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The New York Times

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Europe begs U.S. to keep the Iran pact

Delphine O
Omid Nouripour
Richard Bacon

OPINION

There are few things more worrisome to imagine than the situation we have today in the Middle East. One, however, would be the current situation in the Middle East with nuclear-armed states.

So far, the international regime of nonproliferation has effectively kept the number of nuclear-armed states at bay, even within the context of the continuing regional cold war between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

The most important and promising step taken toward nonproliferation in the past 20 years — the one with the most impact — is known as the Joint

Members of three parliaments ask Congress to block any retreat from the Iran nuclear agreement.

Comprehensive Plan of Action. A document 159 pages long, it was signed in Vienna with the Islamic Republic of Iran almost three years ago by the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany. It is not only a historical landmark — the crowning

achievement of 12 years of intense diplomatic negotiations — but also a safeguard against a nuclear Middle East.

Yet President Trump and his administration have threatened to pull out of this compact. America's withdrawal would put the agreement at high risk; it might also prompt the Iranians to leave the pact, starting a nuclear race in the region.

It would drive a wedge in the trans-Atlantic partnership and drive Europe into a kind of forced marriage with the Russians and Chinese to save at least part of the deal.

Of course, we are not blind to the discord and disarray resulting from Iran's actions and attitude in the region.

We strongly condemn its contribution to the war in Syria and its backing of the murderous government of President Bashar al-Assad, as well as Iran's support, by varying degrees, of non-state actors like Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen.

However, by taking the threat that Iran would develop a nuclear weapon off the table, the pact has effectively limited that country's means to carry out its destabilizing activities.

Those are the reasons that France, Germany and Britain, which form the E3 group, continue to support the agreement and are calling on President Trump to make good on the commitment we took, together with the United States, on July 14, 2015, in Vienna. Now we, members of parliaments in the E3, have decided to raise our voices to tell the United States Congress that we stand by our trans-Atlantic commitments and to warn of the disastrous consequences of an American withdrawal from the Vienna agreement.

BACON, PAGE 11

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



A dairy farm turned out to be a classic South African fraud, prosecutors say. Millions of dollars from state coffers, meant to uplift the poor, vanished in a web of bank accounts.

Growing rich off corruption

VREDE, SOUTH AFRICA

Will the new government of South Africa confront decades of epic graft?

BY NORIMITSU ONISHI AND SELAM GEBREKIDAN

With loudspeakers blaring, city officials drove the black township's dirt roads in a pickup truck, summoning residents to the town hall. The main guest was a local figure who had soared up the ranks of the governing African National Congress and was making an enticing offer.

Over the next few hours, Mosebenzi Joseph Zwane sold them on his latest deal: a government-backed dairy farm that they, as landless black farmers, would control. They would get an ownership stake in the business, just by signing up. They would go to India for training, all expenses paid. The dairy would bring jobs to the impoverished, help build a clinic and fix the roads.

"He said he wanted to change our lives," said Ephraim Dhlamini, who, despite suspicions that the offer was too good to be true, signed up to become a "beneficiary" of the project. "This thing is coming from the government, free of charge. You can't say you don't like this thing. You must take it."

But, sure enough, his instincts were

right. The dairy farm turned out to be a classic South African fraud, prosecutors say: Millions of dollars from state coffers, meant to uplift the poor, vanished in a web of bank accounts controlled by politically connected companies and individuals.

Almost nothing trickled down to the township or the scores of would-be beneficiaries after that first meeting in 2012.

In the generation since apartheid ended in 1994, tens of billions of dollars in public funds — intended to develop the economy and improve the lives of black South Africans — have been siphoned off by leaders of the A.N.C., the organization that had promised them a new, equal and just nation.

Corruption has enriched A.N.C. lead-

ers and their business allies — black and white South Africans, as well as foreigners. But the supposed beneficiaries of many government projects, in whose names the money was spent, have been left with little but anger and deepening disillusionment at the state of post-apartheid South Africa.

The nation was governed for nine years by scandal-plagued President Jacob Zuma, whose close ties with the Gupta family — three Indian brothers at the helm of a sprawling business empire built on government contracts, including the dairy farm — outraged voters. Their cozy relationship contributed to the A.N.C.'s recent electoral losses and helped lead to Mr. Zuma's ouster two

SOUTH AFRICA, PAGE 4



Max Hollein at his home in San Francisco, where he has been director of the Fine Arts Museums. In August, he will become director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Disrupter to take over a New York institution

BY ROBIN POGREBIN AND JASON FARAGO

To renovate and expand a stately museum in Germany, Max Hollein, who was named last week as the new director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, set out to make a splash — in more ways than one.

First he solicited donations from private foundations and wealthy individuals, which is unusual in Germany, where museums are mostly funded by the government.

But his plans for the Städel Museum in Frankfurt were far-reaching and expensive. So Mr. Hollein sought support from the city at large — by selling, among other things, bright yellow rubber boots, used in construction work, which he wore rain or shine. He per-

suaded the mayor and a soccer team to wear the boots, too.

He even enlisted schoolchildren in his grass-roots fund-raising efforts by selling their paintings at auction — all of which brought in more than \$6 million in small donations.

Despite the skeptics, Mr. Hollein's unorthodox showmanship paid off. He raised the museum's public profile — not to mention his own — as well as the \$69 million needed for the building project.

"Max Hollein set benchmarks in terms of mobilizing citizens for culture and museums," said Felix Semmelroth, the city's former cultural affairs director. "He left deep, deep traces in the city."

This summer, Mr. Hollein, 48, will leave his current job as head of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco to be-

MET, PAGE 2

Progressive, but loyal to the Cuban revolution

HAVANA

Castro's chosen successor is expected to carry on island's socialist policies

BY AZAM AHMED AND FRANCES ROBLES

As soon as Cuba and the Obama administration decided to restore diplomatic relations, decades of bitter stagnation began to give way. Embassies were being reopened. Americans streamed to the island. The curtain was suddenly pulled back from Cuba, a nation frozen out by the Cold War.

But one mystery remained: While nearly everyone knew of Cuba's president, Raúl Castro, his handpicked successor, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, was virtually unknown.

So when a delegation of American lawmakers visited Cuba in early 2015, they peppered Mr. Díaz-Canel with questions: What did he think of the revolution that defined the island's politics and its place on the world stage?

"I was born in 1960, after the revolution," he told the group, which was led by Representative Nancy Pelosi, according to lawmakers in the meeting. "I'm not the best person to answer your questions on the subject."

Mr. Díaz-Canel, who became Cuba's new president on Thursday, has spent his entire life in the service of a revolution he did not fight. Born one year after Fidel Castro's forces took control of the island, Mr. Díaz-Canel is the first person outside the Castro dynasty to lead Cuba in decades.

He took the helm of the government



Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez became the new president of Cuba on Thursday.

on Thursday morning to a standing ovation from the National Assembly, which elected him in a nearly unanimous vote. Raúl Castro embraced him, lifting the younger man's arm in triumph.

Mr. Díaz-Canel's slow and steady climb up the ranks of the bureaucracy has come through unflinching loyalty to the socialist cause — he "is not an upstart nor improvised," Mr. Castro has said — but he largely stayed behind the scenes until recent years.

Now, as leader, Mr. Díaz-Canel is suddenly taking on a difficult balancing act. Most expect him to be a president of continuity, especially because he arrives in the shadow of Raúl Castro, who will remain the head of the armed forces and the Communist Party, arguably Cuba's most powerful institutions.

But Mr. Díaz-Canel also has to figure out how to resuscitate the economy at time when President Trump is stepping back from engaging with Cuba. On top of that, Mr. Díaz-Canel must find a way to

CUBA, PAGE 6

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PAGE TWO

Disrupter to take over at the Met

MET, FROM PAGE 1

come the Met's 10th director. He arrives in New York as the museum is trying to move past a period of financial struggle and a controversial new mandatory admission fee for non-New Yorkers. He will also be tasked with helping to determine the fate of the Met Breuer, which the Met has rented until 2023, and a proposal for renovation of the Fifth Avenue flagship's galleries for contemporary and modern art, which was put on the back burner last year.

Mr. Hollein may at first seem a figure of continuity in the mold of his two European predecessors, the British-born Thomas P. Campbell and the French aristocrat Philippe de Montebello. He was born in Vienna, studied early Flemish painting in his youth and has spent his entire career in museums, becoming director of the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt at the age of 31.

He speaks with a Germanic accent — occasionally searching for an English word — favors classic suits and thickly woven ties, and is, to the consternation of some, another white man in a position that has been filled exclusively from those ranks. "I'm sure he is more than qualified," the painter Joanne Greenbaum told *The Guardian*, "but it's just the same old status quo."

Yet for all Mr. Hollein's Old World qualities, he has also demonstrated a modern sensibility and individualistic streak that promises to disrupt some of the Met's traditional ways. He holds a master's degree in business administration alongside one in art history, and he learned at the knee of Thomas Krens, the former Guggenheim director who franchised that New York museum to Berlin; Bilbao, Spain; and Las Vegas and raised hackles for mounting shows of Giorgio Armani suits and Harley Davidson motorcycles.

In addition, more than any director of the Met before him, Mr. Hollein lives in the world of modern and contemporary art. He has curated numerous influential shows of living artists — from Jeff Koons in 2012 to Julian Schnabel, which opens at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco this week — and can be found on some nights at electronic music gigs in San Francisco warehouses or the wildly popular Berlin nightclub Berghain.

Mr. Hollein has also made it clear, both in Germany and in San Francisco, that the line between art and commerce needn't be so stark. One of his first major curatorial efforts was the 2002 show "Shopping," at the Schirn, which re-examined the history of modern art — from Dada to Pop to more recent experiments — through the lens of commodities and consumer capitalism.

Not content to stay inside the gallery, Mr. Hollein struck a deal with a large Frankfurt department store to paper its windows with a huge mural by Barbara Kruger critiquing the satisfactions of shopping. The mural said: "You want it/You buy it/You forget it." The store still got the prestige of art — and the attention surrounding the show. "You fulfill your programmatic ideas and then you do everything you can to find the funding to make that happen," Mr. Hollein said in an interview at the Met.

A "THINK BIG" COACH

This ability to strike a balance between art and business was a skill Mr. Hollein learned from Mr. Krens at the Guggenheim.

Mr. Hollein met Mr. Krens through his father, the prominent postmodern architect Hans Hollein, whom the Guggenheim had tapped for a branch in Salzburg that ultimately never materialized. "You became part of the family," Mr. Krens said. "We had a close relationship."

Growing up in a creative household (his mother Helene was a fashion designer), Mr. Hollein became conversant in the art world and interacted with leading figures like Joseph Beuys and Claes Oldenburg. When Andy Warhol went to Vienna in the 1980s for a show of his late large-scale silk-screens, 12-year-



In 2002, Max Hollein promoted "Shopping: A Century of Art and Consumer Culture" with artwork by Barbara Kruger on the facade of the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt.



As head of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Mr. Hollein helped create "Contemporary Muslim Fashions," opening in September at the de Young in the city.

old Max got the artist to sign every single page of Warhol's exhibition catalog.

"Contemporary artists for other students were these out-of-this-world figures," Mr. Hollein said. "For me, it was a friends and family background."

When Max had to do a report on an artist at school, other students chose subjects like van Gogh and Monet; Mr.

For all his Old World qualities, he has also demonstrated a modern sensibility and an individualistic streak.

Hollein said he chose Naum Gabo, the Russian avant-garde sculptor.

"My parents would have loved me to be an artist," he added, "but I had no talent for that or inclination."

Mr. Hollein's sister, Lilli Hollein, the director of Vienna Design Week, said her brother's business instincts were apparent early on. "He once developed a game that had an economic background," she said. "It was played with farm animals and people, and you had to

buy cattle and stuff and then sell it."

At the University of Vienna he studied under Konrad Oberhuber, an eminent scholar of drawings, and Hermann Filitz, who directed Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum — but also, "as a revolution against my parents," studied business. When Max was 21, he came to New York to work as an intern at the Guggenheim and Mr. Krens invited him to return for a job after completing his education. He ultimately became Mr. Krens's chief of staff and executive assistant, working closely on projects like the Guggenheim branch designed by Frank Gehry in Bilbao. "The reason that Max is so multifaceted and has had so many great opportunities in life has a lot to do with Tom Krens," said Lisa Dennison, chairwoman of Sotheby's Americas division and a former director of the Guggenheim, who overlapped with Mr. Hollein. "Tom gave Max opportunities — he was building museums, he was thinking about technology and he told Max to think big."

After five and a half years at the Guggenheim, Mr. Hollein told Mr.

Krens, "I have to leave here because I risk becoming a copy of you."

What he took from Mr. Krens, Mr. Hollein said, was that he could push an ambitious agenda until the pieces fell into place and naysayers came around.

"One must not forget the success of Bilbao," Mr. Hollein said, by way of example. "Two years before it opened there were large amounts of people who thought it would be a huge failure."

Returning to Europe, Mr. Hollein imported the strategies and techniques he'd learned in New York. "He has this mixture of the European and the American know-how, and that's a very rare thing," said Renée Price, the director of the Neue Galerie and a fellow Vienna native.

In 2001, after impressing Frankfurt's mayor, Petra Roth, at a dinner in New York, Mr. Hollein was named director of that city's Schirn Kunsthalle, a non-collecting institution with such low attendance that local politicians were arguing for its closure.

Mr. Hollein quickly whipped it into shape and was savvy about sponsorships, getting private corporations to



The young Max Hollein, background left, at the Museum Abteiberg in Germany, in 1982 with his father, Hans Hollein, and Joseph Beuys, right, the German conceptual artist.

help pay for exhibitions of Yves Klein and Pablo Picasso. Attendance surged, and hipsters in Berlin began to take note of the upheaval underway in sleepy, big-money Frankfurt. By 2010, the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* had called the Schirn "the most exciting exhibition hall in Germany."

AMBITIONS BEYOND THE RHINE

Mr. Hollein was soon invited by trustees to take the director's post at the Städel foundation, a more venerable institution, and home to one of Germany's best collections of medieval, Renaissance and Baroque paintings. He agreed to take the post, as well as the directorship of the neighboring Liebieghaus sculpture museum under a surprising condition: that he keep the Schirn as well.

This struck some as a power grab, and in Germany, a country whose citizens stick their academic titles on every surface, Mr. Hollein's lack of a doctorate in art history caused additional concern.

Eventually, Mr. Hollein's efforts began to speak for themselves. At the Städel, he helped expand the collection to include 20th- and 21st-century art by

brokering unusual long-term loans with two German banks — Deutsche Bank and DZ Bank AG — that allowed the museum to retain the works in perpetuity.

Exhibitions of Cranach, Botticelli and Monet attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors. An ambitious digital program — including art history video lectures in German and English — brought international attention to what was once a museum of only regional influence.

And at both museums, Mr. Hollein indulged his abiding passion for electronic music. At the Schirn, he backed exhibitions featuring experimental composers like Carsten Nicolai and Ryoji Ikeda; at the Städel, during a 2012 exhibition of Romantic and Symbolist painting, he invited the public to dance until 2 a.m. to D.J.s from the Berlin nightclub circuit.

Mr. Hollein's progress gained attention on the other side of the Rhine. In 2013, he emerged as the odds-on favorite to become director of France's leading modern art museum, the Pompidou Center in Paris. "Max, in Frankfurt, had been committed to very strong temporary exhibitions — blockbuster shows as well as more scholarly, researched, niche shows," said Alain Seban, who was the Pompidou's president from 2007 to 2015. He praised Mr. Hollein's "capability to make the whole curatorial team participate in an exhibition strategy for the museum. And perhaps, considering the current situation of the Met, it's something that he might have to do there as well."

Mr. Seban would continue to hold the top job — a situation that closely parallels Mr. Hollein's new arrangement at the Met, where he will report to Daniel H. Weiss, the Met's president and chief executive.

Yet leaks to the French press damaged his Pompidou candidacy, particularly reports that his requested salary was three times higher than expected. Mr. Hollein withdrew before the final selection. (The job went to Bernard Blistène, a Pompidou veteran.)

In his Met interview, Mr. Hollein said he felt that the French government couldn't give him the freedom he needed to make significant strides. "I draw a lot of energy where I feel I can move the institution forward," he said, adding: "It clearly was not the money."

Some people in the art world were surprised to see Mr. Hollein take the job in San Francisco, in part because of its powerful board president, Diane B. Wilsey, who has a reputation for being loath to relinquish control of the Fine Arts Museums. Ms. Wilsey, 74, ceded the chief executive title after the museums paid a \$2 million settlement to a former high-ranking executive who said Ms. Wilsey had her ousted for revealing alleged museum misspending. But both Mr. Hollein and Ms. Wilsey said they have had a very productive working relationship. "He pushes the staff, but they like it," Ms. Wilsey said in a telephone interview. "They're energized by his energy and intelligence and ambitions."

Indeed, Mr. Hollein managed to make an impact during his short tenure at the museum, balancing the budget and creating shows like "Contemporary Muslim Fashions," which is set to open in September.

"Fine Arts Museums have for some while now not generally generated their own special exhibitions — one of the marks of success for curators," said Neal Benezra, the director of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. "Max really had begun to turn that around. I think that was a point of pride for him."

Still to be seen is whether Mr. Hollein, accustomed to being the guy in charge, chafes at having to report to Mr. Weiss and how the two will come to distinguish their lines of authority.

"The definition of the role is, on the one hand, fairly clearly outlined," Mr. Hollein said. "But it's also ambiguous on purpose, because we really see this as a partnership moving forward."

Catherine Hickley contributed reporting from Berlin.

Scholar traced roots of Russian corruption

KAREN DAWISHA
1949-2018

BY ELLEN BARRY

Karen Dawisha, a Russia scholar who researched Vladimir V. Putin's circle of trusted friends from St. Petersburg in the 1990s and, in a 2014 book, labeled the state they plotted out a "kleptocracy," has died in Oxford, Ohio. She was 68.

Her husband, Adee Dawisha, said the cause of her death on April 11 was lung cancer.

Ms. Dawisha, who at the time was a professor of political science at the Havighurst Center for Russian and Post-Soviet Studies at Miami University in Oxford, distilled her research into "Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?"

The book argued that corruption and authoritarianism in Russia in recent decades were not byproducts of the country's emergence from communism

but rather building blocks of a plan devised in the early 1990s by Mr. Putin and a circle of trusted associates. Many were, like him, former K.G.B. officers who were appalled by the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The book made accusations so weighty that Cambridge University Press, Professor Dawisha's longtime publisher, refused to publish it for fear of being sued by Mr. Putin or his allies under Britain's restrictive libel laws.

Professor Dawisha, furious, took the manuscript to the American publisher Simon & Schuster, which published it, but she noted in a letter to Cambridge University Press that the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom had already translated her thesis into policy, having announced sanctions against the precise individuals who formed the basis of her book.

She said in the letter, which was later published by the Economist, that Mr. Putin's friends had succeeded in build-



Karen Dawisha in 2010.

ing channels of influence in British institutions, prompting Cambridge University Press to "cower and engage in preemptive book-burnings as a result of fear of legal actions."

"These Kremlin-connected oligarchs feel free to buy Belgravia, kill dissidents in Piccadilly with Polonium 210, fight each other in the High Court and hide

In her book she made accusations so weighty that her longtime publisher refused to publish it for fear of being sued by Mr. Putin.

their children in British boarding schools," she wrote.

Few academics have focused on high-level corruption in Russia, in part because publishing on the topic could result in a travel ban by that country. Western policymakers until recently held out hope that Mr. Putin would prove an ally in conflicts in Syria and Iran.

But beginning in 2014, Western governments began to embrace her central thesis: that a network of corrupt oligarchs centering on Mr. Putin formed the structure of his political system.

"What wasn't understood was that it went back to this St. Petersburg inner circle," said Charles G. Davidson, the executive director of the Kleptocracy Ini-

tiative at the Hudson Institute in Washington. "The contention in Karen's book that was so controversial at first — much less so now — is that there was a plan all along by Putin to take over the place."

Officials in the United States Congress and the State Department consulted Professor Dawisha after the book was published, Mr. Davidson said, and the president of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaitė, distributed copies of it to members of the European Parliament.

Professor Dawisha had spent much of her career on more conventional subjects, like Russia's electoral system, but relished the chance to roll up her sleeves and do primary research, said her husband, a retired distinguished professor of political science at Miami University. Unlike most investigative journalists, he said, she had the advantage of extended time to do the spadework and access to sources who were reluctant to speak to reporters.

Karen Dawisha knew that the project would be controversial, he said, but felt that her professional status allowed her to take the risk.

Karen Hurst was born on Dec. 2, 1949, in Colorado Springs to the former Paula Keene, a schoolteacher, and Harry Hurst, a jazz pianist. She became interested in Russia after taking a Russian-language course in high school.

She went on to study Russian politics at the University of Colorado at Boulder and spent her junior year at the University of Lancaster in England, where she met Adee Dawisha, an Iraqi political scientist who had grown up in Baghdad. She received her doctoral degree at the London School of Economics and won a full professorship at the University of Maryland at College Park before joining Miami University in 2000. She and her husband both retired in September 2016.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by her daughter, Nadia Dawisha; her son, Emile; and a grandson.

World

Gloves come off in French politics

PARIS

Public's mood in France sours as new president is seen as pushing too fast

BY ADAM NOSSITER

The veteran journalists did not wear ties and they did not address him as "Mr. President": two outrageous insults in a television interview this week that served to underscore a new chapter in Emmanuel Macron's mercurial presidency, one defined by popular anger.

The total lack of deference and a barrage of hostile questions in the interview on Sunday evening have reverberated for days in France and come on top of a coolly savage portrayal of Mr. Macron in a new book of memoirs by his predecessor, François Hollande.

What both Mr. Hollande's book and the television interview had in common was not only the substance of their attacks — that Mr. Macron is a self-seeking servant of society's fortunate — but also their underlying message: It is open season on the French president.

The undisguised hostility has made clear that, less than a year into this new presidency, anti-Macron sentiment is emerging as a potent force. It is being fueled by a pervasive sense that Mr. Macron is pushing too far, too fast in too many areas — nicking at the benefits of retirees and low earners, giving dollops to the well-off and slashing sacred worker privileges.

The souring of the public mood is reflected in Mr. Macron's drooping poll numbers among workers and the mid-

Hostile questioning and an unusual lack of deference follow a savage portrayal of Mr. Macron by his predecessor.

dle class. (His popularity remains high among those that the French call "executives.") It is also seen in the streets, where a wave of strikes and demonstrations is testing Mr. Macron's resolve as never before.

"In every area, there is discontent," admonished one of Mr. Macron's interviewers on Sunday, Edwy Plenel, a political journalist with the investigative news website Mediapart. The president could barely conceal his anger.

"Your question is biased!" Mr. Macron retorted. "The discontent of the railway workers has nothing to do with the discontent in the hospitals!"

The result for now is a strike that has crippled France's vaunted rail service, shut down many of its universities and put hostile demonstrators in the streets as they try to push back against Mr. Macron's effort to reshape the country's work-force culture.

The television interview was less a conversation than a controlled ambush. For more than two hours, Mr. Macron was admonished, lectured at, cut off and shouted over. And he gave nearly as good as he got. Still, rarely has a French president been so rudely manhandled.

"France has passed a threshold with this debate," the political consultant Philippe Moreau Chevrolet said on television afterward.

"So, you are searching for cash in the wallets of the retirees! Excuse me, Emmanuel Macron!" the other television interviewer, Jean-Jacques Bourdin, nearly shouted at the president.

In the interview, it was plain "Emmanuel Macron" — as in Citizen Macron in the style of the French Revolution — from start to finish.

"I have got to put the country back to work," Mr. Macron was left blustering. "There are too many who work hard, and don't earn enough from their work."

"You are not the teacher, and we are not the students!" Mr. Plenel said in reprimand to Mr. Macron.

"I'm not aggravated, but I don't like intellectual dishonesty!" Mr. Macron insisted through gritted teeth.

The far-left leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon, who makes no secret of his disdain for Mr. Macron, seized upon Sunday's televised "wrestling match," as one commentator called it.

"Jupiter has fallen from the sky!" he

declared, invoking the king of the gods, a name the French news media have pinned on Mr. Macron for gathering up extraordinary power, for example by using his legislative supermajority to carry out his agenda almost unchecked.

If he has not quite fallen, at the very least there is a growing sense that Mr. Macron and the French presidency are no longer "sacred," as a headline on Mr. Plenel's news website Mediapart put it. To be sure, Mr. Macron, once he had rebalanced himself, periodically launched his habitual command performance, speaking fluently and without notes on Syria, labor, taxes and other subjects for more than two hours.

Yet the image remaining is that of an aggravated French president, his voice fairly choking, having to remind his interlocutors, "You are the interviewers, and I am the president of the republic!"

"I am not about sanctifying the function of the presidency," Mr. Plenel said on television afterward.

"There is a monarchical culture in France," Mr. Plenel said in an interview on Tuesday, explaining his strategy Sunday. "It was necessary to break the code of this monarchical culture."

Likewise, in his book "The Lessons of Power," Mr. Hollande draws a portrait in acid of his ambitious successor. While Mr. Hollande was considered by many the "normal" chief executive, Mr. Macron set out to be his opposite.

This was not the stuff of Olympian maneuvering but rather of base human machinations, in Mr. Hollande's view.

Did the young minister of the economy who had been Mr. Hollande's protégé stab the older man in the back, then leap over his carcass to gain the presidency? Did he betray the seasoned politician to whom he owed so much? Those central questions have been a subtext in French politics since Mr. Macron was elected a year ago. Mr. Hollande all but answers yes.

"Always, that style of denying the plain evidence with a smile," Mr. Hollande comments with barely disguised bitterness after Mr. Macron has denied he will be a candidate. That denial followed the triumphalist kickoff rally in July 2016 at which his supporters shouted "Macron, president!" almost for the first time.

"In front of me, Emmanuel Macron protested his good faith, and his faithfulness," Mr. Hollande writes, describing a moment when he was forced to upbraid his protégé for having displayed his ambition. "Was he sincere when he thought that his adventure was limited in time, and that it would eventually end, to serve, finally, my own candidacy?"

The ex-president doesn't answer the question, but he hardly needs to.

"Did he feel guilty about something?" Mr. Hollande asks about the moment he handed over power to Mr. Macron a year ago at the Élysée Palace. "As though the order of things, and of human relations, had been unduly reversed."

And Mr. Hollande wickedly sums up both the limits and potential of Mr. Macron's outlook, gleaned when the younger man was his counselor at the presidency.

"He is certain that reality graciously bends to his will as soon as he expresses it."

The ex-president adopts the critique of Mr. Macron's detractors on the left when he writes in his book that "my government reduced inequality, while this one is deepening it."

If the numbers show Mr. Hollande giving himself too easy a pass on his own record in that regard, the jury is still out on Mr. Macron's.

Certainly he appeared to do himself few favors on Sunday when he repeatedly refused to condemn the well-established practice by the very wealthy in France of seeking tax havens.

"We've got a problem with fiscal optimization," Mr. Macron conceded.

That provoked the outrage of Mr. Bourdin: "Tax evasion!" he shouted at the president, using a term more recognizable to the average citizen. Mr. Macron refused to give ground. "And what about your friend Arnault?" — the question referred to the chief executive of LVMH, France's wealthiest man, Bernard Arnault.

"I don't have friends," Mr. Macron said coldly.

Elian Peltier contributed reporting.



The invitation-only showing of "Black Panther" was part of a wider social opening in Saudi Arabia championed by the 32-year-old crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman.

Kingdom returns to the movies

RIYADH JOURNAL
RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

'Black Panther' screening brings end to decades-old ban in Saudi Arabia

BY TASNEEM ALSULTAN
AND BEN HUBBARD

The audience strolled down the red carpet, fetched popcorn and soda and filed into the cinema for a night at the movies.

It was a sight common around the world. But in the capital of ultraconservative Saudi Arabia, it was a watershed moment: the first opening of a commercial movie theater in more than 30 years.

The invitation-only screening of the Hollywood blockbuster "Black Panther" this week was part of a wider social opening in the kingdom championed by the 32-year-old crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman.

In addition to trying to reorient the Saudi economy away from oil and moderate its official religious rhetoric, Prince Mohammed, a son of the Saudi king and next in line to the throne, has sought to make life more enjoyable for those who have long complained that the country's strict religious rules make it a boring place to live.

Prince Mohammed has tried to change that by creating a government body tasked with expanding entertainment opportunities such as concerts, monster-truck rallies and operas. While those events have been well attended, they have reached limited numbers. It is the opening of commercial movie theaters in shopping centers that will really



Waiting for the start of the movie. Officials hope that expanding entertainment options will help the economy by keeping at home some of the money that Saudis spend abroad.

affect the country's 32 million people.

Saudi officials hope that expanding entertainment options will not only allow citizens to have more fun, but also help the economy by keeping at home some of the millions of dollars that Saudis spend on entertainment abroad. They hope that the creation of a domestic entertainment sector will also generate much-needed jobs for young Saudis.

While international companies have swooped into Saudi Arabia, signing deals to build and operate theaters, movies for the masses are not yet a reality.

The movie theater itself, inside a largely vacant and only partially constructed financial district, had been

hastily put together in a two-story concert hall that appeared better outfitted for symphonies.

Two other halls in the same complex still lacked seats.

But enthusiasm for the changes was tangible among the hundreds of V.I.P. guests, who included government ministers, social media stars and at least one princess.

"We are very happy," said Fouz al-Thiyabi, 35, the vice principal of a girls' elementary school, who came with a girlfriend. "They should have done this a long time ago."

She said she and her friends used to go to the movies abroad, like many Saudis who would flock to neighboring

Bahrain or the United Arab Emirates on weekends to see the latest flicks. Now, she said, she looked forward to seeing movies close to home.

"I like modern movies, action movies," she said. She knew little about "Black Panther," but said she would have come no matter what the movie had been.

"I don't know anything about the film. I came for the event," she said.

Some observers have noted similarities between recent events in Saudi Arabia and the plot of "Black Panther," which tells the story of a prince who takes charge of his kingdom, struggles against a rival to the throne and chooses to lead his people in a new direction.

Could it be that Prince Mohammed, who ousted his cousin to become heir to the throne and now seeks to transform Saudi society, sees himself as similar to T'Challa, the movie's hero?

Adam Aron, the president and chief executive of AMC Entertainment, which opened the theater, said he had brought his company to Saudi Arabia after meeting Prince Mohammed in his palace. But he declined to say if he saw similarities in the two stories.

"It's a great movie, very popular with audiences, and we thought it would make everyone happy," said Mr. Aron, who was in town for the screening. "What movie would you have picked?"

AMC plans to open at least 40 cinemas in 15 Saudi cities in the next three to five years, he said, and would like to open more than 100 in the next five to 10 years. "We have a big vision and a big dream for Saudi Arabia," he said.

Tasneem Al Sultan reported from Riyadh, and Ben Hubbard from Beirut, Lebanon.

Join the army and sleep at home in comfort

BRUSSELS

Belgium considers letting recruits return home each night during basic training

BY MILAN SCHREUER

In armies around the world, basic training is more than just a course in fitness, military organization and weapons skills.

It plays a crucial psychological role, taking raw recruits away from civilian life, plunging them into life in the barracks, breaking down their sense of self and molding them, sometimes brutally, into a cohesive unit of soldiers.

But it may soon be significantly less brutal in Belgium, where the army is considering plans to let recruits sleep at home on weekdays during training. They already have the right to return home during the weekend.

Government officials say the change is needed to make a graying army — the average age in the Belgian armed forces is 44, more than a decade older than in France, Germany or Britain — more attractive to millennials.

"Society is constantly evolving, the dreams and expectations of young people are evolving, and so the army has to evolve with it," said Alex Claesen, a media officer for the Belgian military. He added that the idea was part of broader proposals to better serve the "wishes and capacities" of recruits.

Many veterans and defense experts, however, are aghast, arguing that the policy could undermine unit cohesion and be a dangerous precedent for other Western armies. But many declined to go on the record with their criticism.

Danny Lams, a former Dutch paratrooper and chairman of a veterans' organization, condemned the plans.

"You do not go to a war zone with men who miss their mama," he told The Guardian. "We used to sleep on the cold ground under a leaky tarpaulin. We wanted to serve our country."

"If you allow the recruits to go home during the week, the military will soon ask for a mobile home if they are sent to the front," he added.

Belgium would be the first country in modern Western military history to make such a move, according to experts from the European Defense Agency.

"Every army trains to go to war, and there will be no sleeping at home when you go to war," said Vir Maram, 35, a reservist corporal of the French Foreign Legion who served several tours under the command of Western armies and NATO in Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali.

Until 1994, military service was mandatory in Belgium for men turning 18 or ending their studies for one year. Since then, the head count of the country's armed forces has gradually diminished, to about 28,500 active personnel from 40,000.

Belgium now has about 2.6 soldiers per 1,000 civilians, fewer than many of its NATO allies.

"The army is right to try to attract more youngsters, as many senior per-



Patrolling a train station in Brussels. Many defense experts said the proposal by Belgium's army to let recruits sleep at home on weekdays could undermine unit cohesion.

sonnel will retire over the next five years," said Roger Housen, a retired colonel in the Belgian armed forces. But the requirement to live in barracks, he said, was not the main factor driving young people away.

About 20 percent to 25 percent of recruits chose to end their contracts early, official army statistics show, but only 16 percent of those who leave say they do so because of "family reasons."

More important, Colonel Housen said, was the effect of cuts in the Belgian defense budget over the past decades, which meant that "young people don't

have the appropriate equipment, they lack the means to train in a convenient way, they don't have the right garrisons, the right training infrastructure, they don't have the required readiness."

Mr. Claesen, the army spokesman, said that a growing economy and increasingly lucrative civilian jobs for young people had kept many millennials away from the military. Others, he added, deem the prospect of patrolling the streets of Antwerp and Brussels under the country's continuing counterterrorism operation, Vigilant Guardian, not adventurous enough.



President Emmanuel Macron with the journalists Edwy Plenel, left, and Jean-Jacques Bourdin on Sunday in what had the appearance of a controlled ambush.

WORLD

Graft rampant in South Africa

SOUTH AFRICA, FROM PAGE 1
months ago. Promising a “new dawn,” Mr. Zuma’s replacement, Cyril Ramaphosa, has said he would make fighting corruption a priority. But he is also a veteran A.N.C. insider, and the early signs have not been encouraging.

Having become party leader by a razor-thin margin, Mr. Ramaphosa has tried to keep together a fractured A.N.C. by moving cautiously. He formed his first cabinet by appointing some well-respected officials, but also included allies — his own and Mr. Zuma’s — who have been accused of corruption by the Public Protector’s office and good governance groups.

Beyond that, politicians who long oversaw provinces rife with public corruption, including the one where the dairy farm is, now sit at the top of the A.N.C.’s hierarchy.

National prosecutors, often criticized as being servile to the president, say they are trying to recover more than \$4 billion lost to corruption related to the Gupta family’s undue influence on Mr. Zuma’s administration.

And that is just a small measure of the corruption that has whittled away at virtually every institution in the country.

Almost no one comes out of this looking good.

At just under \$21 million, the money lost in the Vrede dairy farm may seem small. But it is a big test of whether South Africa’s new government has the power and the will to confront public corruption at its source.

The police have apprehended some low- and midlevel officials involved in the dairy farm scandal. But it wasn’t until this week that the top corruption inspector in South Africa announced that she would investigate two high-ranking African National Congress politicians involved in the case, Ace Magashule, secretary general of the A.N.C., and Mr. Zwane, the former minister of mineral resources who promoted the deal to farmers. The inspector, Busisiwe Mkhwebane, announced her decision only after facing harsh criticism from the Parliament’s justice committee.

The endless scandals have also raised serious questions about the complicity of major Western companies, with multiple investigations scrutinizing the role they may have played in enabling corruption and weakening the country’s institutions.

Many trace the deep corruption in the nation to a fundamental flaw in South Africa’s transition from white rule to democracy. In the bargain struck between the apartheid government and the A.N.C., headed by Nelson Mandela, a transfer of power was carried out peacefully, disproving predictions of civil war and earning Mr. Mandela accolades as a visionary peacemaker.

But the deal was reached on what many South Africans today consider Pyrrhic terms: The black majority was allowed to control politics, but much of the country’s economic resources, including land, has remained in the hands of white South Africans and a small group of other elites.

In the early years of A.N.C. rule, Mr. Mandela and other top leaders, who had helped defeat apartheid but had no personal savings, received houses, vehicles and money from white business leaders — essentially bribes, critics say.

A smattering of influential figures, like the current president, amassed extraordinary wealth. They were allowed to buy shares of white-owned companies on extremely generous terms and invited to sit on corporate boards. They acted as conduits between the governing party and the white-dominated business world.

The dairy farm case is emblematic of the many ills afflicting South Africa a quarter-century after the end of apartheid. It shows how corruption, in a government controlled at all levels by a single party, has entrenched old racial inequalities.

Vrede is a small farming community in Free State Province. A cemetery and a police station — buffers during the apartheid era — still separate Vrede from the neighboring black township of Thembalilhe. In many ways, the area is a microcosm of the enduring economic imbalance in South Africa. Nationally, black people make up 80 percent of the population, but most remain shut out of economic opportunities. White people, accounting for 8 percent, retain an over-size influence on the economy.

Nearly all the commercial farmers around Vrede are white, as is the main government contractor. In the adjoining township, black people operate small taverns and basic carwashes. But in Vrede itself, white people still own all of the faded buildings on the main street, where they — along with immigrants from other African nations and countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh — operate shops. Black people, who were not allowed to live in the town under apartheid, own or rent only about 10 percent of its residences.

In the late 1990s, officials were purged from city government and replaced by A.N.C. appointees with little experience. The purge, which occurred at all levels of government across the nation, contributed to the corruption that emerged toward the end of Mandela’s term.

In Free State, one of the first post-apartheid cases of corruption in government revolved around Mr. Magashule, the A.N.C.’s current secretary-general.

Mr. Magashule, now 59, has served as the party’s leader in Free State since the end of apartheid in 1994. He grew up in



Ephraim Dhlamini, a local leader of an organization of black farmers, arriving at an auction in Vrede, South Africa. He said he was suspicious of a government-backed dairy farm project from the start but still signed up.

Parys, a small town in the province. During apartheid, he was an underground A.N.C. operative whose boldness had caught the attention of Winnie Mandela, Nelson’s wife and an anti-apartheid activist.

After white rule ended, he oversaw economic development in the cabinet of the first post-apartheid provincial premier, Mosiuoa Lekota. In an interview, Mr. Lekota said he had caught Mr. Magashule stealing government funds — a charge Mr. Magashule, whose spokespeople did not respond to interview requests for this article, has long denied.

But Mr. Magashule went on to flourish inside Free State. He became premier of the province in 2009 just as Mr. Zuma became president.

To many, the dairy farm project appeared to be a swindle from the outset. For starters, there were ample suspicions about the pitchman, Mr. Zwane.

“I know this guy,” said Mr. Dhlamini, the would-be beneficiary who was also the chairman of Vrede’s arm of the Af-

Corruption, in a government controlled at all levels by a single party, has entrenched old racial inequalities.

rican Farmers Association, a national organization for black farmers. “I don’t trust him.”

When Mr. Zwane became the provincial minister of agriculture, many black farmers in Vrede rejoiced. Like others in the country, they had neither capital nor land. With a local son heading the province’s Agriculture Department, they thought their “lives were going to change,” recalled Meshack Ncongwane, deputy chairman of Vrede’s African Farmers Association.

In 2012, Mr. Zwane and Agricultural Department officials arrived in Vrede to tout the dairy farm project. Flanked by the council speaker, Roseline Zwane — who happened to be his wife — and by his longtime ally, Mayor Tlokotsi John Motaung, Mr. Zwane told the crowd about a dairy farm that would empower black farmers and create 150 jobs.

Shortly afterward, his department signed the first of its two dairy farm agreements with a company called Estina.

This was a peculiar choice. Estina was to buy cows for local farmers and process milk at the farm. But the company was headed by a businessman from India who had a background in information technology — and none in farming. Yet, importantly, he had long worked for the Guptas.

Despite the project’s sketchy details, Mr. Zwane signed off on it and asked the provincial treasury to start paying Estina, according to an investigation by the national treasury. Initially, he was overruled by lawyers in Mr. Magashule’s office, who deemed the contract invalid because procurement rules had not been followed.

The province signed another contract with Estina the following month — with



the lawyers’ blessing. That agreement stated that Estina would invest just under \$20 million in the project and the province would contribute about \$30 million over three years. Local farmers, the so-called beneficiaries, would retain 51 percent of the shares.

There was “something fishy” from the start, said Doctor Radebe, who was a councillor for the opposition Democratic Alliance in Vrede. Mr. Zwane and the agricultural officials presented no business plan or budget for the project, but they and the mayor insisted on pressing ahead, Mr. Radebe said.

In an interview, Mr. Motaung, the mayor, said, “We had no doubt that the plan will work.”

But he acknowledged that Mr. Zwane presented no detailed plan or document about the proposed dairy farm. Even basic details were missing, the mayor said, acknowledging that his role in the project was now under scrutiny.

The payments to Estina began months later. Court documents show that the province deposited just under \$21 million in two Estina bank accounts over three years. Days after every payment, the company transferred the entire sum to other accounts. From there, prosecutors say, the money was withdrawn by individuals and other Gupta-linked companies that had little to do with the farm.

In fact, prosecutors say that only about 1 percent of the money invested by the province actually went into dairy farming. Beyond that, the national treasury found no evidence that Estina ever invested its own money in the project, despite its obligation to do so.

Emails leaked from a Gupta company server indicate that some of the money was sent to the United Arab Emirates and put into accounts registered to the Guptas. The money then made its way back to South Africa through a maze of bank transfers, according to spreadsheets, logs and an invoice in the email worked for.

Many of the problems surrounding the dairy farm could have been ignored had the province not tried to tap into a national fund for struggling farmers. The national government initially agreed to give about \$4 million to the project on the condition that the province submit, among other things, a list of 100 poor farmers who would benefit from the farm.

When the government found no evi-



JOAO SILVA/THE NEW YORK TIMES



POOL PHOTO BY NIC BORTHMA

Cyril Ramaphosa, top center, the new president of South Africa, has promised to focus on fighting corruption. The former president, Jacob Zuma, above left, in court.

dence that local farmers were involved, it sent national treasury auditors to investigate in 2013. Though Mr. Zwane had held meetings to look for beneficiaries, no official list had been drawn.

After the auditors started asking questions, a list of beneficiaries — 80 to 100, depending on the version — was hastily assembled.

Those who were serious about farming started to complain. At a meeting with officials in the provincial government, Mr. Dhlamini and Mr. Ncongwane, of the African Farmers Association, said that when they raised questions about the project, they were dismissed.

In early 2014, the national treasury sent a scathing report to Mr. Magashule, the premier of Free State, and told the province to stop paying Estina. But it took Free State six months to take the farm back. The province even continued to pay Estina an additional \$11 million after officially terminating the contract,

court documents show.

In the end, a project meant to empower black farmers like Mr. Dhlamini further enriched the Guptas and one of the wealthiest white men in Vrede, Willie Basson.

It was a measure of how corrupt South Africa had become a generation after the end of apartheid that nothing was done about the Vrede dairy farm case for years.

The national police and the prosecutors looked away even after the national treasury raised alarms about the project.

In Free State, some who spoke out against public corruption were suddenly killed in circumstances that, even in a country with widespread violent crime, aroused suspicions.

As for Mr. Zwane, the dairy farm hardly hurt his career.

During Mr. Zuma’s presidency, the Gupta brothers increasingly acquired economic and political influence by forg-

ing close ties with the president, his son and political allies like Mr. Magashule.

The Guptas’ influence, and possibly direct role, in the appointment of important government officials has been investigated by the Public Protector and is expected to be a focus of a recently begun government inquiry into public corruption.

In August 2015, according to the leaked emails, Tony Gupta, the youngest of the three brothers, forwarded Mr. Zwane’s résumé to Duduzane Zuma, one of the president’s sons, who was a director of many companies operated by the Guptas. Two months later, Mr. Zwane, whose highest qualification is a teacher’s diploma, became South Africa’s new minister of mineral resources, one of the most important — and potentially lucrative — portfolios.

In December, A.N.C. delegates from all over the country chose Mr. Magashule, Free State’s longtime premier, as the party’s secretary-general — one of the top four positions in the party. Mr. Magashule had been one of Mr. Zuma’s fiercest backers, along with two other provincial premiers who became known in the South African news media as the “premier league.” They had endorsed Mr. Zuma’s chosen candidate as the A.N.C.’s next president.

But, at the last minute, one of the premiers, David Mabuza, switched sides, handing a narrow victory to Mr. Ramaphosa. Afterward, Mr. Ramaphosa made Mr. Mabuza — whose province, Mpumalanga, became known for political killings and endemic corruption during Mr. Mabuza’s decade as premier — the nation’s deputy president.

With a new president in charge, the national police and the prosecutors have started moving against some individuals involved in the dairy farm case. Eight people were charged with fraud, and others had their assets linked to the farm frozen. But a judge released most of the frozen assets in March. The next court hearing in the criminal case is scheduled for August.

Mr. Zwane, who was not appointed to Mr. Ramaphosa’s new cabinet, has kept out of the public eye in recent weeks. Neither he nor Mr. Magashule has shown any willingness to answer questions about the dairy farm from the news media or Parliament — reinforcing the public perception that A.N.C. officials are above the law.

“What has gone wrong has gone wrong under their watch,” said Mathole Motshekga, a senior A.N.C. official who is a member of the party’s decision-making body, the national executive committee, and is also chairman of Parliament’s Justice Committee. “We expect, and the public expects, that they should take responsibility for what has happened. We are waiting to hear what they have to say, because we don’t expect people in such positions to be absentee landlords.”

Norimitsu Onishi reported from Johannesburg, and Selam Gebrekidan from London.



“With our app, we can transform the lives of the blind.”

Hans Jørgen Wiberg, Founder of Be My Eyes, Denmark

A few years after being diagnosed with an illness that would lead to blindness, Hans created an app for people with low or no vision to get immediate assistance from sighted volunteers. To reach the greatest number of people, he developed his app Be My Eyes on Android’s open-source operating system. The app has built a network of 860,000 volunteers giving 58,000 blind and partially sighted people back their independence.

Watch the mini-documentary about the app designed to bring sight to the blind: g.co/androidstories

android

WORLD

Progressive, but loyal to the revolution

CUBA, FROM PAGE 1

manage the frustrations of a Cuban population impatient with the pace of change on the island — without the heft of his predecessor's revolutionary credentials. Such credentials have been the bedrock of political power in Cuba ever since Fidel Castro seized control of the nation in 1959. In the ensuing years, the Castros ruled over Cuba with ironclad control, bolstered by a cadre of loyalists, nearly all of whom had fought alongside them in the revolution.

In the end, the most effective opposition to the Castro brothers was time.

Fidel Castro handed power to Raúl in 2006, then died 10 years later at the age of 90. Raúl then ushered in some of the most substantial reforms in decades, and is now orchestrating yet another one — the passing of the torch to a new generation.

After opening up the economy to private investment and entrepreneurship, expanding travel in and out of the country and re-establishing ties with the great enemy, the United States, Raúl Castro has selected Mr. Díaz-Canel to fill his shoes.

Despite recent efforts to raise his profile, Mr. Díaz-Canel remains a somewhat unknown figure both domestically and abroad. In 2012, he led the Cuban delegation to the London Olympics and accompanied Raúl Castro to an international conference in Brazil.

Still, "he is someone who has very little exposure to U.S. political or cultural figures," said Daniel P. Erikson, a former State Department official. "He is simply not a known figure in the U.S., and frankly he isn't that well-known in the rest of Latin America, either."

Ever since Mr. Díaz-Canel was named first vice president in 2013, Cubans and Cuba watchers alike have scrambled to find out more about the enigmatic heir apparent, combing through his track record as party leader in the provinces of Villa Clara and Holguín, and later as minister of higher education, for clues on how he will lead.

In each position, according to those who knew him at the time, Mr. Díaz-Canel has been a quiet but effective leader, often with a progressive bent. Many called him a good listener, while others described him as approachable, free of the rigidity and inaccessibility of typical party chiefs.

Through it all, he has also been a relentless defender of the revolution and the principles and politics it brought.

Stories of his Everyman qualities have spread widely in recent years: how he rode his bike to work instead of taking a government vehicle during gas shortages; how he defended the rights of a gay club in Santa Clara in the face of protests; how he patiently listened to academics grouse (sometimes about him) as minister of higher education.

More recently, he was a leading voice in the push for internet access in Cuba, arguing that the nation could not seal itself off from the outside world. Though his beliefs remain very much within the party line, those who know him say he does not adhere to the belief that Cuba can exempt itself from the modernization necessary to participate in the global economy.

But in Cuba, the continuum of political thinking is not black and white. Often, conventional definitions of progressives versus hard-liners do not apply. Leaders can be both, and Mr. Díaz-Canel is an example of that. While he is seen as open to the ideas of others, as a younger man he led a campaign to stifle students who read and discussed literature that was not approved by the Communist Party,



President Raúl Castro stood next to his protégé, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, in the legislature on Wednesday. He's "not an upstart," Mr. Castro has said of Mr. Díaz-Canel.



A Havana street on Wednesday. Mr. Díaz-Canel has to figure out how to resuscitate the economy at a time when President Trump is stepping back from engaging with Cuba.

according to those who knew him at the time.

Last year, a video was leaked of Mr. Díaz-Canel addressing a group of party officials. In it, he lambastes the United States, claiming that Cuba had no responsibility to meet its demands under the reconciliation brokered by President Barack Obama.

He then went on a diatribe against a website whose work he considered subversive. He told fellow officials that the government would shut it down — no matter whether people considered it censorship.

The video was seen as a way for Mr. Díaz-Canel to shore up his credentials

with hard-line factions within the government, and yet a review of his career shows that he has not shied away from confronting activities deemed out of bounds by the government, either.

Mr. Díaz-Canel grew up in the central province of Villa Clara, about three hours from Havana, the son of a school-teacher and a factory worker. He studied electrical engineering at the Central University of Las Villas, where he was active in political life.

From an early age he was viewed as a rising star within Cuba's Communist Party. As a young man, he joined the Union of Young Communists, the party's youth league, where he stood out among

his peers. He later worked as a bodyguard to Raúl Castro. According to a friend who knew him at the time, the assignment allowed him to show loyalty to the cause, and drew Mr. Díaz-Canel close to both Raúl and Fidel Castro.

He served three years in the army, another node of power in the country, after which he resumed his slow climb up the party ladder.

In his 20s, he was named the party's liaison to Nicaragua, the only other Communist government in the region at the time, a posting viewed as important to the Cuban government.

Rodolfo Stusser, 72, recalled meeting Mr. Díaz-Canel in the late 1980s, while working as a doctor during Nicaragua's civil war. Dr. Stusser felt the other doctors around him were lazy, not serious about their work. And just as he began liking his life in Nicaragua, he was being deployed elsewhere. He took his complaint to the Cuban Embassy, where he ran into a young Mr. Díaz-Canel, who offered him a ride.

Dr. Stusser unloaded, listing the various injustices he felt were being visited on him. It was almost therapeutic, he recalled. Mr. Díaz-Canel, an up-and-coming member in the party at the time, sat quietly and listened for the duration of the 40-minute drive, he recalled.

"He just heard me," Dr. Stusser said. "He did not say anything at all. It helped me."

Not long after, Dr. Stusser found his fortunes reversed in Nicaragua. He was allowed to stay. And an official who was giving him the runaround made time to see him.

Dr. Stusser, who defected in 2010 and now lives in South Florida, always sus-

pected that the soft-spoken Communist Party official who listened but did not speak had quietly worked his connections in Havana and Managua.

Juan Juan Almeida, 52, recalls hearing Mr. Díaz-Canel's name come up years later in conversations with his father, who was a prominent member of the Cuban Communist Party at the time. He remembers his father coming home

While seen as open to ideas, he also tried to stifle students who read literature not approved by the Communist Party.

one night in 1993 after a meeting in which officials discussed future leaders of the country.

José Ramón Machado Ventura, a member of the Cuban old guard, proposed a slate of young leaders and Mr. Díaz-Canel's name was among them.

"Raúl responded: He's trustworthy, but too young," Mr. Almeida remembers his father telling him after the meeting. "This was the first time I had ever heard the name Miguel Díaz-Canel."

From then on, he said, Mr. Díaz-Canel's name came up often. He moved from one prominent job to another — including provincial posts where he developed a reputation as an effective and loyal functionary.

As first secretary in Villa Clara Province, Mr. Díaz-Canel came to office during the so-called special period, when the generous aid flowing to Cuba from the Soviet Union was abruptly cut off after its collapse.

Back then, Mr. Díaz-Canel took his bi-

cycle to work rather than ride in the air-conditioned car he was entitled to as a prominent leader.

Mr. Almeida, who also defected to the United States, said he and Mr. Díaz-Canel had many mutual friends, in particular musicians and artists whom Mr. Díaz-Canel had taken the time to support in their careers. The new president also has a son who is a musician in Argentina, Mr. Almeida added.

Academics and others in Havana declined to be interviewed about Mr. Díaz-Canel, because the government did not give them permission.

In Santa Clara, Mr. Díaz-Canel is remembered for his Bermuda shorts at a time when party officials wore more formal attire, and for wearing his hair long.

His beliefs also skewed liberal, residents say. He lent his support to one of the country's only gay clubs, El Mejunje. "He supported us anytime there was a complaint made against us," said Ramón Silverio Gómez, the club's director. "He was an ally. And one day when I saw him he said, 'You can keep counting on my support and my understanding.'"

Yet some saw Mr. Díaz-Canel's persona as crafted and less genuine than is often supposed. Sure, he rode his bike to and from work. But he was always trailed by his personal security in vehicles, others said.

"It was a bit of demagoguery," said Guillermo Fariñas, a well-known dissident and Cuban psychologist who grew up with Mr. Díaz-Canel in Villa Clara. "In terms of the gasoline, he was on a bicycle, but there were cars with security going behind him. It was a bit a manipulation of the people."

Mr. Fariñas recalled how one night, while he was hospitalized, the power went out. This was during the time of greatest shortages in Cuba, in the 1990s.

At about 3 o'clock in the morning, Mr. Díaz-Canel, who was first secretary in the province, went to the hospital and began going from room to room, checking on patients and apologizing for the blackout.

Even back then, Mr. Fariñas was a known dissident. He was in the hospital recovering from a hunger strike.

"When they were outside my room, I could hear the state security agents telling him, 'No, don't go to that room. That's a counterrevolutionary's room,'" he recalled. "Díaz-Canel was like, 'What do you mean, don't go to that room? Of course I'll go to that room!'"

Mr. Díaz-Canel entered, shook Mr. Fariñas' hand and said, "Let's not talk about politics."

The men chatted before Mr. Díaz-Canel rushed off to see the next patient. "My impression was that he was doing politics," Mr. Fariñas said.

Mr. Fariñas also recalled how, after graduation, Mr. Díaz-Canel became a teacher and party functionary at his university, joining a nationwide campaign to fight "negative tendencies" in Cuba.

"They tried to convince people that if you were not a real communist, you had to be sanctioned," Mr. Fariñas said of Mr. Díaz-Canel. "He was the head of that at the university."

It was part of the duality of Mr. Díaz-Canel, he added. Mr. Díaz-Canel could be accessible, friendly and modern — mingling with locals, playing basketball with the youth and listening to rock music. But he could also be a staunch advocate of communism and the revolution, willing to silence critics.

"He was very active, very militant and very unconditional in his loyalty to the regime," Mr. Fariñas said.

Ed Augustin contributed reporting.

Trump and Kim aspire to set talks, but where?

WASHINGTON

BY ALI WATKINS

Of all the obstacles to the potential summit meeting between President Trump and North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, just getting there could prove the most significant.

As officials scramble to convene the hastily announced and once-unthinkable meeting in the coming weeks, the site itself remains an open question. It is unclear whether Mr. Kim's fleet of Soviet-era planes can fly him more than a few thousand miles from North Korea.

"We know he has a plane, but it's an old plane," said Sue Mi Terry, a former C.I.A. analyst and National Security Council aide who worked on Korea issues. "No one really knows if it works."

Since taking power in 2011, Mr. Kim is not known to have flown outside his country, and the question of his transportation adds a layer of political complication to a fraught and uncertain summit meeting. Sitting leaders of the two countries have never met.

Could Mr. Kim borrow a plane? Perhaps, but not without a significant dent to his well-established hubris. Could the meeting be held close enough for him to take a train, as he did last month in a secretive visit to China? In theory, though viable options are few. Could Mr. Trump instead travel to Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, thus nullifying the issue? He is almost certainly unwilling to stomach the appearance of showing deference to Mr. Kim.

"It's really hard if you only have a 2,000-mile radius," said David H. Rank, who previously served as the acting

United States ambassador to China.

Locations in the United States and Europe were in the running, a senior administration official said on Wednesday, though the situation was fluid. Here are some options being discussed:

EUROPE

In theory, a neutral location like Sweden or Switzerland would be ideal. Both maintain diplomatic relations with the United States and North Korea and have signaled a willingness to facilitate the meeting.

Those locales have been the sites of some of the most significant diplomatic achievements in history — Geneva hosted the 1985 meeting between President Ronald Reagan and the Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev. It could provide the dramatic backdrop that both leaders appear to crave.

But to get there, one needs a plane. "He's not going to fly commercial," Ms. Terry said of Mr. Kim.

AMERICAN TERRITORY

With the expected range of Mr. Kim's planes, a trip to Hawaii or Guam, the closest United States territory to North Korea, would almost certainly require a refueling stop or a borrowed plane. Korea experts call that an indignity that Mr. Kim would not accept.

"I have trouble believing they would do that. It would be embarrassing," said Joel S. Wit, a senior fellow at the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University. "They've got to borrow an airplane? I mean, what does that look like?"

THE KOREAN PENINSULA

Two locations on the Korean Peninsula



Kim Jong-un has only an old plane with a limited flight range, narrowing the options on where to meet President Trump. Mr. Kim rode a private train to Beijing last month.

have been floated as options. The Demilitarized Zone, a stretch of land dividing the peninsula, already has a facility that could serve as a meeting site: the Peace House in Panmunjom, a border village.

It would be about a three-hour drive for Mr. Kim — no planes required. The stark setting, though, is hardly Trumpian.

"You have to think from Trump's perspective," Ms. Terry said of Panmunjom. "It's just not sexy."

Pyongyang best serves Mr. Kim's interests. The Americans would be coming to him — the first official visit by a sitting American president to the capital.

But such a trip has obvious pitfalls for

Mr. Trump. Bowing to Mr. Kim's needs puts him in a weaker negotiating position and is unlikely to sit well with the president, whose bellicose foreign policy leaves little room for deference.

Foreign policy experts fear that a visit to Pyongyang would risk legitimizing the authoritarian government of Mr. Kim, whose country has not had diplomatic relations with America since establishing itself as a separate state in 1948. But that argument could lose credence if the meeting moves forward.

"One could argue you have already legitimized the regime by having a summit," Ms. Terry said.

The senior administration official said the two sites were probably out of the running.



KOREAN CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY

ELSEWHERE IN ASIA

A venue in Asia might be the easiest compromise. It would free Mr. Kim from the political headache of traveling by plane and keep Mr. Trump away from North Korea. Vietnam and Singapore are being considered rather than more obvious choices like China or Japan.

China is politically problematic because of the rocky relationship between Mr. Trump and Beijing. Seeking Chinese help in arranging such a historic event would do little to polish the Americans' credibility, and Mr. Kim's own relations with the Chinese are tenuous at best.

"The politics of doing this kind of summit under the protective wing of the Chinese just strikes me as pretty implausible," Mr. Rank said.

Japan is not an option, given its longstanding historical tensions with North Korea. Russia presents a problem similar to China's; amid tensions with the Kremlin, Mr. Trump would be ill-served in relying on Russia to host what could be a crowning diplomatic achievement.

A long shot, Mongolia, could serve all parties, and its government has offered to be host to the meeting in its capital of Ulan Bator.

"At least politically, the easiest place for everyone would be Mongolia and Ulan Bator," Mr. Wit said, "because the Mongolians like to think of themselves as the Switzerland of Asia."

Mark Landler contributed reporting from West Palm Beach, Fla.

Business



Carolyn Everson, Facebook's vice president of global marketing solutions, said her company would be investigating app developers who had access to large amounts of data.

Newly wary of Facebook

Advertisers are taking a harder look at their work with the network

BY SAPNA MAHESHWARI

Advertisers are the lifeblood of Facebook, and the vast, personal reach of the social network has been a marketer's dream. But now, some companies are taking a harder look at how they work with it and hunting for skeletons in their own data closets.

Brands are on high alert for how they might be affected as the social network navigates the fallout from revelations that a British data firm improperly harvested the personal information of up to 87 million of its users. With more people expressing concerns about privacy — and Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's founder, appearing in front of the United States Congress to answer questions on the subject — ad agencies are facing concerns on several fronts.

Users are complaining that agencies have their personal information. Brands are trying to come up with ways to replace that kind of personal data, should Facebook place limits on what can be used. And Facebook has now become a companywide concern, rather than one confined to the marketing department, for a slew of advertisers.

"When it comes to marketers, the issues were basically about measurement, impact, those kinds of things. Now it's become a larger issue, which is about trust and law," said Rishad Tobaccowala, chief growth officer for the Publicis Groupe. "Because of the recent events, the chief legal officer, the chief financial officer and the C.E.O. of every client company is asking, when we run campaigns on this platform, what data of ours are we sharing, what legal risk do we have and what reputational risk do we have, because now this has become a political hot-wire."

Bob Gilbreath, the chief executive of the marketing technology company Ahalogy, said that his company had been watching the Facebook changes and consumer responses carefully. "We

have to let the court of public opinion shift, and certainly, if Facebook puts more controls down or if the costs go up, we'll move dollars elsewhere," he said.

The fallout has become unusually personal for Ahalogy, which in recent weeks has been contacted by almost a dozen frustrated Facebook users demanding to know what the company is and why it has their contact information.

The queries have come via email and social media as more people have learned just how much Facebook knows about them and have downloaded their data and more closely scrutinized sections on the social network like "Advertisers with your contact info."

"Ahalogy Partners," a Cincinnati-based firm, sometimes shows up because it runs digital marketing campaigns for a range of advertisers and uses its account to buy targeted Facebook ads on their behalf.

One Twitter user confronted the company in late March after downloading her Facebook data, calling it "desperate" and saying, "I learned that Facebook gave you my data? Why?" She added the hashtag #DeleteMyData.

Mr. Gilbreath explained that Ahalogy, like many marketers, often buys data from outside firms for campaigns so that it can direct ads to certain groups of people — say, Walmart shoppers — but that the company doesn't store that material and can't see personal information like email addresses.

While marketers may be frustrated right now, few have actually left Facebook. The company is the second-biggest seller of digital ads with more than \$40 billion in annual revenue. Last week, Carolyn Everson, Facebook's vice president of global marketing solutions, said at a conference that the company did not expect "major changes to our overall revenue and business model."

Ms. Everson and her team, which works with agencies and the biggest global advertisers, have been in overdrive in recent weeks. She has sent frequent emails to agency leaders, held calls with Facebook's council of top marketers and joined a discussion with the Association of National Advertisers. She noted in an interview that she

"would much rather err on the side of overcommunication right now."

John Montgomery, executive vice president for brand safety at WPP's GroupM, said that while he was dismayed by the initial "pocket of silence" from Facebook in the wake of the revelations, the company has since been candid. He said he appreciated the email updates sent by Ms. Everson every other day.

One of the points of concern seems to be apps that companies made years ago at the behest of Facebook. The tech company recently declared that it would conduct a full investigation of apps that obtained access to a large amount of user information before Facebook changed its platform policies. Between 2010 and the change in 2014, Facebook encouraged brands like insurers and entertainment companies to make games and other apps for the site, according to one agency executive who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

"It's become a larger issue, which is about trust and law."

Ms. Everson said Facebook would look at all app developers, including major brands, that had access to large amounts of data and conduct audits if it saw "suspicious activity."

"To marketers who have asked me about that, I have said if they have an app or had an app, that all app developers will be looked at," Ms. Everson said. "They understand that and recognize our mission only works if people feel it's safe to communicate online and share with others."

Other advertisers have expressed alarm over Facebook's plan to remove the "partner categories" on its site. These categories enable advertisers to direct ads to people based on data collected by outside companies, including their purchasing habits in physical stores and profiles like "big-city moms."

Facebook said that the change would improve user privacy. But it has also resulted in a perhaps counterintuitive lesson for marketers: Several are devising

new ways to build up their own customer data lists out of concern that they relied too much on Facebook for such information.

One executive gave a hypothetical example of a jam brand that had been targeting ads on Facebook through shopping habits based on outside company data. That company might now set up a recipe site and create a newsletter to distribute great recipes every week. It could also make a loyalty program with peanut butter and jelly points, a children's site and an iJam app, collecting customer data from each.

Mr. Montgomery said that he did not expect people to migrate from Facebook en masse.

If people stop using Facebook in significant numbers, the patience of advertisers, which have had a fraught relationship with the social network, will be tested. The main points of contention have been the amount of data that advertisers can gain access to on the platform and issues related to measurement of ad performance. Facebook is aiming to soothe them while it sorts through a very public problem.

"There may have been sellers in media that maybe got the benefit of doubt when something went wrong — when you get discretion, relationships matter, perceptions of the media brand matter," said Brian Wieser, a media analyst at Pivotal Research. "But with Facebook, I feel like a common refrain I've heard is that user trends go down, that's going to have ramifications."

Yet Ms. Everson has received many public messages of support and praise for her leadership on Twitter and on her Facebook page from agency executives and chief marketing officers.

In one of her emails to advertisers last month, which a recipient shared with The New York Times, Ms. Everson said it was important to remember that Facebook's mission was unchanged. It is still the same company, she said, that is "bringing connectivity to remote areas of the world" and that "gives people a voice and enables the movements that are changing the world." She concluded by saying, "Thank you so very much for your continued partnership."

Collateral damage from a trade fight

WASHINGTON

For Qualcomm, pressure from regulators in China and at home in America

BY ANA SWANSON AND ALEXANDRA STEVENSON

A looming trade war between the United States and China has put Qualcomm, one of America's largest technology companies, squarely in the middle of the battlefield.

A major supplier in both China and the United States, Qualcomm, a chip maker based in San Diego, has long managed to play the trading relationship between the world's two largest economies to its advantage. But an escalating trade battle over which country will dominate the technologies of the future is now threatening Qualcomm's business and its growth.

On Monday, Qualcomm lost the ability to export semiconductors to one of its biggest customers, after the United States banned the ZTE Corporation, a Chinese telecommunications equipment maker, from purchasing American technology for seven years.

In China, Qualcomm's plan to acquire NXP Semiconductors, a critical part of its growth strategy, has been stalled by a prolonged antitrust review, a move critics see as Chinese retaliation for President Trump's aggressive trade moves. On Thursday, Chinese officials said that Qualcomm would have to make more concessions to compensate for the market power it would enjoy after completing the deal. They provided no details.

The White House, which has already threatened tariffs on more than \$150 billion in Chinese goods, is preparing new restrictions on Chinese investments in the United States and could limit American partnerships with Chinese businesses abroad. Such a move could place further restraints on American companies with advanced technology, like Qualcomm, General Electric and Boeing, as they seek to form overseas partnerships. It would also likely incite more retaliation from the Chinese. On Tuesday, the administration advanced a new rule that would limit the ability of Chinese telecommunications companies, including Huawei, one of Qualcomm's competitors and a customer, to sell their products in America.

Qualcomm's situation illustrates the perils of trying to punish a major trading partner that has become a crucial link in global supply chains. By focusing on foreign players with ties to their own markets, the United States and China are putting their own economic futures at risk. The question is whether the Trump administration will balk at paying that price — or see its goal of punishing China for unfair trade practices as more important than any collateral damage that could ensue.

"They're obviously really caught in the middle," Andrew Gilholm, the director of analysis for greater China at Control Risks, a consultancy, said of Qualcomm. "The demands the Chinese government has on them, and the demands coming from the U.S. side, at some point might become irreconcilable."

The cold war that is emerging between America and China is increasingly centered on the kind of advanced computer chips that Qualcomm makes. The company's chips, now common in smartphones, also serve as the basis of next-generation 5G systems, vast networks of sensors that may soon govern the function of things from autonomous vehicles to smart power grids and manufacturing systems. Qualcomm is locked in competition with Huawei for dominance of this new industry.

The emergence of this technology means that, for the Trump administra-

tion, national security is no longer confined to airplanes, tanks and weapons systems. Since these chips allow companies to collect vast amounts of information, control critical infrastructure and know the location of people and objects in real time, foreign ownership could pose an unprecedented security threat.

The administration's focus on Qualcomm's technology may be partially of the company's own making. This year, the company asked the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, which evaluates foreign acquisitions for national security threats, to intervene as it faced a hostile takeover attempt by Broadcom, which at the time was based in Singapore. The Trump administration, already interested in the security implications of 5G technology, embraced the idea and made it clear that the United States' success was tied to Qualcomm's. In March, Mr. Trump scuttled Broadcom's \$117 billion bid for Qualcomm, citing security concerns.

Washington is now considering giving regulators even more power to block Chinese investments, people briefed on the discussions said. The move would most likely apply to certain "critical sectors" that China uses its industrial policy to support, such as semiconductors, aerospace and artificial intelligence.

Daniel H. Rosen, a partner at the Rhodium Group, a research firm, said that policymakers worldwide are just discovering that using foreign technology creates vulnerabilities that have outpaced governments' ability to manage them. "This is not just a China-U.S. phenomenon, but a matter of things which just a few years ago we thought were relatively benign now being weaponized in ways that we haven't anticipated," he said.

The cold war that is emerging between the United States and China is increasingly centered on the kind of advanced computer chips that Qualcomm produces.

But trying to clamp down on Chinese products and investment flowing into the United States could be more painful for American companies that depend on access to partners and markets globally than for their Chinese counterparts.

While China has already threatened tariffs of its own on United States products, it has other ways to retaliate — most notably, making life difficult for the many American businesses that depend on the country to source products or sell to China's growing middle class.

For Qualcomm, that may already be happening. Its plan to expand into technology-connected vehicles depends in large part on acquiring a Dutch company, NXP Semiconductors, for \$44 billion. The deal has been approved by every government except for China, whose regulators have asked for more time to assess any antitrust violations.

On Thursday, Gao Feng, a spokesman for China's Ministry of Commerce, said that the acquisition could have a "profound" impact on the technology industry but that the plan Qualcomm had submitted to the regulator on how it would mitigate market competition issues were insufficient.

Many observers believe that China is using the review as leverage to exert pressure on the United States, which sees Qualcomm's success as critical to American dominance in 5G. "At a time when there is so much trade friction, Chinese regulators don't necessarily need to stall the deal. They just need to continue postponing the review," said Guan Zhisheng, an associate professor of economics at Sun Yat-sen University.

If trade tensions between the United States and China continue, American companies — especially those that use

TRADE, PAGE 8

For 36 hours, trying to live on Bitcoin alone

BY JONATHAN WOLFE

Bitcoin can make you filthy rich, but it still won't buy you a buttered roll at the bodega.

How do I know? I tried.

Recently, for 36 hours, I lived on Bitcoin alone. Surviving on the cryptocurrency, even in New York City, one of the world's financial capitals, was not easy. It required long subway rides to far-flung vendors where I was often the first Bitcoin-paying customer.

To get started, I bought 0.00737523 Bitcoin (\$50) on Coinbase, a popular cryptocurrency exchange. It took an hour, \$1.99 in fees, uploading a photo ID and calling my bank after the charge was flagged as possibly fraudulent.

Coinbase also canceled my first attempt to buy the volatile currency because the price had fluctuated in the 10 seconds or so it took me to check out.

I went to bed and woke up with Bitcoin worth \$50.14 in my digital wallet and a list of things to accomplish: grocery shop, do laundry, buy socks, work out and get a haircut.

But first, I needed coffee.

The closest place I found was Kavasutra in the East Village, a 30-minute subway ride away. (The subway does not accept Bitcoin, so to ride I had to cheat.)

After pulling a shot of cold brew for 0.00014486 BTC, or \$1, the barista called up a QR code on an iPad. I scanned it with an app on my phone, but it didn't work. He began coaching me like a child patiently setting up Grandpa's Facebook account, and then gave up.

But eventually I figured it out, the payment went through and I became his third Bitcoin-paying customer of the day. Paying with cryptocurrency was like that: exciting, fraught and never the same twice.

I was invoiced by email for a load of laundry at the Eco Laundry Company in Chelsea. I texted with a hair stylist in Israel who accepted a tip on behalf of his colleague at Armando Piña Hair Salon on the Upper East Side. I waited — fingers crossed — for five minutes before a payment finally posted and I could dig into an ice cream sandwich at Melt Bakery on the Lower East Side.

And like an obsessive day trader, I



Kavasutra, a coffee shop in New York City that accepts the cryptocurrency Bitcoin.

would check my digital wallet and watch the value go up and down by a few cents every few minutes.

It was fun, until I got hungry.

I had searched for restaurants and

grocery stores using Coinmap, the Blockchain Wallet and filters on Yelp, but almost none of the venues listed actually took Bitcoin. A few used to, but stopped because of lack of interest or ac-

counting headaches. "No one is really using it the way it's supposed to be used, as a currency," said Dan Sim, who accepts Bitcoin at his Lean Crust pizza shop in Brooklyn, the New York City borough.

Circa 2013, he said, he had processed dozens of Bitcoin purchases a week, but as the currency became more valuable and volatile, that has dropped to zero. "People don't want to part with their Bitcoin," he said.

As I ate a margherita slice at Lean Crust, Clyde Vanel, a New York State assemblyman who heads the Internet and New Technology Subcommittee popped in. He was hunting for Bitcoin-friendly businesses, too, and in a week of searching, Lean Crust was the first he had found. "The merchant-consumer market is growing, but it's still very, very early," he said.

Because virtual currencies exist largely outside the usual financial system, lawmakers worry about the potential for money laundering, tax evasion and fraud. In 2015, New York became the first state to regulate virtual currency exchanges, requiring them to ap-

It was a challenge to use Bitcoin, even in one of the world's financial capitals.

ply for a BitLicense. (So far, only four have been granted.)

Mr. Vanel, a Democrat from the borough of Queens, has proposed creating a state task force to examine digital currency. "How do we regulate it? Do we want to regulate it? We want to understand the space so New York can attract innovation and not stifle it."

Mr. Vanel came to Brooklyn intending to buy a slice of pizza with Bitcoin, but he flinched. "I didn't want to spend \$2 on the slice and then find out two months from now that I actually spent \$20," he said.

As for me, I could not find anyone to sell me less than \$200 worth of socks or a gym that accepted Bitcoin. By the time lunch rolled around on Day 2, I'd had enough. I headed to the new fast-casual chain Sweetgreen. Its restaurants do not accept cash, but they still take good old-fashioned plastic.

BUSINESS

Amazon reboots a classic Hollywood film lot

CULVER CITY, CALIF.

Tech giant conjures spirit of DeMille and Welles at 14-acre Culver Studios

BY BROOKS BARNES

It was as if they were stepping into 1940, the heart of Hollywood's golden age.

The stucco bungalow where Orson Welles puffed on his pipe between "Citizen Kane" scenes shimmered in the sun. White roses bloomed along a path leading to the cottage where Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh had changed into their "Gone With the Wind" costumes. You half expected Cecil B. DeMille to come bounding out of the nearby studio administration building, a mansion modeled after Mount Vernon, to bawl out an underling.

Yet a gathering here last week was not about Hollywood's past as much as its future. The official purpose was to commemorate the \$12 million restoration of four studio buildings. But the visitors may as well have come to cut the ribbon on a new era in the entertainment industry — one marked by the ascent of streaming giants like Amazon Studios, the compound's new tenant.

"This historic place has become newly relevant," a beaming Jeffrey Cooper, Culver City's mayor, told the crowd as Jennifer Salke, the Amazon Studios chief, sliced a green-and-white sash with gargantuan scissors.

"So exciting!" Ms. Salke said, shaking Mr. Cooper's hand. Two of her Amazon Studios lieutenants, Albert Cheng and Jason Roppel, clapped nearby.

Amazon is only renting Culver Studios, as the 14-acre lot is called. Hackman Capital Partners, a real estate investment company, has owned the rectangular property since 2014 and lured Amazon with a plan to spend \$600 million on seven new studio buildings and other upgrades by 2021.

But Amazon's decision to move its entertainment division to the compound under a 15-year lease — the company had been using nondescript offices in Santa Monica — demonstrates the degree to which the tech giants have woven themselves into the fabric of Hollywood. You can no longer separate one from the other.

"This is mixing old media and new media in a completely harmonious way," Michael Hackman, chief executive of Hackman Capital Partners, said by phone on Wednesday.

The majestic administration building, for instance, looks much as it did in the 1930s and '40s, when DeMille and David O. Selznick, who produced "Gone With the Wind," had their offices inside. Only now, the movies in the framed posters hanging inside "the mansion," as the building is known in film circles, are owned by Amazon, including "Manchester by the Sea," "The Handmaiden" and "The Big Sick."

"I like the sense of history because it holds us to a standard," Jeff Bezos, Amazon's founder and chief executive, said



ELIZABETH LIPPMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



MGM STUDIOS/ARCHIVE PHOTOS, VIA GETTY IMAGES

Top, the Culver Studios administration building is modeled after Mount Vernon. Above left, the area where sets were set ablaze to simulate the burning of Atlanta for "Gone With the Wind" now includes condominiums. Above right, Jennifer Salke, center, head of Amazon Studios, cutting a ribbon for the \$12 million restoration of four studio buildings.



ELIZABETH LIPPMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

when a reporter asked him about the Culver Studios move at an Oscar-season cocktail party.

Culver Studios may have a grand past — "Raging Bull" and "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial" were made here, along with the pilot for the original "Star Trek" television series — but the complex also epitomizes the troubles the movie busi-

ness has encountered over the decades.

As a string of owners struggled to adapt to changing audience tastes, new technology and rising costs, vast sections of the campus were sold. (Condominiums now occupy part of the area where Selznick ignited monumental outdoor sets to simulate the burning of Atlanta.) As waves of consolidation buf-

feted the movie business and fewer films were made, idling some of Culver Studios' stages, the facility turned to television production to pay its bills, much like Hollywood as a whole.

By 2004, when a struggling Sony sold the property, years of underinvestment had taken a toll. The old star bungalows were in poor repair. Soundstages were

outdated. The mansion smelled like Grandma's house. "It needed a lot of work, to say the least," Mr. Hackman said. (Contrary to popular belief, the mansion was not Tara in "Gone With the Wind.")

Amazon, which has roughly 700 entertainment employees, began moving staff here late last year. More will follow

Will training help workers shed biases?

Starbucks plans to test the thesis with sessions for 175,000 employees

BY NOAM SCHEIBER AND RACHEL ABRAMS

Reeling from an incident at a Starbucks in Philadelphia that prompted accusations of racial bias, Howard Schultz, the company's executive chairman, called the head of a nonprofit public-policy organization this week to discuss ways to prevent similar episodes in the future.

His idea: provide anti-bias training for his work force.

"He called and expressed that he felt personally accountable and that the company was responsible and took ownership over all of the events that unfolded, and then we went on to discuss his idea for this training," said Heather McGhee, the president of Demos, the public policy group.

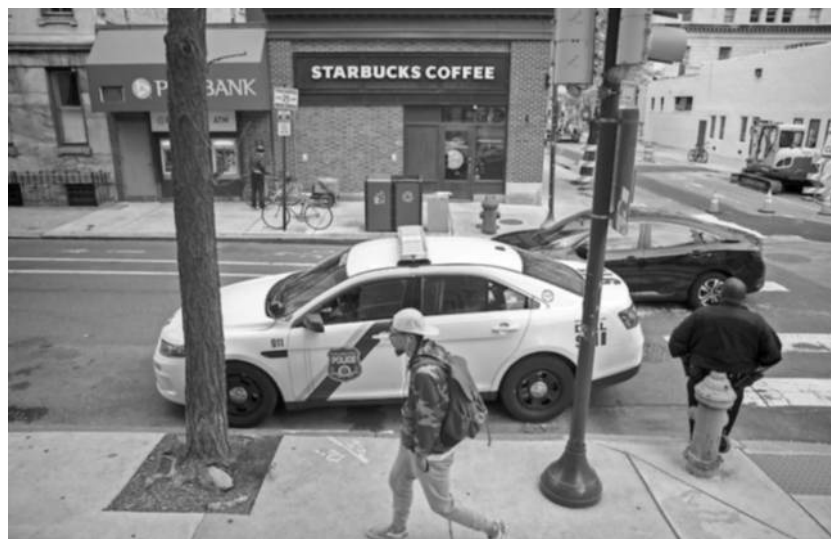
On Tuesday, the day after the call, Starbucks announced that it would close its more than 8,000 stores in the United States on May 29 to offer anti-bias training for 175,000 employees.

The announcement, about which the company has yet to provide more details, has thrust a fundamental question to center stage: Can such trainings actually relieve people of their biases?

The particular bias the company alluded to, known as unconscious or implicit bias, occurs when people make decisions based partly on stereotypes without being aware that the stereotype has influenced them.

Academics who study unconscious bias say that training can help alleviate it. In one study involving five California middle schools, math teachers were asked to read up on the reasons students might misbehave and urged to make students feel heard and respected. They were then asked to write down how to employ these concepts in practice, a technique that tends to help people internalize material.

The researchers found that suspension rates at those schools plummeted for groups of students who traditionally



BENJAMIN NORMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Philadelphia neighborhood where two black men were recently arrested at a Starbucks store, leading to accusations of racism and a corporate apology.

were suspended at very high rates, and who may have been victims of bias.

"It allows people to just think in a more mindful way when interacting with other people," said Jason Okonofua, a social psychologist at the University of California, Berkeley, who was the lead researcher.

"It's putting yourself in the other person's shoes, seeing humanity in that person," he said.

Some workers have seen the benefits of these exercises. Darion Robinson, the volunteer and community engagement coordinator at City Garden Montessori School in St. Louis, said he took a three-day anti-bias training course when he started in July and felt that it helped build a sense of community.

"I think it's pushed people to be open and have real conversations about things that are going on," he said.

Other academics and experts on bias caution that anti-bias training is a sensitive exercise that can be ineffective or even backfire if handled incorrectly. Any training that involves explicitly telling people to set aside their biases is especially likely to fail, said Seth Gershenson, an economist at American Univer-

sity who has also studied anti-bias training.

Even with training, some said, it is exceedingly easy to revert to the original biases. "In the moment of stress, we tend to forget our training," said Mark Atkinson, the chief executive of Mursion, which provides a simulation platform for training workers in skills like interpersonal interactions.

Mr. Atkinson said Mursion attempts to solve this problem using highly lifelike avatars to simulate real-life interactions. "You want to give people reps around stressful circumstances," Mr. Atkinson said.

Some experts argue that the most effective way to eliminate unconscious bias is to limit the extent to which people engage in automatic, reflexive thinking. One solution is to try to nudge workers toward more thoughtful and deliberate decision-making.

In a study involving the Seattle Police Department, researchers randomly selected a group of officers to meet with their sergeants and have an open-ended, 20-minute conversation about a recent encounter with a citizen. The encounters frequently involved minor is-

sues like loitering — a situation analogous to the Philadelphia Starbucks incident. Over a six-week period, the officers selected to have those conversations were about 12 percent less likely to resolve an incident with an arrest.

"We were getting the police officers to slow down their thinking," said Emily Owens, an economist at the University of California, Irvine, who was one of the researchers. Although the study didn't look explicitly at arrest rates by race, Ms. Owens argued that, "when you're not automating, and you're thinking slowly, bias is less likely to influence your behavior." (Ms. Owens stressed that the study was only suggestive and that over all, the evidence on the effectiveness of bias training for police officers is very thin.)

Still, Joelle Emerson, the chief executive of Paradigm, which advises companies on strategies for increasing diversity, argued that limiting employees' discretion altogether can be a far more effective way of reducing bias than trying to alter their thinking.

Well-understood policies that leave less room for discretion can often save employees from having to make decisions that reflect bias, said Ms. Emerson, whose company advises several retailers. For example, rather than generally urging employees to keep an eye out for suspicious-looking customers in order to cut down on shoplifting, which can prompt sales associates to follow customers of certain races at disproportionate rates, stores concerned about theft might want to adopt a clear, uniformly applied security protocols.

"The whole challenge of implicit bias is that we're not the best judges of when it's impacting us," she said.

Ms. Emerson pointed to hiring, another area that is often rife with unconscious bias. Many companies, including some of her clients, like Pinterest, have moved toward a more structured hiring process.

For example, in an effort to remove subjectivity from interviews, her firm often encourages managers to come armed with examples of better or worse responses to questions.

Qualcomm finds itself in middle of trade war

TRADE, FROM PAGE 7

China as a platform to export to the United States — could see themselves embroiled in more time-consuming regulatory reviews revolving around pricing, monopoly power, food and drug safety, or bribery, Mr. Gilholm of Control Risks said. "That is another potentially very powerful front in this that China has not really used yet," he said.

Qualcomm's bottom line is also likely to be hurt by American efforts to target the Chinese as a result of the decision this week by Washington to impose a seven-year ban on exports of American products to ZTE, after the company made false statements to the government as part of an investigation into possible violations of American sanctions.

Jeff Fieldhack, a research director at Counterpoint Technology Market Research, said this will be a blow to the company, which provided chips for more than half of the roughly 45 million smartphones that ZTE sold globally last year. Qualcomm declined to comment.

Qualcomm has found itself under an increasingly uncomfortable spotlight in China in recent years. By 2013, the company was deriving more revenue from China than any other market, just as the Chinese government began expressing concern that its companies were forced to depend on the network infrastructure of American technology giants like Qualcomm and Cisco.

In late 2013, Chinese government investigators raided the Beijing and Shanghai offices of Qualcomm. After a 15-month investigation, regulators fined the company a record \$975 million and declared Qualcomm a monopoly. The company had to cut prices and pledge to move more of its sophisticated manufacturing to China and help the technological abilities of Chinese companies. Today, a growing chorus of American companies have complained that China has pressured them into sharing their technology in similar ways.

Fang Xingdong, the founder of the research group China Labs, said their complaints had little merit. "The pres-

as buildings are completed.

"It's about recognizing the traditions and legacy of Hollywood, while also recognizing that we have the ability to reshape it," Mr. Cheng, chief operating officer of Amazon Studios, said of the decision to make Culver Studios the unit's headquarters.

Last month, Amazon said it would also lease a four-story building that is going up across the street, giving its Hollywood division a total of 355,000 square feet of office space in Culver City, or about 33,000 square meters. (Apple recently leased a building three blocks away for its own original content group.)

Amazon revealed Wednesday that more than 100 million people globally had a Prime membership, which includes access to its streaming service, and the company is expected to spend \$5 billion on movies and television programming this year, according to the J.P. Morgan analyst Doug Anmuth. Its 44 original series include "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" and "The Man in the High Castle."

Amazon has at least 10 movies in various stages of production, including "Life Itself," a highly anticipated romance set for release on Sept. 21.

The streaming-service boom has given other old, independently owned soundstage facilities a new lease on life. Bookings have spiked at the Lot, a 1920s-era compound that once belonged to United Artists; Amazon has rented it for shows like "The Last Tycoon" and "Goliath." Hulu is using Sunset Gower Studios, vacated by Columbia Pictures in 1972, to tape "I Love You, America," starring Sarah Silverman.

A few years ago, there was no sadder movie property in Los Angeles than Sunset Bronson Studios, a dilapidated 10-stage facility that Warner Bros. occupied until decamping for Burbank in 1930. Last year, Netflix moved onto that lot, attracted by \$200 million in upgrades and a new, 14-story office tower. Another five-story building for Netflix is under construction at Sunset Bronson, which is owned by Hudson Pacific.

But nothing quite matches the restoration of Culver Studios, in part because Hackman Capital has paid lavish attention to detail.

"They even took pains to recreate the same texture and color of the cement," said Margarita Jerabek, director of historic resources at ESA, a planning firm involved in the project. She pointed to steps leading into the bungalow once used by Gable and Leigh as a dressing room.

That white structure, notable for its green shutters and bordered by a tightly clipped lawn, sits just outside the 99-year-old mansion, which was built by Thomas Ince, a silent-film innovator whose 1924 death was suspicious. According to "Movie Studios of Culver City," a 2011 book by the historians Julie Lugo Cerra and Marc Wanamaker, people have long reported sightings of Ince's ghost on the property.

"I personally have not seen him yet," Mr. Cheng said. "But I'm sure he's happy. We plan to take very good care of our new home."

Technology once considered benign is being weaponized.

ures on companies such as Huawei and ZTE in the U.S. market are much higher than those of U.S. companies in China," he said. "The U.S. sanctions on ZTE are enough to kill the company." If China wanted to retaliate, Mr. Fang said, the simplest option would be to emulate American actions toward Huawei. "They could ban products from Qualcomm, Intel and Cisco in government, infrastructure and other areas of the market, based on security concerns."

China could be seeking to influence the Trump administration by putting pressure on a company that has been politically connected in the United States, often serving as an unofficial liaison between the countries.

Technology once considered benign is being weaponized.

Over the years, Qualcomm has lobbied Washington to further its interests in China, at one point helping to pave the way for China to join the World Trade Organization. In the late 1990s, Clinton administration officials pushed China to adopt American standards for mobile phones on behalf of Qualcomm. But Qualcomm's ability to influence the White House is unclear: The Trump administration has focused on recruiting American companies to build up their businesses domestically, not encouraging them to go abroad.

"Yes, the Chinese have a way to squeeze Qualcomm to really hurt their China revenue, and yes, Qualcomm has fought a lot of battles in the U.S. government arena," said Derek Scissors, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. "The one weakness in the Chinese approach is it's not clear the Trump administration cares about how much U.S. firms make in China."

Ana Swanson reported from Washington and Alexandra Stevenson from Hong Kong. Cao Li contributed reporting from Hong Kong.

Opinion

Preparing a post-Trump renaissance in diplomacy

Diplomats have time to find solutions to long-term problems — and those created by Mr. Trump's neglect.

Nicholas Kralev

It has been just over a year since American diplomacy entered a dark age, but the time for mourning has passed. The Trump White House's disdain for diplomacy persists, and that probably won't change. The new national security adviser, John Bolton, is no fan of diplomacy or diplomats.

The best that the Foreign Service and those outside government in academia and at think tanks can do now is prepare wisely for the day after Mr. Trump leaves office to make sure that a renaissance follows the dark age.

Many career diplomats in Washington have little to do these days. Some are between assignments because of the administration's failure to fill hundreds of State Department positions. Others have jobs but find themselves increasingly ignored or sidelined.

The silver lining is, they now have time to turn inward and find solutions to their problems — both those created by Mr. Trump's neglect and those that have long plagued the department.

There is even a precedent for this in American history. After the Civil War, Congress drastically slashed the United States Army's budget. The service lost its sense of mission and morale suffered.

So smart and farsighted officers began thinking and writing about how to initiate reforms and strengthen professionalism, to be ready when the dark period ended. One of the modern Foreign Service's biggest cultural challenges has been to organically produce true — even if informal — leaders within its ranks, regardless of their formal positions or titles. This is one reason nobody has emerged as the face of the current discontent with the administration's war on diplomacy.

Even in normal times, career diplomats are conditioned to keep their heads down and not make much noise. The diplomats have to get over that. Abnormal times like these demand that grass-roots leaders take the initiative and mobilize their colleagues to create a path to a revival.

As former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's much talked about but ill-fated attempt to "redesign" the department showed, true reforms in how the United States conducts diplomacy are unlikely to come from political appointees. According to a recent report, Mr. Tillerson spent \$12 million on consultants who knew nothing about the State Department and produced little of value.

Worthy ideas are more likely to emerge from the professional ranks — but not by the boss's order. Any major changes would have to be approved by the department's leadership, but in a normal administration, career diplomats are entrusted with some of those top posts, along with political appointees, and can exert outside influence. That would be easier with compelling



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and innovative ideas. And it won't hurt to have powerful allies on Capitol Hill — after all, Congress is the only reason the State Department's budget didn't get slashed by the 30 percent the White House wanted.

It would be crucial for such an effort to focus on the right issues, such as long-term abilities and the institutional culture, rather than on technical matters. For example, United States diplomacy has been more reactive than proactive for far too long.

How do we fix that? The Foreign Service's culture relies too heavily on improvisation and not enough on strategic thinking. William J. Burns, a former deputy secretary of state, once told me that career diplomats "perversely pride ourselves on our ability to adapt quickly to different circumstances, and we are not particularly systematic about how we go about doing that."

Another problem is the stupefying amount of administration that diplomats overseas have to contend with, instead of practicing diplomacy; many have taken to calling it "e-hell." It gets in the way of the very reason they live in

foreign countries — to understand and analyze developments in those countries and engage with their societies to better inform United States policies.

What about the staffing gaps overseas every summer, when officers start new assignments at embassies and consulates weeks or even months after their predecessors have left? Even in the age of instant communication, this leads to a lack of continuity and a need for almost every new officer to reinvent the wheel.

As for those outside government, internationally focused think tanks could play a role in producing research on trends and innovation in diplomatic practice. They have largely ignored that, saying their job is to study foreign policy, not what some call "the machinery" that carries it out. The main reason for that is funding — it's much easier to find donors willing to finance policy research, which they hope will influence government decisions. However, given the damage being done to the machinery, getting the process right will be as important as the policy substance on the other side of the dark age.

Academia can help as well. The Trump administration's policies and actions have significantly diminished the attractiveness of diplomacy as a career for young Americans. As a result, the number of those taking the Foreign Service exam has decreased by nearly half since Mr. Trump's election, and compared with pre-2017 figures, fewer than a third of new officers are being accepted into the Foreign Service.

So it's vital to keep alive the young generation's interest in and pursuit of diplomacy as a career. But it's difficult to find colleges and universities in the United States (and globally, for that matter) that teach diplomacy. Not international relations, but diplomatic practice. Even schools whose names include the words "diplomacy" or "foreign service" offer no more than a couple of diplomacy-related courses, one of which is usually in diplomatic history.

To that end, my school, the Washington International Diplomatic Academy, which trains diplomats and other international affairs professionals from

around the world, is holding a practical training program for students this summer for the first time. They will learn what is increasingly becoming a lost art, as well as specific skills, from some of the best diplomats in recent years, including recent State Department refugees. Still, I'd rather see dozens of universities offer multiyear degree programs.

The longer the United States fails to exercise its diplomatic muscle, the worse its atrophy will get. Future Foreign Service leaders could emerge from its current ranks or among Americans still in college. Naturally, they will aspire to become ambassadors and assistant secretaries. But once at the top, despite the huge political demands of those jobs, they should find time to take care of their colleagues in the service. Dark age or renaissance, no one else will.

NICHOLAS KRALEV, the executive director of the Washington International Diplomatic Academy, is the author of "America's Other Army: The U.S. Foreign Service and 21st-Century Diplomacy."

How big forests solve global problems

They can help turn around issues like climate change, species extinction and dwindling human cultures.

Thomas E. Lovejoy
John Reid

Sit on a log by the Madidi River in Bolivia at dusk and you can hear what an Amazon forest should sound like. The music includes red howler monkeys, breathy thumps from the mutum jungle fowl, droning cicadas, eerie calls from deadly bushmaster vipers and the untinged excitement of elusive titi monkeys. Around your feet, the beach is crisscrossed by jaguar tracks and those of the pony-size tapir, a shy beast that, if you keep quiet, will saunter out of the forest and swim across the river.

This is what scientists call an "intact forest landscape." It's a swath of at least 500 square kilometers (about 193 square miles, equal to 70,000 soccer fields) of unbroken forest. Because of their size, these areas have maintained all their native plant and animal life and biophysical processes. These forests still adorn parts of our planet's tropical midsection, notably the Amazon, Congo Basin and the island of New Guinea. And they form a northern belt, the boreal forests of Canada, Russia, Alaska and Scandinavia.

Intact forests today total around 11.8 million square kilometers (about 4.6 million square miles), according to estimates by a group of researchers and organizations, including Greenpeace, Global Forest Watch, World Resources Institute, Transparent World, University of Maryland, World Wildlife Fund of Russia and Wildlife Conservation Society. That's roughly the United States and Mexico combined. It's about a

quarter of the planet's total forest area, the rest of which is fragmented by roads, mines, cities and agriculture. Over 7 percent has been lost since 2000. Keeping the rest is a key to turning around three stubborn global trends: climate change, the sixth great extinction crisis and the loss of human cultures.

In the tropics, intact forests hold 40 percent of the aboveground forest carbon even though they make up only 20 of those latitudes' forests. And intact forests have been shown recently to absorb enough carbon to offset many Amazon countries' (like Peru) total emissions. When forests become fragmented, edge effects (forest damage at created edges), drying and fire cause over 150 million tons of annual emissions — more than result from outright deforestation.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency estimates suggest that those emissions cost us \$6.3 billion in lost crops, flood damage, fires and other impacts. In the boreal region, forests protect permafrost, which, if it thaws, will be a huge source of heat-trapping methane emissions. Aside from maintaining the global climate, intact forests stabilize weather locally and regionally, which sustains livelihoods for millions of people.

Carbon has been fashioned by evolution into a staggering array of plants and animals, many of which are threatened by the current spasm of extinctions. The great intact forests host the most diverse ecosystems and robust populations of top predators, wide-ranging migrants and undiscovered species. They are evolutionary workshops still going full tilt. In places like



TOMAS ZRNA/MOMENT OPEN, VIA GETTY IMAGES

A tropical rainforest with a small river inside the heart of Madidi national park, Bolivia.

the western Amazon, intact forests climb mountainsides, giving species altitudinal ladders to survive climate change.

The planet's cultural diversity also depends on its big forests. Of the world's approximately 6,900 languages, around a quarter are from the three great tropical forest regions (which have just 6 percent of the land area): 330 languages in the Amazon, 1,100 in New Guinea and its environs and 242 in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where most of Africa's intact forests are. UNESCO estimates that a language is lost every two weeks. Many are blinking out as the forests that sustain their speakers are eroded.

Humanity's very ability to think

certain thoughts depends on our great forests. When the renowned Harvard botanist Richard Evans Schultes first arrived in the Amazon (in 1941), he found that some Indians used the same word for "green" and "blue" but had 18 terms for varieties of a sacred vine that had been identified by baffled scientists as a single species.

Forest conservation solutions are practical and affordable. First, roads need to give big forests a wide berth. The principal underlying driver of fragmentation is road-building, which carves forests into progressively smaller patches and has accounted for 81 percent of losses since 2000. And they usually lose money. One study found that a major new highway in the Brazil-

ian Amazon would return around 6.5 cents on each dollar of investment. Money is better spent by intensifying transportation near towns and existing farms, where the infrastructure can serve more people. A 2014 global study in Nature showed that needed road networks could be developed without fragmenting forests.

Second, forest peoples' land rights need to be supported, for both ethical and practical reasons. There are almost no forests without people; intact forest wildernesses are forests with few people whose traditions and economies are woven into the landscape. Recent Amazon research shows that legally recognized indigenous territories are extremely effective at preventing deforestation, even where deforestation pressure is high. Parks and nature reserves were also revealed to be effective, especially when tailored to local needs.

Third, the adage that you can't manage what you don't measure applies here. A continuous, near-real-time system of monitoring must be put in place to track where intact forests are being cut so that governments, forest communities and private organizations can react early.

How will we pay for a future with forest wilderness? Part of the answer lies in programs to avert climate change. A recent economic study indicates that a large share of intact forests could be preserved at a cost of \$20 per ton of carbon. That's less than half of one indicative benchmark figure: the \$52 midpoint price projected by California for its regulated carbon emissions market in 2030.

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OPINION

The New York Times

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MACRON'S DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACY

The French president told the European Parliament that the Continent was facing a “civil war” over democratic values.

Not long ago, the things Emmanuel Macron said this week would not have needed saying. Yet, addressing the European Parliament, the French president — barely 40 and not yet a year in office — sounded almost like a biblical prophet, warning of the rising fascination with antidemocratic and “illiberal” ideas, “the deadly tendency which might lead our continent to the abyss, nationalism, giving up of freedom.”

Mr. Macron did not mention anyone by name — not Viktor Orban of Hungary, not Jaroslaw Kaczynski of Poland, not the populists who won in Italy’s national election, not the far-right parties that have spread across Europe on hatred of immigrants, xenophobia, disdain for the rule of law, intolerance of dissent and suspiciousness of international cooperation. Nor did he name Donald Trump or Vladimir Putin, though they are clearly an inspiration and model for the European far right.

He did not have to. The struggle between the traditional values of Western liberal democracy and the new forces of authoritarianism, intolerance and nationalism has become a defining challenge of the times. Invoking the title of a well-known German trilogy by Hermann Broch about the deterioration of values in the years before World War I, Mr. Macron said: “I don’t want to belong to a generation of sleepwalkers that has forgotten its own past. I want to belong to a generation that has decided forcefully to defend its democracy.”

Mr. Macron’s crushing defeat of France’s reactionary National Front last May raised hopes that the tide of illiberalism was turning in Europe. But Prime Minister Orban’s easy win in Hungary’s national election on April 8 and the success of antiestablishment parties in Italy a month earlier have signaled otherwise. To the east, Russia’s brazen violation of international norms has only increased despite broad economic sanctions — witness the chemical assault on a double agent in Britain, while to the west, the Trump administration relentlessly pursues its chaotic assault on American values and traditions.

Mr. Macron said political change was inevitable, but it should not mean abandonment of democratic principles.

“Indeed, in these difficult times, European democracy is our best chance,” he said. “The worst possible mistake would be to give up on our model and our identity.”

He added, “We see authoritarians all around us, and the answer is not authoritarian democracy, but the authority of democracy.”

Mr. Macron is not without political weaknesses. He has been called “Jupiter” for his haughty style, and his economic reforms at home are being challenged by a wave of strikes. His proposals for a closer financial convergence in the eurozone have been met with a cool response in Germany. Yet the French president is one of the rare European leaders who unabashedly believe in Europe’s future, especially as Britain prepares to exit the European Union and America’s leadership erodes. Though he has cultivated a strategic rapport with President Trump, providing French forces for the punitive strike on Syria last weekend, for example, Mr. Macron drew a distinction in his speech between Europe and an America that was “rejecting multilateralism, free trade and climate change.”

It may be that the West is going through a temporary backlash against globalization, terrorism, migration, social upheavals and technological change that have swept so rapidly around the world, and that Mr. Macron is exaggerating when he sees a “certain European civil war” in the political turmoil. Yet, in Hungary, Mr. Orban opened his fourth term as prime minister with a national hate campaign against George Soros, the Hungarian-American funder of liberal projects, and with plans for a legislative campaign against nongovernmental groups that help immigrants and refugees. Late last year the European Union formally put Poland on notice that its assault on the judiciary was a serious breach of union rules. And the vulgar soap opera in Washington shows no signs of ending.

Mr. Macron said his goal was to open a critical public debate on what Europe is about. That debate should not be limited to Europe. This month, Madeleine Albright, the former secretary of state, warned that fascism posed a more serious threat now than at any time since the end of World War II, and the danger was “enhanced by the volatile presidency of Donald Trump.” When a 40-year-old French president and an 80-year-old former American secretary of state sound the alarm, one hopes that the sleepwalkers will awaken.

The road ahead for Liberia

George Manneh Weah

MONROVIA, LIBERIA I grew up in the Gibraltar area of Clara Town, a slum in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia. Sport was my passport out of poverty. A combination of luck and hard work enabled me to make my improbable journey from the dusty football fields of Clara Town to glamorous stadiums in Europe. I played professional football for the biggest clubs in the world and was honored to be the first African named FIFA World Player of the Year.

On Jan. 22, I returned to the Samuel Doe football stadium in Monrovia — a beloved venue where I had played numerous games — to take the oath of office as the president of Liberia. It was the nation’s first peaceful, democratic transfer of power in almost 75 years. I stood in the stadium proud and aware of the great responsibility of leading Team Liberia.

Growing up as a poor child, I intimately saw and experienced the hardships an ordinary Liberian faced. I know the difficulties and horrors our people suffered before and during the crippling conflicts that tore Liberia apart from 1989 to 2003. In the mid- and late ’90s, I often returned home as a goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Children’s Fund to help draw attention to my people’s plight and to work to disarm child soldiers.

I moved back to Liberia in 2003. The arrival of peacekeepers the same year, first from our West African neighbors and then from the United Nations, helped end 14 years of successive, brutal civil wars, which killed around 250,000 people and displaced around two million.

Liberia’s people were traumatized, the public sector virtually decimated and the infrastructure reduced to rubble. Through the United Nations, the world offered a hand and we took it.

On March 30, the U.N. Mission in Liberia successfully completed its mandate, having helped disarm and rehabilitate combatants and helped



George Manneh Weah taking the oath of office as president of Liberia in January.

families to return home. Liberia’s police and army, which once preyed on the population, began to be professionalized. Over the years, the U.N. mission helped the Liberian government extend state authority and promote human rights.

Liberia held three successful presidential elections, assumed full responsibility for our own security and overcame the horrors of Ebola. We began to repair the torn social fabric of our country. We began to heal and to build. We are grateful for the remarkable work and bravery of the U.N. mission personnel. We honor and remember the sacrifice of the 202 peacekeepers who lost their lives in Liberia.

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf played an integral role in Liberia’s revival and helped build the foundation on which we stand today. I carry forward the torch from her. I am excited and humbled, ready to get to work.

I must acknowledge the enormous tasks ahead. We need to build a stable and sustainable peace and ensure that our dire socioeconomic situation does not undermine the hard-fought gains of

the past 15 years. Liberia’s economy is broken and the government is broke. According to the World Bank, the gross domestic product per capita was \$455 in 2016. Inflation is at 15 percent and rising, and unemployment is at record highs. The U.N. human development index ranks Liberia 177 out of 189 countries.

The world must not forget my country as it moves from recovery to development.

one can have access to quality education. I am disbursing funds to enable our 12th graders to take the standardized West African Examinations Council examination and attend universities across the region.

The most effective way to improve the lives of the poor and reduce inequality is to ensure that government officials

do not skim public resources. I intend to use legislation and build upon our current code of conduct to limit conflicts of interest involving government employees, enhance transparency over public processes and punish violators.

We are also drafting legislation to make our ministries more effective and efficient in addressing the specific challenges they face. We are decentralizing the government to make it more accessible to the people. We are reforming our land rights regulations to ensure equity for all Liberians. We are investing in infrastructure and roads to improve connectivity across the country and promoting agriculture to ensure self-sufficiency and nutrition for all.

To sustain a peaceful and stable Liberia, we are examining ways to strengthen national integration by enacting laws promoting national unification. We are working on reforming our judicial system to ensure the basic rights of all citizens are protected.

It will require sustained engagement from both my government and the citizens of the country. We do need the assistance of our friends outside Liberia. Building a stable, prosperous, democratic Liberia in the heart of West Africa is firmly in the interests of all nations, including the United States.

To ensure economic growth and make Liberia attractive for investment, I have committed to removing unnecessary regulations and bureaucratic hurdles. We need urgent reforms in a number of areas, including removal of restrictions on dual citizenship and regulations that limit land ownership to Liberian citizens. Liberia is open for business and my government will take every measure to support economic growth and bring prosperity to all our people.

But we do need continued support from our international partners. Don’t forget Liberia as we move from recovery to development. We are not asking for charity; we are looking for a chance. We need partners to walk with us on the road to progress and development.

GEORGE MANNEH WEAH is the president of Liberia.

Don’t fear classical music

Miles Hoffman

I was talking about music recently with a friend who makes his living cloning genes, manipulating molecules and investigating the pathways of the human immune system. This is a person whose intellectual molecules are clearly very well arranged. But he proceeded to tell me that although he loved classical music, when he listened to it he wasn’t able to perceive anything other than his own emotional reactions.

Could it be true? Well, he thought it was. But he was wrong.

What my friend was expressing was merely a symptom of a common affliction, one that crosses all intellectual, social and economic classes: the Classical Music Insecurity Complex. Immediate therapy was indicated.

There’s no question, I pointed out, that he perceives more than just his own reactions. Lots more. In every

piece he listens to he perceives changes, both great and small, in tempo, volume, pitch and instrumentation. He perceives melodies, harmonies and rhythms, and their patterns. He perceives, in short, virtually all the musical ingredients that composers manipulate to stimulate emotional effects, which is precisely why he’s emotionally affected.

His “problem” isn’t perception — it’s description. And what he doesn’t know is the jargon, the technical terms for the ingredients and manipulations.

And why should he? He’s a scientist, not a musician. And frankly, it’s not even essential that he be aware of the specific musical and technical means by which his reactions are being stimulated.

Years ago I was rehearsing a piece for flute, viola and piano by the composer Seymour Barab. Mr. Barab was attending the rehearsal, and the pianist asked him at one point if it was important to “bring out,” or highlight, a certain clever rhythmic pattern. Mr. Barab’s instant reaction was to shout: “No! It’s none of your business!”

Mr. Barab’s position, expressed in his inimitable fashion, was that it was not the performer’s job to try to teach the audience, nor was it the audience’s responsibility to try to pass some sort of test in rhythm recognition.

If he, the composer, had done his job well, and had organized and manipulated his musical materials in a compelling fashion, the music would “work,” and the audience would enjoy it.

It’s sad but true that many people denigrate and distrust their own reactions to classical music out of fear that they don’t “know enough,” and that



JONATHAN CALUGI

other, more sophisticated folks know more. When people leave the movie theater they rarely hesitate to give their opinion of the movie, and it never occurs to them that they don’t have a right to that opinion. And yet after most classical music concerts you can swing your program around from any spot in the lobby and hit a dozen perfectly capable and intelligent people issuing apologetic disclaimers: “Boy, I really loved that — but I’m no expert” or “It sounded pretty awful to me, but I don’t really know anything, so I guess I just didn’t get it.”

At least those people showed up. Many others are too intimidated to attend classical concerts at all.

It’s human nature to want to know more, and to try to understand and explain our experiences and reactions. And there’s no denying that the more we know about music, as with cooking or gardening or football, the more levels of enjoyment are available to us, and the better we’re able to recognize great achievement. Do we have to

know the Latin names of flowers — or the English names, for that matter — to be moved by the beauty of a garden? No. Do we have to know about blocking schemes and “defensive packages” to be excited when our team scores a touchdown? No. But we find these things . . . interesting. They add to our appreciation.

I’m all for knowledge — I’ve spent most of my career as a musician and commentator trying to help people learn more about music, and to remove any obstacles to the enjoyment of it. The Classical Music Insecurity Complex is a barrier of discomfort. Experience, exposure and familiarity play critical roles in helping to lower that barrier, and a little learning, along with basic explanations of technical (and foreign) terms and concepts, can be of great value.

What is not of value, and is in fact completely off-putting and counterproductive, is the kind of introductory concert talk, review or program note that uses technical terms rather than

plain English to explain other technical terms and to “describe” musical works. Program notes that use phrases like “the work features a truncated development with chromatic modulations to distant keys and modally inflected motivic cells,” for example, do not exactly help to break down barriers and put people at ease.

Perhaps it’s overly optimistic of me, but I still cling to the hope that, with the right approaches and experiences, longtime sufferers will feel sufficiently encouraged to go ahead and jettison the C.M.I. Complex outright. I’d like the legions of actual and potential classical music lovers to believe that, like my friend the scientist, they hear more than they can name, and that the very point of listening to great music is to be moved, not to put names on what moves you.

MILES HOFFMAN is the violist of the American Chamber Players and the classical music commentator for NPR’s “Morning Edition.”



Fixing the 'housewife' visa

Shikha Dalmia

I came to America from India at age 23. That was in 1985, a golden age of immigration to this country. It didn't feel like it, though, because it still took my husband, a medical physicist, and me a good seven years to trade up from our student visas for an H-1B for him and an H-4 spouse visa for me. Eventually we got the ultimate prize: green cards — which, to our amusement, weren't even green back then.

In the decades since, wait times for green cards for Indian techies have become impossibly long, with particularly unfortunate consequences for H-4 spouses who want to work. And President Trump is now poised to undo a 2015 Obama-era regulation that took a small stab at addressing their plight.

An H-1B, which is primarily reserved for high-tech talent, allowed my now ex-husband to accept a job at a Detroit cancer hospital. But my H-4 barred me from working, even though I already had several years of journalism experience along with a degree in biology and chemistry. I had to wait another two years for my green card before I got the legal right to earn a living.

Putting my career on hold until I was 30 was frustrating, especially since we had a baby to support. But Indian spouses on H-4s — well over 90 percent of them women — who came after me envy my experience.

When I arrived, the wait times for green cards for Indian H-1Bs averaged about four years. But over the next several decades, the wait steadily grew. By 2005, it was more like 10 to 15 years. Today, according to the National Foundation for American Policy, a nonpartisan research outfit, Indian H-1Bs can expect to stand in the green card queue for several decades.

This happened because in 1990, Congress imposed an annual limit on employment-based green cards that was far too low for America's growing economy. This was on top of the overall green card cap and country-specific quotas. With the I.T. revolution taking off and Silicon Valley aggressively recruiting Indians on H-1Bs, the timing of this third blow couldn't have been

more inopportune.

The upshot is that Indians who've applied for their H-1B in the past six years may end up retiring before seeing their green cards. And their spouses may have to abandon hope of ever working in America unless they can get their own H-1B.

That was never easy. These visas have always been in short supply. Over the past six years, they've been running out within the first week after the government starts accepting applications. It also means finding an employer in the same town as your husband that is willing to hire and sponsor you despite the cost and the uncertainty involved. That's why Indian women plaintively refer to the H-4 as an "involuntary housewife visa."

Late in his term, after it became clear that comprehensive immigration

Why is President Trump so determined to prevent spouses of H-1B visa holders from living the American dream?

reform wasn't going anywhere, President Barack Obama issued a regulation giving 100,000 H-4 spouses work authorization so long as their husbands had scaled all the bureaucratic hurdles — like obtaining labor certification — and filed a completed green card application, which still takes a year.

This was a huge boon to Indian spouses, who eagerly applied, landing about 93 percent of the authorizations.

But an anti-immigration outfit called Save Jobs USA sued the Obama administration, claiming that work authorization for H-1B spouses meant that the United States would end up "importing" two foreign workers for every one. Instead of defending the regulation in court, the Trump administration has decided, come June, to scrap it to advance its "Buy American, Hire American" agenda. Although there is nothing official yet, once the regulatory process is completed, the government may stop handing out new authorizations or renewing existing ones when they expire.

Restrictionists assume a zero-sum math for workers: A job gain for a foreigner is a job loss for an American. By that logic every college graduate

who enters the job market would be cause for mourning. But that's backward, given that skilled individuals create, not take away, jobs, and no economy succeeds by shackling qualified people.

These women are qualified because educated people tend to marry other educated people. The majority of H-4 women have college degrees, according to a 2014 survey by the blogger Rashi Bhatnagar, herself an H-4 visa holder. They also happen to be between the ages of 26 and 35 — peak productive years. It would be far better for the economy to accommodate their ambitions and turn them into productive, taxpaying individuals.

Not letting them do so is a personal tragedy for them. But it also turns the restrictionist worry that immigrants today prefer to live transnational lives rather than assimilate into a self-fulfilling prophecy. A job is not just income. It is also an assimilation program because it offers an entry into a new culture and a chance to form new friendships.

Because getting a green card took only a few years when I came, I, like many other spouses in my situation, used that time to obtain a graduate degree and build skills in preparation for entering the job market. However, what would be the point of investing that kind of time and effort in an advanced degree if there is so little certainty that it would actually offer a return one day? Many H-4 wives I know end up staying at home, Skyping with friends and family back home to escape the boredom and isolation of being confined to a "gilded cage" — their description of their life in America.

I remember feeling an exhilarating world of opportunities open up before me when I got my green card. It is sad — and senseless — that President Trump is so determined to prevent others like me from experiencing the full promise of America and participating fully in American life.

SHIKHA DALMIA, a native of India, had to overcome the H-4 hurdle to obtain a green card and work authorization before finally becoming a naturalized United States citizen in 2002. She is a senior writer at Reason magazine and a columnist at The Week.

Europe and the Iran pact

BACON, FROM PAGE 1

To that end, we have written a letter being published Thursday and Friday by leading newspapers in France, Germany and Britain calling on the members of Congress to bring their full backing to the nuclear deal and prevent their government from pulling out of this major diplomatic achievement. The letter has been signed by nearly 500 members of France's National Assembly, Germany's Bundestag and Britain's House of Commons.

The signatories as of Wednesday night — 362 French, 70 British and 52 German — represent the entire political spectrum of our home countries.

They may disagree on internal policies and on other international issues, but they agree on one thing: The compact is a major achievement of our collective security, in the Middle East and beyond. The letter and a list of signatories is available online at europeanmpsforsjcpoa.com.

As elected representatives, we have taken this extraordinary step of rallying hundreds of our fellow members of parliament across our political aisles, and of reaching out to our American colleagues, because we firmly believe that the diplomatic strength of a strong and unified trans-Atlantic partnership is needed today more than ever. As Europeans, we are undertaking this cross-European, cross-parliamentary initiative to show the international community that Europe's democracies will rise in solidarity on critical international problems.

We are pleading to the men and women of Congress to play their part in keeping the nuclear deal alive. We know that the citizens we represent are the people who make the formulas of our shared values come alive every day.

With equal fervor on both sides of the Atlantic, they strive for liberty and believe in human rights and the rule of law. These are principles upon which we can build a more just world order.

The need for such a world order is obvious, and not just in relation to confrontation with Iran. We need all of our forces and credibility to help broker an understanding between Iran and Saudi Arabia as the main antagonists in the Middle East today.

We need those strengths also to offer a credible alternative to radical ideologies that thrive on discord, instability, repression and corruption in many parts of the world.

And we need them to strengthen the principles of democracy, the same principles that so many Americans gave their lives for in helping to liberate Europe from fascism in the not so distant past.

DELPHINE O., of the En Marche party, leads the National Assembly's France-Iran Friendship Group. **OMID NOURIPOUR**, of the Green Party, is a leading member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Germany's Bundestag. **RICHARD BACON**, a Conservative, heads the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Iran in Britain's House of Commons.

Forests can save globe

LOVEJOY, FROM PAGE 9

But for funds to flow, climate policies need to adapt. They now provide little incentive to conserve large, often remote forest areas. That's because the forests are beyond the immediate frontier of expanding agriculture and therefore not recognized by climate protection regimes as targets for campaigns to avoid deforestation. It's difficult to project the baselines of intact forest loss and degradation far into the future, and those predictions are needed to calculate the climate benefits of protecting them. But the United Nations Green Climate Fund and forested countries and donors should embrace that challenge and fill the funding gap.

It takes four days and a balsa wood raft to get to that beach in the Bolivian Amazon, which is a big part of the reason its big trees are still standing. Similarly epic journeys will get you to forest gems around the world, where, if you listen, you'll understand a little more about where we came from and where we need to go from here.

THOMAS E. LOVEJOY is a professor of environmental science and policy at George Mason University. **JOHN REID** is the founder and former president of Conservation Strategy Fund and advises Nia Tero and the Field Museum in Chicago on economic and policy dimensions of protecting natural ecosystems and indigenous territories.

Menopause and Alzheimer's

Lisa Mosconi

In the next three minutes, three people will develop Alzheimer's disease. Two of them will be women.

There are 5.7 million Alzheimer's patients in the United States. By 2050, there will probably be as many as 14 million, and twice as many women as men will have the disease.

And yet research into "women's health" remains largely focused on reproductive fitness and breast cancer. We need to be paying much more attention to the most important aspect of any woman's future: her ability to think, to recall, to imagine — her brain.

When I first started in the field, Alzheimer's was thought of as the inevitable consequence of bad genes, aging or both. Today we understand that Alzheimer's has compound causes, such as age, genetics, high blood pressure and aspects of lifestyle, including diet and exercise. There is also scientific consensus that Alzheimer's is not always a disease of old age but can start in the brain when people are in their 40s and 50s.

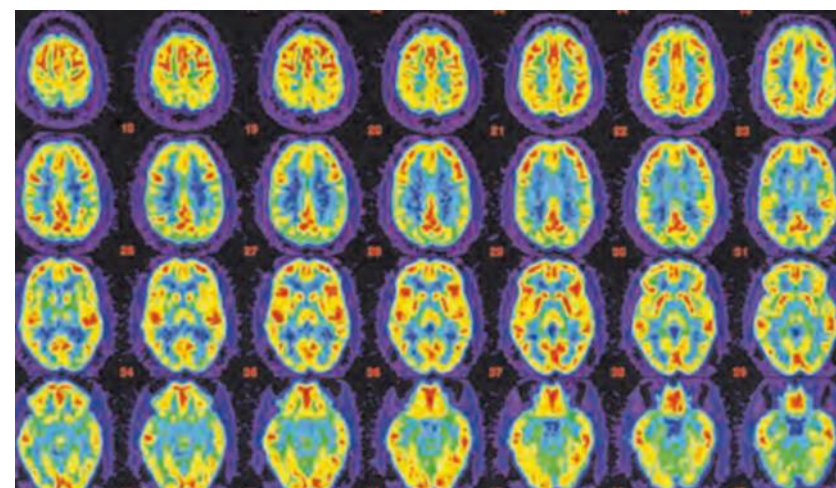
What we are only beginning to understand is why women are more susceptible. What factors differentiate women from men, specifically as we reach middle age?

The first and most obvious thing is fertility. Women are diverse, but we all experience the decline in fertility and the beginning of menopause.

It turns out that menopause affects far more than our childbearing potential. Symptoms like night sweats, hot flashes and depression originate not in the ovaries but largely in the brain. These symptoms are all caused by an ebb in estrogen.

The latest research, including my own work, indicates that estrogen serves to protect the female brain from aging. It stimulates neural activity and may help prevent the build up of plaques that are connected to the onset of Alzheimer's disease. When estrogen levels decline, the female brain becomes much more vulnerable.

To determine this, my colleagues and I used a brain imaging technique called PET on a group of healthy middle-aged women. This allowed us to



JONATHAN SELIG/THE IMAGE BANK, VIA GETTY IMAGES

PET scans of an Alzheimer's sufferer's brain.

measure neural activity and the presence of Alzheimer's plaques. The tests revealed that the women who were postmenopausal had less brain activity and more Alzheimer's plaques than premenopausal women.

More surprising, this was also the case for perimenopausal women — those who were just starting to experience symptoms of menopause. And both groups' brains showed even more

By 2050, twice as many women as men will have the disease. But we may be able to change that.

drastic differences when compared with those of healthy men of the same age.

The good news is that as women mature into their 40s and 50s, there seems to be a window of opportunity when it is possible to detect early signs of higher Alzheimer's risk — by doing a brain-

imaging test, as we did — and to take action to reduce that risk.

There is increasing evidence that hormone replacement therapies — mainly, giving women supplemental estrogen — can help to alleviate symptoms if given before menopause. We need much more research to test the efficacy and safety of hormone therapy, which has been tied to an increased risk of heart disease, blood clots and breast cancer in some cases.

Perhaps in the next decade it will

become the norm for middle-aged women to receive preventive testing and treatment for Alzheimer's disease, just as they get mammograms today. In the meantime, research shows that diet can alleviate and mitigate the effects of menopause in women which could minimize the risk of Alzheimer's.

Many foods naturally boost estrogen production, including soy, flax seeds, chickpeas, garlic and fruit like apricots. Women in particular also need antioxidant nutrients like vitamin C and vitamin E, found in berries, citrus fruits, almonds, raw cacao, Brazil nuts and many leafy green vegetables.

These are first steps, for women and for doctors. But the more we learn about what kicks off and accelerates dementia, the clearer it becomes that we need to take better care of women's brains. A comprehensive evaluation of women's health demands thorough investigations of the aging brain, the function of estrogen in protecting it and strategies to prevent Alzheimer's in women specifically.

No one needs to be reminded that many things make a woman unique. We are working to help make sure that the risk of Alzheimer's is not one of them.

LISA MOSCONI is the associate director of the Alzheimer's Prevention Clinic at Weill Cornell Medical College and the author of "Brain Food: The Surprising Science of Eating for Cognitive Power."

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WELL

Breakthrough in a common lung cancer

Immune therapy is advised as an immediate standard to let patients live longer

BY DENISE GRADY

The odds of survival can greatly improve for people with the most common type of lung cancer if, along with the usual chemotherapy, they are also given a drug that activates the immune system, a major study has shown.

The findings should change medical practice immediately, cancer experts say: Patients with this type of lung cancer should receive an immune-activating drug, also called immunotherapy, as early as possible after the diagnosis is made.

"What it suggests is that chemotherapy alone is no longer a standard of care," said Dr. Leena Gandhi, a leader of the study and director of the Thoracic Medical Oncology Program at the Perlmutter Cancer Center at New York University Health.

Patients in the study had an advanced stage of nonsquamous non-small-cell

lung cancer. The immune-activating drug was pembrolizumab, or Keytruda, made by Merck, which supported the study. The chemotherapy was a drug called pemetrexed, plus either carboplatin or cisplatin.

Dr. Gandhi said chemotherapy alone had only a "modest benefit," and could add only a few months of life, with most patients surviving about a year or less. The combination treatment is a significant improvement, she said. It is already approved as a first-line treatment for this disease.

She presented the results on Monday in Chicago at a meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research, and they were also published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

The findings represent another step forward for immunotherapy, which has been making steady gains against a number of different cancers. In addition to pembrolizumab, three other immunotherapy drugs, known as checkpoint inhibitors, have been approved. The drugs unleash the patient's own immune system to kill cancer. They cost more than \$100,000 a year, can have serious side effects and do not help everyone. But

when they work, the responses can be long-lasting.

"I've been treating lung cancer for 25 years now, and I've never seen such a big paradigm shift as we're seeing with immunotherapy," said Dr. Roy Herbst, chief of medical oncology at the Yale Cancer Center. He was not involved in the pembrolizumab study.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death globally, causing 1.7 million deaths a year. In the United States, it is expected to kill more than 154,000 people in 2018. "If you want to see long-term survival, you've got to give immunotherapy as soon as possible," Dr. Herbst said. "Chemotherapy has limitations. Immunotherapy has the ability to cure. I lead the Yale lung team. We have patients on these immunotherapies alive more than eight years."

Other studies in lung cancer have involved another checkpoint inhibitor, nivolumab, or Opdivo (made by Bristol-Myers Squibb), which works in a similar way to pembrolizumab.

The data are not conclusive, but Dr. Herbst said, "In lung cancer, my suspicion is these drugs are the same, like Coke vs. Pepsi."

Most patients stay on the drugs for two years, he said. One Yale patient who has survived for eight years took the drug for two years and has remained well ever since. Another had to stop because of side effects after only two or three months, but is still well two years later.

Dr. Herbst offered several theories about why chemotherapy and immuno-

"If you want to see long-term survival, you've got to give immunotherapy as soon as possible. Chemotherapy has limitations."

therapy could work well together. He said that tumor cells were like bags of proteins that the immune system could use as targets to find and attack cancer. By killing some tumor cells, chemotherapy could pop open the bags and help the immune cells—unleashed by the checkpoint drugs—to identify their prey. It is also possible, he said, that chemotherapy may kill some immune cells

that interfere with the cancer-killing action of other parts of the immune system.

Dr. Gandhi's study included 616 patients with advanced lung cancer, from medical centers in 16 countries.

Their tumors lacked certain mutations that would have made them eligible for other, so-called targeted treatments. They were picked at random to receive either chemotherapy plus immunotherapy, or chemotherapy plus a placebo, with two-thirds receiving the combination that included immunotherapy.

After a median follow-up of 10.5 months, those in the immunotherapy group were half as likely to die. The median overall survival was 11.3 months in those who did not receive immunotherapy, whereas survival in the immunotherapy group was longer and the median has not yet been reached.

But patients in the immunotherapy group had more kidney problems, more immune-related adverse events and were more likely to stop treatment because of side effects.

The estimated survival at 12 months was 69.2 percent in the group that re-

ceived immunotherapy, and 49.4 percent in those who did not.

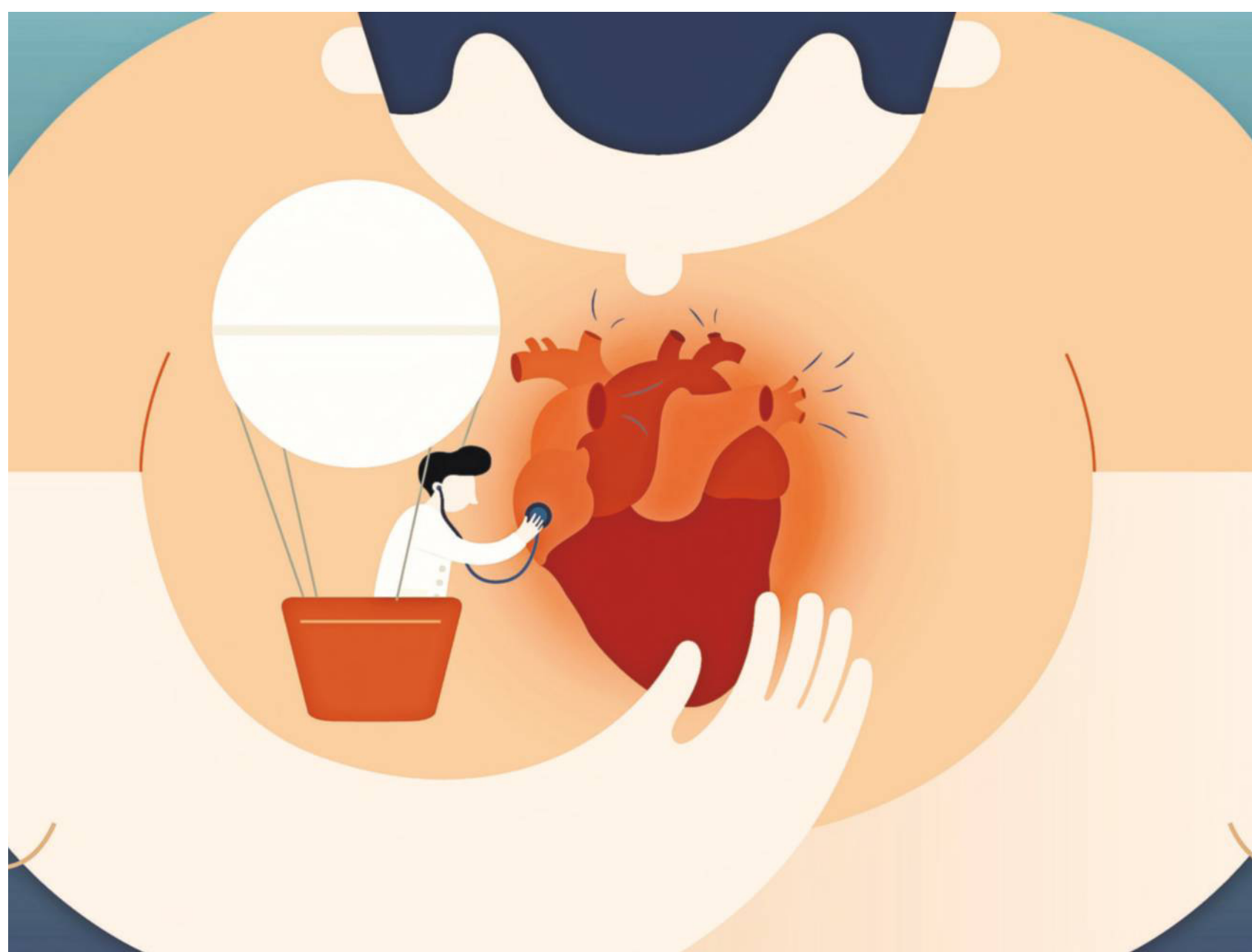
"I think we were all surprised at the magnitude of benefit and how clear the difference was at an early analysis, and that we could tell there was an overall survival difference," Dr. Gandhi said, adding that there was "a lot of excitement" at the conference about her study and several others involving immunotherapy.

"It represents a sea change in the way we think about treating lung cancer," she said. "All of it is better than what we've been using for years. Going forward, it will only get better."

Patients were tested for a biomarker used to predict whether pembrolizumab is likely to help them.

In the study, patients with high levels of the marker fared somewhat better with immunotherapy than those with low levels—but even those with low levels were helped.

"The data are impressive," Dr. Herbst said. "We're making progress, but still, only benefiting 30 to 40 percent of patients. There's a lot more room to do better. We have to keep looking for new things and new approaches."



CHIARA ZARMATI

Discussing statin therapy

Personal Health

JANE E. BRODY

Are you among the millions with cholesterol levels that current American guidelines suggest should be lowered by taking a statin for the sake of your cardiovascular well-being? Have you and your doctor discussed the pros and cons of statin therapy and whether it is appropriate for your circumstances?

If not, now is the time to do so. Too often, patients are given a prescription with little or no discussion of what the drug can mean for their health, and that affects their willingness to take it or stay on it.

Dr. Seth Martin, a preventive cardiologist at Johns Hopkins Hospital, strongly recommends that taking a statin be a fact-based, collaborative and personalized decision between doctor and patient, following one or more discussions of the individual's medical and personal concerns.

Maybe you've already been prescribed a statin and are among the 45 percent of such patients who never took the medication or who abandoned it within six months, perhaps because you've heard scary stories about possible side effects.

If so, I'm not surprised. Bad news about drugs travels fast, and reports of side effects are often exaggerated and rarely presented in a way that is meaningful to those who might be affected. (The same is true for a drug's benefits, which are often described with statistics that mean little to the average person.)

Misinformation, or misinterpretation of factual information, can result in what doctors call the "nocebo" effect—the experience of an anticipated side effect, even when the patient is given a dummy pill.

A personal example: After being on a statin for nearly two decades to lower a genetically influenced high cholesterol level, I recently decided to take a drug holiday after reading about how the medication can affect muscle metabolism and sometimes cause muscle pain and damage.

Was the statin, I wondered, and not my age, the reason I was finding it harder to cycle, walk and swim? Could this otherwise valuable medication contribute to my back pain?

"A person's expectation of the effects of statins can result in the experience of symptoms and relating those symptoms to the drug," Dr. Martin explained. Thus, I may feel better without the statin even if the drug is not responsible for my symptoms. Regardless of the outcome, I expect to return to the statin lest I succumb to a "premature" heart attack, as my father and grandfather did.

Doctors and patients need to talk about the need for statins and possible side effects.

As an international team of researchers pointed out in *The Lancet* in 2016, "exaggerated claims about side-effect rates with statin therapy may be responsible for its underuse among individuals at increased risk of cardiovascular events. For, whereas the rare cases of myopathy and any muscle-related symptoms that are attributed to statin therapy generally resolve rapidly when treatment is stopped, the heart attacks or strokes that may occur if statin therapy is stopped unnecessarily can be devastating."

Unlike medications prescribed to treat a symptom or illness, statins are often given to healthy people to prevent a potentially devastating health problem, and the drug must be taken indefinitely to do the most good.

Nearly half of Americans with cholesterol levels that put them at high risk

of a heart attack or stroke are not taking medication to reduce that risk, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Under current guidelines, among people 60 and older, 87 percent of men and 54 percent of women not already taking a statin would be considered eligible for treatment.

There is no question that statins can protect the health of people who have already had a heart attack or stroke (or even angina) and thus face a significant risk of a recurrence that could prove fatal.

But many people—especially those who are uncomfortable about taking drugs for any reason—resist taking a daily statin if they have no history or symptoms of cardiovascular disease, only a risk of developing them, especially since it has not yet been proved that the drugs help such people live longer.

Furthermore, people correctly regard "risk" as a possibility, not a probability, and vary in the degree of risk they are willing to tolerate.

One chance in 100 may be considered acceptable by one person, while 1,000 as too risky.

Doctors define cardiovascular risk as a percentage chance of a heart attack or stroke occurring within the next 10 years based on the presence of well-established risk factors: high cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, age, gender and race (and, in some cases, family history). You can determine your own risk using the calculator developed by the American College of Cardiology and American Heart Association at cvriskcalculator.com.

If your calculated risk is 7.5 percent or higher, your doctor is likely to suggest you consider taking a statin, although a relatively high cholesterol level may not result in such a recommendation if you have no other heart risk factors.

The risk score is meant "to start a conversation, not to write a prescription," according to Dr. Don Lloyd-Jones, professor of preventive medicine at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and a spokesman for the heart association.

Let's say your risk is 19 percent. That means among 100 people with similar risk factors, 19 are likely to have a heart attack or stroke within the next decade. Is that a risk you're willing to take? Or would you rather reduce your risk by a third by taking a statin?

Only you can make that determination, and it should be based on a full understanding of the known benefits and risks of statins, not something you may have heard from a friend or read online.

The current labeling on statin prescriptions doesn't help matters. In 2012, the United States Food and Drug Administration ruled that the warnings should include several reversible side effects: confusion and memory loss, liver problems, increases in blood sugar and muscle weakness, as well as interactions with certain other medications. But the label doesn't state how rarely such problems occur, and reading the list of possibilities could scare off some people, especially those already timid about taking a lifelong drug.

The longer someone is on statin therapy, the greater the reduction in the risk of a cardiovascular event. The drug works primarily by lowering blood levels of harmful LDL cholesterol that can otherwise collect inside arteries that feed the heart and brain. It also helps to stabilize existing plaque, lowering the chances that a chunk will break loose and trigger a heart attack or stroke.

There are also several different statins available that vary in potency and side effects, and all leading brands are now available as inexpensive generics.

Why exercise alone may not burn pounds

Fitness

GRETCHEN REYNOLDS

If you give a mouse a running wheel, it will run.

But it may not burn many additional calories, because it will also start to move differently when it is not on the wheel, according to an interesting new study of the behaviors and metabolisms of exercising mice.

The study, published in *Diabetes*, involved animals, but it could have cautionary implications for people who start exercising in the hope of losing weight.

In recent years, study after study examining exercise and weight loss among people and animals has concluded that by itself, exercise is not an effective way to drop pounds.

In most of these experiments, the participants lost far less weight than would have been expected, mathematically, given how many additional calories they were burning with their workouts.

Scientists involved in this research have suspected and sometimes shown that exercisers, whatever their species, tend to become hungrier and consume more calories after physical activity. They also may grow more sedentary outside of exercise sessions.

Together or separately, these changes could compensate for the extra energy used during exercise, meaning that, over all, energy expenditure doesn't change and a person's or rodent's weight remains stubbornly the same.

Proving that possibility has been daunting, though, in part because it is difficult to quantify every physical movement someone or something makes and how their movements do or do not change after exercise.

Mice, for instance, skitter, dart, freeze, groom, eat, roam, defecate and otherwise flit about in frequent fits and starts.

But recently, animal researchers hit upon the idea of using infrared light beams to track how animals move at any given moment in their cages. Sophisticated software then can use that information to map daily patterns of physical activity, showing, second-by-second, when, where and for how long an animal roams, sits, runs or otherwise spends its time.

Intrigued, scientists at Vanderbilt University and other institutions thought that this technology would be ideal for tracking mice before and after they started exercising, especially if the technology were used in specialized metabolic-chamber cages that could quantify how much energy an inhabitant was expending throughout the day.

So the scientists fitted out cages,

added locked running wheels and let young, healthy, normal weight, male mice loose in them to roam and explore for four days, providing the researchers with baseline data about each mouse's metabolism and natural peripatetic-ness.

The wheels then were unlocked and for nine days, the mice could run at will, while also eating and moving around off the wheels as much as they chose.

The mice, which seem to enjoy running, hopped readily on the wheels and ran, off and on, for hours.

They showed a subsequent spike in their daily energy expenditure, according to the metabolic measures, which makes sense, since they had added exercise to their lives.

But they did not change their eating habits. Although they were burning more calories, they did not gorge on more chow.

They did, however, alter the way they moved. Almost immediately after

they started using the wheels, they stopped roaming around their cages as they had before the wheels were unlocked.

In particular, they stopped engaging in the kind of lengthy meanders that had been common before

they began to run. Instead, they now usually jogged on their wheels for a few minutes, hopped off, rested or roamed in short spurts, and then climbed back on the wheels, ran, rested, briefly roamed, and repeated.

These changes in the way they spent their time neatly managed to almost counteract the extra calorie costs from running, said Daniel Lark, a research fellow in molecular physiology at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, who led the new study.

In general, the running mice showed a slightly negative energy balance, meaning that they were burning a few more calories over the course of the day than they were taking in by chowing down.

But that caloric deficit would have been about 45 percent greater, the metabolic calculations showed, if they had not also begun moving around their cages less.

What prompted the running mice to roam less is still uncertain.

"But it does not seem to have been fatigue or lack of time," Dr. Lark said.

Wheel running is not arduous for mice, he pointed out, and did not fill their waking hours.

Instead, he said, it is likely that the animals' bodies and brains sensed the beginnings of an energy deficit when the mice began to run and sent out biological signals that somehow advised the animals to slow down, conserve energy, maintain homeostasis and not drop weight.



JACQUELYN MARTIN/ASSOCIATED PRESS

If a study involving mice holds true for humans, it's possible that even a determined pursuit of fitness could be hindered by sedentary periods between workouts.

Sports

Safety check after man lost at sea in race

Sailor went overboard in the Southern Ocean during the Volvo contest

BY CHRIS MUSELER

Libby Greenhalgh was wedged into the navigator's seat below decks on the Sun Hung Kai/Scallywag when the helmsman shouted repeatedly, "Man overboard."

It was before dawn on March 26, and 35-to-45-knot westerly winds had been violently thrashing the competitors in the Volvo Ocean Race for weeks, since they left Auckland, New Zealand, and headed for Itajaí, Brazil, in the seventh leg of the round-the-world event.

The helmsman hit the red man-overboard button at the wheel, which records the boat's GPS location. But in those frantic moments, the button was not depressed by the compulsory four seconds it takes to record the spot.

Greenhalgh instinctively locked the boat's coordinates — 1,400 nautical miles west of Cape Horn in the Southern Ocean — into her navigation software, which shows the boat's track on a digital chart. That was roughly the position where the crew's safety officer, John Fisher, 47, had been knocked over the side of the boat.

Rapidly calculating in her head how Fisher would drift in the frothy, cold waves, Greenhalgh drew a search pattern on her screen. Fisher was miles behind by the time the boat was under control and pounding back upwind into the waves.

Greenhalgh directed the crew, shouting into the intercom. Four and a half hours later, with no sign of Fisher or the inflatable buoy and life ring the crew deployed, she radioed Race Control in Alicante, Spain, that they were suspending their search.

Making sense of the tragedy has been difficult for even these elite, professional sailors. The Volvo crews are drilled relentlessly on recovery of a person overboard, and the latest locator beacons are provided to each sailor. Sailors are also given inflatable harnesses with tethers to clip into the boat.

Still, sailors continue to die while racing at sea. Fisher is the second sailor fa-

tality in an ocean race in the past five months. In November, the same stretch of water claimed the life of Simon Speirs, 60, a crew member in the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race for amateur sailors. In that accident, the clip for Speirs's safety tether broke and he was washed overboard. He was recovered but had died of apparent drowning and was buried at sea.

Although the risk of going overboard will never be eliminated, race officials and crews said, Fisher's loss revealed several safety areas to be addressed, including redundancy in new technologies, to help in preventing people from going overboard and in recovering lost crew.

"I've seen worse conditions," David Witt, the skipper of the Scallywag, said about the weather during Leg 7 in a recent phone interview. "But never so consistently, so relentlessly, for so long."

The 7,600-nautical-mile leg, which started March 18, covered the most dangerous stretch of the race, where rapidly changing depressions spin unimpeded in the Southern Ocean between Antarctica and Cape Horn. Winds this year rarely dropped below 30 knots and often exceeded 40, considered gale force.

Two of the seven teams retired during the punishing leg. Vestas 11th Hour Racing arrived in Itajaí on Monday under a makeshift rig after its mast broke past Cape Horn. The Mapfre team, the overall race leader entering the leg, finished fifth after having to anchor off the coast of Chile to repair a mainsail that had ripped in two, and is now second overall, behind Dongfeng.

The Scallywag sailed into Puerto Montt, Chile, on April 3, and most of the crew flew home to be with their families. But the team plans to start the next leg, to Newport, R.I., on Sunday.

The loss of the sailor was the second in recent Volvo Ocean Race history. The Dutch sailor Hans Horrevoets went overboard in a North Atlantic gale during the 2005-06 edition. He was about to put on his harness when a wave swept him away at night.

"Nothing's guaranteed when you are on the water," Richard Falk, the Royal Yachting Association's director of training and qualifications, said last winter regarding the Clipper fatality. "Our take on training is giving as much knowledge



John Fisher, a safety officer on the Sun Hung Kai/Scallywag in the Volvo Ocean Race, went overboard March 26 and was lost at sea.

and training to make better decisions. What can never be done is completely eliminate the risk."

In the Volvo Ocean Race, crews are given R.Y.A. safety training and inflatable harnesses with single or double tethers. According to the Scallywag team, Fisher had unclipped his tether to move forward from the cockpit when the boat, moving at 20 to 30 knots, surfed down a wave and accidentally jibed, changing the wind's direction relative to the vessel. Fisher was thrown overboard, and crew members believe he was knocked unconscious.

For the first time, every Volvo crew

member received a Yachtmaster certification from the R.Y.A. And Greenhalgh said that training allowed her team to gain control of the boat and return to the area where Fisher went overboard.

Professional ocean sailors have been criticized for being cavalier and not clipping into the boat or not wearing a harness, as can be seen in onboard images and videos.

In January, Witt and the Scallywag crew were targets of this criticism when the youngest crew member, Alex Gough, 24, fell off the boat during Leg 4 in benign conditions during daylight. He was clearing a sheet while hanging over

the side without wearing a harness.

An upset Witt, in a video from onboard after the recovery, said: "You should, one, either be tethered on, or, two, at a minimum, tell the driver what you're doing so he knows. He didn't do either of those."

In a phone interview from Race Control in Alicante, the race director, Phil Lawrence, said: "It's always the responsibility of the skipper and crew to wear the equipment. We have recommendations, but we can't enforce it when they are a thousand miles away."

Greenhalgh, who helped propel Scallywag to a victory in Leg 4, said clipping

John Fisher is the second sailor fatality in an ocean race in the past five months on the same stretch of water.

in all the time was not realistic on almost any offshore boat.

"When you go to move about the boat, you can't tell me there isn't a fraction of a second where you're not clipped in," she said in a phone interview from her home in England last week.

The conditions the night Fisher was lost were some of the worst she had seen, she said.

"The sea state was the size of mountains," Greenhalgh said. "You'd ask yourself, 'Is that an island or a wave?'"

Zooming in on digital charts and satellite phone communications with rescue services was a challenge, she said. But communication failures did not hinder the search for Fisher. Scallywag's Automatic Identification System, or A.I.S., was broken.

This edition of the race is the first to provide personal A.I.S. beacons for the crews. The system is used on commercial and recreational ships to observe boats on navigation screens to avoid collisions. Personal A.I.S. instantaneously puts a person overboard target on the screens of the ships within several miles of the victim.

For Scallywag, this lifesaving new technology went away when, two days out of Auckland, the boat's lone A.I.S. antenna at the top of the 100-foot mast was damaged in the strong winds.

"If we had our A.I.S., we would have found him," Witt said. "I've learned that redundancies in this system is an example of change, like a second antenna."

He added that he believed the race's safety procedures worked well but that "we waste an awful lot of time and money" on safety equipment that is not as useful as a second antenna would be.

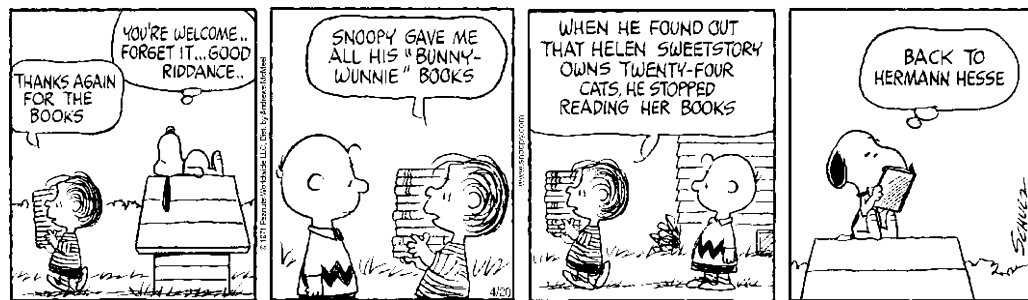
Lawrence, the race director, said the skippers meet at each stopover to review safety procedures and equipment, and investigate accidents. Such a meeting is scheduled for Friday.

"Race procedures can change after each race, even each leg" he said. "We will take into account new techniques, new technologies."

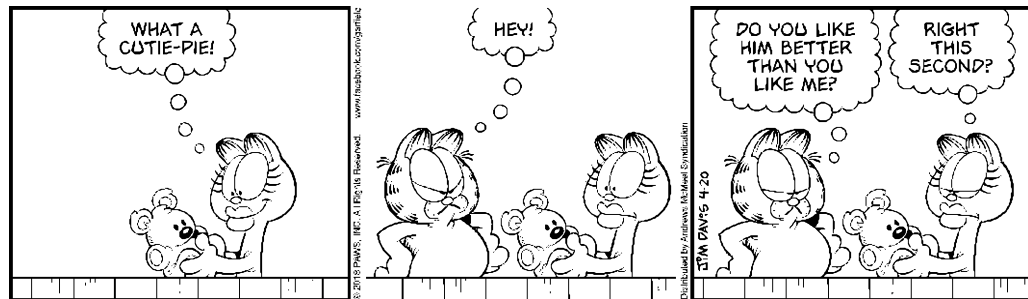
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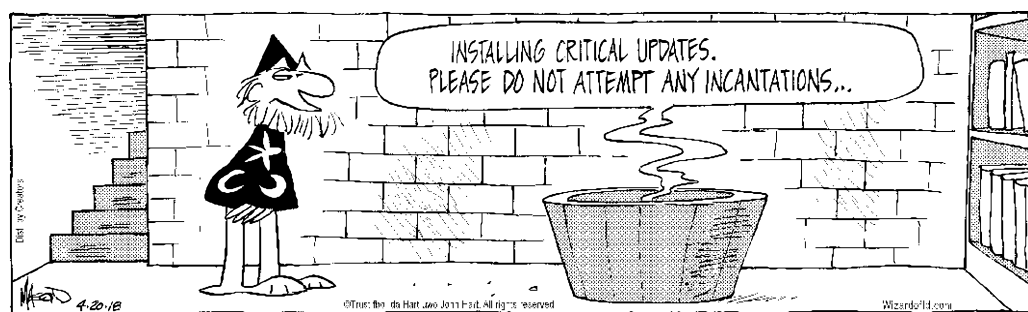
PEANUTS



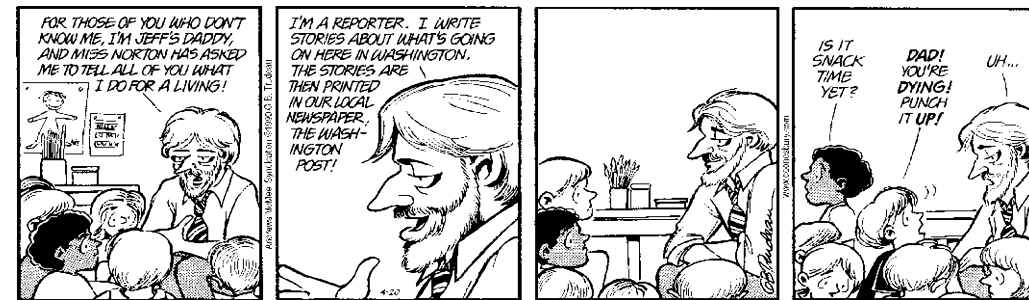
GARFIELD



WIZARD of ID



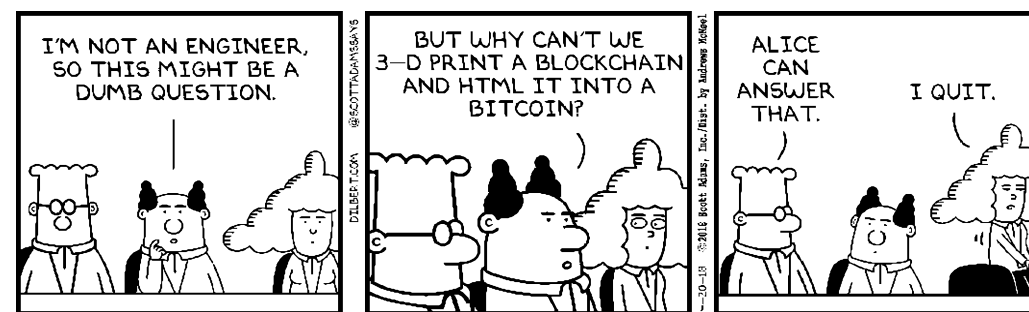
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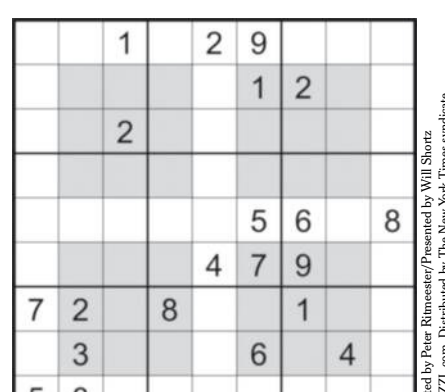
CALVIN AND HOBBES



DILBERT



SUDOKU



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

KENKEN

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

Answers to Previous Puzzles

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

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

CROSSWORD | Edited by Will Shortz

- Across**
1 Cruise seat
10 Fastener with a crosspiece
15 Winner of eight Winter Olympics medals in the 2000s
16 Corresponded with
17 Household item usually stored upside down
18 Rapper who was part of N.W.A.
19 Class struggle?
20 Couple's matching pair, informally
22 ___ end up
24 Pledge drive plea
25 Lady bird
26 Desperately in need of approval, in modern slang
28 Fair-hiring inits.
31 Animal with the longest gestation, at nearly two years
33 "Wouldn't that be nice!"
35 Charming
36 Diner fixture
37 Warm place to chill
38 Supply for sautéing
39 Org. in "Inglorious Basterds"
40 Under the specified word, in a reference book
42 Shipping or handling
43 His number 33 is retired by the Lakers
44 Put in play?
45 Part-time newspaper employee
48 Fossey who studied gorillas
50 Stand too close to

Solution to April 19 Puzzle

POKE	UNIV	CACHE
AREA	NOTE	HERES
BEETHOVEN	AHORA	
SONIA	MISSOURI	
TOATURN	CUTUP	
SIN	GREATE	SIAM
SIN	USH	SMELT
COUNT	THE	SQUARES
ALLEY	SIT	IN
BLUE	ISEEIT	SPP
LITCO	PIONEER	
ARACHNID	RINSO	
LITHO	MARKSPITZ	
ICEES	EVIL	ALEE
FOSS	SEAM	TERN

Down
1 Cousin of a crow
2 Prefix with -genetic
3 Topic of the mnemonic "Eat An Apple As A Nighttime Snack"
4 Paintings such as "Cat and Bird" and "The Goldfish"
5 Teeth
6 Otter's den
7 "How clever!"
8 Words of summation
9 Anti-slippage substances
10 With 26-Down, the place of today's puzzle among all New York Times crosswords
11 Kepler's contemporary and assistant
12 Sup
13 Distance in astronomy: Abbr.
14 Shots are taken off of them
21 Like HBO's "Last Week Tonight With John Oliver"
22 100+ million-selling band that once held a Guinness record for loudest concert
23 Sol's counterpart
24 Sup
26 See 10-Down
27 German city on the Elbe
28 Historical transition point
29 Simple skate park tricks
30 Space for a lace
32 S.F. winter setting
34 Lit class reading
36 Stick (onto)
38 Not neat
41 Confirmed being locked, as a car
43 Birds on New Zealand dollar coins
44 "To the power of" symbol
45 Foretell the future
46 Diagram of possibilities
47 Capacity
48 Like unfinished laundry
49 Some early computers
52 One out of 10
53 A.C.A. part
54 "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia" woman

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
Unscramble those four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.
SATHS
HNIEW
INDOIE
AGNAME
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.
"VICTORY" AND "VICTORY" ARE ---
Yesterday's Answer: GUILT CRACK NEURON HAPPEN
The Jumble creators' favorite bread is ---
PUN-PEPPER

Culture



Interior details from the Margravial Opera House, which is nearly 300 years old and has been a Unesco World Heritage site since 2012. Richard Wagner was entranced by it, but he ended up building a new theater nearby to stage his epics.

An operatic jewel repolished

BAYREUTH, GERMANY

The *other* storied theater in Wagner country reopens after extensive renovation

BY A. J. GOLDMANN
AND GORDON WELTERS

This small city is known throughout the world for its summertime Wagner festival, founded in 1876 by Richard Wagner himself. But long before the “Ring” cycle, Bayreuth had another operatic vision.

Wilhelmine, Margravine of Brandenburg-Bayreuth, was the eldest daughter of King Frederick William I of Prussia and the sister of Frederick the Great. An ambitious polymath who composed music, wrote verse and corresponded with Voltaire, she built Bayreuth’s intimate yet elaborate Margravial Opera House, one of the most outstanding surviving examples of Baroque theater architecture in Europe.

This week, the nearly 300-year-old opera house — a Unesco World Heritage site since 2012 — reopened to the public after a six-year renovation that cost 29.6 million euros, or about \$36.6 million, and that returned its dazzling ornamental details, murals and trompe l’oeil effects to something approximating their original brilliance.

“Centimeter for centimeter, you can see that we got our money’s worth,” said Thomas Rainer of the Bavarian Palace Department, which oversaw the renovation, during a tour of the building last week.

In addition to the painstaking restoration and conservation of the theater’s ornately painted, gilded surfaces — which took some 70,000 hours of work and brought more lightness and brightness back to the interior — the proscenium has also been enlarged to its original dimensions, after having been reduced during an earlier renovation.

The chairs in the roughly 500-seat house have been replaced and can be adjusted according to performance requirements, and the lighting has been judiciously updated with LED bulbs that



The main hall of the Margravial Opera House, which reopened to the public this week after a six-year renovation that cost 29.6 million euros, or about \$36.6 million.

suggest the warm glow of candles. Behind the scenes, the stage machinery has been modernized, the temperature in the auditorium is now regulated, and the building’s ceiling has been freshly insulated.

“Today, Bayreuth is the cultural capital of Bavaria,” Markus Söder, the minister president of Bavaria, said before the gala opening of the theater on April 12, addressing an invited audience that

included Katharina Wagner, the artistic director of the Wagner festival and Richard Wagner’s great-granddaughter, and Christian Thielemann, that festival’s music director since 2015. Also in the crowd was Georg Friedrich, Prince of Prussia, the great-great-grandson of Wilhelm II, the last German emperor.

Built in 1748 from plans by Joseph Saint-Pierre — with the interior designed by Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, the

leading theater architect of his day, and his son Carlo — the Margravial Opera House was inaugurated that September as part of the wedding festivities of Wilhelmine’s only child, Elisabeth Friederike Sophie, to Carl Eugen, Duke of Württemberg.

The building has remained in good condition largely because it was little used after Wilhelmine’s death in 1758. After Wagner’s plans for a festival in

Munich devoted to his works fell through, he was entranced by the Margravial Opera House, but it was much too small for the epics he envisioned. (He ended up building a new theater, on a hill about a mile north.)

The rededication program included a performance of an opera that had been a part of the theater’s 18th-century opening: Johann Adolf Hasse’s “Artaserse,” from 1730, now given in a postmodern

staging by the Theaterakademie August Everding in Munich. The production, by the Hungarian director Balazs Kovalik, drew parallels between Pietro Metastasio’s popular libretto about family intrigue at the ancient Persian court — it was set to music more than 90 times — and the story of Wilhelmine and her family.

In addition to the spirited and vocally resilient student cast, the production featured the distinguished German soprano Anja Silja in the speaking role of the Margravine. As Ms. Silja, still redoubtable at nearly 80, read passages from Wilhelmine’s letters and diaries, the characters around her shifted fluidly from Persian to Prussian.

Over the course of the evening, the production dramatized many of the defining events of the Margravine’s life, including her father’s cruelty; her love for her gay brother (offstage, Frederick the Great’s sexuality is a matter of historical debate); and the building of her opera house, which was represented by a miniature model onstage — suggesting the sort of mise en abyme effects the Bibienas were renowned for in their set designs.

Productions like “Artaserse” will continue to take place at the Margravial Opera House, but it will not become an active full-time theater. Conservation-based limits have been placed on how often the house can be used for performances, and none will be programmed during winter, since the comparatively frail wooden interior cannot withstand extreme temperatures. (Throughout the year, visitors will be able to watch a multimedia presentation and view the auditorium.)

Among the events scheduled over the coming months are the Berlin Philharmonic’s annual European Concert, a Chopin recital by the Russian pianist Daniil Trifonov, and a Czech production of Monteverdi’s “L’Orfeo,” from 1607, which is commonly regarded as the first modern opera.

Indeed, it’s easiest to imagine early operas here, rather than more common 19th-century works that require larger forces and benefit from bigger houses.

“Performing Wagner here,” Mr. Rainer said, in an understatement, “would be difficult.”

When ‘Fair Lady’ debuted the first time

NEW HAVEN, CONN.

The star’s nervousness meant the original opening night almost didn’t occur

BY FRANK RIZZO

The snow was coming down. The turntables didn’t turn. The star refused to perform. The cast was dismissed, thinking that that night’s show would not go on.

Yet “My Fair Lady” opened improbably, triumphantly, to its first paying audience on that Saturday, Feb. 4, 1956, at the Shubert Theater here, making the night the stuff of theater legend.

The out-of-town circuit for shows destined for Broadway — and its pressure cooker atmosphere — has largely been replaced with the more measured pace of readings, workshops and developmental productions at regional theaters and presenting houses. The latest, highly anticipated revival of “My Fair Lady,” which opened on Thursday at Lincoln Center Theater in New York, was developed in-house. And the weather was expected to be more kind.

But in 1956, signs of trouble for the new musical, based on George Bernard Shaw’s play “Pygmalion,” came early. In the days before opening, the production’s turntables, a new kind of cable-driven stage device, failed to work properly.

Tensions, too, were rising a few blocks away, inside the rehearsal hall at the Jewish Community Center. Rex Harrison, the show’s Henry Higgins and marquee star, was looking increasingly nervous, as the 20-year-old Julie Andrews, who was to play Eliza Doolittle, was keeping her cool. In an era before microphones could supersize voices, ac-

tors had only their own vocal cords to project to the back of the theater, and Harrison — a novice to the Broadway musical, though he had sung in London shows decades before — was feeling insecure.

The show’s director, Moss Hart; its librettist and lyricist, Alan Jay Lerner; and its composer, Frederick Loewe, tried to reassure the temperamental actor, but when he faced an orchestra of 32 musicians in the 1,600-seat, two-balconied theater in a final rehearsal for that first public performance, he became overwhelmed.

According to Lerner’s 1978 memoir, when Harrison got to the “A Hymn to Him” number, he stopped the rehearsal.

“Mossie! Mossie!” he cried out to the director in the darkened orchestra, stepping into the footlights. “We’re not going to open tonight — and I may never open.”

Among the backstage witnesses to that piece of theater history: Jerry Adler, now 87, who was an assistant stage manager. “He flung his hat into the orchestra and stormed off to his dressing room, slamming the door behind him,” Mr. Adler recalled recently.

“He was terrified,” added Mr. Adler, now best known as a late-in-life actor (“The Good Wife,” “The Sopranos”). “We were opening that night, and we hadn’t been through the second act yet.”

As Mr. Adler remembers it, Harrison’s British valet emerged from his dressing room to make a formal announcement: “Mr. Harrison would like to see Mr. Hart.”

Mr. Adler went on: “The rest of us were all standing around, like, what do we do now? So we did a little rehearsal of the next scene, which was ‘A Little Bit of Luck’ with Stanley Holloway.”

“Everything was fine and great with that number,” he added. “Finally, Moss came out and told us to release the cast for the day.”



Above, Jerry Adler, who worked on the original production of “My Fair Lady.” At left, Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews.

The creative team scurried in and out of Harrison’s dressing room to urge the star to change his mind.

Finally, an emergency telephone call was placed to Maurice H. Bailey, who ran the Shubert and was playing bridge at the local country club, according to Edith Goodmaster, his executive secretary at the time.

Mr. Bailey rushed to the theater, Ms. Goodmaster, 87, remembered, and told Harrison that if he didn’t perform that night, Mr. Bailey would go onstage and tell the audience of the actor’s refusal.

Harrison’s manager “turned white,” Ms. Goodmaster said, adding: “Mr. Bailey later told me that he would never have gone through with the threat. He was bluffing.”

It’s not clear whether Mr. Bailey’s warning — or the failure-to-perform lawsuits that were then being discussed with Harrison’s lawyer and agent — had an impact, but the actor relented, appeased by the promise that Hart would

advise the theatergoers of the production’s tenuous state before the curtain rose.

“Moss told Rex that we would explain to them that there are technical problems, and that it’s more like a rehearsal,” Mr. Adler said. “He said, ‘They won’t mind at all, because audiences love things like that.’”

Around 6 o’clock, Hart came out of Harrison’s dressing room. “I’ll never forget what he said,” Mr. Adler recalled. “He said, grandly: ‘Gather the players! We’re opening tonight!’”

Word of the performance’s cancellation, which had been broadcast on the radio, was rescinded, and crowds started forming at the theater: Yale students, local fans and trainloads of theater folk from Manhattan.

Meanwhile, Mr. Adler and another assistant stage manager crisscrossed New Haven, rounding up the actors from Kaysey’s (a theater hangout) and the nearby Taft Hotel, where most of the

cast was housed.

“I went across the street to the Loew’s Poli,” said Mr. Adler, referring to the movie theater opposite the Shubert, “and in the middle of the movie, I yelled out: ‘Anyone here from ‘My Fair Lady’ cast? The show is back on tonight!’ We got everyone but one — Rosemary Gaines, who had an attack of appendicitis and was in the hospital.” (She was an ensemble member who played a servant.)

As promised, Hart stepped before the curtain around 8:45 p.m. — openings were later in that era — and addressed the audience with his famous elegant charm.

“It was one of the great opening night speeches,” said Mr. Adler, who watched from the wings. “He finished by quoting Blanche DuBois: ‘We have always depended on the kindness of strangers.’ The audience loved it.”

The orchestra started its overture as lights on the scrim revealed a tableau at

Covent Garden. The first scene began with Harrison’s revealing himself from behind a pillar. He was holding a notebook. “I could see that he was shaking,” Mr. Adler said.

The welcoming applause helped calm him, and he got through his opening number: “Why Can’t the English?”

“That gave him confidence,” Mr. Adler said. “Wouldn’t It Be Lovely,” which showcased Ms. Andrews’s soprano, was welcomed even more warmly. By the time the old music hall pro Holloway performed “With a Little Bit of Luck,” it was clear that the audience was loving the show.

But the night’s high point, according to those who were there, was at the end of “The Rain in Spain,” when Ms. Andrews, Harrison and Robert Cooté — who played Colonel Pickering — joyously collapsed on a sofa after Eliza’s linguistic breakthrough.

“The audience just went berserk, leapt to their feet and refused to stop applauding,” Mr. Adler said.

Harrison and Cooté didn’t know what to do.

“It was little Julie — a veteran of England’s music halls — who took command,” Mr. Adler said. “She grabbed their hands and led them in taking a small bow, acknowledging the audience’s applause so they could go on with the show. It never happened quite like that again.”

At intermission, Ms. Goodmaster remembered, members of the audience were rushing to the box office to snap up remaining tickets for the run.

That’s not to say the show was perfect. With technical delays and an over-stuffed score, “My Fair Lady” ran past midnight. Three numbers were later cut. And the problematic turntables proved problematic throughout.

“They never worked perfectly,” Mr. Adler said. “Not even on opening night in New York.”

Surviving by her wits

Parker Posey, long known for small films, is now in a reboot of 'Lost in Space'

BY DAVE ITZKOFF

It seemed only right that, at a certain point in an unpredictable conversation with Parker Posey, the topic of true evil in the universe would arise.

Ms. Posey was talking about her portrayal of the devious Dr. Smith in the new Netflix reboot of "Lost in Space" — a rare television role on a résumé full of quirky indie-film protagonists, and the first honest-to-badness villain she has played in some time.

"Can she just not help herself?" she wondered aloud in her ethereal voice. "Am I going to save the world? Am I going to destroy it?" She concluded that her Dr. Smith was the "dark Medusa force" of the resuscitated "Lost in Space."

"She can go under and take everyone with her," Ms. Posey said. "But she also has the strength to save herself and others."

More than 25 years into an ever-changing acting career, Ms. Posey, 49, continues to embody the irrepressible energy she brought to films like "Dazed and Confused," "Waiting For Guffman" and "Party Girl."

She unapologetically wears oversize, Elaine Stritch-style eyeglasses and carries Tic Tacs in a dispenser the shape and size of a giant Tic Tac. She shares her New York apartment in the West Village with Gracie, her 14-year-old bichon frisé-poodle-Maltese mix; her friends are fellow artists — actors, comedians, directors — and her tastes are eclectic. Her idea of a good movie, she said, would be something from "the Estonian film festival I saw 10 years ago."

Like her best-known characters, Ms. Posey carries herself with a blithe spirit that conceals a cutting sense of humor. She spent a walk through her neighborhood on the lookout for starlings and blue jays, and when asked for the address of a restaurant she recommended, she answered: "I'm not going to tell you. I'm a practicing psychic, and I want to see if you can read my mind."

For Ms. Posey, playing Dr. Smith is an opportunity to cavort among the stars on a big-budget series and to put her unique stamp on a beloved cult-TV character.

But it's also an acknowledgment of how challenging it has become, even for an actor of Ms. Posey's stature, to make a living solely from small prestigious films in today's industry.

"I was so happy to find a place within the show at this time," she said. "I was absolutely, wholeheartedly relieved. Because I really had not felt that I had a place. I know it doesn't look like that from the outside."

The original "Lost in Space," which ran on CBS from 1965 to 1968, followed the interplanetary adventures of the Robinson family. On that series, Dr. Smith, as played by Jonathan Harris, was a conniving and campy foil who bickered with the family's robot and spouted alliterative insults.

Matt Szazama and Burk Sharpless, the producers who developed the Netflix reboot, which began streaming last Friday, said that they did not want to copy or caricature what Mr. Harris did with the role.

Mr. Szazama and Mr. Sharpless reconceived the character, changing Dr. Smith's gender and making her a low-level criminal on Earth, who steals her own sister's identity — and later a doctor's title and uniform — so she can re-



CLEMENT PASCAL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



NETFLIX



PARTY PRODUCTIONS

Above, Parker Posey in her New York apartment. Far left, with Molly Parker, in the foreground, in "Lost in Space," and left, in the 1995 film "Party Girl."

invent her life in another star system.

Imagining their Dr. Smith as a 21st-century upgrade of the nefarious title character from "The Talented Mr. Ripley," Mr. Sharpless said this approach was possible only because of Ms. Posey's blend of comedic and dramatic talents.

"It wasn't like we had the Dr. Smith you see on screen and then just went out and got Parker," Mr. Sharpless said. "Parker allowed the Dr. Smith that you're seeing to exist. She expanded the genre of the show."

Ms. Posey has been a fan of "Lost in Space" since watching reruns during her childhood in Louisiana, "getting up at 5:30 in the morning to watch the static turn to color when the show came on at 6."

She described her Dr. Smith as "a cha-

"I was so happy to find a place within the show at this time. I was absolutely, wholeheartedly relieved."

meleon" who "survives by her wits," which is not too different from how she has come to see herself.

During the last decade, Ms. Posey said, she has experienced a steep decline in the kinds of acting opportunities that best suit her. "I was like, I need to do something else — I need to express myself in a different way," she said.

"When reality TV showed up, it was like, O.K., that's it — game over, character actors, bye," she said. "There are so many big chunks that are gone from the culture. It wouldn't be that much of a

turn to say, you know what? I'm going to become a landscaper."

Over the years, Ms. Posey has occasionally dabbled in television, on shows like "The Good Wife" and "Search Party." She said she also felt left behind by the explosion of serialized genre shows — like "Game of Thrones" and "The Walking Dead" — that she does not believe she would fit into and does not watch. (Even the Netflix sci-fi anthology "Black Mirror," she said, is off the table: "I hear it's really good, but I don't want to watch it alone," she explained. "I'm scared to.")

Yet each time she'd speak to a friend or peer who was happily thriving in a genre TV role, she remained hopeful that an appropriate role would come her way.

Recalling a conversation she had had

with Denis O'Hare, who was then playing a malevolent vampire on HBO's "True Blood," Ms. Posey said he told her, "It's like Shakespeare — you get to be really epic in your emotions."

Much to her satisfaction, "Lost in Space" has allowed Ms. Posey to perform her own Shakespearean pastiches, like a soliloquy addressed to the decapitated head of a robot. And it has let her share scenes with actors like Selma Blair ("Cruel Intentions," "Legally Blonde"), a guest star who plays Dr. Smith's wealthy, disapproving sister.

Describing a scene that required her to pass out (under the influence of drugs that Ms. Posey's character had surreptitiously slipped her), Ms. Blair said: "I decided I was really going to milk it. And Parker was laughing, like, 'I feel like you're on an episode of "Columbo." You

really love acting, don't you?' Coming from Parker, it wasn't an insult."

Ms. Blair said it was a positive development that Ms. Posey had finally made the crossover to serialized television.

"She should be a big-deal, household name," Ms. Blair said. If TV hadn't snapped Ms. Posey up already, she said it was because past series "might not be the best fit for people who have a real gravity and an eccentricity." But now, Ms. Blair said, "They're making such great shows for people like her, and hopefully one day for people like me."

Even with a busier acting schedule, Ms. Posey is continuing to expand into other forms of media. She is finishing her first book, called "You're on an Airplane: A Self-Mythologizing Memoir," which will be published in July. (The title, she explained, was intended to evoke a conversation she might have with a fellow passenger on a plane "that is a little bit tell-all and a little bit, I'll never see you again.")

She said the thought of sharing herself with an audience this way was intimidating. "No one likes an actress who writes books," she said, half joking and half sincere. "It's true. I've lost friends, I know."

Ms. Posey said she was trying to leave herself open to whatever future possibilities might await her after "Lost in Space." "I will feel the reverberations for a while, I imagine, and then hopefully I'll be able to relax," she said. "And then, Season 2 will begin."

On watch with wary words

BOOK REVIEW

Wade in the Water: Poems

By Tracy K. Smith. 83 pp. Graywolf Press. \$24.

Brown Poems

By Kevin Young. Photographs by Melanie Dunea. Illustrated. 161 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. \$27.

BY DWIGHT GARNER

When Robert Frost was poet laureate of the United States in the late 1950s, he saw himself as a political as well as a literary eminence. He expected his advice to be sought on matters of state.

He later flew to Russia to talk to Khrushchev about the crisis in Berlin. Walls were, as they are now, in the news. We know, of course, how Frost felt about them. He wrote, "Something there is that doesn't love a wall / That wants it down."

The flagrant unlikelihood of anyone in today's White House ingesting a book of poems, much less consulting Tracy K. Smith, our current laureate, on any matter, is apparent. If someone in the West Wing did pick up "Wade in the Water," her new collection, it would very likely burn his or her fingers.

Smith's new book is scorching in both its steady cognizance of America's original racial sins — open wounds that have had insectlike eggs repeatedly laid in them — and apprehension

about history's direction. In a poem titled "An Old Story," she comes out and says it:

*The worst in us having taken over
And broken the rest utterly down.*

In an early poem in "Wade in the Water," her fourth collection, two grizzled angels in leather biker gear show up in a hotel room, reeking of rum and gasoline. There is a sense in this volume that Americans' better angels will need to become rowdier. They will need to know how to handle themselves in a brawl.

"Wade in the Water" is pinned together by a suite of found poems that employ near-verbatim the letters and statements of African-American Civil War veterans and their families.

These historical poems have a homely, unvarnished sort of grace. One is based on a soldier's letter — Smith maintains the original spellings — and includes these words:

*Sir We the members of Co D of the
55th Massachusetts vols
Call the attention of your Excellency to
our case —
for instant look & see
that we never was freed yet
Run Right out of Slavery
In to Soldiery & we
hadent nothing atall &
our wives & mother most all of them
is aperishing all about & we
all are perishing our self*

Another found poem is based on survivors' accounts and journalism about the DuPont company's dumping of hazardous wastes in Appalachia.



Kevin Young.

This volume is not entirely a ticket on a doom-bound train. There are poems about the poet's childhood and her own children. Quotidian delights are sampled. In one, on a long flight, the poet "snuck a wedge of brie, and wept / Through a movie starring Angelina Jolie."

"Wade in the Water" is Smith's first collection since "Life on Mars," which won a Pulitzer Prize in 2012. If this book lacks some of the range and depth of that one, well, she has batted down certain hatches.

The most memorable lines in "Life on Mars" were perhaps these, and they linger, too, over Smith's new book: *The worst thing you can imagine has*



Tracy K. Smith.

*already
Zipped up its coat and is heading back
Up the road to wherever it came from.*

In 2018, you are nobody without an acronym. If Smith, America's PLOTUS, has a new book out, so does PEONY — that is, the poetry editor of The New Yorker. Kevin Young is still relatively new in that influential position; he is also the director of Harlem's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

These poets are friends. They attended Harvard two years apart. Young wrote the introduction to Smith's first book of poems, "The Body's Question" (2003). They are very different writers.

Young is a maximalist, a putter-inner, an evoker of roiling appetites. As a poet of music and food, his only rival is Charles Simic. His love poems are beautiful and sexy and ecstatic.

He mostly wears his politics lightly but regularly sinks hooks into you that cannot easily be removed. His book of selected poems, "Blue Laws" (2016), is as indispensable as any volume this decade. It is a delivery system for many varieties of complicated and uncomplicated joy.

Young produces so much that his audience can become stupefied. He writes books of cultural criticism, edits anthologies and composes so much poetry that he sometimes issues what he calls outtakes and remixes from earlier work.

Keeping up with him is like trying to keep up with Bob Dylan or Prince in their primes. Even the bootlegs have bootlegs. His manic-impressive productivity can lead to soft spots in his work, which is why "Blue Laws," a judicious paring down, is so valuable.

Young's new book, "Brown," is vital and sophisticated without surpassing anything he's done before. It's a solid midcareer statement.

A few of its poems are explicitly political. One is about Trayvon Martin; another is titled "A Brown Atlanta Boy Watches Basketball on West 4th. Meanwhile, Neo-Nazis March on Charlottesville, Virginia."

Young has long been investigating the lives, art and lingering meanings of black cultural figures. He seems to

know everything and everyone. Playlists and bookstore receipts and theater stubs and archive call slips seem to spill from his pockets. Indeed, he once referred to what he called "my magpiety."

In this book, there are excellent poems that name-check or investigate more closely people like Lead Belly, Tracy Chapman, Hank Aaron, the painter Jacob Lawrence and the jazz guitarist Charlie Christian. One poem is titled, after the rapper, "Ode to Ol Dirty Bastard."

Other poems in this book revisit the author's childhood in the Midwest: dodgeball games, RC Cola, Atari, wrestling coaches, health teachers and casual and not-so-casual racism.

Young evokes his "baby dreads, tortoiseshells, tight fade." He cannot help but be a poet of micro-felicities. Watching Arthur Ashe on television, he observes:

*Your hair a microphone cover
to help keep
the static down.*

"We were black then, about to be / African American," he writes about his school days, before adding that he and his friends had

*given the campus cops the slip
whenever they quizzed or frisked us
for studying while black.*

The key to a certain kind of songwriting, it's been said, is to deliver blues in the verse and gospel in the chorus. There's not a lot of gospel in these two books — just a strong, wary sense of watching and waiting.

TRAVEL

Betrayal? Just another day at the races

At the Palio di Siena, bribery and violence are all part of the fun

BY DWIGHT GARNER

When Hunter S. Thompson took the English artist Ralph Steadman to the Kentucky Derby in 1970, he tried to prepare his guest for the chaos into which they were descending. "Just pretend you're visiting a huge outdoor loony bin," Thompson said. He added, because he was rarely out of character, "If the inmates get out of control we'll soak them down with Mace," a pepper spray.

"Huge outdoor loony bin" is not the most precise description of the Palio di Siena, the thunderous, lawless, bareback, medieval-style horse race held twice each summer in front of tens of thousands of spectators on a track of packed clay laid down in the downtown heart of Siena, in Tuscany. But it will do for the moment.

This is a race in which jockeys — they ride for various contrade, or neighborhoods — feel free to bribe one another, out in the open, before the contest begins. Betrayal is common. Guile is prized. There are no rules but one: A rider may not interfere with the reins of another horse.

Jockeys whip their horses, and each other, with crops made from cured distended bull's penises. If a jockey is thwacked off his mount, his riderless horse can still win on its own.

The jockey who finishes second is held in more contempt than the one who comes in last. After the race, the victors celebrate by sucking on pacifiers or drinking cheap wine from baby bottles to symbolize rebirth. Siena comes to resemble a playpen in which many of the toddlers have hairy legs and five o'clock shadows.

A few years ago, when the Contrada Pantera (the Panther) was beaten by its long-established enemy, the Contrada dell'Aquila (the Eagle), a loudspeaker mounted on the Eagle's church tower reportedly boomed out a motto mocking the Panther 24 hours a day for more than a month.

I know these things — they barely scratch the surface of this festival's part-circus, part-theater ambience — because my English friend, Valentina Rice, has been attending the Palio each summer since she was a child. She tells good stories. I know a bit about the race, too, because I've seen Cosima Spender's fascinating and highly recommended 2015 documentary, "Palio."

Last August, I finally witnessed this spectacle, the world's greatest horse race, for myself. Valentina, whose family has long owned a house in the Tuscan hillside nearby, invited me along.

We were standing in the center of Siena's main square, the Piazza del Campo, waiting amid a boiling sea of spectators for the race to begin. We'd been there for hours, having staked out a plum spot on high ground. I'd forgotten my cap. In the strong sunshine, one side of my potato head, I fear, had gone from pink to a gruesome tomato-and-bacon sort of hue.

It's possible to purchase bleacher seats for the Palio, but they are expensive — as much as several hundred dollars — and look a bit rickety. If you have the right connections, or several thousand dollars to spend, you can also view the race from a variety of windows and balconies that ring the piazza and function like opera boxes.

In Valentina's family, the tradition is to be in the center of the piazza, in the scrum.

This was free. I was born in Appalachia. My people like the scrum, too. Still, it's a bit of an endurance test.

One woman fainted. There was a good deal of jostling for position. Men and women who'd had hard weekdays were not going to put up with being pushed around on this particular weekend, especially by tourists. A man near me had stripped down to tiny red briefs in the heat and was pouring ice water down his grizzled chest.

As the sun moved lower on the horizon, a solemn and highly choreographed two-hour pageant, the Corteo Storico, began. More than 600 people in historical costume, many on horseback, began moving slowly around the piazza. Many of the faces were nearly medieval in their El Greco thinness. There were skilled flag tossers, severe-looking military-style drummers, oxen-pulling chariots, floats of ancient design.

The race, which occurs twice a year, on July 2 and Aug. 16, dates to the 13th century, and most likely began as military training. The earliest races were on buffalos and then on donkeys. The word palio itself means banner in Italian, and that's all that the winning contrada receives. This banner bears the image of the Virgin Mary, in whose honor these wild races are held.

There are 17 fiercely rivalrous contrade that ring Siena. These tend to be named after animals: snails, porcupines, she-wolves. Each contrada has its own museum and church and public square and fountain and traditions and banner. Once there were more than three times as many contrade. One of the most moving portions of the pre-race procession is watching the banners of past contrade wind by, ghosts of earlier contests.

There may be 17 contrade, but there is room in each race for only 10 horses. A form of musical chairs must occur, and



Clockwise from above left: Pageantry plays a huge part in the Palio di Siena, a medieval-style horse race in Italy; the race is run on a track of packed clay laid down in the downtown heart of Siena, and riders meet their horses just four days before the race; riders represent different contrade, or neighborhoods in the city, whose flags hang from buildings; Siena in the evening, with the medieval Duomo, center.

the seven contrade that cannot fit in one race are included in the next. The contrade are allowed to choose their jockeys but not their horses, all of which are mixed breed and chosen in part for their ability not to be easily spooked by the crowds and chaos. These are arranged marriages: Each contrada meets its horse for the first time just four days before the race.

We were coming to the point where, in the explaining of the Palio, things began to grow a bit surreal. This is truly a human endeavor about which the more you know, the less you understand. The contrade pay their jockeys handsomely to ride for them, yet these jockeys are hired guns and fundamentally unfaithful. Everyone is a potential double agent.

There's no official betting at the Palio, but allegiances are purchased for tens of thousands of dollars. Secret negotiations abound. Did your contrada's jockey miss his opportunity to peek ahead at that turn, or was he paid to fall back? There's no knowing.

This sort of existential criminality, in nearly any other country, would lead to madness among horse people and spectators. Yet in Siena, no one wishes to change a thing about the Palio.

There's been a good deal of op-ed analysis over the years about how the race illustrates the Italian soul. The Italians admire people, it's often said, who



make good via the wily bending of rules and conventions. Witness Silvio Berlusconi, the former prime minister, who has confidently brushed off sex and corruption scandals. Benito Mussolini is said to have adored the Palio.

Sometimes more than guile and payoffs are used to secure a Palio victory. In past years, horses have reportedly been drugged and jockeys kidnapped. Writing in Condé Nast Traveler, Steve King reported a bit of Palio skulduggery that involved inflaming a stallion's lust: "By the time the race began the poor beast didn't stand a chance — indeed, could hardly stand at all and barely managed to stagger his knock-kneed way around the course."

During the race, jockeys take their lives into their hands. The race involves three clockwise laps around a one-third-of-a-mile track, and there are tight turns. There have been dozens of seri-

ous injuries; videos of spills are all over YouTube. Horses are more vulnerable. More than 50 have died in these races since 1970; animal rights protesters have staged repeated protests. In response, Palio administrators have increased the padding on some turns and instituted other safety controls. Critics say these measures are not enough.

The parade ended and a booming cannon-like shot scattered every bird within two miles. The crowd grew quiet as the horses and their riders entered the piazza. Nine of the 10 racers took up their assigned positions at the starting rope. The 10th rider decided when the race started, when he made a go for it.

While this was happening, the riders conversed, swapped taunts and offered bribes. Impatient horses jostled and reared off the crowded line and were ridden back. The 10th horse made multiple exploratory false starts. This to-ing and fro-ing took more than 10 minutes.

And then they were off. The race was a clattering blur, whipping around us. It took less than 90 seconds but seemed even shorter. Several riders fell from their horses but none were seriously injured.

The winner was La Contrada dell'Onda (the Wave), its colors aquamarine. It was this contrada's first win since 2013 and its jockey, Carlo Sanna, known as Brigante, was an instant hero, hoisted upon shoulders.

He and his horse, the 9-year-old Porto Alabe, were whisked off to receive the winning banner and be blessed at the Siena Cathedral, the Duomo. This event was not hard to find. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people poured through the streets to make their way there, as the carabinieri kept close watch.

Out came the pacifiers and baby bottles. The winners wept with happiness. Meals commenced at huge tables set up in the streets. The festivities ran all night, which frankly they'd done for the four days leading up to the race, sometimes keeping us awake in our hotel room.

That night we ate pizza margherita, one of Valentina's Palio-night traditions, at an outdoor table at one of the restaurants that line the piazza. (Tables are hard to come by on Palio night. To watch Valentina secure one in the front row is to witness charm, fortitude and kung fu Italian-language skills in action.) We sat, caught our breaths, drank rehydrating beer over post-Instagram photographs. What else is vacation for?

The pizza was delicious — but not so delicious that I'll forget to remind you that August is also the time to find plentiful and inexpensive white truffles in Siena. Some restaurants have entire wings of their menus devoted to their glory. Dishes come buried beneath them. Again, I wanted to cry.

I'd heard that truffle dogs could be rented for an afternoon in Siena. I asked my hotel's concierge about this. He told me yes, they're 600 euros. I said, "That's a lot of euros." He replied: "Do you know what a truffle dog's time is worth?"

This outdoor loony bin is one I will happily be committed to.

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