWORD | Edited by Will Shortz

- Across**
- Wrangler, for one
 - Things kids sometimes draw
 - Carriages in Kew Gardens
 - Band with a slash in its name
 - Occur to, with "on"
 - ___ Cinemas, second-largest theater chain in the U.S.
 - Be hot under the collar
 - Snap, Crackle and Pop, e.g.
 - Dweller on the Arabian Sea
 - "No one can get in a fight by himself," informally
 - Rum cocktail
 - Robert Burns's "since"
- Down**
- Welled (up)
 - Flip out ... or a hint to eight answers in this puzzle
 - Diamond datum
 - Adjutant
 - Progenitor of the Edomites, in the Bible
 - Old Scottish title
 - What optical readers do
 - Staples of "Poor Richard's Almanack"
 - Sir William ___, medical pioneer
 - Far from subtle actors
 - Pro side

Solution to February 6 Puzzle

SUN	FIRE	MOTHER
ORI	URAL	ADWARE
LIBRETTO	DEALIN	
BEG	APART	LED
HELLO	TELESCOPE	
ORE	EAST	ROAR
LARGEST	ECRU	
ASSORT	OPERA	
CITY	ARSE	NICO
INEEDANAP	NIGHT	
USA	IVANA	OCT
DIPDYE	KNOCKOUT	
ADORER	LOCH	SPA
DETERS	ELSE	SIX

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				38			
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			
66					67				68			
69					70				71			

PUZZLE BY MORTON J. MENDELSON

- "I'll spring for it"
- National park in Utah
- Latin word on a dollar bill
- Pipe part
- Basted, e.g.
- Indigenous Peruvian
- Whack
- Littlest piggy
- "My assumption is ..."
- Time of day, in ads
- Archived document
- Current device
- Delivery door location, often
- Silky cottons
- Fired
- Opposite of staccato
- Foams
- Universal
- Supply that no one's supposed to find
- Second-longest-running Broadway musical ever (after "The Phantom of the Opera")
- A very long time back
- Provider of directions to a farmer
- Mild cheese
- Wow
- ___ Constitution

Opinion

China’s online censorship stifles trade, too

When the Chinese government blocks foreign internet companies for political reasons, the U.S. should treat the tactic as the anti-competitive economic strategy that it is.

Tim Wu
Contributing Writer

As China and the United States engage in high-level negotiations over a possible trade deal, it’s puzzling to see what’s been left off the table: the Chinese internet market. China blocks or hinders nearly every important foreign competitor online, including Google, Facebook, Wikipedia in Chinese, Pinterest, Line (the major Japanese messaging company), Reddit and The New York Times. Even Peppa Pig, a British cartoon character and internet video sensation, has been censored on and off; an editorial in the Communist Party’s official People’s Daily newspaper once warned that she could “destroy children’s youth.”

China has long defended its censorship as a political matter, a legitimate attempt to protect citizens from what the government regards as “harmful information,” including material that “spreads unhealthy lifestyles and pop culture.” But you don’t need to be a trade theorist to realize that the censorship is also an extremely effective barrier to international trade. The global internet economy is worth at least \$8 trillion and growing, yet the Trump administration has focused chiefly on manufacturing, technology transfers and agriculture, and does not seem to have pressed for concessions on this issue.

Sheltered from American, Japanese and European competition, Chinese internet businesses have grown enormously over the past decade. Nine of the world’s 20 largest internet firms, by market value, are now Chinese. Some of this growth reflects the skill and innovation of Chinese engineers, a vibrant start-up culture and the success of Chinese business in catering to local tastes. But it’s hard to believe that this has been unaided by censorship.

And the barriers to foreign competition have more than just economic effects. Without any better options, Chinese users are forced to put up with companies like Tencent, which owns the private messaging app WeChat, and the online payment company Ant Financial, whose privacy violations are, amazingly, even more troubling than those of Facebook and Cambridge Analytica. By tolerating Chinese censorship, the United States encourages other countries to do the same.

When it joined the World Trade Organization in 2001, China agreed to a broad liberalization of trade in services, including data processing and telecommunications. China’s internet policies must be understood as a vio-

lation of these commitments. China will presumably counter that its internet policies are “necessary to protect public morals or to maintain public order,” invoking the relevant exception to the World Trade Organization’s rules. But while that exception might justify bans on gambling sites or even Peppa Pig, in the case of most of China’s internet barriers the real purpose seems to be the protection of home-grown business interests.

Why is the United States not demanding change? It’s not as if it lacks leverage. Chinese firms like Tencent and the online retailer JD.com have aggressively pursued operations in the United States, seeking to take advantage of America’s open internet and open market. The Office of the United States Trade Representative even cited Chinese internet blocking as a trade barrier in 2016. Why allow a country to do business here if it won’t let us do business there? The basic principle of trade policy is reciprocity: Lower your barriers and we’ll lower ours. When it comes to the internet economy, the United States has unilaterally disarmed and is being played for a fool.

Particularly baffling is the attitude of the major American internet firms, the victims of China’s internet trade policy, whose strategy has largely been one of appeasement. Google did retreat from the Chinese market in 2010 because of concerns about censorship and industrial espionage, and it did complain for a while about Chinese obstructions. Yet last year we learned that Google was effectively giving up the fight, building a censored search engine for the Chinese market and begging for access.

Also disappointing has been Facebook’s approach. Even though Facebook has been banned in China for years, Mark Zuckerberg, its chief executive, has made embarrassing efforts to ingratiate himself with China’s president, Xi Jinping. (At one point gossip pages even reported that Mr. Zuckerberg asked, in vain, for Mr. Xi to give an honorary Chinese name to his unborn child; Mr. Zuckerberg denied that this happened.)

Appeasement does not make effective foreign policy or trade policy. The United States, with the world’s largest economy and its most important internet sector, should be negotiating from a position of strength. If the Trump administration wants to be tough with China on trade, it should demand meaningful access to the Chinese internet market, on pain of denial of access to American markets for Chinese firms.

That is how trade negotiation has always proceeded, and the internet ought to be no exception. We otherwise run the risk of winning the battle for the past while surrendering the battle for the future.

TIM WU is a law professor at Columbia and the author of “The Curse of Bigness: Antitrust in the New Gilded Age.”

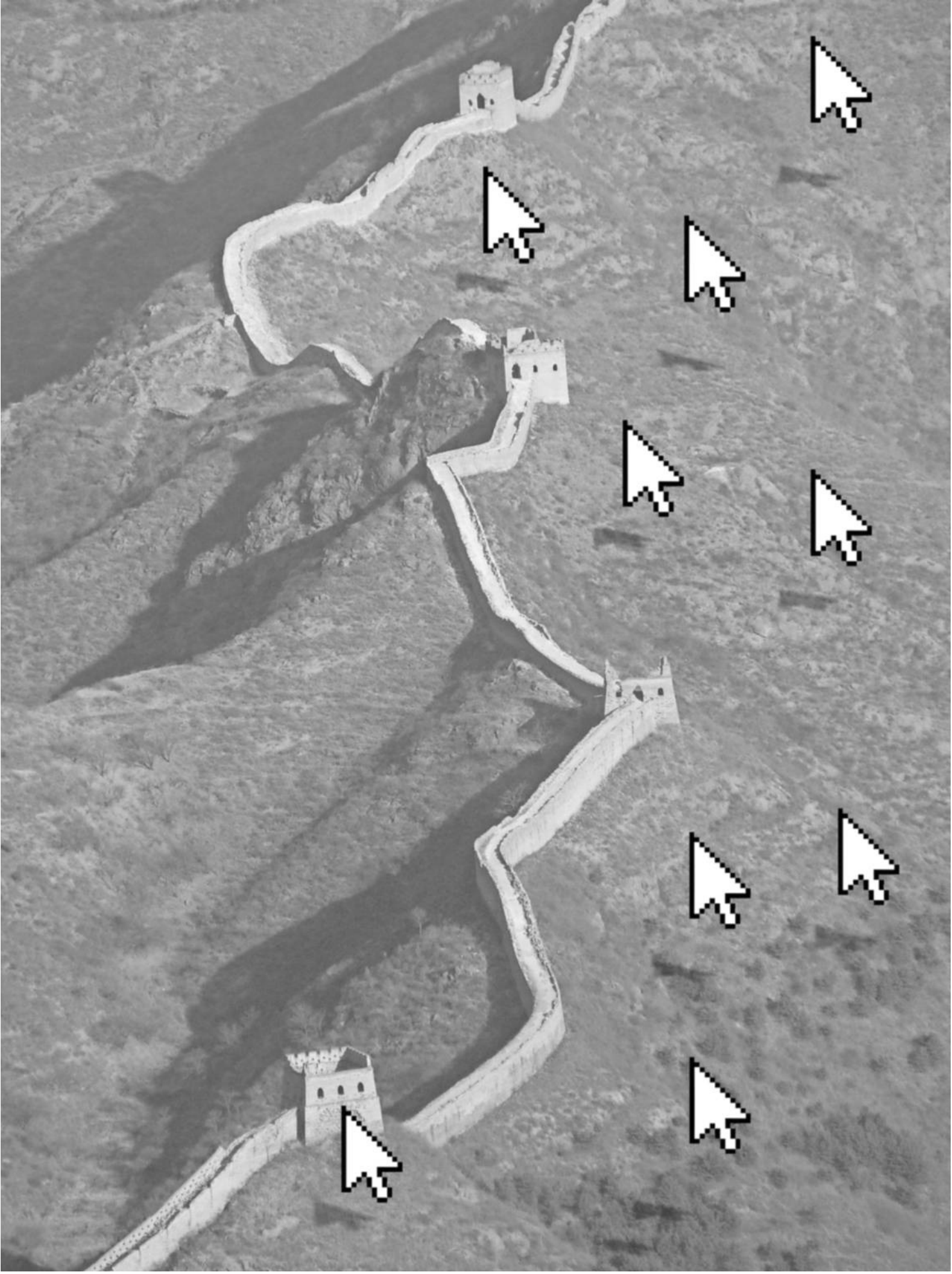


ILLUSTRATION BY DEREK BRAHNEY/NEW STUDIO; PHOTOGRAPH BY PETE SALOUTOS/GETTY IMAGES

What if Trump could explain as well as he inflames?

Building a border wall won’t solve America’s immigration problem.



Thomas L. Friedman

The debate around a border wall and immigration has become so distorted by President Trump’s superheated nonsense — *we must build a wall to keep out all these rapists and murderers, and Mexico will pay for it* — that we’ve forgotten what it would sound like if we actually had a president framing the real border issue in a really honest way to come up with a real solution — not just one to energize his base.

Here is how a real president would explain it:

My fellow Americans, we face a global crisis: More people are on the move today seeking jobs, asylum from murderous governments, safety from environmental disasters or just looking for *order* than at any time since World War II — some 70 million people.

Why now? Answer: During the late 19th and the 20th centuries the world shifted from being governed by large empires in many regions to being governed by independent nation-states. And the 50 years after World II were a great time to be a weak little nation-state — for several reasons.

First, because there were two superpowers competing for your affection by throwing foreign aid at you, building your army, buying your cheap goods and educating your kids at their universities. Second, climate change was moderate. Third, populations were still under control in the developing world. Fourth, no one had a cellphone to easily organize movements against your government or even see what Paris or

Phoenix looked like. Fifth, China was not in the World Trade Organization, so every poor country could be in textiles and other low-wage industries.

All of those advantages disappeared in the early 21st century. Climate-driven extreme weather — floods, droughts, record-setting heat and cold — on top of man-made deforestation began to hammer many countries, especially their small-scale farmers. Developing-world populations exploded thanks to improved health care. Africa went from 140 million people in 1900 to one billion in 2010 to a projected 2.5 billion by 2050. The same surge happened in Central America, in countries like Guatemala.

Meanwhile, the smartphone enabled citizens to easily compare their living standards with Paris or Phoenix — and find a human trafficker app to take them there. Also, China joined the W.T.O., gobbling up low-wage industries, and the end of the Cold War meant no superpower wanted to touch your country, because all it would win was a bill.

The result: It’s much harder to be a weak country today, and the weakest of them are starting to fail or fracture and hemorrhage their people. That’s Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Venezuela in our hemisphere and Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, Libya and many countries in sub-Saharan Africa across the Atlantic.

This is creating wide zones of “disorder” — and the biggest geopolitical trend in the world is all the people trying to get out of zones of disorder into the world of order. And that is what’s creating all the populist, nationalist, anti-immigrant backlashes in the world of order — particularly in America and Europe.

That is the real context for this immigration crisis. What’s the answer? Well, if you look at what slowed the flood of single Mexican men illegally and legally coming to America in the last decade, it was the combination of greater economic opportunity in Mexico, thanks in

part to Nafta, plus slower population growth in Mexico, plus improved governance in Mexico, plus better border security along the Mexico-U.S. border.

That same formula has to be applied now to Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. They have become the primary source of all those migrants and caravans coming to America today, including 187,000 minors without adult guardians, who were picked up by the U.S. Border Patrol between 2014 and 2018. Their parents sent them our way to connect with relatives already here or to be shielded from forced gang recruitment and violence.

That’s why, among other things, a smart U.S. immigration policy would promote family planning in rural areas in Central America. Letting America’s religious right limit U.S. family planning assistance abroad is stupid.

The only thing more stupid is not working to mitigate climate change, which Trump refuses to do. Extreme weather has been disrupting small-

scale farming in Central America. And when small-scale farming weakens or collapses, people leave the countryside and flock to the city. And if they find high unemployment and high crime rates there, they head to America.

At the same time, we need an investment shock by local and foreign companies and governments to build infrastructure, tourism and trade in Central America so more people can thrive there, especially when 61 percent of the population is under 29 years of age.

Alas, though, investment rates average just 12 percent of G.D.P. in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, while in Mexico it’s 26 percent.

Yes, both legal and illegal immigrants actually contribute, on balance, to American growth, but there is no question that border security, asylum courts, resettlement and absorption facilities put pressure on federal, state and local governments. But . . .

The U.S. could spend millions of dollars to help stabilize Central Ameri-

can countries — so that more of their citizens could stay home, which most immigrants prefer — and we’d still save money *and* reduce illegal immigration. It costs us anywhere from \$14,000 to \$38,000 to detain and deport a single migrant.

Finally, we also need fences, drones and sensors to strengthen the border in places. But rather than building a \$5.7 billion wall against Mexico, what we need most is to help Mexico improve its capacity to intercept migrants at its southern border with Guatemala — where all Central American migrants headed north have to pass. It’s not that hard. There are only two main roads out of Guatemala to the north, with a mountain in the middle. It’s called Mexico’s “Tehuantepec isthmus bottleneck.”

If we worked with Mexico to create better entry-point infrastructure there with biometric controls and improved ability to inspect vehicles, people and merchandise to stop smugglers — and even interview potential asylum seekers there — we would significantly reduce the numbers coming out of Central America, crossing Mexico and piling up at our border.

In sum, we need a plan that creates a wall, not a wall that substitutes for a plan. That’s what a real president would offer. If only we had one.

But have no illusions: More weak nation-states will be imploding under these pressures in the coming decade and no empire is going to impose order there; those days are long gone. But many of these states simply cannot effectively govern themselves any longer. (*Heck, Britain can’t effectively govern itself any longer!*)

So how the world of order collaborates to bring order to more and more of these places — Italy has basically created and funded the Libyan Coast Guard to protect itself from migrants crossing the Mediterranean — is going to become one of the biggest governing challenges of this century.



ALEXANDRE MENECHINI/REUTERS

A migrant from Honduras in southern Mexico, on his way to the United States border.

OPINION

The New York Times

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

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CRISIS SPREADS BEYOND VENEZUELA

The country's citizens have become pawns in a global power game. They need a peaceful and rapid resolution to the crisis.

The tense standoff in Venezuela between Nicolás Maduro and Juan Guaidó has morphed into something far larger than a contest for power between a failed leader still supported by parts of the army and die-hard leftists, and a young legislator propelled to the front by popular demonstrations. In part because of the Trump administration's all-in support for regime change, the crisis has become a dangerous global power struggle. That's the last thing Venezuelans need.

There is no question that President Maduro must go, the sooner the better. Heir to the socialist rule of Hugo Chávez, he has led his oil-rich country into utter ruin. Its currency is useless, basic foods and medicines have disappeared and more than three million people have fled, fomenting refugee crises in Colombia, Brazil and Ecuador. The only solution is an interim government under Mr. Guaidó, who as the head of the National Assembly has a legitimate claim to the presidency under the Venezuelan Constitution. It would lead to new presidential elections and a flood of emergency aid.

American officials said this week that the United States is sending food and medical supplies to the Colombia-Venezuela border where they will be stored until an agreement is reached to safely transport them to Venezuelan communities.

Pope Francis said Tuesday that he was willing to help mediate an end to the conflict if both sides agreed. He said he had received a plea from Mr. Maduro to help start a new dialogue.

"There needs to be the will of both parts," Francis said. He suggested beginning with small concessions from both sides, working toward a more formal negotiation.

The pope recalled John Paul II's intervention in a 1978 dispute between Argentina and Chile, which he said helped avoid a war. But Francis said the conditions for mediation between the two factions in Venezuela were not yet ripe and that an earlier effort by Vatican officials and European diplomats had yielded only "a little mouse, nothing, smoke."

In hopes of a peaceful resolution, many democratic governments have thrown their support behind Mr. Guaidó. Twelve Latin American countries, the Organization of American States, Canada and more than a dozen members of the European Union have so far crowded into Mr. Guaidó's corner alongside the United States, recognizing him as the interim president. Mr. Maduro's primary backers are Russia, China, Iran, Cuba and Turkey.

These are not entirely alliances of the like-minded. As in any geopolitical struggle, disparate interests are at play, and many include a suspicion or fear of President Trump's motives and potential means. For the hard-core conservatives in the Trump administration, Mr. Maduro is the failed standard-bearer of the scourge of socialism in Latin America and the beachhead for Russian, Cuban and Chinese influence. Mr. Trump has repeatedly refused to rule out a military option.

The prospect of a proxy war that could spill over Venezuela's borders horrifies most Latin American leaders, as well as Canada and the Europeans. The Lima Group, which brings together Canada and a number of Latin American countries with the aim of finding a nonviolent solution to the Venezuelan crisis, held an emergency meeting in Ottawa on Monday at which it unequivocally rejected any foreign military intervention. "This is a process led by the people of Venezuela in their very brave quest to return their country themselves to democracy in accordance with their own constitution," declared the Canadian foreign minister, Chrystia Freeland, in a statement echoed by most Latin American and European supporters of Mr. Guaidó.

In Mr. Maduro's camp, the motives are also mixed. China has huge loans out to Venezuela but has kept a low profile in the struggle, perhaps in the hope of cultivating a relationship with Mr. Guaidó, should he prevail. Turkey's increasingly authoritarian president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has long embraced Mr. Maduro as a comrade against Western, and especially American, hegemony. Russia has been his strongest supporter, channeling billions in aid and arms to Mr. Maduro, and has been most vocal in warning the United States to stay clear.

It is very much in American and Western interests to free Venezuela from such unholy alliances through negotiations between supporters of Mr. Guaidó and Mr. Maduro. But the goal must be to do so in order to give the long-suffering Venezuelans a chance to freely choose their government and start the arduous task of rebuilding their economy, not to score a victory in an ideological struggle.

1919: Hollywood's boom year

David Bordwell

The First World War radically changed the landscape of moviemaking. Before 1914, Europeans had dominated the booming industry — France, Italy, Germany and even Denmark had sent films across the globe. At first they were just shorts, but by 1913 companies were developing long-form storytelling in "feature" films that could run an hour or more. Audiences poured into movie houses.

The war brought that European domination to an end. Film stock was rationed. Workers were sent to the front. American film companies, benefiting from neutrality, swept into secondary markets like Australia and South America. Moving into Europe and Asia, several companies established foreign offices to distribute their product directly and set prime prices. By the end of the war, the center of the global film industry had shifted to the United States, and in particular Los Angeles, where one neighborhood was already providing the shorthand term for the emerging studio system: Hollywood.

The American studios were not just lucky to expand at a time of turmoil in Europe. They also brought a new approach to filmmaking. Detailed shooting scripts broke scenes into shots. Specialists were assigned to set design, costuming, photography, editing and other tasks. This system helped manage the complicated plots demanded by feature-length films.

Directors also forged a method of crisp, high-impact storytelling. Fast cutting, close-ups of faces and scene details, plots driven by goal-oriented characters, scenes packed with conflicts, humor, fights, chases and stunts — these techniques crystallized into a distinctive national style.

That style was fully formed by 1919, with films like D.W. Griffith's bitter-sweet "Broken Blossoms" and Erich von Stroheim's mordant "Blind Husbands." "America's healthy will has created true film," rhapsodized a German critic in 1920. "What is happening, or rather racing by on the screen, can no longer be called plot. It is a new dynamic, a breathless rhythm."

The style fit the players. Close-ups enhanced the big-eyed sweetness of Lillian Gish, the sparky mischief of the perpetual adolescent Mary Pickford, the stoic sadness of the cowboy William S. Hart. Cutting had to be punchy to keep up with the exuberance of Douglas Fairbanks, who comfortably leapt over hedges and hurled himself out windows.

The American boom did not wipe out European filmmaking; as the continent recovered, its filmmakers maintained a high quality of production. In 1919 Mauritz Stiller of Sweden mounted the historical romance "Sir Arne's Treasure," while in Denmark Carl Dreyer released his first film, the American-influenced melodrama "The President." The German director Ernst Lubitsch managed, during the turmoil of the Weimar Republic, to create the historical epic "Madame DuBarry." Filmmaking flourished further afield as well, from Japan to the newly Communist Russia. Lenin nationalized the film industry in 1919 and would later declare: "Of all the arts, cinema is for us the most important."

Still, there was no doubt that for the moment, at least, the standards for film as an art and an industry were



Erich von Stroheim in his 1919 film, "Blind Husbands."

being set in America. And things were about to change again, thanks to a percolating struggle among stars, studios and theater owners.

Most of the entrepreneurs who forged the American film industry — Samuel Goldwyn, Marcus Loew, William Fox, Carl Laemmle, Jesse Lasky, Adolph Zukor — were East European émigrés. While genteel business owners had scorned the crowds pouring into nickelodeons and vaudeville houses, the newcomers risked setting up production companies. The war had helped their firms achieve success.

But by the war's end, the salaries they paid to their stars were rising astronomically, and driving up production costs. Some producers sought to play down star power by acquiring famous literary properties and hiring celebrity directors. Exhibitors, like theater owners, were starting to merge, and these bigger companies had more bargaining power. On Feb. 5, 1919, a group of actors reasserted their clout.

"Billion-Dollar Trust Is Defied: Revolt of Motion Picture Stars Is Bombshell to Film Producers," blared a headline in The Los Angeles Times.

Defying the studios, four of Hollywood's biggest names — Pickford, Fairbanks, Griffith and Charlie Chaplin — created the United Artists Corporation.

Other stars were creating their own production units, but United Artists' "Big Four" wanted complete autonomy in developing projects. They also aimed to cut out the distribution companies that rented films to theaters. United Artists would offer the stars' films directly to exhibitors.

Pickford presented the maneuver as a defense against the growing power of theater chains. Griffith, taking the "Artists" label seriously, claimed that if the partners could control their work, they could break with formula. "We are willing to make certain pictures which we do not expect to make money," he declared.

But the Big Four did have money on

their minds. Their employers had relied on booking packages of films, mixing mediocre items with star vehicles. The dominant system, called "program booking," obliged exhibitors to take a distributor's entire yearly output. Fairbanks complained: "We were used as a club over the exhibitors, and the magnates at the swivel chairs made the money."

True, the three United Artists stars enjoyed astronomical salaries, with Pickford and Chaplin yearly reaping the equivalent of \$13 million today. But the artists recognized that their drawing power was even more valuable. By offering their product to exhibitors directly, they could recoup a bigger share of rentals.

United Artists aimed high, planning for each partner to produce three films per year. Fairbanks was quickest off the mark with "His Majesty, the American," which debuted in September 1919 at New York's new Capitol Theater, said to be the largest in the world. He followed with "When the Clouds Roll By" in December.

Yet Fairbanks's partners owed projects to other companies. Pickford managed to bring out two features in 1920, but Chaplin would not complete a United Artists release until 1923, and that ("A Woman of Paris") failed, partly because he appeared merely in a walk-on role. Griffith could meet his immediate United Artists obligations only by buying, at a hefty price, his film "Broken Blossoms" from Adolph Zukor's company, where he had made it.

The new firm needed product, and soon it was contracting with other producers, including Samuel Goldwyn, to fill out its obligations. Another problem, as the historian Tino Ballo has shown, was funding. Thanks to program booking and a rigid schedule of releases, studios could attract backers. But banks recoiled from a company of independents working at irregular intervals to please themselves. For the most part, the Big Four had to self-finance.

United Artists survived through the 1920s, largely because of Pickford and Fairbanks. They married, and as Hollywood royalty, they enjoyed a huge fan following; crowds choked the streets during their world tours. Pickford turned out several projects, notably "Rosita" (1923), directed by Lu-

bitsch, who had recently arrived from Germany, and "Sparrows" (1926). Fairbanks changed his image, from a whimsical go-getter to a debonair adventurer, as Zorro, D'Artagnan, Robin Hood, the Thief of Baghdad and the Black Pirate. The scapegrace heroes he played would be "reimagined" by Hollywood filmmakers for decades to come.

Under the guidance of Joseph Schenck, the United Artists president, and thanks to Goldwyn's polished independent productions, the company managed to keep going, but things got harder for the founders. Fairbanks and Pickford mounted lush, expensive productions, while Chaplin proceeded at a leisurely pace. Griffith, plagued by financial problems, pulled out of United Artists briefly, then returned at intervals to direct a string of failures. Soon after the coming of sound, nearly all of the United Artists founders ended their careers. Chaplin persisted, but when he abandoned his Tramp persona in the 1940s, he too lost his public.

Nobody understood star power better than the producer Adolph Zukor, a dapper former furrier now at the top of the film industry. He had quickly mastered the feature film and program booking. He had built a production juggernaut by merging his company, Famous Players, with that of Jesse Lasky, and then adding a distributor called Paramount.

Zukor, who had employed Pickford and Fairbanks at stratospheric salaries, knew that stars could be difficult to manage. His refusal to raise Pickford's pay helped drive her to create United Artists. At that juncture, he faced ominous competition from First National, an alliance of theater chains that was starting to sign up stars. In the summer of 1919, Zukor recruited Wall Street backing to fund his counterthrust: buying theaters.

Zukor reckoned that there were about 15,000 theaters in the country. Then as now, the first-run theaters in cities commanded the highest ticket prices. Within a few months, Zukor boasted that over 2,200 American screens were playing his pictures, and he was already acquiring hundreds of the most desirable ones.

This was Hollywood's second breakthrough of the boom year. Less heralded than the creation of United Artists, it had more far-reaching consequences. Wall Street money began to permeate the film industry. And Paramount, as Zukor's company would soon be called, would smoothly combine production, distribution and exhibition. Through vertical integration, one company would provide a reliable output of films controlled from conception to consumption.

Zukor's rivals scrambled to catch up. With the help of banks and brokers, they too merged production units, distribution and exhibition. From the 1920s onward, the top studios — Paramount, Warner Bros., Fox, M.G.M., and R.K.O., collectively called "the majors" — coalesced into an oligopoly. They competed with one another, but also cooperated to impede censorship and dominate foreign territories.

Unsurprisingly, United Artists could not conquer this machine. "Producers have so bottled up the best theaters," Pickford remarked, "that it is impossible to get a showing of my pictures in them." Stars might fade, but theaters, it seemed, were forever.

Thanks to vertical integration, the majors created an entertainment empire that stretched across the planet. Eventually, after World War II, the Supreme Court declared that the oligopoly violated antitrust law. The studios sold off their theaters. (It was lucky timing. Film attendance would soon slump drastically.) Fittingly, Paramount was the first-named party in the suit; the Federal Trade Commission had been chasing Zukor since the 1920s.

United Artists would reinvent itself many times. Its aim of selling films as unique attractions encouraged ambitious projects like "Stagecoach," "Wuthering Heights" and "Red River." After the studio system's breakup, it renewed itself and shepherd dozens of important pictures. The model of filmmakers cooperating to control their work, though it has had a rocky record, remains an ideal for ambitious independents.

A studio system is making a comeback, too. Netflix and Amazon, which blend distribution and exhibition by pushing films to our home screens, have started generating their own content. Telecommunication companies have bought film libraries and production firms, with Comcast taking NBCUniversal and AT&T absorbing Time Warner. Like the studios in the boom year, today's digital-delivery companies are vertically integrating to fill the world's ceaseless appetite for movies. Adolph Zukor would not be surprised.

DAVID BORDWELL is a professor of film studies emeritus at the University of Wisconsin and the author, most recently, of "Reinventing Hollywood: How 1940s Filmmakers Changed Movie Storytelling."



From left, D. W. Griffith, Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin (seated) and Douglas Fairbanks Sr. signing the original contract, below, that created the United Artists studio in 1919. United Artists' "Big Four" wanted complete autonomy in developing projects in Hollywood.



My dog’s DNA test surprise

Jennifer Finney Boylan
Contributing Writer

The results of my friend Chloe's DNA test are in, and her father is not who we thought.

Talk about a bombshell! Half of her ancestors are not only from a place we did not expect, but are, in fact, of a whole different breed.

Did I mention that Chloe is a dog? We were sure she was a black Lab. But two weeks ago, I swabbed the inside of her mouth with a special brush and sent it off to a new dog DNA testing service called Wisdom Panel.

Now they tell me Chloe is only half black Lab; the other half is — drum roll please — flat-coated retriever, a breed, quite frankly, I'd never heard of. According to the American Kennel Club, flat coats are “the Peter Pan of the sporting group.” The club describes them as “happy, self-assured and eager to please.” Also: easily distracted.

That describes Chloe pretty well. She's a joyful creature, although one minute she is looking at me with eyes that say, I love you, Jenny Boylan, and the next, she is all, Wait. What were we talking about?

Suddenly I own a different dog than I thought, although the dog I own has not changed.

This story is the tail-wagging version of an increasingly common drama, as DNA tests become ubiquitous. I know of at least three people who have taken them as a lark and found — well, let's just call them “surprises.” A former student of mine, Aaron Long, was a sperm donor in the 1990s; in the last year he's been contacted by at least a dozen of what he estimates are his 67 biological children.

In a particularly strange and wonderful twist, he is now dating a woman who gave birth to one of his daughters. Or to put it another way, the mother of his child, after 13 years, now has her daughter's father as her boyfriend.

“It's kind of like I'm living in a science fiction story,” Aaron told the hosts of “Good Morning America.”

The author Dani Shapiro has a terrific new book, “Inheritance,” which recounts her own version of this mystery. After taking a test not unlike the one I gave my dog, Ms. Shapiro learned that the man she thought was her father was, in fact, no relation to her. “By the time I went to bed that night,” she writes, “my entire history — the life I had lived — had crumbled beneath me, like the buried ruins of an ancient forgotten city.” The lucky readers of “Inheritance” will find Ms. Shapiro building herself a new city.

And what it taught me about myself.



It was back in 2014 that my fourth cousin M.J. Boylan found me on the genealogy site Ancestry, and since then we have become close: I call her my “first sister once removed.” Last year we went to Ireland together, the same country our great-great grandfathers left over 175 years ago.

Walking along the strand together near the Boylan cottage in Ballyferrier, in County Kerry, I felt a profound sense of belonging.

I wonder, though, if someone told me that M.J., after all, is no blood relation, would I lose my sense of connection with her? Would it really be so unlike the situation with Chloe, if the person I love turned out to be someone other than I had thought?

What question is it we are trying to answer, when we set off in search of our ancestors?

Clearly it has something to do with connection, with the wistful hope that learning about where we come from will help us understand who we are.

My friend Tim Kreider, adopted at birth, found his half sisters several years ago, and went with one of them to the National Air and Space Museum to touch the moon rocks.

“Touching that piece of lunar basalt,” he writes in an essay, “brought from a quarter-million miles away was not stranger or more marvelous to me than the touch of my sister's finger. What gives us that faint interplanetary chill of awe is not the commonplace matter but the knowledge that it's come back to us from such an abyssal distance, from some place that was torn from us long ago, a place we've always looked to with wonder and yearning, but never dreamed we would ever really go.”

And yet I'm still left with the suspicion that the question of who we are will always remain a mystery, not least because we are so much more than our genes. There is no one who can tell us who we are except ourselves.

Chloe, for her part, is unconcerned. You really don't know who you are, or why you're here? she says to me with her soft brown eyes. We are here to love one another, and to be loved.

Wait, what were we talking about?

JENNIFER FINNEY BOYLAN is a professor of English at Barnard College and the author of the novel “Long Black Veil.”

Showdown in Venezuela is a bad idea

VELASCO, FROM PAGE 1

him full support. Likewise, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tacitly backed Guatemala's president, Jimmy Morales, as he quashed a United Nations-mandated anticorruption commission, Cicig, in a move widely seen as antidemocratic. And anyone who claims to promote democracy and human rights would condemn the appointment of Elliott Abrams as special envoy to Venezuela. His involvement in covert operations and support for death squads in Central America in the 1980s has been well documented.

If not oil or democracy, what, then, drives United States officials' outsize push to oust the Chavismo leadership, and with what larger implications for Venezuela and Latin America? For the United States, regime change in Venezuela means reclaiming leadership over its “backyard,” as then-Secretary of State John Kerry characterized Latin America in 2013, after nearly 20 years of marginalization.

Mr. Chávez was first sworn in as president on Feb. 2, 1999. He was swept into office partly by promising to reverse United States-led austerity, free trade and privatization policies that brought inequality and poverty to millions across the region. As Mr. Chávez spotlighted their suffering, he helped to usher in a new crop of leaders regionally willing to assert greater political independence from the United States.

As left-wing governments won office across Latin America, they used the spike in commodity prices to distribute wealth and lower poverty. They also formed strategic partnerships to counter United States influence in hemispheric affairs, opening up rela-

tions and major investment with then-booming China and Russia. When Brazil helped scuttle the Free Trade Area of the Americas in 2005, it proved that the era of overriding United States influence in the region was over. Washington had lost the ability to set the agenda.

But the tide has turned again. Corruption, mismanagement and exhaustion with left-wing governments have ushered in governments that are more aligned with United States trade policies and political interests. In Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Peru, new leaders are reversing pink-tide policies that weaned the region away from United States influence and toward other markets and alliances.

Washington did not engineer this shift, but it stands ready to take the reins. Last week The Wall Street Journal reported that Trump administration officials have long sought to target Cuba and stem Chinese and Russian inroads in the region. Regime change in Venezuela would accomplish both. It is here where Chinese and Russian influence in Latin America has been strongest, to the tune of billions in cash, credit or sales, especially of weapons and technology. Cuba relied on Venezuelan oil and services to weather sanctions by the Trump administration. And there is the symbolic victory — it was in Venezuela where the regional shift away from United States influence began two decades ago.

For the United States, time is of the essence. Consolidating influence and leadership in Latin America depends

not only on achieving regime change in Venezuela, but doing so quickly. Each day Mr. Maduro retains power gives Russia and China more leverage to seek an outcome that does not shut them out completely from Venezuela or the region, losing not only what they have invested but also future opportunities to do so, as The Economist recently argued. But such an outcome would undermine the power the United States is seeking to reassert, driving instead a winner-take-all strategy requiring rapid escalation to resolve, no matter the costs. A winner-take-all strategy undermines prospects for a peaceful transition in Venezuela. It sidelines left-wing political groups domestically and abroad who would abandon Maduro but feel instead compelled to fight to the end.

There are alternatives. Calls for negotiation toward free and fair elections have emerged from Latin America and Europe. In the past, Mr. Maduro has used negotiations to stall and cling to power, but the landscape now has changed. With the world's attention on Venezuela, Mr. Maduro and his backers at home and abroad would find no room to prevaricate. Fresh elections would allow Venezuelans to determine their future on their own terms, paying the way not only for a legitimate presidency in the short term, but for a more stable transition in the long term.

Otherwise, it's the grass that stands to suffer.

ALEJANDRO VELASCO is an associate professor of Latin American history at New York University, and author of “Barrio Rising: Urban Popular Politics and the Making of Modern Venezuela.”

The truth about B.D.S.

Marco Rubio

A bipartisan supermajority in the Senate passed the Combating B.D.S. Act on Tuesday. Yet a few of my colleagues — some on the Senate floor and one in an Iowa airport — recently echoed false claims made by anti-Israel activists and others that the bill violates Americans' First Amendment rights.

That line of argument is not only wrong but also provides cover for supporters of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, who embrace an international campaign of discriminatory economic warfare against Israel, a fellow democracy and America's strongest ally in the Middle East.

Some proponents of B.D.S. claim — and perhaps even believe — that it is a movement meant to put pressure on Israel to end its occupation of the West Bank. But a cursory look at the public statements of B.D.S. leaders and key advocates show that this is nonsense. The goal of the movement is to eliminate any Jewish state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

In a high-profile case in 2014, the B.D.S. movement drove the Israeli company SodaStream from the West Bank. Five hundred Palestinian employees were left jobless by the move. Then, when SodaStream set up shop in the Israeli Negev Desert, B.D.S. proponents urged boycotting the company because they see nowhere within modern Israel that was not once Arab land.

SodaStream is just one of many examples. At a time when anti-Israel boycotts are popping up around the country and internationally, allies of Israel need to find new ways to defend against the evolving threat of economic warfare. That's why, since 2015, more than 25 states, including Florida, have adopted laws or issued executive orders to divest from or prohibit contracts with companies that wage discriminatory economic warfare against Israel.

B.D.S. supporters are challenging these state laws in federal court, arguing essentially that private companies have a fundamental right under the First Amendment to government contracts or to investment by public-

sector pensions in their company stock.

The problem is that there are no such rights. While the First Amendment protects the right of individuals to free speech, it does not protect the right of entities to engage in discriminatory conduct. Moreover, state governments have the right to set contracting and investment policies, including policies that exclude companies engaged in discriminatory commercial- or investment-related conduct targeting Israel.

Enter the Combating B.D.S. Act, a bill that Democratic Senator Joe Manchin and I introduced to protect the right of states to do just that. It is now included in the Strengthening America's Security in the Middle East Act (S. 1) that was under consideration on the Senate floor.

It passed with overwhelming support from both Republicans and Demo-

The goal of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement is to eliminate any Jewish state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

crats, but given the misleading arguments and amount of misinformation being spread by opponents of the bill, it is worth clarifying what the bill does.

The Combating B.D.S. Act does not infringe on Americans' First Amendment rights or prohibit their right to engage in boycotts. By design, it focuses on business entities — not individuals — and, consistent with the Supreme Court's unanimous ruling in *Rumsfeld v. Forum for Academic and Institutional Rights* (2006), it focuses on conduct, not speech. Indeed, it does not restrict citizens or associations of citizens from engaging in political speech, including against Israel.

Rather, the bill merely clarifies that entities — such as corporations, companies, business associations, partnerships or trusts — have no fundamental right to government contracts and government investment. Similar to federal statutes protecting state governments that choose to divest from companies engaged in business with Sudan and Iran, the bill clarifies that state anti-B.D.S. laws meeting its criteria are not inconsistent with federal policy. By empowering states to counter discriminatory economic

warfare targeting Israel, this bill also reinforces American policy insisting that only direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations can resolve that conflict.

Just as United States court rulings have repeatedly affirmed that states have discretion over whether to invest or contract with a company undertaking actions at variance with their laws or policies, companies remain free to cow to radical anti-Israel interests and engage in discriminatory economic warfare against one of America's closest allies. Indeed, a federal court in Arkansas last month upheld the constitutionality of that state's anti-B.D.S. law.

Yet it's disturbing to see the bill's opponents challenge anti-discrimination principles to create an open field for B.D.S. “Anti-discrimination restrictions on government contractors are commonplace and a normal requirement for government funding” Eugene Kontorovich, a law professor at George Mason University, notes. “Of course, some who oppose discrimination against gays may think boycotting Israel is more defensible. But First Amendment protection or lack thereof does not turn on the popularity or content of the relevant views.”

The pro-Israel Combating B.D.S. Act enjoyed strong bipartisan support last year; Senate co-sponsors included the majority leader, Mitch McConnell, and the minority leader, Chuck Schumer; the current Foreign Relations Committee chairman, James Risch, (Republican of Idaho); the committee's ranking member, Bob Menendez, (Democrat of New Jersey); the current Finance Committee chairman, Charles Grassley, Republican of Iowa; and Ron Wyden, Democrat of Oregon. The Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs under Mike Crapo, Republican of Idaho, discharged the bill and tried to fast-track it for passage last December.

Despite the growing influence of anti-Israel voices on the left, which accounts for a growing share of the Democratic political base, the Senate passed the Combating B.D.S. Act in a bipartisan supermajority vote.

I urge Speaker Nancy Pelosi to quickly pass the measure in the House of Representatives. Let's stand with our ally in its fight against the B.D.S. movement's discriminatory economic warfare.

MARCO RUBIO is a Republican senator from Florida.

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Fashion

The struggle to survive

BY GUY TREBAY

Barely three years after New York Fashion Week: Men's made its debut as a stand-alone celebration of all things sartorial and male, the bold experiment has fizzled.

Inaugurated in 2015 as a move by the Council of Fashion Designers of America to showcase homegrown designers and align their schedules with the nearly monthlong schedule of men's wear shows in Paris, London and Milan, the men's week in New York quickly established itself as a calendar fixture, attracting corporate sponsors drawn to the buzz around a formerly untapped market and luring both the inevitable paparazzi and the street-style jesters that they seemingly exist to document.

Designers, too, clamored to get in on a dedicated men's wear week and the access it provided to international buyers and press. And for a time it looked as if New York's men's week could hold its own. Then, just before the fall shows began this week, the CFDA made it clear that it had merged the men's week into a 10-day fashion calendar, with a scant three days dedicated to men's wear before coed and women's wear shows would begin.

What is more, the CFDA would no longer provide funding for the dedicated men's wear week that was one of the key initiatives undertaken by Steven Kolb, the council's chief executive. "We've seen our budget drop by half, at least," Mr. Kolb explained. "We haven't had a hard time finding the talent. We've had a hard time finding the funding."

Although the CFDA will continue to organize a men's fashion week, it will now be up to individual designers to find the venues, sponsorship and financing for shows that can cost hundreds of thousands to produce.

"My strategy was always to date-stamp a time period when American men's wear designers would show," Mr. Kolb said. While those men's wear-only shows will stay on the calendar, in different time slots and abbreviated formats, what remains to be seen is who will fill the roster.

Big guns like Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger no longer show men's wear in New York. And the list of promising talents that marked NYFW: Men's at its start has steadily dwindled over the last eight seasons. Where once close to 90 labels were on the schedule, there now are just over two dozen.

"The two significant changes are that we won't produce anything, though we'll be the organizer, and that everyone will be on their own," Mr. Kolb said. "How that plays out, we'll see."

Perhaps, some suggest, the end of



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



Top, Ryohei Kawanishi, the creative force behind the Brooklyn men's wear label Landlord. Right, Emily Bode in her studio in Lower Manhattan and a rack of her patchwork jackets.

NYFW: Men's as a corporately funded monolith may also mark its rebirth as a proving ground for the scrappy independent labels that have been its driving force in recent years.

This thought came to mind last week on a visit to a loft above a Chinatown bakery selling 15-layer wedding cakes. Up two flights and behind a battered steel door, the workroom of the designer Emily Bode was a scene of organized tumult. A threesome of Japanese buyers sorted through racks of Ms. Bode's trademark patchwork jackets as a clutch of seamstresses furiously stitched samples behind tables piled high with the vintage textiles the designer favors.

Snow squalls whited out the view over East Broadway, adding to an overall sense of troopers hunkering down for an onslaught. And in a sense, like most independent designers, the 29-year-old Ms. Bode struggles for commercial survival as each season rolls around.

"Every time, before a show, I'm like, 'Why am I doing it?'" she said.

Typically, Ms. Bode's presentations rely on personal narratives, and the current one is no exception. Her point of departure this season, she said, was the youth of the artist and gallery owner Todd Alden, a friend whose late '80s style might best be characterized as New Wave-renegade-slacker-preppy.

For a show that was scheduled Wednesday morning, Ms. Bode rented an empty art gallery and constructed in-

side it a version of the New Canaan, Conn., garage where a teenage Mr. Alden once practiced with his band.

"We're out so much money for fall, it's out of control," Ms. Bode said, noting that day rates for even a modest show space can start at around \$5,000.

Yet she has to do it, said the onetime CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund award winner who, after establishing her label in 2016, became the first woman to show at NYFW: Men's and quickly found her collections being sold by Matches Fashion, Moda Operandi, Dover Street Market and Bergdorf Goodman.

"We haven't had a hard time finding the talent. We've had a hard time finding the funding."

"You have to have that one hour during New York men's week because that flood of attention from buyers and social media is what carries us for the whole next season," Ms. Bode said.

Somehow, the city that produced legacy labels like Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, Tommy Hilfiger and Perry Ellis has been lapped in recent years by its European competitors. Yet while the concepts behind all the sneakers and hoodies on European runways have origins in American sportswear, American designers seem to have lost the plot. Few are the creative spheres in which New York plays the underdog; men's fashion

at the moment appears to be one.

This may not, after all, be such a bad thing as Mr. Kolb noted. In a reformulated landscape, space opens for the many independents that have proven to be the strength of NYFW: Men's. People like Ms. Bode or, say, Ryohei Kawanishi, a designer whose Brooklyn-based Landlord label, while assuredly a flyspeck compared to a colossus like Balenciaga, still draws some of that luxury house's fanatical cultists to designs like the candy-colored faux fur coats he designed in 2017 and that were later spotted on Wiz Khalifa and Migos.

If the European men's wear weeks increasingly seem like arena rock shows, with multinationals like LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton reportedly spending more than \$1 million in production costs for lavish shows like recent ones staged by Dior Men, their New York counterparts more closely resemble indie festivals with a roster of everyone's favorite garage bands.

Ask Joseph Abboud. Along with Tom Ford and Todd Snyder, Mr. Abboud is among of the few big-name designers to remain on the calendar of NYFW: Men's. As he readied a collection based on the journey made by his Lebanese forebears through Ellis Island, Mr. Abboud talked about the grit required to survive an always fickle industry.

"I have confidence in young designers sticking it out, because they're tough," Mr. Abboud said. "Like grass growing through a sidewalk, you find a way."

A preview of the season

BY MATTHEW SCHNEIER

Congratulations! You're having a fashion week.

IN NEW YORK, MOVES

The first official day of New York's women's shows is Thursday, and haunting the proceedings is a show that isn't: Calvin Klein, which parted ways with Raf Simons, its chief creative officer, just before Christmas. Its next designer has yet to be announced.

New York has always been hospitable to newcomers and rising stars, even if some of them have a habit of leaving home once they hit it big. (Joseph Altuzarra? Gone to Paris. Thom Browne? Him, too. Kerby Jean-Raymond, of Pyer Moss? Taking a season off.)

IN LONDON AND MILAN, A MIX

After New York, things pick up in London, where more than 100 catwalk shows, presentations and events are scheduled over six days. Riccardo Tisci, who showed his first collection for Burberry in September, will present his follow-up show. Expect particular excitement around Wales Bonner, which has, since its inception, shown during London's men's wear week.

Men and women will get increasingly equal airtime at Milan Fashion Week, during six days of shows. Several of the biggest Italian labels have opted to combine men's and women's shows, including Gucci, Giorgio Armani, Salvatore Ferragamo and Bottega Veneta.

That last will come in for especially close scrutiny. Bottega Veneta's show on Feb. 22 will be the first by Daniel Lee, the house's new creative director, a relatively unknown Briton from Celine.

IN PARIS, STALWARTS REBORN

The last of the four major fashion weeks is in Paris, a nine-day affair with a stricter admissions policy: There are only (if "only" is the correct term here) 78 shows on the official schedule.

The historic houses tend to rule in Paris, which means change can be slower to arrive there. But several heritage labels and longstanding brands will have new leadership this season. Nina Ricci, long associated with Parisian coquetterie, is now in the hands of Rushemy Botter and Lisi Herrebrugh, a couple with roots in Curaçao, the Dominican Republic and the Netherlands.

Lanvin, which has cycled through creative directors since the departure of Alber Elbaz in 2015, will now be designed by Bruno Sialelli, who came from Loewe. (Lanvin declined to comment on whether Mr. Sialelli's designs would be on the runway in February.)

And some newcomers are budding in Paris, like Rokh by Rok Hwang, a Korean-born alumnus of Phoebe Philo's Céline, who was given a special award by the LVMH Prize jury in 2018.

"In terms of sustainability and economics, it's really hard for a younger brand to do a show," he said. "But I also think it's kind of the only form. It's something that's exciting."



Culture

She guides your process

SANTA FE, N.M.

Julia Cameron’s tools have helped unlock imaginations for decades

BY PENELOPE GREEN

On any given day, someone somewhere is most likely leading an Artist’s Way group, gamely knocking back the exercises of “The Artist’s Way” book, the quasi-spiritual manual for “creative recovery,” as its author, Julia Cameron, puts it, that has been a lodestar for blocked writers and other artistic hopefuls for more than a quarter of a century.

There have been Artist’s Way clusters in the Australian outback and the Panamanian jungle; in Brazil, Russia, Britain and Japan; and also, as a cursory scan of Artist’s Way Meetups reveals, in Des Moines and Toronto. It has been taught in prisons and sober communities; at spiritual retreats and New Age centers; from the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, Calif., to Sedona, Ariz.; from the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, N.Y. to the Open Center in New York City, where Ms. Cameron will appear in late March, as she does most years. Adherents of “The Artist’s Way” include the authors Patricia Cornwell and Sarah Ban Breathnach. Pete Townshend, Alicia Keys and Helmut Newton have all noted its influence on their work.

So has Tim Ferriss, the hyperactive productivity guru behind “The Four Hour Workweek,” though to save time he didn’t actually read the book, “which was recommended to me by many megaselling authors,” he writes. He just did the “Morning Pages,” one of the book’s central exercises. It requires you write three pages, by hand, first thing in the morning, about whatever comes to mind. The book’s other main dictum is the “Artist’s Date” — two hours of alone time each week to be spent at a gallery, say, or any place where a new experience might be possible.

Elizabeth Gilbert, who has “done” the book three times, said there would be no “Eat, Pray, Love” without “The Artist’s Way.” Without it, there might be no adult coloring books, no journaling fever. “Creativity” would not have its own publishing niche or have become a ubiquitous buzzword — the “fat-free” of the self-help world — and business pundits would not deploy it as a specious organizing principle.

The book’s enduring success — over four million copies have been sold since its publication in 1992 — has made an unlikely celebrity of its author, a shy American Midwesterner who had a bit of early fame in the 1970s for practicing lively New Journalism at The Washington Post and Rolling Stone, among other publications, and for being married, briefly, to the film director Martin Scorsese, with whom she has a daughter, Domenica. With its gentle affirmations, inspirational quotes, fill-in-the-blank lists and tasks — write yourself a thank-you letter and describe yourself at 80, for example — “The Artist’s Way” pro-



RAMSAY DE GIVE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Julia Cameron, whose book “The Artist’s Way” has sold more than four million copies, moved to Santa Fe, N.M., a few years ago after completing one of her own exercises.

poses an egalitarian view of creativity: Everyone’s got it.

The book promises to free up that inner artist in 12 weeks. It’s a template that would seem to reflect the practices of 12-step programs, particularly its invocations to a higher power. But according to Ms. Cameron, who has been sober since she was 29, “12 weeks is how long it takes for people to cook.”

Now 70, she lives in a spare adobe house in Santa Fe, overlooking an acre of scrub and the Sangre de Cristo mountain range. She moved a few years ago from Manhattan, following an exercise from her book to list 25 things you love. As she recalled, “I wrote juniper, sage brush, chili, mountains and sky, and I said, ‘This is not the Chrysler Building.’” On a recent snowy afternoon, Ms. Cameron, who has enormous blue eyes and a nimbus of blond hair, admitted to the jitters before this interview. “I asked three friends to pray for me,” she said. “I also wrote a note to myself to be funny.”

In the early 1970s, Ms. Cameron, who is the second-oldest of seven children and grew up just north of Chicago, was making \$67 a week working in the mail room of The Washington Post. At the same time, she was writing deft lifestyle pieces for the paper — like an East Coast Eve Babitz. “With a byline, no one knows you’re just a gofer,” she said.

In her reporting, Ms. Cameron ob-

served an epidemic of green nail polish and other “Cabaret”-inspired behaviors in Beltway bars, and slyly reviewed a new party drug, methaqualone. She was also, by her own admission, a blackout drunk. “I thought drinking was something you did and your friends told you about it later,” she said. “In retrospect, in cozy retrospect, I was in trouble from my first drink.”

“I think it’s fair to say that drinking and drugs stopped looking like a path to success. So I luckily stopped.”

She met Mr. Scorsese on assignment for Oui magazine and fell hard for him. She did a bit of script doctoring on “Taxi Driver” and followed the director to Los Angeles. “I got pregnant on our wedding night,” she said. “Like a good Catholic girl.” When Mr. Scorsese took up with Liza Minnelli while all three were working on “New York, New York,” the marriage was done. (She recently made a painting depicting herself as a white horse and Mr. Scorsese as a lily. “I wanted to make a picture about me and Marty,” she said. “He was magical-seeming to me, and when I look at it I think, ‘Oh, she’s fascinated, but she doesn’t understand.’”)

In her memoir, “Floor Sample,” published in 2006, Ms. Cameron recounts the brutality of Hollywood, of her life there as a screenwriter and a drunk. Pauline Kael, she writes, described her as a “pornographic Victorian valentine, like a young Angela Lansbury.” Don’t marry her for tax reasons, Ms. Kael warns Mr. Scorsese. Andy Warhol, who escorts her to the premiere of “New York, New York,” inscribes her into his diary as a “lush.” A cocaine dealer soothes her (“You have a tiny little wife’s habit”). A doctor shoos her away from his hospital when she asks for help, telling her she’s no alcoholic, just a “sensitive young woman.” She goes into labor in full makeup and a Chinese dressing gown, vowing to be “no trouble.”

“I think it’s fair to say that drinking and drugs stopped looking like a path to success,” she said. “So I luckily stopped. I had a couple of sober friends, and they said, ‘Try and let the higher power write through you.’ And I said, ‘What if he doesn’t want to?’ They said, ‘Just try it.’”

So she did. She wrote novels and screenplays. She wrote poems and musicals. She wasn’t always well reviewed, but she took the knocks with typical grit, and she schooled others to do so as well. “I have unblocked poets, lawyers and painters,” she said. She taught her tools in living rooms and classrooms — “if someone was dumb enough to lend us

one,” she said — and back in New York, at the Feminist Art Institute. Over the years, she refined her tools, typed them up and sold Xeroxed copies in local bookstores for \$20. It was her second husband, Mark Bryan, a writer, who needed her into making the pages into a proper book.

The first printing was about 9,000 copies, said Joel Fotinos, formerly the publisher at Tarcher/Penguin, which published the book in 1992. There was concern that it wouldn’t sell. “Part of the reason,” Mr. Fotinos said, “was that this was a book that wasn’t like anything else. We didn’t know where to put it on the shelves — did it go in religion or self-help? Eventually there was a category called ‘creativity,’ and ‘The Artist’s Way’ launched it.” Now an editorial director at St. Martin’s Press, Mr. Fotinos said he is deluged with pitches from authors claiming they’ve written “the new Artist’s Way.”

“But for Julia, creativity was a tool for survival,” he said. “It was literally her medicine, and that’s why the book is so authentic and resonates with so many people.”

“I am my tool kits,” Ms. Cameron said. Indeed, “The Artist’s Way” is stuffed with tools: worksheets to be filled with thoughts about money, childhood games, old hurts; wish lists and exercises, many of which seem exhaustive

and exhausting — “Write down any resistance, angers and fears,” e.g. — and others that are more practical: “Take a 20-minute walk,” “Mend any mending” and “Repot any pinched and languishing plants.” It anticipates the work of the indefatigable Gretchen Rubin, the happiness maven, if Ms. Rubin were a bit kinder but less Type-A.

“When I teach, it’s like watching the lights come on,” Ms. Cameron said. “My students don’t get lectured to. I think they feel safe. Rather than try and fix themselves, they learn to accept themselves. I think my work makes people autonomous. I feel like people fall in love with themselves.”

Anne Lamott, the inspirational writer and novelist, said that when she was teaching writing full time, her own students swore by “The Artist’s Way.” “That exercise — three pages of automatic writing — was a sacrament for people,” Ms. Lamott wrote in a recent email. “They could plug into something bigger than the rat exercise wheel of self-loathing and grandiosity that every writer experiences: ‘This could very easily end up being an Oprah Book’ or ‘Who do I think I’m fooling? I’m a subhuman blowhard.’”

“She’s given you an assignment that is doable, and I think it’s kind of a cognitive centering device. Like scribbly meditation,” Ms. Lamott wrote. “It’s sort of like how manicurists put smooth pebbles in the warm soaking water, so your fingers have something to do, and you don’t climb the walls.”

Ms. Cameron continues to write her Morning Pages every day, even though she continues, as she said, to be grouchy upon awakening. She eats oatmeal at a local cafe and walks Lily, an eager white Westie. She reads no newspapers or social media (perhaps the most grueling tenet of “The Artist’s Way” is a week of “reading deprivation”), though an assistant runs a Twitter and Instagram account on her behalf. She writes for hours, mostly musicals, collaborating with her daughter, a film director, and others.

Ms. Cameron may be a veteran of the modern self-care movement, but her life has not been all moonbeams and rainbows — and it shows. She was candid in conversation, if not quite at ease. “So I haven’t proven myself to be hilarious,” she said with a flash of dry humor, adding that even after so many years, she still gets stage fright before beginning a workshop.

She has written about her own internal critic, imagining a gay British interior designer she calls Nigel. “And nothing is ever good enough for Nigel,” she said. But she soldiers on.

She will tell you that she has good boundaries. But like many successful women, she brushes off her achievements, attributing her unlooked-for wins to luck.

“If you have to learn how to do a movie, you might learn from Martin Scorsese. If you have to learn about entrepreneurship, you might learn from Mark” — her second husband. “So I’m very lucky,” she said. “If I have a hard time blowing my own horn, I’ve been attracted to people who blew it for me.”

Riding that midnight train

People always said Kelly Rowland would be a great Gladys Knight

BY KATHRYN SHATTUCK

Kelly Rowland has been hearing it for almost as long as she’s been singing. “Always, when I meet somebody, they’re like, ‘Oh man, you look like a young Gladys Knight,’” she recounted. “Well, she’s lovely to me — a beautiful woman. So I definitely love the comparison.”

And so apparently does Knight. “It’s no secret that I love my @kelly-rowland,” Knight posted on Instagram in October 2016. “So many people have said that Kelly would be the perfect person to star in my biopic.”

So when Rowland was asked to portray Knight in “American Soul” — a new BET drama about the evolution of Don Cornelius’s “Soul Train” — “I wondered if somebody was creeping through Gladys’s comments,” Rowland said. “I was beyond flattered because she had such an illustrious career, and I just wanted to soak her up.”

Starting last fall, Rowland pored over vintage YouTube clips to help capture Knight’s essence for “American Soul,” which premiered on Tuesday and follows Cornelius as he hitches his wagon to her star in preparation for the show’s syndication on Oct. 2, 1971.

The result is a groove down the “Soul Train” line as Rowland channels Knight, swaying in a glittering black evening gown alongside the fast-stepping Pips, in “I Heard It Through the Grapevine”; wrapped in gold knee-high gladiator sandals for “Friendship Train,” which the group performed on that inaugural episode; and seated alone at a piano in a poignant rendition of Knight’s signature song, “Midnight Train to Georgia.”

Rowland’s own career skyrocketed in her teens alongside Beyoncé’s in Destiny’s Child, which in 1998 displayed its own coordinated outfits and synchronized moves on “Soul Train.” And she hasn’t left music behind: In November, she released the self-love single “Kelly” as a teaser to a promised album, her first since “Talk a Good Game” in 2013.

In a phone interview from Los Angeles, where she lives with her husband, Tim Weatherspoon, a talent manager, and Titan, their 4-year-old son, Rowland, 37, spoke about channeling a legend and the politics of the Super Bowl.

Here are edited experts from the conversation.

Did you grow up watching “Soul Train”?

Oh, I absolutely did. “Soul Train” was one of my first memories of watching all these different beautiful black people dancing and having a good time, and that was just a moment for me. I remember wanting to dress like the women who had expressions of self and freedom. I remember watching so many different girl groups — was it En Vogue or SWV? — and them just making it look so fun. And I would emulate the dancers, whether it was pop locking or jumping from that one platform and landing in the splits.

How intimidating was it playing the Empress of Soul?

It wasn’t intimidating until I remember watching one performance of her doing “Midnight Train to Georgia.” And it was of course with the Pips, and they’re on a dark stage and she has a beautiful dress on, and it’s just so effortless. From all of her movements to the different inflections in her face, I sat there and just studied it for days and days and days. She’s an effortless voice, an effortless talent, and I think



EMILY BERL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Kelly Rowland, who portrays Gladys Knight in the new miniseries “American Soul.”

that’s what people have always loved about Gladys.

Did you try to mimic her voice?

There is only one Gladys Knight, and I completely love and respect her, and there is no voice in the world that sounds like hers. What I did do — because I wanted to have a little bit more rasp to my voice — I would take shots of whiskey and I would scream really loud to try to get it as scratchy as possible or be around people who were smoking in a cloud of smoke and inhale. And all of that still didn’t work. [Laughs.] When I finally got a cold and my voice got raspy, I was like, “Oh my God, it’s so exciting!”

What’s it like interpreting the classic “Midnight Train to Georgia”?

Like, I can’t even say [starts to sing] “L.A.” [Pause.] Oh my gosh, the very first verse literally gets me choked up. I think it’s one of the deepest love songs ever written, and it’s extremely personal to me now. It was personal before, because I am an Atlanta girl and Gladys is an Atlanta girl. But now I can’t wait to have a conversation with her to ask exactly what this song is about. I want to know where she was singing from.

Are you nervous about her reaction to your performance?

Yes, yes, I’m so nervous to have her watch me, for sure!

Knight has been getting blowback for her decision to sing the national anthem at the Super Bowl. You ap-

peared as part of Beyoncé’s halftime show in 2013. Is performing at the Super Bowl a political act?

I think the interesting times that we’re in right now, in politics and opinions, make it very touchy. And I’ll keep my answer right there. Because it’s really unfortunate that we’re in this place where even having your opportunity . . . she probably wanted to do the national anthem her whole career, and here we are at a moment where you make one decision, and some people are excited and some people are really, really upset about it. [Sighs.] It really is a tough one.

Michelle Williams, your former Destiny’s Child collaborator, is playing Diana Ross in “American Soul.” Was there any competition about who could better recreate a diva?

When she told me she got the role, I was excited and couldn’t wait to see her performance. We just didn’t have that competition moment, and we probably should have!

Any plans for another Destiny’s Child reunion?

Everybody is like, “Oh my God, when’s it going to . . .” Our kids have play dates, and we hang out for girls’ nights, but it hasn’t been anything that we’ve talked about. And . . . yeah!

Do you feel any extra pressure raising a boy in such turbulent times?

I feel like it’s a great responsibility to raise a good man, respectful, with integrity, honest, a great sense of self-assurance. That’s the pressure that I feel ever since he was in my womb. My gosh, I think Mike Brown had just been killed, and it was a series of killings of black boys back-to-back. And I remember holding my belly, weeping, because I was thinking, I have a black boy and he’s going to come into this world and how do I

protect him from ignorance? How do I protect him from any and *everything* — when they fall, when they’re learning to meet friends, when they’re going to have a job interview. Of course, God’s bigger than me, and he was just like, “You’ve got this.” I feel like God was like, “I created woman on purpose. I’ve created you this way for a reason, and you have everything it is that you need to raise this child.”

RCA dropped R. Kelly after a documentary resurrected sexual-misconduct allegations. Last month, Mathew Knowles, Beyoncé’s father, spoke about keeping him away from Destiny’s Child. You went on to record songs with him. Any thoughts in hindsight?

No, I’d honestly rather not say. I will keep my comments to myself at this moment because I’m still downloading all of this like everybody else is.

You’ve vowed to finally release an album this year. What should we expect from your music-making?

I’m at the point where I feel like as long as I’m having fun making music, I can do whatever I want to do. Not follow anybody else’s standards, only my own. And music that I’m excited about, that I want to share with people, that I want them to be inspired by. On this next album, I want people to actually meet me.

“Kelly,” your latest, very danceable single, feels like a proclamation of where you are in life. So what do you mean when you sing, “Kelly ain’t humble no mo’?”

What I mean is, usually I let so many different things slide and it’s, “Oh, it’s so sweet, Kelly, it’s sweet.” I’m so sick of that word. “She’s sweet.” [Laughs.] Because I am a kind person, but what I’m saying is: Don’t take my kindness for weakness.

CULTURE

Truths exposed, both glorious and bitter

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
PARK CITY, UTAH

The Sundance festival continued its tradition of splendid documentaries

BY MANOHLA DARGIS

“The real me is not photographable.” That’s the claim made by Benedetta Barzini in “The Disappearance of My Mother,” one of several memorable documentaries shown at this year’s Sundance Film Festival, which ended Sunday. A former Italian supermodel, Barzini (born in 1943) inhabits various roles in the movie, which was directed and primarily shot by her son Beni-amino Barrese. Now in her 70s — and after years of being a photographically fetishized subject — Barzini has decided that she would like to disappear. “The work we’re doing,” she says to her son, “is a work of separation.”

Deeply personal and shot through with fascinating contradictions, “The Disappearance of My Mother” is a portrait of a woman in rebellion. Born into privilege — her father was a well-regarded writer and her mother an heiress — Barzini survived anorexia and indifferent parenting, and began modeling in New York in the early 1960s after catching the eye of Diana Vreeland, who was then at Vogue. Barzini worked alongside Richard Avedon and Irving Penn but soon expanded her horizons: She studied with Lee Strasberg, befriended Salvador Dalí and hung out at Andy Warhol’s Factory, posing with Marcel Duchamp for one of Warhol’s short “Screen Test” films.

In “The Disappearance of My Mother,” Barrese selectively grazes over Barzini’s past and incorporates archival still and moving images into the mix, including some fabulous footage of her on the job. (Her geometric poses fluidly enhance the lines of the clothing.) Most of the images, though, were taken by Barrese, an obsessive chronicler of his mother. He began shooting her when he was young, turning his photographic gaze on a woman who, as she grew older, became more and more tired of being in front of the camera, to the point of hostility. She continues to model, strolling one catwalk with hauteurl that edges into contempt, but it’s complicated.

Those complications surface in the documentary piecemeal. Barzini is Barrese’s subject (and apparent muse), but she’s also his mother, which creates some productive friction. A feminist and Marxist who now also teaches, Barzini is a severe, unsparring critic of the commodification and exploitation of the female body by men, which greatly complicates her son’s insistent, at times intrusive, gaze. It also deepens the movie, making the personal ferociously political. He’s forever shooting her, and she routinely swats him away, asking and sometimes yelling at him to stop. Yet she also poses for him, and as her face brightens, it seems she’s not ready to vanish just yet.

Sundance is well known for its documentary selections — there are sepa-



VIA SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

Two of the most powerful selections in the lineup focused on China. They’d make a knockout double bill.

rate American and international competitions — that include celebrity profiles, personal essays, advocacy movies and journalistic investigations. These tend to be formally familiar, and too many this year contained drone imagery (cue the camera swooping over a location) that generally registers as a tedious, meaningless visual tic. That said, the diversity of subjects in the documentary selections could also make these titles feel more adventurous and expansive than those in the fiction lineup. (One small mercy: There were fewer coming-of-age stories about alienated, misunderstood teens.)

Two of the most powerful documentaries in the festival, “American Factory” and “One Child Nation,” focused on China. They’d make a knockout double bill. Directed by Steven Bognar and Julia Reichert, “American Factory” explores the cultural and political complications that emerge when Cao Dewang, a Chinese billionaire, opens an auto-glass factory in a shuttered General Motors plant near Dayton, Ohio. The filmmakers were already familiar with the site from their short 2009 documentary, “The Last Truck: Closing of a G.M. Plant.” They go longer and deeper in the new movie’s gripping two hours.

It can be startling when documentarians are granted the kind of extraordinary access that Bognar and Reichert managed to get while making “American Factory.” However they did it, the filmmakers made the most of



NAITI GMEZ, VIA SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

their freedom in a documentary that begins in sorrow with the G.M. closure and quickly turns buoyant with the arrival of Fuyao, the world’s largest manufacturer of auto glass, which brings hundreds of Chinese workers with it. Elegantly shot and edited, the movie closely tracks the new factory’s growing pains, which turn increasingly factious as the company’s management practices clash with the expectations of American workers accustomed to hard-won labor rights.

Bognar and Reichert personalize this tale of globalization and its discontents by focusing on individuals, including a young Chinese man separated from his family and an older American who shows off his gun col-

lection to his (receptive) Chinese colleagues. The anxious optimism expressed by all the workers, domestic and imported, can be heartbreaking, and it’s impossible not to root for the plant’s success, even when the company — which brutally overworks its employees in China and tries to do the same in Ohio — is at its most villainous. It’s no surprise that the Chinese government is involved in Fuyao’s venture, which underlines the larger, complex geopolitical stakes.

I haven’t been able to shake “One Child Nation,” an essential, often harrowing exploration of China’s decades-long one-child policy, which officially ended in 2015. Directed by Nanfu Wang (“Hooligan Sparrow”) and Jial-



VIA SUNDANCE INSTITUTE



RACHEL LEARS, VIA SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

Clockwise from top left: Benedetta Barzini in “The Disappearance of My Mother”; “American Factory”; Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in “Knock Down the House”; and “Hail Satan?”

ing Zhang, the documentary investigates the experiment in social engineering that China adopted around the same time it made its great leap forward into late capitalism. (The country’s former leader, Deng Xiaoping, once explained that the policy was necessary so that “the fruits of economic growth are not devoured by population growth.”) For Wang, who was born in China and now lives in New York, the story could not be more personal.

At once an insistently feminist memoir and a far-reaching social critique, “One Child Nation” follows Wang as she returns to China with her infant daughter. There, she begins exploring the one-child policy, speaking with family members and neighbors, as well as former workers who performed forced sterilizations, abortions and labor induction for China’s family-planning program. Some of this can be almost too hard to bear; there are images of discarded fetuses and a story about a pregnant woman’s attempted escape. As the filmmakers chart the evolution of the policy, which grew to include international adoptions, the movie evolves into an unsparing rebuke of totalitarian rule.

Sundance gives out awards like Halloween candy, but sometimes selections truly deserve the honor, which is the case with “One Child Nation” (the U.S. grand jury prize) and “American Factory” (the U.S. directing prize). Other commendable winners include “Knock Down the House,” which unsurprisingly snagged an audience award; directed by Rachel Lears, it was one of a handful of movies in the festival that together offered a vivid collective portrait of the United States in its current historical moment. Fast and efficient, it follows four women who were part of the wave of female candidates running for Congress in 2018 with little money or establishment support.

One of those women (lucky, lucky filmmaker) was Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Although the movie focuses on Ocasio-Cortez — a vivid screen presence whether she’s on the move or delivering a deft, funny take on the semiotics of campaigning — “Knock Down the House” works because it looks at political action from the ground up. It makes an instructive contrast with “The Brink,” Alison Klayman’s intimate, intelligent documentary on Steve Bannon, who helped put President Trump into the White House. Together, these two documentaries would make a perfect triple bill with “Hail Satan?,” Penny Lane’s hilarious movie about the Satanic Temple and its devilish role in the culture wars.

Fighting for L.G.B.T. people in India

BOOK REVIEW

An Indefinite Sentence: A Personal History of Outlawed Love and Sex
By Siddharth Dube. 372 pp. Atria Books. \$28.

BY SONIA FALEIRO

In 1988, when Siddharth Dube was a deeply in love 26-year-old, the majority of gay men in India concealed their sexual orientation. A colonial-era law, Section 377, criminalized homosexuality, which was defined as an “unnatural” offense. To protect themselves from arrest, many gay men socialized in public parks and toilets under the cover of darkness. As an Americanized journalist just in from New York, Dube was often shielded from the accumulation of traumas that defined the lives of others. With his partner, a Parisian Bharatanatyam dancer, the cool Delhi nights passed in idyllic fashion. Until the night the police called them in.

“The man sitting behind the desk in the muddy-brown uniform of the Delhi police looked at me with such aggressive loathing,” Dube writes in “An Indefinite Sentence,” his heart-stopping memoir of being gay in India and the world. “I thought, momentarily, that he had mistaken me for someone else. . . . He burst out angrily, almost as if in a rage. ‘You are a homo! You have naked men dancing at your house, exposing yourselves. Go back to America! If you want to live here, you will live as an Indian, not like an American!’”

Dube fled. A scholarship at Harvard put him on the path to a career in global health policy, with a special focus on AIDS. “In every way, this was a disease about me,” he explains. “This virus that was intertwined with our essential human longing for sex and

love, and with being outlawed, shamed and persecuted.”

From that distance, it was easier to assess the things — beautiful and terrible — that had defined life in India. There was the magical childhood in Calcutta with loving parents, private yoga lessons and bedtime stories. But then, from the age of 11, there were the seven years at the Doon School, the elite public school in the Himalayan foothills, where sexual abuse by older students flourished and headmasters cruelly advised victims to “become tougher.” It speaks to the author’s transcendental capacity for forgiveness that he was later able to harness the memories of his abuse into fighting for the human rights of others. “My own suffering seemed less random and unfair,” he writes, “now that I could see so many other people who had also been wrongfully cast out by society.”

As the AIDS epidemic gathered ferocious momentum in the United States, the activist and author Paul Monette observed, “Death by AIDS is everywhere around me, seething through the streets of this broken land.” Dube responded by living a life of virtual abstinence. Over the next few years, he poured himself into work for the United Nations, the World Bank and then Unicef. He published two books, including a deeply reported account of one impoverished family’s life in India.

And so, although this is a personal memoir, it is also a memoir of work. Work helped Dube find himself. And work allowed him to live a life he could be proud of. It’s in combining his personal story with the ravages of AIDS he witnessed that Dube advances the genre of queer memoirs in India.

The book has precursors. Firdaus Kanga’s novelized account of his life in Bombay, “Trying to Grow” (1991), is



ROBERT NICKELSBERG

A patient infected with H.I.V., at a government hospital in eastern India.

one important example. Another is “Because I Have a Voice” (2005), in which the editors Arvind Narrain and Gautam Bhan brought together an indelible set of essays and personal narratives from across the country. At the opposite end of the class spectrum, A. Revathi’s gut-wrenching “The Truth About Me” (2010) recounted the normalized violence facing the country’s hijras — a term for a variety of third gender. But Dube’s return to India in the 1990s, at the height of its AIDS crisis, equipped him to chronicle another vital story. His critical and vivid reporting of the time brings to mind the achievements of David France in “How to Survive a Plague.”

In 1996, doctors in India told The New York Times that the death toll from AIDS could reach 20 million, or

even 50 million, by the end of the century. That year, after a group of prostitutes in the southern city of Madras were arrested for solicitation, a researcher working for Dr. Suniti Solomon, the microbiologist credited with pioneering AIDS research in India, drew samples of their blood. The women didn’t know what they had consented to. The six who tested positive for H.I.V. were immediately transported to a government-run reformatory where they were confined to a tiny room. They were refused legal and medical aid and access to their families.

A pattern was set in place. “Forever after in India,” Dube writes, “AIDS was thought of as a disease of women prostitutes merely because the first indigenous cases were detected among

them. They were accused of spreading the sexual infection to hapless men, who then spread it to their innocent wives and babies.” On the pretext of protecting the public, human rights abuses became rampant.

Some doctors didn’t just refuse to treat victims; they leaked their status to the media. Prostitutes were imprisoned in such large numbers, the government had to set up makeshift camps to house them. And Hindu supremacist politicians censored any public conversation about sex and sexuality. In 1996, vigilante groups empowered by such politicians burned down movie theaters that screened Deepa Mehta’s film “Fire,” because it focused on a lesbian relationship. The idea that homosexuality is a disease brought to India by Islamic invaders is popular even today. Last September, after the Supreme Court overturned Section 377, a politician from the prime minister’s Bharatiya Janata Party called homosexuality “a genetic disorder, like having six fingers.”

Such statements betray an ignorance of traditional values. “Hindu mythology,” the author Devdutt Pattanaik writes in “Shikhandi,” his retelling of popular myths, “makes constant references to queerness.” A key character in the war epic Mahabharata was born a woman and becomes a man. A great king experiences life as both a man and a woman. And, in an oral retelling of the story of Lord Ram, the Hindu god is so moved by the steadfast devotion of his hijra subjects that he promises, “Never again shall you be invisible.” In the literary history “Same-Sex Love in India,” the academic Ruth Vanita reminds us that pre-Islamic texts feature “men and boy prostitutes and dancers who service men . . . in descriptive, nonjudgmental terms, as normally present in court

and in daily life.”

Nationalist politicians, more so than anyone else, should by now be aware that it was the British, with their Victorian prudery, and their fear and distaste of Indians, who criminalized homosexuality. They empowered the police to arrest hijras without a warrant for merely “appearing” to be “dressed or ornamented like a woman.”

By the time of the AIDS crisis, these forms of persecution were widely embedded in Indian society; they forced vulnerable groups to take the lead in the campaign to spread awareness. In Madras, one of the H.I.V.-positive prostitutes isolated at the start of the epidemic started working as a peer educator. In the coastal state of Goa, Dominic D’Souza, a young gay man, fought to dissolve the law that had allowed the state to isolate him in a TB sanitarium after he fell ill. Collectives of prostitutes mushroomed across the country. On one memorable occasion, a protest outside Parliament shut down the main streets of the Indian capital. In the time they had, many victims catalyzed transformative change in how the public approached the unprecedented crisis.

By reminding us of their achievements, Dube gives his readers the substantial gift of hope. The sentiment is, in fact, the spine of his memoir. “The impoverished, the reviled and the outcast — whether black or untouchable, whether girly boy, faggot, hijra or whore — never stop fighting for dignity and justice,” he writes. “There is hope in this — undying hope. It makes bearable the most indefinite of sentences.”

Sonia Faleiro is the author of “Beautiful Thing: Inside the Secret World of Bombay’s Dance Bars.”

TRAVEL

Like clubby cachet? Stay at a private club

More travelers are skipping hotels in favor of these old-school institutions

BY AMY SOHN

When Kwame Campbell, 48, a real estate conference producer, travels to Providence, R.I., for events at his alma mater, Brown, he stays at the Hope Club in the College Hill neighborhood, chartered in 1876. “I love it,” he said. “It is like an Edith Wharton novel, one of those turn-of-the-century mansions.”

Mr. Campbell said he enjoys the sense of history, though room modernizations can make for unusual configurations. “My shower had a frosted window overlooking the hallway,” he said. “It was definitely a moment out of ‘The Shining.’”

As more boutique hotels offer retro, club-like experiences, some travelers have discovered that they prefer the real thing: lodging overnight in private, 19th-century clubs. So-called city clubs offer culture, history and a sense of belonging under one landmark roof, and although it might sound counterintuitive, they are often cheaper than hotels. The Hope Club, for example, starts at \$110 a night.

Occupancy rates in city clubs, while lower than hotels (61 percent versus 69 percent in 2017) are on the rise overall, according to Jonathan McCabe, a consultant to the club industry who is the former general manager of the Union League Club of Chicago. “The Union League Club of Chicago, Union League Club Philadelphia, the Yale Club in New York and the New York Athletic Club are all chockablock full in their guest rooms,” he said.

The catch — which is also a great part of the appeal — is getting in.

American city clubs, many affiliated with elite universities, date back a century or more and come with some questionable historical baggage. Early city clubs excluded women, Jews, African-Americans and other minority groups.

These days, nearly all are coed, diverse and far more inclusive than they once were. The Princeton Club of New York accepts not only Princeton alumni but graduates and faculty of 16 associate schools, including Villanova, William & Mary and Bucknell; the Cornell Club-



Kwame Campbell, left, often stays at the Hope Club, above, in Providence, R.I. He says the building is like something out of an Edith Wharton novel.

off experience, no matter how aesthetically pleasing it might be.”

THE PRIVILEGE OF EXCLUSIVITY

Though some competitive hotels (think the Ace) have out-clubbed the clubs by offering an elite feeling, rich aesthetics and social events, they are nonetheless not private. Expensive does not necessarily mean exclusive. “We like being members of a club,” said Jason Kaufman, author of “For the Common Good? American Civic Life and the Golden Age of Fraternity,” which examined organizations between the Civil and First World Wars. “We’re liked and accepted, and we benefit from the kindness of strangers who share our affiliations.”

“The reason people stay in private clubs,” said Mr. McCabe, the industry consultant, “is so they don’t have to be with the great unwashed masses, the proletariat. I was at the Four Seasons in Chicago for high tea and there was a man wearing a shirt that had the F word on it. And my grandchildren were with me.”

For other travelers, the appeal is the attention to service. “Nobody is looking for a tip or a handout, and is really not supposed to take one,” said Marsha Goldstein, 73, a retired tour-company owner and member of the Union League Club of Chicago who has stayed at private clubs all over the world.

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

Private clubs also offer safety, a factor that deters some solo travelers from Airbnb, as well as networking opportunities. “I really think city clubs are going to explode in the next decade — at least the ones who decide to put business connections and security at the forefront,” Gabe Aluisi, who hosts a radio show about private clubs and wrote a book on private club marketing, wrote in an email.

Of course, private clubs are not for everyone.

Children are not always welcome. Cellphone and laptop use is often permitted only in certain locations, sometimes as small as a closet. Dress codes might prohibit jeans, flip-flops and baseball caps. Then there is the elitist history.

Mr. Campbell, the Brown alum, who hails from the Golden Isles of Georgia and is a first-generation college graduate, said this did not bother him. “The Hope Club was probably no blacks, no Jews at one point,” he said. (It was.) “But things have changed. You need to exercise your right to use those clubs and have access to them because it’s a right that you’ve earned. It’s a sense of belonging someplace where you formerly did not belong and claiming it. It’s my form of protest, to be the black person who shows up.”

At home in a residential area

CHECK IN

BY ROB WALKER

HOTEL PETER & PAUL, NEW ORLEANS

RATES
\$109 to \$629

THE BASICS

Before the Hotel Peter & Paul opened last fall, the clutch of buildings it now occupies had been vacant for years. One was a Catholic school that closed in 1993, and another was a beautiful mid-19th century church that fell out of use in 2001. The property, which also includes a former convent and rectory, has been revived by ASH NYC, a buzzy design and development firm, and a local partner, Nathalie Jordi, as a 71-room hotel aiming to mix vintage aesthetics with modern perks. It is in a residential section of a city that can be surly about yet another offering for the tourists, but its most impressive design achievement may be how well it blends in. The red brick structures have been elegantly restored, with no added flash and minimal signage; on a street level, nothing announces “hotel.” That light touch goes a long way. Check-in was easy, and the front desk workers seemed pleased when they figured out my companion and I were locals.

THE LOCATION

That these lovely buildings were vacant may suggest that the surrounding Faubourg Marigny neighborhood is somehow neglected, but in fact, it’s thriving. The hotel is two blocks from Frenchmen Street, where a vibrant collection of live-music venues and restaurants (The Maison, Snug Harbor, Three Muses and more) has evolved into a sort of Bourbon Street alternative for people with a modicum of taste. The Marigny is between the French Quarter and its many famous attractions (Café du Monde, Preservation Hall, etc.) and the Bywater, which to the surprise of longtime residents has developed a hip reputation, with several happening restaurants and bars (Bywater American Bistro, the Joint, and several dives I’d prefer you didn’t ruin). The local Blue Bikes bike-sharing system is a really useful way to explore — just factor in the raggedy condition of many New Orleans streets.

THE ROOM

Most rooms are in the former school building, but I spent a little extra for one in the Convent (\$229 for a “classic” room, compared with \$149 for a Schoolhouse Classic), a smaller building at the edge of the property. The room was spacious and nicely furnished; I liked the bed’s fancy wrought iron canopy frame with crosses on the corners. But it felt a little isolated, compared with the school



HOTEL PETER & PAUL

Inside the recently opened Hotel Peter & Paul, which has 71 guest rooms.

(where you check in) and its warmer and more active vibe. Worse: the Wi-Fi didn’t work. The front desk, while immediately responsive to my irritable call, seemed familiar with this issue in my second-floor room, and offered to move me. But by then I’d unpacked and it was 10 o’clock, and I wasn’t in the mood.

THE BATHROOM

It was surprisingly large, tile-floored and tidy, with bath products “made exclusively for Hotel Peter & Paul.” When we checked in, we were given the option of a room with a claw-foot tub, or a balcony, and chose the latter. For us this meant a disconcertingly huge shower; seriously, you could wash a pony in it. The water heated quickly and the pressure was great. (On the other hand, our balcony overlooked the parking lot.)

DINING

The developers clearly mean for the Elysian Bar, in the old rectory space, to be a destination of its own, and they have a partnership with Bacchanal, the stalwart Bywater neighborhood wine shop/restaurant/music venue. The food is inventive and solid: smoked gulf fish with pickled mustard seeds and avocado on toast (\$11); chorizo with kale and mixed grains topped with a fried egg (\$15); and confit chicken leg over excellent braised white beans (\$15) all impressed.

The bar is toward the back of the rectory building, with several warm and inviting spaces to drink or nosh, and the Thursday night crowd was lively. It felt like a discovery.

You’re on your own for breakfast, however. The cafe that opens at 7 a.m. offered only some puny muffins and a single cheese biscuit. The barista endorsed Cake Café a few blocks away. That’s farther than I wanted to walk while starving, so I had a perfectly pleasing eggs, sausage and biscuit with house jam combo (\$7) at Who Dat Coffee Cafe, across the street. The hotel menu, which kicks in at 10:30 a.m., includes some brunchy options, including a duck egg omelet with “Cajun caviar beurre monte” (\$13).

AMENITIES

On the third floor of the old school building, its auditorium has been converted into a kind of reading lounge, with the stage intact, comfortable furniture, an eclectic library, and a nifty trompe l’oeil depiction of a posh drawing room.

There is also a nice courtyard area, and the church has been restored and converted into an impressive event space. As my companion noted several times, the communal space décor is somewhat comically gingham-heavy, but then, some people really like gingham.

BOTTOM LINE

Hotel Peter & Paul is a beautiful spot in a great location for exploring New Orleans from a downriver home base, and its Elysian Bar deserves a visit. The place already feels like part of the city.

Hotel Peter & Paul, 2317 Burgundy Street, New Orleans; hotelpeterand-paul.com

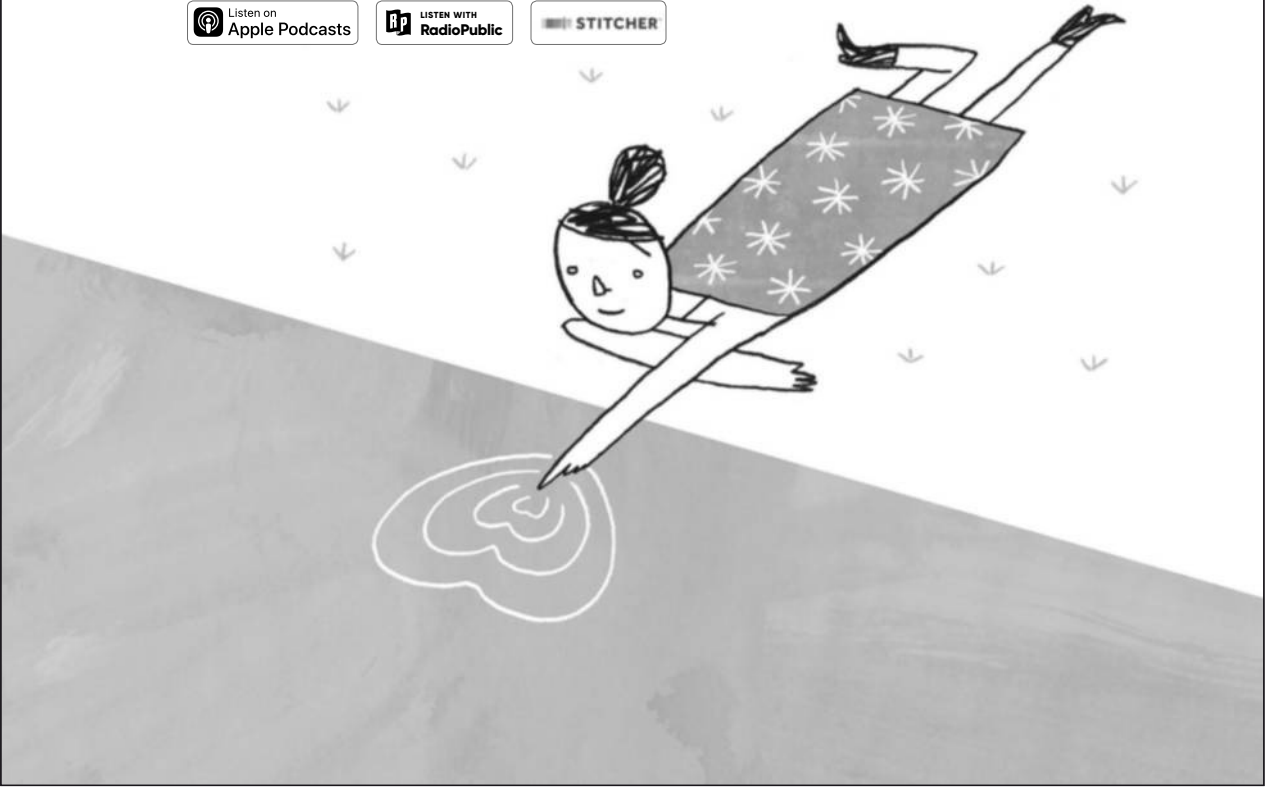
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