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Don't scuttle the vital Iran nuclear deal

Boris Johnson

OPINION

By 1931 Winston Churchill had fought more election battles than any other member of the British Parliament. He ruefully calculated that "one day in 30" of his adult life had been consumed by "arduous and worrying" campaigning.

Churchill's famous conclusion was that democracy constituted the "worst form of government — except for all those other forms that have been tried." He was not succumbing to pessimism; on the contrary, faced with an array of unappealing options, there is a deep wisdom in choosing the one with the smallest downside and then fixing its limitations.

So it is with the Iran nuclear agreement that President Trump is now reviewing, with May 12 — this Saturday — looming as the next deadline for him to pull out of the deal. Of all the options we have for ensuring that Iran never gets a nuclear weapon, this pact offers the fewest disadvantages.

The agreement has problems. But the alternative of no deal at all is far worse.

It has weaknesses, certainly, but I am convinced they can be remedied. Indeed at this moment Britain is working alongside the Trump administration and our French and German allies to ensure that they are.

Do not forget how this agreement has helped to avoid a possible catastrophe. In his address to the United Nations in September 2012, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, rightly warned of the dangers of a nuclear-armed Iran. At that moment, Iran's nuclear plants held an estimated 11,500 centrifuges and nearly seven tons of low-enriched uranium — totals that would rise to nearly 20,000 centrifuges and eight tons of uranium.

Had the leaders of the Islamic Republic decided to go for a nuclear arsenal, they would have needed only a few months to produce enough weapons-grade uranium for their first bomb.

The situation was even more worrying because, month by month, Iran was installing more centrifuges and building up its uranium stockpile. But under the deal, Iran has placed two-thirds of its centrifuges in storage and relinquished about 95 percent of its uranium stockpile. The "break out" time has been extended to at least a year — and the agreement is designed to keep it above that minimum threshold.

Moreover, inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency have

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



Garbage collectors delivering unclaimed bodies to a mass grave at one of Mosul's city dumps. Most of the dead are believed to have been Islamic State fighters.

'The graveyard of ISIS'

MOSUL, IRAQ

After the battle for Mosul, trash collectors are given task of gathering bodies

PHOTOGRAPHS AND TEXT BY IVOR PRICKETT

The garbage men laid out and unzipped each body bag so their supervisor could photograph the remains inside, just in case someone came forward to ask about a missing person.

But it seemed unlikely that anyone would be able to identify their loved ones from those cellphone snapshots, given how decomposed the corpses were. And no DNA was collected for future identification before the bodies were buried in a pit on the edge of a city dump on the outskirts of Mosul.

In the end, it was another pile of unidentified bodies in a mass grave, like so many others in a country plagued by violence. This time, most of the dead were believed to be Islamic State fighters killed in the final stages of the battle for Mosul. City workers said that since August, they had retrieved and buried an estimated 950 such bodies.

The municipality has struggled to



Scavengers, many of them women and children, foraging for scrap at Mosul's main city dump. Many residents in Iraq's second-largest city are struggling to make a living.

keep pace with the return of residents after the expulsion of the Islamic State nearly a year ago, and Mosul does not have the personnel to focus on clearing bodies and unexploded ordnance.

So the city enlisted garbage men to help.

On a recent visit to Mosul, I ap-

proached the city's main municipal dump on the eastern outskirts of the city. It took me back to a year earlier when I had accompanied Iraqi special forces entering the city under siege. The smoke and strong smell of burning trash were reminiscent of the battle for Mosul.

But this was peacetime and in many ways things have returned to normal in Mosul, remarkably so given the level of destruction and killing in recent years. Part of that normalcy is the collection of refuse, the main job of the garbage collectors. A growing trash problem is one of the municipal government's biggest challenges.

As residents surge back, garbage is piling up, and informal dumps have sprung up throughout the city. Adding to the problem is a lack of dump trucks. Islamic State fighters tried to defend their position in Mosul by using state-owned dump trucks to block roads and even turned some of them into truck bombs. During months of intense battle to wrest the city back after three years of militant rule, the trucks were either destroyed by airstrikes or blown up by the radical fighters themselves.

At the main city dump, some of the city's poorest residents sifted through debris looking for anything salvageable. The foul smell emanating from the sea of trash was inescapable and the thick, chemical-infused smoke wafting through the air burned the nose.

Many of the scavengers were young children. Armed with hooked metal rods, they descended on every new dumpster that arrived with a mixture of excitement and desperation. They

MSUL, PAGE 4

Challenges in verifying a disarmed North Korea

WASHINGTON

Experts say inspecting Pyongyang's vast arsenal 'could make Iran look easy'

BY DAVID E. SANGER AND WILLIAM J. BROAD

As he weighs opening nuclear disarmament negotiations with North Korea, President Trump faces a regime that for decades has hidden key elements of its nuclear programs from international monitors and has banned inspectors from the country.

As a result, the first step in any meaningful agreement would be a declaration from North Korea about the scope of its nuclear program, a declaration that no one will believe.

It would have to be followed by what experts say would be the most extensive inspection campaign in the history of nuclear disarmament, one that would have to delve into a program that stretches back more than half a century and now covers square miles of industrial sites and hidden tunnels across the mountainous North. And it may demand more than the 300 inspectors the International Atomic Energy Agency now deploys to assess the nuclear facilities of nearly 200 countries.

For Mr. Trump, getting the right declaration and inspection process is critical given his argument that false declarations from Iran undercut the legitimacy of the 2015 nuclear accord, which he is debating pulling out of this week.

While there is no question Iran hid much of its weapons-designing past, North Korea has concealed programs on a far larger scale and built an arsenal of 20 to 60 nuclear warheads — compared to none in Iran. In fact, the Iran inspections, the International Atomic Energy Agency says, have gone on without a hitch in the past two years, though it is a far smaller, comparatively easier effort.

"North Korea could make Iran look easy," Ernest J. Moniz, the former United States Energy Department secretary and nuclear scientist who negotiated many details of the 2015 deal during the Obama administration, said last week.

"This isn't 'Trust, but verify,'" he said, using President Ronald Reagan's phrase from arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union. "It's 'Distrust everything and verify, verify, verify.'"

Success with a relatively small force of inspectors in North Korea, according to former weapons inspectors, depends on the full cooperation of its leader, Kim Jong-un, in opening up the vast nuclear enterprise he inherited from his father and grandfather.

Four years ago, the RAND Corporation, which often conducts studies for the United States Defense Department, estimated that finding and securing the

NORTH KOREA, PAGE 4

A Pulitzer finalist arises out of nowhere

Hernán Díaz answered open call for manuscripts by a nonprofit press

BY LAWRENCE DOWNES

Hakan Soderstrom, the hulking hero of Hernán Díaz's novel, "In the Distance," makes a stupendous entrance, ascending onto the first page through a star-shaped void on a featureless plain of white sea ice. Longhaired, white-bearded, gnarled and naked, he pulls himself onto the floe and walks on bow legs to an icebound schooner, carrying a rifle and an ax. We are somewhere, nowhere, in the frozen north.

Nowhere is also the place "In the Distance," Mr. Díaz's first novel, seems to have erupted from.

He had no agent when he answered an open call for manuscripts by the nonprofit Coffee House Press in Minneapolis, which published the novel last October.

In April Mr. Díaz was named a finalist



Hernán Díaz is a scholar at Columbia University who grew up in Argentina and Sweden.

for the Pulitzer Prize and the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction, causing book reviewers around the country to say, who?

Mr. Díaz is a scholar at Columbia University who grew up in Argentina and Sweden, studied in London and New York and lives in Brooklyn. His book is about an immigrant Swede of unusual size journeying in America's desert frontier in the mid-1800s.

Though many of its elements are familiar to the point of being worn out — saloons and wagon trains, Indians and gold prospectors — the novel is not. Mr. Díaz's long study of North American literature, much of it steeped in the 19th century, allowed him to expertly plunder an antique genre for parts. The rebuilt mechanism is his own design, and it moves in unexpected directions: west to east, around in circles, down into the earth and north to Alaska.

Which makes "In the Distance" an uncanny achievement: an original western.

"He's standing on the shoulders of a DIAZ, PAGE 2

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PAGE TWO

After a flight, home to 'Crew Gardens'

NEW YORK JOURNAL NEW YORK

Neighborhood is popular with airline workers thanks to location near 2 airports

BY COREY KILGANNON

It was just after 10 on a Monday night — "flight night" at Austin's Ale House in the New York City neighborhood of Kew Gardens — and the place was packed with flight attendants and pilots.

For anyone curious about the social lives of flight crews after touchdown, here was a glimpse. They had replaced their crisp blue uniforms with casual clothes or, in keeping with a theme of the evening, fuzzy pajamas.

A pilot in a unicorn onesie danced to music spun by a flight attendant sidling up as a DJ.

"We're all really close, and we need to have each other's backs because we're all up in the air together," said Evan Kopilow, 36, a pilot who explained that camaraderie was one reason Kew Gardens has long attracted flight crew members seeking a community of their own.

Thousands of them have apartments or crash pads in Kew Gardens, which has long had the nickname "Crew Gardens" for its popularity with airline flight crews who favor the location, in the borough of Queens not far from both Kennedy and La Guardia Airports.

"It's here a hub for airline personnel forever," said A. B. Rich, 32, a flight attendant originally from Boston who has lived in Kew Gardens for 10 years and who, like other crew members interviewed in this article, spoke under the condition that his employer not be named, citing airline policy. "It's cheaper than Forest Hills and it's safer than Jamaica," he added, naming nearby neighborhoods.

The neighborhood's popularity with pilots and flight attendants stretches back to the early days of commercial jet travel in the 1960s.

Most airline personnel are originally from other states but have flight schedules based out of New York and often work on-call. So they either move to Kew Gardens or keep permanent homes elsewhere and rent an inexpensive crash pad there to stay between flights.

They are hard to miss along Lefferts Boulevard: coiffed men and women in dark uniforms and out-of-season tans, rolling their luggage to bus stops or airline employee shuttle stops. Some rent apartment shares, single rooms or simply a bunk bed — or a share of one — in a crowded house that can include more than a dozen flight attendants and pilots cycling through sporadically.

Kew Gardens is recommended to many flight attendants when they go through training and are starting out with irregular schedules and tight budgets, said Cicero Goncalves, who dropped by the Ale House after working a non-stop flight from California.

"That's why this exists — you're just



Airline crew members dancing at a pajama-theme party at Austin's Ale House in Kew Gardens. Thousands of airline employees live in the New York City neighborhood.



Ronald Paul, center, an Ale House bartender, has been serving drinks to flight crews for nearly 20 years. He jokes that when he flies, he's a very pampered passenger.

starting out and you're broke and you have to live in New York City and you can't afford it otherwise," said Mr. Goncalves, 37. "It has this small-town feel because we all work together, so we all kind of know each other."

A bartender at the Ale House named Ronald Paul, better known as Doogie, has been serving drinks to the flight

crowd for nearly 20 years and has become a social director of sorts. He jokes that he cannot fly without seeing crew members who he has served at the Ale House — making him one pampered passenger.

"They can't serve me fast enough," he said. The flight crowd also frequents the

Last Call bar, a block away on Lefferts Boulevard from the Ale House, as well as Hangar 11 on Metropolitan Avenue, an aviation-themed bar and grill.

JetBlue holds staff parties at Hangar 11. The airline's chief executive, Robin Hayes, recently showed up to address employees during happy hour. About 80 JetBlue crew members have official addresses in the Kew Gardens area and another 2,000 or so keep crash pads locally, airline officials said.

Crew members at the Ale House said they follow rules set by the aviation authorities and airlines forbidding crew members from drinking alcohol at least eight hours before working.

Kew Gardens is hardly the only neighborhood in Queens popular with airport employees. Of the 49,000 workers employed at Kennedy and La Guardia, 28,424 are registered as living in Queens, according to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which operates the airports.

Jillan Moore, 47, a flight attendant originally from Atlanta, moved into Kew Gardens' crash pads 17 years ago. First there was a studio with five other flight attendants, then a three-bedroom home with 10 colleagues. Now she has her own place but can reel off descriptions of crash pads that include a five-bedroom house in nearby Ozone Park with 35 people living in it, dormitory style, and a

crash pad with a soda machine that dispenses beer for \$1 a can.

Flight crew members often find beds through social media listings and word of mouth, said Ms. Moore, who herself connects co-workers with beds and rentals and keeps lists of businesses that cater to airline personnel.

"I'm the den mother to all the new hires," she said, sitting at the Ale House with Capt. Bill Korz, 59, a pilot who had just flown in from Los Angeles. He lives in Washington but has kept a crash pad in Kew Gardens for 20 years.

Rooms can typically be rented for roughly \$750 a month, crew members said. A "cold bed" in a group room can go for \$350 a month. The least expensive option is a "hot bed," which could cost \$250 a month or less for crew members willing to settle for any available bed, night to night, and provide their own linens.

"It's cheaper than a hotel," said Tyler LaDuke, 30, a flight attendant at the Ale House who had just arrived from Los Angeles. He pays \$150 a month for a couch in a house in Kew Gardens, "but it's a big L-couch, so there's plenty of space."

"When you take this job, you move to a new city and you don't know anybody, so it's nice to live in an area where you have a lot of co-workers," he added. "It's an instant social life."

A Pulitzer finalist seemingly out of nowhere

DIAZ, FROM PAGE 1
of giants," said Chris Fischbach, publisher of Coffee House Press and Mr. Diaz's editor. "It's a modernist book in that he's absorbing all these fragments and using them to create a new world, and a new piece of art."

In a recent interview in a sunny apartment that Mr. Diaz shares with his wife, Anne, a filmmaker, and their daughter, Eliza, 7, he talked about the bafflement that led him to Hakan.

He was mystified, he said, by the absence of western novelists in the American canon.

Who besides Zane Grey and Louis L'Amour and a forgotten brotherhood of pulp novelists? Who, besides Larry McMurry and Cormac McCarthy? And if those contemporaries write "anti-westerns," what are the westerns they are writing against?

"They're writing against John Ford, I suppose," Mr. Diaz said.

"It's weird," he said. "Weird that the western novel was so underachieving, given how tightly the genre embraces America's most potent myths about itself."

Westerns, he said, glorify "the worst aspects of the imperial drive of the United States: its brutality against natives, genocidal racism, 'the whole macabre thing, the place of women, the frivolous violence, it goes on.'"

Mr. Diaz, it should be clear, is a writer of books. He said he was sickened him to think that telling Hakan's story would require imagining and describing acts of murderous violence. "I came very close to not writing the book," he said. "But I knew something really bad had to happen to him to make the plot plausible."

Hakan is a backwoods boy from Sweden who leaves home with his older brother, Linus, for the American meat-packing town of Njugard. But he loses Linus on a wharf in Portsmouth, England,

"I came very close to not writing the book. But I knew something really bad had to happen to him to make the plot plausible."

boards the wrong ship and ends up in San Francisco. He resolves to reunite with his brother by trading across the continent, shoes against the current of westward migration and continental conquest.

He knows no English, and for a time the reader is almost as disoriented as Hakan is. Stray words float by in a river of frontier gibberish: "Frowder than preulus rare shur per thurst. Mirtler freckling thow." But Hakan learns fast. He meets people: a mystery woman in a corset with amber hair and black-red lips, like a booker with a heart of coal. A demoted gold miner. An obsessive naturalist who wades in alkaline pools for imagined proto-organisms. Homesteaders and a sinister sheriff.

More immediately, how do you pronounce Hakan? Make a fish mouth and glide over the vowels: "Hu-oh-aahk-kan." To Mr. Diaz, it sounds like a Long Islander saying "Hawk kan," which is pretty close, for someone whose roots are from nowhere near Massapequa.

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Hernán Díaz's book, an original western, is about an immigrant Swede of unusual size journeying in America's desert frontier in the mid-19th century.

He was born in Buenos Aires in 1973. His mother was a psychoanalyst; his father a filmmaker who became involved in Trotskyist politics, which took the family in danger after Argentina's military coup, when Hernán was 2. They fled to Stockholm. Moving there and then back to Argentina as a boy gave Mr. Diaz double doses of immigrant dislocation; the emotional aftereffect of isolation and bullying seems to echo in his story of lonely Hakan.

Unlike his reticent hero, Mr. Diaz has a slight build and a wide smile and an expression that gains intensity as he listens and weighs his words, which he delivers with rapid precision. He is associate director of the Hispanic Institute at Columbia, where he edits the journal Revista Hispanica Moderna, or RHM. His last book was a study of Jorge Luis Borges, the Argentine essayist and poet:

"Borges, Between History and Eternity."

Among the ideas Mr. Diaz challenges with "In the Distance" is the one that writing convincingly about a place requires going there at some point.

He didn't. No rental car and GPS for him: "There was something that to me felt corrupt and dishonest about having an air-conditioned experience of the protagonist's ordeals," he said. "I defend the idea of reading over researching, which has this whole protocol that I don't think applies to literature, which has its own relationship to truth."

Instead he read widely and deeply and wrote the book in Brooklyn and Manhattan. He knew he was working within an old tradition. Many early westerns were written by men for whom "Go West" meant crossing the Rhine. They include Karl May, the German

scribbler of sauerbraten westerns, and Franz Kafka ("Amerika"). Arthur Conan Doyle set part of "A Study in Scarlet" in Mormon Utah.

Mr. Diaz considered the risks of historical bowlers (Kafka imagined the Statue of Liberty holding a sword) and found them tolerable. What he concocted is strange and transporting, a story that approaches but never enters the realm of magical realism. Hakan is one humongous Swede, but not a biblical giant. On a big-enough horse to match his proportions, he can plod down Main Street without causing panic.

When he was sickened him to think that telling Hakan's story would require imagining and describing acts of murderous violence. "I came very close to not writing the book," he said. "But I knew something really bad had to happen to him to make the plot plausible."

Dictator of Bolivia was jailed for genocide

GEN. LUIS GARCÍA MEZA, 1929-2018

BY SAM ROBERTS

Gen. Luis García Meza, a former Bolivian dictator who was convicted of genocide after leading a brief but brutal rule engineered by cocaine cartels and a Nazi war criminal, died on April 29 in La Paz. He was 88.

He died at the Cossamil military hospital, where he was serving the remainder of his 30-year prison term, a hospital spokesman told The Associated Press.

General García Meza was installed as president in July 1980 after a military junta toppled President Lidia Guéllier, who had been steering Bolivia to democracy after 16 years of dictatorship. They were cousins.

Fiercely conservative and anti-Communist, he seized control in what became known as the "cocaine coup" to keep Hernán Siles Zuazo, who was elected president that June, from taking office.

The military massacred leaders of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left and other opponents. Within a month, hundreds of other Bolivians had been arrested and tortured.

"He doesn't think he is primarily the president of Bolivia," Fernando Bedoya Ballivián, the head of the Banco de Bolivia and a longtime friend, said of the general at the time. "He feels he represents the army, and the army is fighting to the death against communism."

The United States Drug Enforcement Administration said that the general had used millions of dollars received from cocaine cartels to buy the allegiance of Bolivian army commanders and to forestall an antidrug operation begun by Washington.

He presided for 13 murderous months. In August 1981, amid outbreaks at the time of the leftist Cuban guerrilla and economic catastrophe, he re-

signed. The military installed a less radical president, Celso Gaitán Valdez. "García Meza and his generals made Bolivia the world's pariah," the journalist Elaine Shannon later wrote.

Mr. Siles Zuazo, who had been prevented from taking office in 1980, returned from exile in Peru when the Bolivian Congress, meeting for the first time after more than two years of military dictatorship, elected him president of a civilian government in 1982.

Nationwide democratic elections were held in the mid-1980s, but pretrial investigations and hearings into the charges against General García Meza took a decade.

He was accused not only of collusion with cocaine traffickers but also of collaborating in his coup with Klaus Barbie, the Nazi "butcher of Lyon," who had been living in Bolivia under an alias and was extradited to France in 1983.

In 1993, General García Meza was finally convicted in absentia of genocide, sedition, corruption and other crimes, including the illegal sale of diaries belonging to the slain Cuban guerrilla leader Che Guevara, who had been captured and killed in Bolivia in 1967.

After hiding for years, General García Meza was arrested and extradited to Bolivia from Brazil in 1996 and began serving the maximum 30-year prison term.

"To the best of our knowledge," Human Rights Watch said at the time, "the conviction marks the first time in Latin America's legal history that members of a de facto military government have been held in account for usurping power and violating constitutional norms."

When he died, the general had seven years left to serve.

Last year, a court in Rome convicted him in the deaths of 23 Italians during his crackdown on dissidents.

Luis García Meza Tejeda was born on Aug. 8, 1929 (although he once gave his birth year as 1932), in La Paz, the capital of Bolivia. His father was an army colonel.

Luis, known by the nickname Lacho, was educated at La Salle, a Christian school, and graduated from the Military College, which he later ran.

He was once suspended from the army for cruelty to cadets, but he went on to serve as the army commander. When he was 50, he was 50, with a wife, a daughter and four sons.

World

Erotic photographer's muse is his critic

TOKYO

Known for explicit work, Nobuyoshi Araki is called a bully by longtime model

BY MOTOKO RICH

How much does an artist owe his muse?

Last month a model who posed for Nobuyoshi Araki, Japan's most notorious photographer, accused him of exploiting and bullying her for 16 years.

With a New York exhibition featuring the work of Mr. Araki, known for his sexually explicit images of women, the accusations are raising questions about the power dynamics between a photographer and his subject.

In a blog post published in Japanese in early April after "The Incomplete Araki" opened at the Museum of Sex in Manhattan, the model, Kaori — who uses only her first name — said that over their working relationship, Mr. Araki never signed her to a professional contract, ignored her requests for privacy during photo shoots, neglected to inform her when pictures of her were published or displayed and often did not pay her.

"He treated me like an object," she wrote.

In an interview in Tokyo, Kaori, who stopped working with Mr. Araki two years ago, said she felt empowered to speak out by the international reckoning about sexual harassment and assault known as the #MeToo movement.

Kaori, who began posing for Mr. Araki in her early 20s, has not accused him of sexual assault. Instead, she said she felt emotionally bullied by an artist who never acknowledged her as a creative partner.



Kaori, a former model, recently described years of ill treatment by the Japanese photographer Nobuyoshi Araki. "He treated me like an object," she wrote in a blog post.



Deciding how to use his photographs is "all up to me," Mr. Araki wrote.

"I want them to know what happened in the past between me and Araki," Kaori said last month. "I was not allowed to speak out. People should know, and they should look." Mr. Araki, 77, declined repeated requests to comment.

Mr. Araki's work has long ignited controversy, given the provocative nature of his images, which include photographs of nude women bound up in a Japanese technique known as kinbakubi. He has been fined on obscenity

charges in Japan, and while some critics consider him a maestro, others deem his work pornography.

Maggie Mustard, co-curator of the Museum of Sex exhibition, said Kaori's allegations were forcing a new conversation about models' rights.

"This gives us the opportunity to talk about what happens to a muse — and I use that word with air quotes — when she doesn't have a contract or a sense of economic or legal agency about how her image was used," Ms. Mustard said in a telephone interview.

Ms. Mustard added that she had spoken with Kaori and would incorporate her comments into the exhibition's programming materials. Already, the wall text mentions another model's anonymous allegations of inappropriate sexual contact by Mr. Araki, noting that "the controversy surrounding Araki's work has almost exclusively been about reception and meaning, and far less about the issues of consent and the potential abuses of power that can be at the foundation of artistic practice and artistic production."

The contentious relationship between

artist and model goes back centuries, with men like Picasso or Egon Schiele known for mistreating women. More recently, potential portrait models for Chuck Close have accused him of sexual harassment.

Art historians argue that it might be time for artists to rethink the basis on which these relationships are built. Models should have "more agency in terms of authorship of the work itself," said Rebecca Zorach, a professor of art history at Northwestern University.

"The art world has a tendency to erase women as makers, and historically it just happens over and over again," she said.

In Japan, Kaori's disclosures come as women are just starting to raise questions about male power, sexual harassment and assault.

Last year, when one of Japan's best-known television journalists was accused of rape, his accuser received only a smattering of attention in the Japanese media. Last month after a television reporter anonymously asserted that a high-level civil servant in the Finance Ministry had sexually harassed

several women, the official resigned, although he has denied the charges. The ministry has acknowledged that he harassed a reporter.

In this staunchly patriarchal culture, women are often subservient to men. Japan consistently ranks low among developed countries on gender equality in health, education and the economy and has one of the world's worst records for women in politics.

Kaori's blog raised questions about artists, subjects and power.

For models working in Japan's art world, it is difficult to make demands of a male artist.

"I can imagine that as a male photographer who is more than 70 years old, he unconsciously has the perspective towards women that he can do whatever he wants," said Yukie Kamiya, head of the Japan Society Gallery in New York, speaking of Mr. Araki. "Male power is such a common understanding, and women don't have much of a voice."

Kaori, who trained in Paris as a dancer, began posing for Mr. Araki after meeting him at a party in 2001.

She said he paid her 100,000 yen (about \$930) to pose in the studio wearing a kimono or performing dances that Mr. Araki would photograph. For nude projects, he took her to so-called "love hotels" and paid her about 50,000 yen for each assignment.

But she said he also called her for impromptu, unpaid sessions where he took photos while she walked in a park or sat in a bar at his command.

It was not enough to make a living. Asked how she supplemented her income, Kaori demurred. "I don't want to say," she said.

In public, Mr. Araki described her as his "muse," but she said he did not tell her when or where the work would be published or exhibited, and she had no say in how the images were composed. "For him, a muse means someone who doesn't speak or have any of her own opinions and just keeps obeying his orders," she said.

Early on, the two did have a consensual sexual relationship, Kaori said.

During one photo session, she balked when he snapped Polaroid pictures of her and sold each individually without paying her any royalties. "That money that he earned is based on my contribution," Kaori said.

"He says, 'I am Araki, and you must be happy and honored that I am taking a picture of you,'" she said.

Kazuko Ito, a lawyer whom Kaori consulted last November, said Kaori told her that after nude photos appeared without her permission, a stalker broke into her home. Kaori asked the lawyer for help obtaining some rights to the photos, but Ms. Ito said that such disputes were very rare in Japan and that she was unlikely to win in court.

Ms. Ito said she had heard similar complaints from other models for Mr. Araki.

Of course, power inequities between artists and models are not unique to him. "There has been no public discourse about this structural problem within the industry and the photographer-model relationship," said Michio Hayashi, a professor of art history at Sophia University in Tokyo.

Kaori described one incident when foreign photographers came to observe Mr. Araki as he took pictures of her. She did not want to appear nude in front of strangers, she said, but Mr. Araki told her, "They aren't here to photograph you, they're here to photograph me."

But when pictures from that session came out in print, Kaori appeared in them, naked. "He invited many photographers into the studio and he ordered me to spread my legs in front of that big audience," she said. "I didn't like that."

Still, it took her a long time to quit as Mr. Araki's model. She started working with him when she was young; he was already famous. When he was hospitalized, she did not want to abandon him.

"Looking back now, everything was excessive and extreme," she wrote on her blog. "Something in me was numb. He asked me to do abnormal things, and I did them as if they were normal." At one point, she said she became suicidal.

By 2015, the relationship had soured so badly that Mr. Araki insisted that she sign a document vowing not to defame him or his business. In 2016, Kaori, who by then was running her own ballet school, stopped working with him.

When she requested that he stop publishing or exhibiting some photographs of her, he warned in a March 2017 letter that she had no rights. "All models should understand the potential for unlimited use of the work," he wrote in the letter, seen by The New York Times. "I will decide which publication, which exhibition, when to publish and what kind of products I will give permission to use my work. It's all up to me."

Kaori said she did not expect an apology from Mr. Araki, and she is not asking the Museum of Sex to remove the three photos of her it is displaying.

The work, she said, should serve as a reminder. All she wants, she said, is for visitors to "know my sad background and experience."



From left: Bilal and his parrot, Toti, at their home in Nangarhar Province in Afghanistan last year; a truck driver buying ice cream from a vendor while transporting an Afghan family out of Pakistan; and Bilal with his now-empty birdcages.



Pushed out of Pakistan, a boy clung to a parrot

BESHUD, AFGHANISTAN

BY MUJIB MASHAL

The truck wound its way through mountain passes in the pre-dawn darkness, stacked high with the trappings of a refugee life pieced together over 30 years.

The Shah family had been forced out of the haven in Pakistan that their patriarch had found for them during the last war, against the Soviets. Now they were returning to Afghanistan, a place in the grip of a newer and longer war that has sent hundreds of thousands of people fleeing.

They clung to everything they could: tins of clothes, bundles of blankets, pots and pans, 11 beds, 40 chickens, two pigeons, a goat and more. The women and children, nearly two dozen all together, either rode atop the truck or stuffed themselves among the belongings in the back.

Among them was a 6-year-old boy named Bilal, who held tightly to a small cage. In it was his parrot, Toti, his only friend in a country he had never been to, and his escape from the lonely days in

the desolate gorge where they would start their new lives.

The large family built by Dawran Shah, Bilal's grandfather, was among nearly 100,000 undocumented Afghans pushed out of Pakistan last year. Many of them were forcibly repatriated, but others, like the Shahs, were fed up with being the targets of police abuse.

In Nangarhar Province, the rocky region in eastern Afghanistan where they settled, one in every three people is either internally displaced by fighting or is a returned refugee, according to the International Organization for Migration.

The family's new neighborhood is desolate, just a few houses in a mountain gorge. When they unloaded, the women and children cried at the sight of their new home, Dawran Shah said. (Many of the homes had been built with the help of the Norwegian Refugee Council. Bilal was first brought to the Times's attention by a photographer who had taken pictures of the boy on behalf of the aid group.)

"Our house there had a balcony, three rooms, and there was also a guest room," Bilal said of their home in Paki-

stan. "Here we have two rooms, and they don't have doors. And we have two tents."

Bilal was only 4 when he found Toti, in a different country, a greener one, where life seemed abundant.

Dawran Shah had settled in the Hashtnagar area in northwestern Pakistan, fleeing his home in Kunar Province not long after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. He farmed tomatoes and zucchini, and over 30 years, raised a large family.

Bilal had accompanied his father, Jamshed, into the fields the day they saw the parrot, perched on a branch of an aspen tree.

"My father shook the branch. Toti fell, and I threw my scarf on it," Bilal recalled.

How big was Toti?
"It was a baby — this big," said Bilal, bringing his small fingers together.

Bilal and Toti were inseparable: together at home, together in the fields, together when Bilal was out playing with other children.

"I had 10 friends — Noor Agha, Khan, Mano," Bilal said. "We would make houses."

The only times Bilal would put Toti down from his shoulder was to feed the parrot grain and peanuts, or to slide the bird's cage under his bed at night.

Then came the move. For some refugees, even 30 years in one place is not enough to put down roots.

For nearly two weeks after they settled in Nangarhar, Jamshed would try to find work. But each day he would return with nothing except new debt.

One day, Jamshed broke down. "All these debts — they need repaying. And when I see you worried like that, I don't like it," Mr. Shah recalled Jamshed telling him. "Father, will you give me permission?"

Like that, Jamshed joined the army and was sent to the restive south. A war that takes about 50 lives from all sides every day requires new blood.

For Bilal, the new life wasn't easy. His grandmother died of diabetes. He didn't have many friends to play with. One of his three young sisters, Lalmina, is disabled by what the family said could be polio.

"I was scared here. My friends were not here. They were left there," Bilal said. "I got sick; my eyes hurt and I had

fever. The doctor gave me pills."

But Bilal had Toti. The bird would be on his shoulder as they climbed the mountain behind their new home and remain there for hours.

"Toti, Toti," Bilal would call to the bird. "Toti!" the bird would respond.

One night about two months ago, Bilal put Toti in the cage and, as he had done every other night, slid it under the bed. When he woke in the morning, Toti was on the cage floor, unmoving.

"I sent the picture to my father on the net. I said, 'Toti is dead,'" Bilal said. "He said, 'When I come home, I will buy you another one.'"

It's difficult to know what may have happened to Toti. Bilal's grandfather said it was the change of climate in Afghanistan — the same reason given for the deaths of the two pigeons and the 40 chickens.

"The cages are empty," Dawran Shah said.

Toti's death devastated Bilal. He had lost the friend who helped make his days bearable. But some solace was waiting around the corner.

About a 20-minute walk from Bilal's house, Asadullah Safi was holding

classes at his house, where an aid group was funding a makeshift school.

Bilal started attending toward the end of the program, tagging along with Yasir, a relative he liked. He had no official paperwork, so he couldn't be registered as a regular student.

Unlike the rest of the 30 children, he had no books and no backpack. But when one of the children dropped out, the family returned the backpack and the books and Mr. Safi gave them to Bilal. Registered under someone else's name, he began to study.

The program has wrapped up, but the children still come for a couple of hours a day, the house a day care of sorts. They repeat after Mr. Safi as he reads out loud from the board. Once a month, they get a biscuit and juice.

And then Mr. Safi takes them to the yard, where there is a cow and a goat and tiny chicks. The boys chase after a plastic ball from one end of the yard to the other in a game of soccer.

Bilal is no longer alone. He runs and plays.

In a crack in the wall outside his room, Bilal keeps a handful of Toti's feathers, a shrine to a little friend.

WORLD

Challenges in inspecting North's arsenal

NORTH KOREA, FROM PAGE 1
North's weapons of mass destruction if the nation fell apart — or into any situation in which it might be hostile to inspection — could require up to 273,000 troops. That is far more than the peak of the American occupying force in Iraq.

Like Iran, North Korea would have to begin any denuclearization pact with a comprehensive listing of all its atomic sites, factories and weapons — which American intelligence agencies would immediately compare with their own estimates.

The complexity of the ensuing verification would depend on how extensive a "disarmament" Mr. Trump has in mind — and whether it matches Mr. Kim's definition.

Everyone agrees that such a program of disarmament would involve the North surrendering its nuclear arms. But American intelligence agencies have vastly differing estimates of the size of the arsenal, be it the Central Intelligence Agency's assessment of around 20 nuclear weapons or the Defense Intelligence Agency's estimate of about 60. That means it is possible that inspectors will never know for sure if they have found everything.

So far, the Trump administration has not said whether North Korea would have to dismantle most or all of its nuclear-fuel production facilities, which are believed to be much more numerous than Iran's. Nor is it clear whether the North would have to give up its missiles.

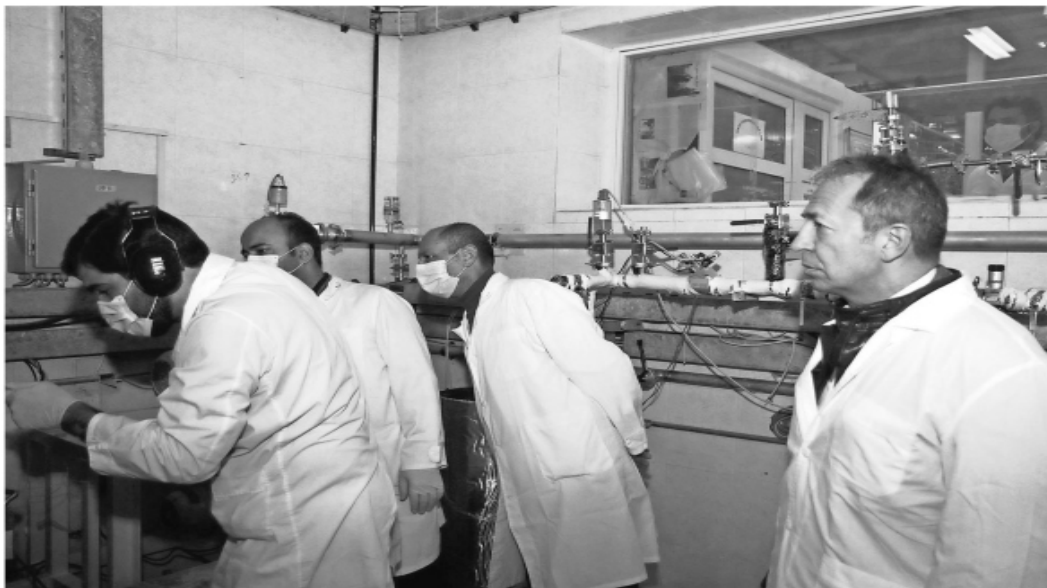
North Korea is also believed to possess large stores of germ weapons and nerve gas, like the kind used to assassinate Mr. Kim's half brother in an attack last year in Malaysia.

But it is the sprawling nuclear complex that poses the largest problem. Inspectors at the I.A.E.A. are not trained to recognize or handle nuclear weapons; they are basically forensic accountants, keeping track of uranium and plutonium flows through factories and of equipment that can be used to produce nuclear fuel.

Ridding the North of its warheads would require military specialists from the Western nuclear states — including "render safe" teams trained to prevent arms from detonating, as well as possible agreements with China or Russia to take the weapons.

Even so, the agency is likely to be overwhelmed.

Last year, Tero Varjaranta, the chief



An International Atomic Energy Agency team inspecting uranium enrichment in Iran in 2014. Inspectors of North Korea's arsenal would require the full support of its leader.

inspector of the Vienna-based agency, told nuclear experts that piercing North Korea's secretive maze would "require novel and modified monitoring and verification approaches to be developed, and probably implemented, at short notice in a very challenging environment."

The agency now monitors the nuclear activities of 180 nations with a corps of some 300 inspectors, including the 80 assigned to its Iran Task Force.

Western experts put the North's total number of nuclear sites — including its

main atomic center at Yongbyon, its mountain testing complex and a number of clandestine labs and facilities — at 40 to 100, according to the RAND report.

Iran, by contrast, has about a dozen significant sites and never developed nuclear weapons.

That is just one metric to explain why the denuclearization of North Korea has "no good parallels" in disarmament history, said David A. Kay, a nuclear expert who in 2003 and 2004 led the American hunt for unconventional arms in Iraq.

The goal of nuclear dismantlement in North Korea, Dr. Kay said in an interview, "is far more complex than anything the administration is talking about," because its atomic complex is so large, so advanced — and in some cases, so well hidden.

The North's atomic industrial site has some 400 buildings — a vast maze largely unknown to the outside world, and one that is much larger than most American weapon laboratories.

At least two buildings hold reactors,

one credited with making the plutonium that fueled some of North Korea's atom bombs. Experts say the site is now inaugurating a large new reactor.

At Mount Mantap, a mile-high peak, the North dug a system of deep tunnels for testing its nuclear bombs. Six have been tested so far.

Experts suspect the most recent, in September, was a hydrogen bomb.

The 2014 RAND study, conducted for the United States Army, imagined for the North's collapse and a military rush to

secure and remove its weapons of mass destruction. The troop estimates were driven by the need to secure the nuclear sites, though the study also looked at North Korea's chemical and biological arms, as well as long-range missiles.

In addition, the study took into account a wide range of expected opposition and hostility from North Korea's military.

It put the American force requirements at 73,000 troops in a situation where it was unclear how they would be received, or up to 273,000 if there was active resistance. Currently, the United States keeps about 28,000 troops in South Korea.

Dr. Kay, the head of the American hunt in Iraq for unconventional weapons, estimated that up to 300 inspectors would be needed in the North. But he said that it would be difficult to find enough specialists with the requisite skills and experience.

"Frankly," he said, "there's a limit to the talent pool."

To succeed with a relatively small force of inspectors, Dr. Kay said the North's denuclearization program would require the nation's "full cooperation" to free inspectors from what he called the arduous task of hunting down clandestine sites and outfitting other aspects of "deception and denial."

In the end, Dr. Kay said, a successful case of atomic verification would probably rely extensively on the North Koreans themselves — as only they understood the real dimensions of their sprawling nuclear complex.

The inspections, he added, would probably come down to monitoring how North Korean experts go about the denuclearization.

"It's not going to be like Iraq, where we'd find something and destroy it," Dr. Kay said. "It's going to be coming in as observers of what the North is going to do, and that will let you keep the numbers small. It will be looking over their shoulders."

Dr. Kay said that such an outcome is "probably all right if all you want is a Nobel Peace Prize" — as Mr. Trump has welcomed.

But, he added, it would not be enough to reach the demanding standard of obtaining hard proof that a country has gotten rid of all its nuclear arms and the complicated means of producing them.

"I'm not sure that's what they mean by denuclearization," he said.

Trash collectors' grim task



MOSUL, FROM PAGE 1
scorers could each other with the idea that there could be treasure amid the trash.

There were also many women scavenging in these harsh conditions. Though wary of a foreign journalist, the eldest of the group explained that many of them were widows and this was their only way to survive and provide for their children.

Under the Islamic State, she said, women were forbidden from doing this activity, and only since the group's defeat had such large numbers joined in.

The bodies the trash collectors retrieve also end up at a municipal dump, but they are buried in unmarked mass pits around the edges. If they do find a body that they think belongs to a civilian, rather than an Islamic State fighter, they will hand it over to the morgue.

I followed a team of state workers through the most devastated part of the Old City, where the militants made their last stand, and watched as they searched the rubble for any signs of bodies. Often local residents guided them toward the stench, complaining that they hadn't been able to return home because of the smell.

The Maydan district, where the militants were cornered and ultimately killed, is now marked by a sign that says in Arabic: "Here is the graveyard of ISIS."

After more than six months of decomposition, it was hard to tell much about the remains, particularly without any forensic training or equipment. With each body, however, the workers would find a



teiltale sign that they said indicated it was that of an Islamic State member. Either it was fatigue-style clothing, a long beard or relatively new sneakers, which they said only fighters had at that point in the city. In many cases, it seemed impossible to tell.

In a crumbling house set on the river bank above the emerald-colored Tigris, a hard-to-reach room was filled with more than 30 bodies piled on top of each other. Either they had been executed while lying down or killed elsewhere and thrown inside. But there was no sign of anyone who was qualified or interested in trying to ascertain what had happened to these people.

The garbage men took a few bodies out of the room but then decided they

needed to call in a digger to clear a more direct route to the house. They would not finish the job that day and we moved on. Some of the men said there were many more such sites buried beneath the rubble.

Once the men had filled their flatbed truck with nearly 20 bodies, it was time to take them for burial. Less than a 20-minute drive away at the al-Sahaji dump on the western side of Mosul, an excavator was already at work digging a mass grave.

One of the more intact cadavers appeared to be holding his arm up to his face as if trying to shield himself. There was muted laughter as the men joked that it looked as if this Islamic State fighter had been scared in death.

Test is given a failing grade

BERLIN
German students criticize use of obscure words in English portion of key exam

BY CHRISTOPHER F. SCHUETZE

Complaining that your final exams at school are too tough is a rite of passage — almost a tradition.

But German secondary-school students in the southwestern state of Baden-Württemberg who hunkered down last month to take pivotal final exams have gone a step further in their protests about the English-language portion of the test, which they said was absurd, with obscure and outdated references.

Nearly 36,000 people — over 2,000 more than the number of students who took the exam, called the Abitur — have signed an online petition demanding that officials change the scoring system in light of what they describe as "unfair" questions, even before the results have been released.

The test required the students to show comprehension of current issues like Britain's pending exit from the European Union, or Brexit, and to comment on two contrasting cartoons about the process, titled "Project Fantasy" and "The Realities."

One focus of their objections was a reading comprehension section that used text from "Call It Sleep," a critically acclaimed 1934 novel by the American writer Henry Roth, which the students said was rife with archaic vocabulary. Their petition highlighted this passage as difficult to comprehend:

"Against the luminous sky the rays of her halo were spokes of darkness rowing the air; shadow flattened the torch she bore to a black cross against flawless light — the blackened hilt of a broken sword. Liberty."

Those words are a reference to the Statue of Liberty.

The Abitur exams were created from a national pool of questions distributed by the education ministry in Baden-Württemberg. The exam is Germany's equivalent to the United Kingdom's A-levels or France's baccalauréat — the final hurdle for students leaving secondary school for higher education, a series of written and oral tests worth roughly one-third of their grade.

The resulting grades are used for a system known as "numerus clausus" that rations admission to popular university programs. Those who wish to study a high-demand subject like medicine but fail to meet a required minimum score may be required to wait up to seven years for a place.

"The Abitur grades are the single most important selecting factor for getting into university," said Rainer Bölling, an education expert who wrote a book on the history of the Abitur.

Mr. Bölling suggested that the test, which holds an important place in German culture, was becoming easier, as a bigger proportion of young people try to get into university.

In 1960, 7 percent of students took the test; in 2000, it was 37.2 percent; and in 2015, it was 53 percent, according to official figures.

Because of the Abitur's importance to students' future careers, however, the protest and petition had a tinge of panic and frustration.

The exam is Germany's equivalent to the United Kingdom's A levels or France's baccalauréat.

The petition, 991 words long and divided into four points, was cast as an open letter by the test takers to the ministry of culture, youth and sports in Baden-Württemberg.

But many others signed it out of solidarity.

One commenter, A. K. Mohan, declared: "I'm signing because I, too, will soon be doing my Abitur."

An independent panel of experts commissioned by the state to evaluate the exam after the petition gathered steam found it to be of reasonable difficulty and warned students to wait to see their grades, which will be released on June 18.

"There is no need to worry," Susanne Eisenmann, the state minister responsi-

ble for secondary education, said in a statement. "I advise peace and serenity."

One of the region's top linguists, Bernd Saur, also had advice for the students, according to the BBC: "I urge the pupils to await their results — nobody's going to get a whacking."

Recently, Germans have taken to displaying online petitions to express anger and force officials to justify seemingly routine practices.

Last month, the city of Hanover faced a crisis when nearly 300,000 people signed an online petition to save a dog that had killed two people.

Petitioners blamed the dog's surroundings, not the animal itself, for the deaths.

The city put down the dog but faced protests and media scrutiny partly resulting from the petition.

Last year, a dispute about another English exam, in the western German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, led to a revision after an online petition. Students had complained that the test included a poor recording of a "mumbly" speech by Prince Harry, the BBC said.

Other students taking this year's Abitur apparently did not run into the same issues as those in Baden-Württemberg.

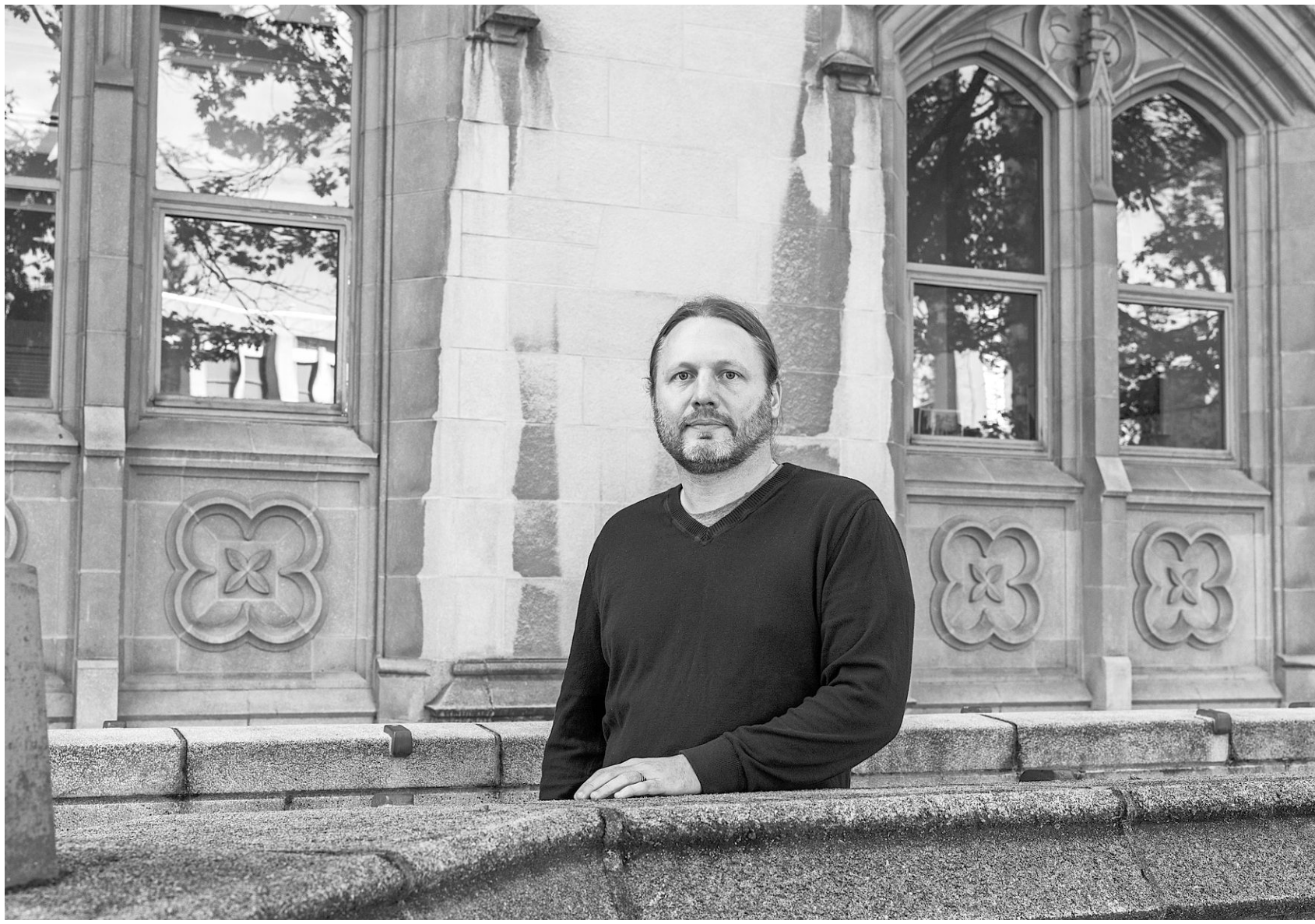
Students in the northeastern state of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern were tested on similar passages, but did not appear to complain publicly.

Recently, however, in the northwestern state of Lower Saxony, the math test portion of the Abitur had to be exchanged — and in some places delayed. Burglars had broken into the school safe, where they might have had access to the exam.



The Abitur is a pivotal national exam for German students leaving secondary school for higher education, and the results can shape their future careers.

Business



KYLE JOHNSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Luke Zettlemoyer, a University of Washington professor, rejected a lucrative offer from Google so he could stay in academia. But he has accepted a position at Facebook.

A.I. a drain on human brains

SAN FRANCISCO

Academics concerned that internet companies are monopolizing talent

BY CADE METZ

At a conference in Silicon Valley recently, Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's chief executive, vowed that his company would "keep building" despite a swirl of questions about the way it has dealt with misinformation and the personal data of its users.

That is certainly true in the important area of artificial intelligence, which Mr. Zuckerberg says can help the social media giant deal with some of those problems.

Facebook is opening new A.I. labs in Seattle and Pittsburgh, after hiring three A.I. and robotics professors from the University of Washington in Seattle and Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. The company hopes these seasoned researchers will help recruit and train other A.I. experts in the two cities, Mike Schroepfer, Facebook's chief technology officer, said in an interview.

As it builds these labs, Facebook is adding to pressure on universities and nonprofit A.I. research operations, which are already struggling to retain professors and other employees.

The expansion is a blow for Carnegie Mellon, in particular. In 2015, Uber hired 40 researchers and technical engineers from the university's robotics lab to staff a self-driving car operation in Pittsburgh. And The Wall Street Journal reported last week that JPMorgan Chase had hired Manuela Veloso, Carnegie Mellon's head of so-called machine learning technology, to oversee its artificial intelligence operation.

"It is worrisome that they are eating the seed corn," said Dan Weld, a comput-

er science professor at the University of Washington. "If we lose all our faculty, it will be hard to keep preparing the next generation of researchers."

With the new labs, Facebook — which already operates A.I. labs in Silicon Valley, New York, Paris and Montreal — is establishing two new fronts in a global competition for talent.

Over the last five years, artificial intelligence has been added to a number of tech products, from digital assistants and online translation services to self-driving vehicles. And the world's largest internet companies, from Google to Microsoft to Baidu, are jockeying for researchers who specialize in these technologies. Many of them are coming from academia.

"We're basically going where the talent is," Mr. Schroepfer said.

But the supply of talent is not keeping up with demand, and salaries have skyrocketed. Well-known researchers are receiving compensation in salary, bonuses and stock worth millions of dollars. Many in the field worry that the talent drain from academia could have a lasting impact in the United States and other countries, because schools won't have the teachers they need to educate the next generation of A.I. experts.

Over the last few months, Facebook approached a number of notable researchers in Seattle. It hired Luke Zettlemoyer, a professor at the University of Washington who specializes in technology that aims to understand and use natural human language, the company confirmed. This is an important area of research for Facebook as it struggles to identify and remove false and malicious content on its networks.

In the fall, Mr. Zettlemoyer told The New York Times that he had turned down an offer from Google that was three times his teaching salary (about \$180,000, according to public records) so he could keep his post at the university. Instead, he took a part-time position at the Allen Institute for Artificial

Intelligence, a Seattle lab backed by the Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen.

Many researchers retain their professorships when moving to the big companies but they usually cut back on academic work. At Facebook, academics typically spend 80 percent of their time at the company and 20 percent at their university.

Like the other internet giants, Facebook acknowledges the importance of the university system. But at the same time, the companies are eager to land top researchers.

In Pittsburgh, Facebook hired two professors from the Carnegie Mellon Robotics Institute, Abhinav Gupta and Jessica Hodgins, who specialized in computer vision technology.

"If we lose all our faculty, it will be hard to keep preparing the next generation of researchers."

The new Facebook lab will focus on robotics and "reinforcement learning," a way for robots to learn tasks by trial and error. Siddhartha Srinivasa, a robotics professor at the University of Washington, said he was also approached by Facebook in recent months. It was not clear to him why the internet company was interested in robotics.

Andrew Moore, dean of computer science at Carnegie Mellon, did not respond to a request for comment. But over the past several months, he has been vocal about the movement of A.I. researchers toward the big internet companies.

Google also operates an engineering office near Carnegie Mellon.

"What we're seeing is not necessarily good for society, but it is rational behavior by these companies," he said.

The two new Facebook labs are part of wider expansion for the company's A.I. operation. In December, Facebook said

it had hired another computer vision expert, Jitendra Malik, a professor at the University of California, Berkeley. He now oversees the lab at the company's headquarters in Menlo Park, Calif.

Facebook faces fierce competition for talent. Mr. Allen recently gave the Allen Institute, which he created in 2013, an additional \$125 million in funding. After losing Mr. Zettlemoyer to Facebook, the Allen Institute hired Noah Smith and Yejin Choi, two of his colleagues at the University of Washington.

Like Mr. Zettlemoyer, both specialize in natural language processing, and both say they received offers from multiple internet companies.

The nonprofit is paying Mr. Smith and Ms. Choi a small fraction of what they were offered to join the commercial sector, but the Allen Institute will allow them to spend half their time at the university and collaborate with a wide range of companies, said Oren Etzioni, who oversees the Allen Institute.

"The salary numbers are so large that even Paul Allen can't match them," Mr. Etzioni said. "But there are still some people who won't go corporate."

Others researchers believe that companies like Facebook still align with their academic goals. Nonetheless, Ed Lazowska, chairman of the computer science and engineering department at the University of Washington, said he was concerned that the large internet companies were luring too many of the university's professors into the commercial sector.

Carnegie Mellon and the University of Washington, he said, are working on recommendations for commercial companies meant to provide a way for universities and companies to share talent more equally.

"The university must be a Switzerland," Mr. Lazowska said. "We want every company to collaborate with us and to feel like they have an equal opportunity to hire our students and work with our faculty."

Europe's data rules and what they mean

LONDON

New privacy measures take effect May 25; users may see little difference

BY ADAM SATARIANO

In a couple of weeks, Europe will introduce some of the toughest online privacy rules in the world. The changes are aimed at giving internet users more control over what's collected and shared about them, and they call for punishing companies that don't comply.

Here's what it means for you.

WHAT ARE THE NEW RULES?

On May 25, a new law called the General Data Protection Regulation takes effect across the European Union.

The law strengthens individual privacy rights and, more important, it has teeth. Companies can be fined up to 4 percent of global revenue — equivalent to about \$1.6 billion for Facebook.

The internet's grand bargain has long been trading privacy for convenience. Businesses offer free services like email, entertainment and search, and in return they collect data and sell advertising.

But recent privacy scandals involving Facebook and the political consulting firm Cambridge Analytica highlight the downsides of that trade-off. The system is opaque and ripe for abuse.

Europe is attempting to push back.

It's too early to know how effective the law will be, but it is being closely watched by governments globally.

WILL THE WEB LOOK DIFFERENT?

Not really.

Supporters of the law say it will bring sweeping changes in the ways companies operate online, but in reality, the effect on your internet experience will be minimal. An American visiting Europe, for example, isn't likely to see a difference.

If you live in one of the European Union's 28 member states, there is one change you may welcome — you are likely to see fewer of those shoe or appliance ads that follow you around the internet after you do some online shopping.

As e-commerce became commonplace, a cottage industry sprang up to track people around the web and nudge them back to online stores to complete a purchase. Advertisers call these ads "fine tuned," but most people consider them creepy, said Johnny Ryan, a researcher at PageFair, an ad-blocking service.

Mr. Ryan said the new rules would make it harder for ad-targeting companies to collect and sell information.

The new law requires companies to be transparent about how your data is handled and to get your permission before starting to use it. It raises the legal bar that businesses must clear to target ads based on personal information like your relationship status, job or education, or your use of websites and apps.

That means online advertising in Europe could become broader, returning to styles more akin to magazines and television, where marketers have a less detailed sense of the audience.

WHAT ARE YOUR RIGHTS?

Even if you don't notice big changes, the new law provides important privacy rights worth knowing about.

For instance, you can ask companies what information they hold about you and then request that it be deleted. This applies not just to tech companies, but also to banks, retailers, grocery stores or any other organization storing your

information. You can even ask your employer.

And if you suspect your information is being misused or collected unnecessarily, you can complain to your national data protection regulator, which must investigate.

Of course, an individual going up against a giant corporation like Google or Facebook isn't in a fair fight. The law has 11 chapters and 99 subarticles, and just initiating a case can take as many as 20 steps, according to the International Association of Privacy Professionals, an industry trade group.

But the new rules allow people to band together and file class-action style complaints, a legal approach that hasn't been as common in Europe as in the United States. Eager to exploit the new law, privacy groups are planning to file cases on behalf of groups of individuals. The hope is that a few successful lawsuits will have a ripple effect and lead companies to tighten up how they handle personal data.

The new law also ensures that you cannot be locked in to any service. Companies must make it possible for you to download your data and move it to a competitor. That could mean moving financial information from one bank to another, or transferring Spotify playlists to a rival streaming service.

WHAT ABOUT THE PRIVACY NOTICES?

In the weeks before the law goes into force, internet users have been receiving a stream of privacy policy updates in their inboxes — grocery store loyalty programs, train services, even apps that parents use for youth soccer all have to set out what data they gather from you and how they handle it.

The law requires that the terms and conditions be written in plain, understandable language, not legalese. Companies must also give you options to block information from being gathered.

But the deluge of emails is leading to concerns that users are agreeing without taking a closer look.

A similar reaction came after the European Union required companies, starting in 2011, to put warnings on websites alerting users that they were being tracked. The rules have led to so many pop-up disclosure boxes that people often consent just to make the warnings disappear.

Companies argue that they are being careful to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation, but Giovanni Buttarelli, who oversees an independent European Union agency that advises on privacy-related policies, has been unimpressed.

He has criticized the wave of privacy policy emails as being posed in a "take it or leave it" manner that leaves users thinking they have to accept the terms in order to keep using a service, rather than letting people choose what information to share.

Mr. Buttarelli said the messages might violate the spirit of the law.

WILL IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

It's too soon to tell.

That may be an unsatisfactory answer, but the long-term effects of the new law won't be known for years.

Much will depend on how strictly national regulators enforce the rules, and how they use their tight budgets. Data-protection agencies in each European Union country will be in charge of policing the companies that have European headquarters within its borders.

That oversight structure is leading to concerns that officials in countries like Ireland, where data-heavy companies like Google, Facebook, Microsoft and Twitter are based, will be overmatched.

A lot of responsibility also falls on you to keep tabs on how companies use your data.

Marketers study how to close sales in America's heartland

BY SAPNA MAHESHWARI

The commercial for HP, the maker of computers and printers, features a large family enjoying Christmas dinner together — that is, until the words "global warming" are uttered. A tense exchange between two sisters follows, culminating when one shouts at the other, telling her to leave her house.

A younger member of the family excuses herself from the table and prints out photos of the sisters over the years, arranging them in the shape of a heart. Soon, one of the feuding sisters is taking a pie to the other as a peace offering. HP's closing message: "If we never reach out, we'll never come together."

The commercial is one of many influenced by research that marketers began conducting after the 2016 United States presidential election. Donald J. Trump's victory came as a surprise to a number of advertisers, raising soul-searching questions about how well they understood Americans who do not live in coastal cities and what the sharp political polarization in the country meant for the messages they create.

When marketers for HP met to review a new ad campaign a month after the election, which took place in November,

they said they found themselves asking, "Do we think the situation we are portraying here is relevant to the Trump voter?"

The result is that marketers are now making concerted efforts to learn more about Americans who live outside New York and California. HP's recent research on marketing and political identity included visits to the swing-state cities of Cincinnati and Detroit. Late last year, the ad agency Y&R, using a division of the firm that had previously overseen cultural immersion projects in Myanmar and Ecuador, deployed strategists to immerse themselves in cities like Indianapolis and Milwaukee.

HP, based in Palo Alto, Calif., used data from social media sites to figure out how people's political bent influenced their views of technology and the brand's message of "reinvention."

"The notion was one tribe looking forward and the other tribe looking back," Antonio Lucio, HP's marketing chief, said in an interview. One group "derived the benefit of the Obama years in economic terms, in terms of opportunity — they're all about technology, open systems, open society, diversity. The other one is actually like: 'We need a reset. We've lost our way.'"



An HP commercial. The company said that it would now design ads with consumers' political leanings in mind.

That second group, he said, is more "about family and community and faith and classical Americana imagery."

HP sought to find common ground between those "very different views of the world" through research in Cincinnati, Dallas, Detroit and Richmond, Va., Mr.

Lucio said. "Normally in focus groups, you put like-minded people together and you get some insights. Here, you're putting the reds and the blues together and you allow them to fight it out," Mr. Lucio said, referring to people who identify with the Republicans or with the

Democrats. Split into pairs or groups of four, people debated for the first half, then spent the second part finding topics that they agreed on. One of those areas was family, which informed HP's ad with the arguing sisters.

Y&R's immersion project focused on

understanding the family life and core values of people in Middle America, including their relationships with brands. These people were "frequently lumped into stereotypes or overlooked entirely by marketers," the agency said when it announced the effort last year.

The firm sent 14 strategists to four cities for two weeks each: Memphis, Indianapolis, Milwaukee and Phoenix. Moments from their journey, including visits to the rural outreaches of each city, were posted to Instagram.

A report on their findings noted that the Americans they had spoken with identified more with their communities than the nation at large and "preferred the comfort of fiery conviction to the lucidity of cold truth."

The report added that marketers should be conscious of a changing definition of success in the nation and the power of "an emotional appeal made with gumption," rather than, say, promoting a product's superior qualities or rankings.

A spokeswoman for the agency said the research had been used in pitches to win new business.

As marketers have become more aware of "an urban-suburban-rural geo-

HEARTLAND, PAGE 6

BUSINESS

Help wanted at fast-food counters

TheUpshot

BY RACHEL ABRAMS
AND ROBERT GEBELOFF

A quarter-century ago, there were 56 teenagers in the American labor force for every “limited service” restaurant — that is, the kind where you order at the counter.

Today, there are fewer than half as many, which is a reflection both of teenagers’ decreasing work force participation and the explosive growth in restaurants.

But in an industry where cheap labor is an essential component in providing inexpensive food, a shortage of workers is changing the equation upon which fast-food places have long relied. This can be seen in rising wages, in a growth of incentives and in the sometimes odd situations that business owners find themselves in.

This is why Jeffrey Kaplow, for example, spends a lot of time working behind the counter in his Subway restaurant in New York. It’s not what he pictured himself doing, but he simply doesn’t have enough employees.

Mr. Kaplow has tried everything he can think of to find workers, including placing Craigslist ads, asking other franchisees for referrals and seeking to hire people from Subways that have closed.

Yet there he was during a recent lunchtime rush, ringing up veggie footlongs and fountain drinks. He feared that if the line grew too long, people might get frustrated and not come back.

“Every time there’s a huge line, the next day the store is nowhere near as busy,” he explained later as he straightened tables and swept up crumbs.

Across the United States, Keith Miller, another franchisee, is dealing with the same problem. “What employees? We don’t have them anymore,” joked Mr. Miller, who can’t find enough workers for the three Subways he owns in Northern California.

Since 2010, fast-food jobs have grown nearly twice as fast as employment over all, contributing to the economic recovery. But rapid growth has created new problems. Some say restaurants have grown faster than demand, causing a glut of competition that is another source of pressure on business owners.

Restaurant owners are also worrying about increased immigration enforcement: Nearly 20 percent of workers are foreign-born.

With unemployment at a 17-year low, businesses everywhere are struggling to find workers. Fast food is feeling the pinch acutely, especially as one important source of workers has dried up. In 2000, about 45 percent of those between 16 and 19 had jobs — today it’s 30 percent. “We used to get overwhelmed with the number of people wanting summer jobs,” Mr. Miller said, adding that he now got a handful of such applications, at most. “I don’t know what teenagers do all summer.”

Gavin Poole, a 17-year-old senior at Montville Township High School in New Jersey, likes the idea of being his own boss — that’s one reason he created a small business out of after-school landscaping and handyman work. The



Jeffrey Kaplow, second from left, working at the Subway store he owns in New York City. With unemployment at a 17-year low, businesses are struggling to find workers.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAM HODGSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

money has helped cover his cellphone bill and the payments on the Jeep Wrangler he leased last year. “I want to be prepared for the future, because you don’t know, financially, what situation you could be in,” he said.

A recent analysis by economists at the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that an increased emphasis on education — and getting scholarships — had contributed to the decline in working teenagers, reflecting both the rising costs of education and the low wages most people that age can earn. Now, after years of benefiting from low-cost labor, many employers are starting to pay more. Fast-food wages began rising in 2014 and have increased faster than overall wages since. But at \$10.93 an hour, the pay is still less than half the average for an hourly employee, pushing companies to offer more incentives — like dental insurance, sign-up bonuses and even travel reimbursement — to entice workers.

That’s good news for workers like Juan Morales, who has assembled sandwiches at a Subway on Staten Island for more than 15 years. “It’s much better than before,” said Mr. Morales, who earns a little more than \$15 an hour. “But for my boss, I see that it’s harder.”

Restaurants are notorious for churning through employees. But people are coming and going faster than they have in recent memory, according to data



Gavin Poole, a 17-year-old student, created a business out of after-school landscaping and handyman work. The money has helped pay for a Jeep Wrangler he leased.

from TDn2K, a restaurant research firm. Last year, the turnover rate reached 133 percent, meaning that positions often had to be filled more than once.

That has forced business owners to adjust. Tamra Kennedy, who owns nine Taco John’s franchises in the Midwest, started offering \$100 as a bonus to new

employees who reached 100 hours. She has started offering merit increases twice a year, and she pays all employees more than the minimum wage.

“Hiring has been more challenging in the last two years than probably the previous 10,” Ms. Kennedy said.

About half of her stores are understaffed. So she has devised work-

arounds: Digital probes, not people, now record food temperatures. She has also invested in expensive new registers that can produce reports that employees used to do by hand.

“I’ve never seen the industry in this kind of situation,” said Robert S. Goldin, a partner at the food consulting firm Pentallact. “It’s never been like this.”

Labor costs are rising, according to an estimate from Dean Haskell, a partner at National Retail Concept Partners, a restaurant and retail consulting firm in Denver. Mr. Haskell analyzed public financial filings from 15 major chains and determined that those companies spent about \$73 million more on labor last year than the year before.

McDonald’s has announced that it will expand its tuition-reimbursement program, committing \$150 million over five years to tuition reimbursement for employees who work at its stores for at least 90 days. Before, the requirement was nine months.

“Thirty years ago, I would not put up with the stuff I put up with today,” said John Motta, a longtime Dunkin’ Donuts franchisee in Nashua, N.H. When an employee recently missed a shift, one of his stores could serve only drive-through customers for about an hour.

“You try not to be too harsh on them,” he said, “because you’re afraid tomorrow they’re not going to show up.”

Marketers focus on America’s heartland

HEARTLAND, FROM PAGE 5 graphic divide,” it has had an effect on some of the settings and people who appear in advertisements, said Harris Diamond, chief executive of McCann Worldgroup.

A recent Chevrolet commercial from the firm reflects that newfound awareness, he said. The ad features actual Chevy truck owners, several with Southern accents, describing the stories behind dents and scratches on their trucks.

“There has been a little bit of a reawakening to the fact that we probably went too far with respect towards pushing a sort of cosmopolitan, what some people viewed as an elitist, image,” Mr. Diamond said. “I think if you look at some of the campaigns that are out there, you will see more imagery that is more broadly associated with all of America rather than cosmopolitan America.”

As a result of its research, HP will now design ads with consumers’ political leanings in mind — the same way it considers age, ethnicity and income when formulating its marketing plans, the company said in a report last month. Just as the company might design certain marketing for a Latino audience, Mr. Lucio said, “we’re going to have to test first and foremost whether a piece of content actually works across the aisle and whether there’s a possibility of custom-made content.”

More of that work will be visible over time, he said.

“We’re about to launch a campaign for the premium line, and it is going to have a couple of digital videos,” Mr. Lucio said. “And we said we have to make one for the heartland.”

The dilemma in a glass of Venezuelan rum

REPORTER’S NOTEBOOK

BY DANNY HAKIM

A reader recently asked me about Venezuelan rum.

“Is it ethical to still drink it given the current horrific situation politically and economically?” she wrote in an email. “I adore dark rum and recently have become enamored with all rums from Venezuela but especially Diplomático. I joke that I am supporting the people of Venezuela but am I really? Should I stop drinking them? Who really owns those companies?”

The backdrop for her questions is Venezuela’s descent into increasing isolation, mired in an economic crisis, hyperinflation and basic problems of survival like food shortages and a starving population amid the authoritarian socialist rule of its president, Nicolás Maduro.

But is avoiding a country’s products an appropriate response, or even justified? Is there a difference between rum brands like Diplomático and Ron Santa Teresa?

“Living in a country like Venezuela, you have to live ethical dilemmas on a daily basis,” said Alberto Vollmer, the chief executive of Ron Santa Teresa, the oldest and most polarizing of the rum companies in the country, in a recent interview. He likened operating in the country to walking on eggshells, and then reconsidered. “More like broken bottles.”

While Venezuela’s economy is dominated by oil, the history of rum in the region goes back to the colonial era.

Deciding how you spend your own money seems like a fundamental right in a democracy. But Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, writing in *The Guardian*, warned of “boycott fatigue” related to fresh campaigns against Starbucks from the left and the San Antonio Spurs from the right.

My first call on Venezuelan rum was to Thor Halvorssen, an activist who

runs the Human Rights Foundation, which puts on the Oslo Freedom Forum, a conference that honors dissidents from around the world.

Mr. Halvorssen is a dual citizen of Venezuela and Norway, with deep roots in both countries. He thinks boycotts should be focused on repressive governments.

“Engaging in boycotts that dampen someone’s freedom of expression is probably not a good idea, because those winds can turn on you,” he said. He brought up calls to boycott the Coachella music festival because of its owner’s views on gay rights, noting that “the owner of Coachella can’t have you tortured and taken away.”

He also said there is “not a one-size-fits-all solution or prescription with regards to ethics, boycotts and authoritarianism.” He believes proceeds from purchases of goods from places like Cuba end up helping a repressive government.

He had a more nuanced take on Venezuela, and said the question was more situational, depending on the company. But he was vociferous about one rum in particular — Santa Teresa, and its owner, Mr. Vollmer.

“He acts as an ambassador for the regime,” said Mr. Halvorssen. “Nobody should buy Santa Teresa.”

That might sound like a tough stance. Mr. Vollmer, 49, has worked to rehabilitate gang members in his region by creating an ambitious work training program called Project Alcastraz, and also organizes rugby matches for gang members and prison inmates.

But Mr. Vollmer has also long courted controversy for his accommodations to Mr. Maduro and his predecessor, Hugo Chávez. He also has a warm relationship with Tareck El Aissami, Venezuela’s vice president, who has been sanctioned by the United States as a drug trafficker.

Mr. Vollmer particularly fanned resentments when he appeared with Mr. Maduro last year, gave a speech, shook his hand enthusiastically and

accepted government aid amid economic turmoil.

“He received the subsidies from the government and then he went on television to praise the government, in Venezuela and elsewhere,” said Mr. Halvorssen, calling such executives “key enablers of the regime.”

I met Mr. Vollmer this month in New York to hear his side of the story. He is a charismatic executive whose grandfather was a merchant from Hamburg who married a first cousin of the Venezuelan independence hero Simón Bolívar. (Mr. Halvorssen is also a descendant of Bolívar.)



JENS MORTENSEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

“For me, the main ethical dilemma that I have every single day is basically thinking, is it right to stay here?” he said of his country. “Putting my three kids in danger, I’ve got a 6-month-old baby, a 4-year-old and a 6-year-old, and of course my wife. Every single day they are there, their lives are at risk.”

“But then you think, if we leave, then what are you leaving unprotected?” he added. “And so you’re talking about 7,500 families that depend on you, you’ve got the development of the country, you’ve got all that responsibility that’s somehow on your shoulders, that you’re basically leaving behind.”

Regarding his appearance last year with Mr. Maduro, he said “I spoke with bad timing and probably the wrong

body language. Not probably, surely. You know I’ve heard the speech several times, and when you see the content of the speech, the content wasn’t bad. The body language was bad, the timing was bad.”

He said his company was extended a line of credit by the government, and ultimately used \$1 million to buy barrels for aging rum. When I asked him what he thought about the government, he paused.

“Wow,” he said. “I’m just thinking what the right answer is.”

“I would say I think we’ve made mistakes, and when I say we, I’m talking as a country. Decisions that have been taken have been wrong decisions that have taken us to a country that is in crisis, that has been isolated. Now I also believe that the biggest challenge we have as a country right now is coming together in having a unifying vision, a common vision.”

His company has survived for 221 years, and he appears determined to continue.

“In such a polarized environment, if you try to be neutral, everyone is going to attack you,” Mr. Vollmer said. “If you leave, if the good guys leave, who is going to be there? Who is going to help steer things in the right direction? And when things somehow open up, who is going to be there to be build?”

Other rum companies have taken a lower profile. Victoria Cooper, a spokeswoman for Diplomático, issued a statement that lived up to the company’s name: “We are aware of the difficult situation that our country is facing, and it is our duty to support our local community and employees in the best way we can.”

Mr. Halvorssen, for his part, believes there should be more thought put into the question of the political conditions under which products are made.

“People are smart when it comes to buying their groceries, buying cage-free eggs,” he said. “Why wouldn’t people have an individual commerce policy?”

Envisioning an official digital rival for Bitcoin

TheUpshot

Former Fed official thinks central banks should give thought to blockchain

BY NEIL IRWIN

Many enthusiasts of Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies are motivated by deep skepticism of the central banks that control the world’s money supply.

But what if central banks themselves entered the game? What would happen if the United States Federal Reserve or the European Central Bank or the Bank of Japan used blockchain technology to create their own virtual currencies? Besides, that is, having some cryptocurrency fans’ heads explode?

A former Fed governor — who was also a finalist to lead the American central bank — thinks the idea deserves serious consideration.

“Most central banks have a view that these crypto-assets are clever, like guys in the garage did it and it’s kind of cool, or risky,” given the potential investor losses and widespread fraud, said Kevin Warsh, who was a governor at the Fed from 2006 to 2011 and was a top contender to become its chairman late last year when President Trump instead appointed Jerome Powell.

If he had returned to the Fed, Mr. Warsh said, he would have appointed a team “to think about the Fed creating FedCoin, where we would bring legal activities into a digital coin.”

“Not that it would supplant and replace cash,” he said, “but it would be a pretty effective way when the next crisis happens for us to maybe conduct monetary policy.”

He added that blockchain technology, which allows reliable, decentralized record keeping of transactions, could be useful in the payment systems operated by the Fed, which enable the transfer of trillions of dollars between banks.

“It strikes me that a central bank digital currency might have a role to play there,” Mr. Warsh, who is now a distinguished visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, said recently.

Some central banks are already doing work in this vein, including the Monetary Authority of Singapore and the Bank of England. And Mr. Powell acknowledged the potential applications in his confirmation hearing for the Fed chairmanship in November, saying, “We actually look at blockchain as something that may have significant applications in the wholesale payments part of the economy.”



Kevin Warsh, a former Federal Reserve governor, said something like a FedCoin could be helpful to the central bank.

It would be quite a twist if a technology whose most ardent fans are motivated by distrust of central banks became a key tool for those banks.

But it would address some of the concerns connected to Bitcoin and its many privately created rivals. To the degree that the value of existing cryptocurrencies fluctuates wildly, they are ill-suited as a medium of exchange. Central banks have spent hundreds of years learning how to keep the value of money stable.

And to the degree Bitcoin and the like facilitate tax evasion, money laundering and fraud, they will be a target of global law enforcement. Central banks are used to building systems that allow enforcement of those laws.

It’s clear that central banks weighing use of blockchain technology don’t share the more anarchist impulses of some of the most die-hard cryptocurrency enthusiasts. But there may be more commonality than it might seem. As Mr. Warsh argues, if people really do believe that digital currencies in some form are the future of money, it would behoove central banks to treat them as more than a novelty.

“Congress gave the Fed a monopoly over money,” Mr. Warsh said. “And if the next generation of cryptocurrencies look more like money and less like gold — and have less volatility associated with them so they would be not just a speculative asset but could be a reliable unit of account — as a purely defensive matter I wouldn’t want somebody to take that monopoly from me.”

In other words, if cryptocurrency enthusiasts are correct that this technology could become a better way of carrying out even routine transactions, the Fed and its counterparts are the institutions that have the most to lose.

ART OF FILMMAKING

“These stories are truly powerful to other women, and I felt they are not told enough.”

Women’s battles continue at Cannes

Urgent political struggles in the spotlight are reflected in the festival

BY NICOLAS RAPOLD

Eva Husson’s “Girls of the Sun” remains a rarity in cinema for being a story centered on women in combat. In a year of historic battles over the status quo in gender and power relations, the story gains a special resonance.

“At such an important moment in history for women — a paradigm shift — I was very surprised that nothing had been done on this level before,” Ms. Husson said of the film, which will have its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival. “As a woman, I’ve been quite angry over the past year.”

In “Girls of the Sun,” a former lawyer (Golshifteh Farahani) joins a battalion of women in Kurdistan after escaping enslavement by extremists. She becomes a commander and recounts her experiences to a war reporter (Emmanuelle Bercot). The resulting drama was compared with “Black Panther” by Thierry Frémaux, the festival’s director, for revamping traditional points of view.

“My experience is a lot of women have lived through very traumatic things, but most of them are extremely strong and resilient and are hard-core survivors,” Ms. Husson said. “These stories are truly powerful to other women, and I felt they are not told enough.”

Ms. Husson is one of the three female directors in the 21-film competition at Cannes, which runs through May 19. In the past, the festival has drawn criticism for gender imbalances in its lineup. And this year, other urgent political struggles also enter the spotlight.

If anything could define its 71st edition — which is being held on the 50th anniversary of the May 1968 protests in France against President Charles de Gaulle’s government, when the festival shut down after days of sit-ins — it is the impossibility of compartmentalizing movies during turbulent times.

The 2018 competition, for example, also has the latest film from Iran’s Jafar Panahi, “Three Faces.” Yet for years, Mr. Panahi has been confined in his home country by the Iranian government. He has a Russian counterpart in Kirill Serebrennikov, director of “Leto,” a competition film about rock ‘n’ roll in Russia during the 1980s. Mr. Serebrennikov, an acclaimed theater director, has been under house arrest in Moscow.

Even in the weeks since the announcement of this year’s lineup, fresh political dramas emerged. Wanuri Kahiu’s “Rafiki (Friend)” was banned in her home country, Kenya. The film, the first Kenyan selection in Cannes history, portrays a romance between two young women, taboo and illegal in that country.

“As much as it’s a great, great honor to have a film acknowledged in Cannes,



Love and war Top, a scene from “Girls of the Sun” by Eva Husson, one of three female directors in the competition. Above, Wanuri Kahiu’s “Rafiki (Friend)” was banned in her home country, Kenya. The film portrays a romance between two young women, taboo and illegal there.

you want the people you made it for to be able to see it,” Ms. Kahiu said in an interview hours after the Kenyan Film Certification Board announced the ban.

For directors like Ms. Kahiu, Cannes serves as a home for exiled films. More generally, however, the festival remains a dedicated showcase for the art of cinema, whether politically targeted or not. It is an unabashedly big stage in an age of small screens.

In the auteurist tradition of Cannes, that means spotlighting filmmakers like Jean-Luc Godard (“The Image Book”), Alice Rohrwacher (“Happy as Lazzaro”), Spike Lee (“BlacKkKlansman”), Lee Chang-dong (“Burning”), Nuri Bilge Ceylan (“The Wild Pear Tree”) and Jia Zhangke (“Ash Is the Purest White”). Stars, of course, don’t hurt; Penélope Cruz and Javier Bardem headline the festival opener, Asghar Farhadi’s “Everybody Knows.”

The anticipation for such titles remains high, and in an overwhelming news media atmosphere, Cannes works to preserve the impact of its world premieres. A policy change coordinates the timing of press screenings so they do not precede and upstage red carpet galas. The move seems to ensure that no filmmaker or actor has to read a negative advance review (or tweet). It also feeds the sense of mystique and exclusivity that the festival thrives on.

That might sound a bit like pandering to producers and publicists looking to manage the first impressions of their films. But the shift could also have fans among filmmakers who like to preserve some mystery about their work.

“Films are the result of alchemy, and revealing the ingredients even before the experiment may prove counterproductive,” Ms. Rohrwacher wrote in an email about her “Happy as Lazzaro,” a

tale of a bucolic innocent who leaves his world “It’s like inviting friends for a pasta: Real friends don’t ask ‘what pasta? what sauce?’”

Ms. Rohrwacher screened “The Wonders” in the festival’s Un Certain Regard section in 2014. The latest class of Un Certain Regard features other names to follow, such as Bi Gan (“Long Day’s Journey Into Night”); Ulrich Köhler (“In My Room”); and, among several first-time filmmakers, Vanessa Filho (“Angel Face”).

The section reflects efforts by the festival to address the gender imbalance among its directors. Nearly half the section’s films were directed by women. The actor-filmmaker Nandita Das of India, a Cannes regular and two-time jury member, is one of them.

In “Manto,” which Ms. Das also wrote, she tells the story of the Urdu author Saadat Hasan Manto, a witty and relent-

less critic of India’s Partition.

Ms. Das views cinema and politics as going hand in hand. “For me, films have always been a means to an end. I make no bones in admitting that what I want to convey through the film decides the form that I choose to adopt,” she wrote in an email.

The stories told by Ms. Das and Ms. Husson dovetail with a larger sense that Cannes is acknowledging a changing world. The 2018 juries feature two female heads this year (Cate Blanchett and Ursula Meier), and the festival has

One film was banned in Kenya, and two directors may not be allowed to leave their home countries.

announced efforts to gain parity in its administrative staff.

There are further announcements promised at a conference that will convene representatives of Time’s Up, 5050 x 2020 and similar international organizations.

In this climate, the role of Cannes in defining film history becomes particularly acute. That gives new significance to its Cannes Classics section, ordinarily a sedate redoubt of restorations and cinephiliac documentaries. One of this year’s selections, the documentary “Be Natural: The Untold Story of Alice Guy-Blaché,” shines a light on an early French filmmaker, who in recent years has attracted new attention for her pioneering work in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Far from languishing in obscurity, this historical film has a celebrity narrator: Jodie Foster, who was also surprised to learn about Ms. Guy-Blaché. “I thought, how is it possible that I’ve never heard her? She was a writer, producer, studio head, with 1,000 films under her belt,” Ms. Foster, a Cannes veteran and multi-hyphenate, wrote in an email.

“Be Natural” will be screened in the annual assortment of out-of-competition films. There are midnight selections (such as Ramin Bahrani’s “Fahrenheit 451”) and special screenings ranging from a vintage 50th-anniversary presentation of “2001: A Space Odyssey” to a Wim Wenders documentary about Pope Francis.

The festival also features the usual complement of enfants terribles and causes célèbres. Yes, we see you, Lars Von Trier (“The House That Jack Built”), back after being banned. And welcome back — probably — Terry Gilliam, with “The Man Who Killed Don Quixote,” which has been the target of legal threats by a producer.

But this year, it seems unlikely that Cannes will remain quite the same bubble of art, glamour and gossipy intrigue that attendees have known. Early signals suggest that the festival is acknowledging that cinema, like the world, has entered a period of change. Everybody knows (to borrow the opening film’s title), and, it seems, so does Cannes.



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ART OF FILMMAKING

Wang Bing gives voice to history

'Dead Souls' documents the struggles of those enslaved in the 1950s

BY NICOLAS RAPOLD

"Well, I guess I'll start at the beginning."

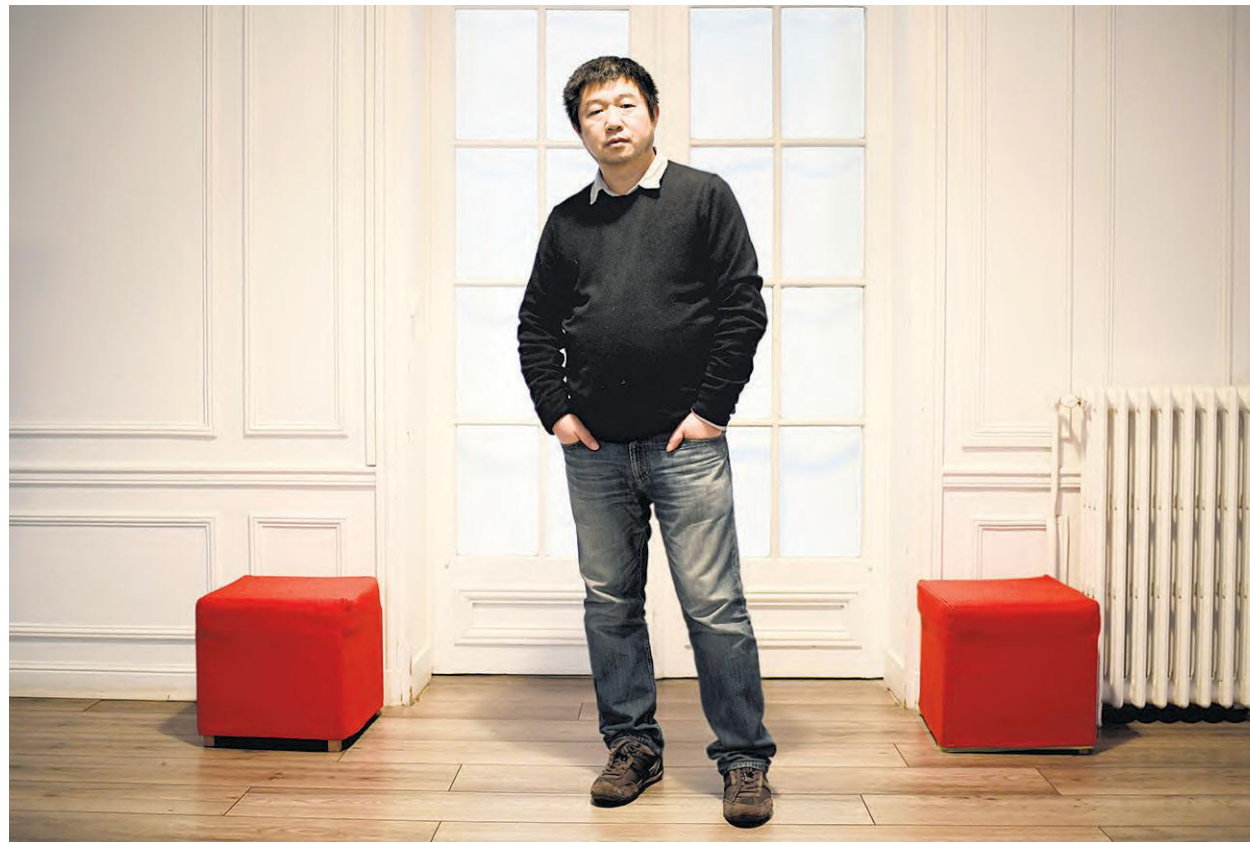
The opening words spoken in Wang Bing's film "He Fengming: A Chinese Memoir" are humble ones. But what follows is a record of cataclysmic times in postwar China, recounted by Ms. He, a survivor of forced labor camps. She methodically speaks of how it happened, how she was separated from her husband, all while seated in her cluttered, dimly lit, utterly ordinary home.

The result is by turns shattering and sedate — a testimony that one critic called "both a cry of pain and a sigh of relief."

"He Fengming" screened at Cannes in 2007, the same year as "4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days" and "No Country for Old Men." Now Mr. Wang returns to the festival with a work that gives voice to more living veterans of history like Ms. He. "Dead Souls," his new documentary, has its world premiere this week, clocking in at 8 hours 15 minutes.

"The only objective is to obtain, from their memories, the knowledge of the people who can no longer speak of what they went through," Mr. Wang said in an interview.

The subjects of "Dead Souls" were condemned in the Communist Party's "anti-rightist" campaign in the 1950s. Like Ms. He, they were imprisoned, en-



STEPHANE DE SAKUTIN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES



LES FILMS D'ICI

"What happened in the Jiabiangou labor camps was a page unknown in the Chinese history."

slaved and starved in "re-education" camps like Jiabiangou in the Gobi Desert.

"Dead Souls" is only the latest film in an ambitious, outsize oeuvre that seems to take Frederick Wiseman as the benchmark for capturing the experience of a nation.

Mr. Wang's previous works include his gargantuan chronicle of obsolescent factories and their workers, "West of the Tracks," which The New York Times called a "nine-hour masterpiece." His 14-hour installation "Crude Oil" tracked the process of oil extraction. "Mrs. Fang," his most recent, is a comparatively brief (86 minutes) but devastating elegy of an older woman's final days.

Mr. Wang sits at the pinnacle of the Chinese documentary groundswell that arose with the country's social and economic upheaval in the 1990s. Last year, he won the Golden Leopard at the Locarno film festival, bestowed by a jury led by the filmmaker Olivier Assayas. His work has premiered in Berlin,

Long memories Wang Bing, top, whose new documentary, "Dead Souls," has its world premiere this week at Cannes. Above, one of the survivors of China's labor camps in the 1950s who tell their stories in the film, which clocks in at 8 hours 15 minutes.

Venice (garnering another prize), and Documenta (which has also commissioned projects of his), with retrospectives at the Centre Pompidou and the Harvard Film Archive.

"Wang brings us inside the world he is chronicling so thoroughly that, if we

watch it in one go, we are apt to lose track of what things outside are like," the critic Luc Sante wrote of Mr. Wang's "epic and intimate" cinema.

"Fengming" stands alongside first-person precedents like Shirley Clarke's "Portrait of Jason" (1967) and Errol Mor-

ris's "The Fog of War" (2004) in its ability to wrest powerful effects from the deceptively simple setup of a lone raconteur," the critic Ed Halter wrote. Other admirers include the filmmakers Jia Zhangke, Arnaud Desplechin and Pedro Costa.

What to watch for at Cannes

A global roster includes new work by Spike Lee and Jean-Luc Godard

BY NICOLAS RAPOLD

Here are some films people will be talking about this year at Cannes.

"BIRDS OF PASSAGE"

The opening film of Directors' Fortnight is being advertised as "the origin story of the drug trade." The filmmakers Ciro Guerra and Cristina Gallego of Colombia portray a family crime dynasty that faces a clash between tradition and the brutal demands of its illicit business. In 2015, Mr. Guerra mesmerized audiences with the trancelike Amazon River drama "Embrace of the Serpent," and he is already at work on his next film with Robert Pattinson.

"BLACKKLANSMAN"

Spike Lee is in the competition for the first time since "Jungle Fever" in 1991. Mr. Lee's Cannes comeback seems likely to fry the brain circuits of viewers: It's the true story of Ron Stallworth, a black Colorado police detective who went undercover in the Ku Klux Klan in the late 1970s with the help of a white fellow officer. John David Washington, who played a conflicted cop in the Sundance award-winner "Monsters and Men," stars as Mr. Stallworth with Adam Driver as his partner.

"BURNING"

Fans of Haruki Murakami will be curious about this adaptation of his short story "Barn Burning." The director Lee Chang-dong of South Korea has spun a feature out of the tale's chance encounters between a writer and a freewheeling couple (an arsonist and a model). Mr. Lee's take may not follow all the particulars of the original, but Mr. Murakami's text is in good hands: The filmmaker's last feature, "Poetry," won Best Screenplay at Cannes. Steven Yuen, a "Walking Dead" alumnus, plays the firestarter.



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DAVID LEE/FOCUS FEATURES

Coming attractions Clockwise from top left: scenes from "Birds of Passage," from the Colombian filmmakers Ciro Guerra and Cristina Gallego; Lars Von Trier's "The House That Jack Built"; Spike Lee's "BlackKlansman"; and "Burning," from Lee Chang-dong of South Korea.

"CAPERNAUM"

The third feature from Nadine Labaki, a Lebanese director and actor, puts a new twist on the enduring theme of children finding their own place in the world. The story concerns a 12-year-old boy who sues his parents for bringing him into the world. Ms. Labaki, who directed the warm and wise beauty parlor drama "Caramel," again taps nonprofessional actors for much of her cast and uses a Middle Eastern fishing village for a setting.

"THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT"

Much like Terry Gilliam's long-gestating "The Man Who Killed Don Quixote," Lars Von Trier's latest feature was

nearly going to be famous for not showing at Cannes. The uncertainty arose because Mr. Von Trier had been banned from the festival for comments he made in 2011 about Hitler. His film will screen out of competition. Mr. Von Trier's newest provocation evokes pure, twisted id: A serial killer (Matt Dillon) undertakes five murders as if they were art. Uma Thurman, Bruno Ganz and Riley Keough also star.

"THE IMAGE BOOK"

A few years ago at Cannes, Jean-Luc Godard drew wild applause midfilm for the 3-D experiments of "Goodbye to Language." The feat proved that a new film by the 87-year-old Mr. Godard remains

an event, and after he missed the last edition, the 2018 lineup at last features his latest venture into the poetics of pure cinema. The film reportedly addresses the present and past of the Middle East, but as ever, the real draw is Mr. Godard.

"HAPPY AS LAZZARO"

Lazzaro, a good-hearted farm boy, befriends a nobleman named Tancredi in Alice Rohrwacher's long-awaited feature after "The Wonders," 2014 entry in the festival section Un Certain Regard. Strange adventures in modernity ensue after Tancredi enlists Lazzaro in a kidnapping scheme involving... Tancredi. Ms. Rohrwacher's feel for secluded communities and the wisdom of innocents

For his part, Mr. Wang can sound very modest about his continuing document of Chinese history.

"In China, my life is like that of all the other normal Chinese," Mr. Wang said. "I am one of the many from the normal class. So I filmed these people."

Mr. Wang was born in the north of China in 1967, after the events chronicled in "Dead Souls." Initially studying photography, he went on to the Beijing Film Academy, part of the same generation as Mr. Jia (who also has a film at Cannes this year). Mr. Wang gorged himself on the directors Antonioni, Bergman, and Tarkovsky (partly thanks to a professor who brought thousands of videotapes from abroad), with Pasolini close to his heart.

"West of the Tracks," with its view of Chinese heavy industry in decline, put a spotlight on Mr. Wang in 2003. The film announced an artist with a mission to catch major epochs and small moments before they disappeared.

"Dead Souls" is no different. Shot from 2005 to 2017, it covers most of China's provinces and entailed visits to more than 120 survivors of re-education camps. Mr. Wang's goal was to preserve memories before they disappeared, in the vein of Claude Lanzmann's monumental "Shoah."

"What happened in the Jiabiangou labor camps was a page unknown in the Chinese history," Mr. Wang said of the project, which at an early stage was titled "Past in the Present." "Of course, it's not only a tragedy of China, but also one of the numerous terrible catastrophes in human history."

Hard-hitting subject matter can sometimes be a problem for filmmakers facing censorship in China, but this does not seem to have been an obstacle for Mr. Wang.

"I've been free to shoot my films in China," he said, explaining that the low commercial value of his work kept him from submitting them for theatrical release there. ("Mrs. Fang" will screen at next month's Shanghai International Film Festival.)

"Dead Souls" finds Mr. Wang again embracing the immersive approach that has yielded memorable results: the touching and magical fireside moments with migrants in "Ta'ang," or the unnervingly free wanderings of children left to fend for themselves in "Three Sisters." It's a form of cinema that begins to feel more like living with the people on screen than merely watching them.

For those ready to commit the time and attention, "Dead Souls" will be an oasis of focus amid the many distractions of Cannes.

With his typical cool understatement, Mr. Wang said: "I don't have particular expectations from the audience. I hope this film can hold the content of the stories I shot. In other words, there is a lot of content in this film. That's why it's long."

Stories of a crime dynasty, undercover police work, chance encounters, adventures in modernity, a serial killer, a boy who sues his parents and more.

looks to be on display in the story, which has a time-travel component that the director compares to the story of Rip Van Winkle.

"LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT"

Bi Gan may not be as well known as his compatriot Jia Zhangke (who is also appearing in this year's edition), but his prior feature, "Kaili Blues," announced a spectacular new voice in Chinese cinema. In his next film, starring Sylvia Chang and Tang Wei, a man goes on a quest to track down a woman from his past. It's film noir, but infused with dazzling color. At the press conference announcing this year's lineup, the feature was described as a mix of David Lynch and Hou Hsiao-hsien.

"THREE FACES"

Honored at festivals across the world, the director Jafar Panahi has remained confined in Iran and nominally banned from filmmaking. But that has not prevented him from directing yet another feature. Mr. Panahi chronicles three Iranian actresses from different generations, pre- and post-revolution, setting the action in the country's mountains as opposed to the usual backdrop of Tehran (or rooms in Tehran). The Cannes festival is reportedly trying to secure permission for Mr. Panahi to attend.

"UNDER THE SILVER LAKE"

Andrew Garfield stars as a lost soul in what sounds like a classic trip into a Pynchon-esque California bizarro-world. Mr. Garfield's character begins by trying to track down a beguiling woman who has disappeared, but who knows where it goes from there. The director David Robert Mitchell showed an indefatigable focus with his creepy twist on ghoulish stalker horror, "It Follows," and the new film promises another destabilizing universe for audiences to enter.

Opinion

What is wrong with Malaysia?

Despite the election on Wednesday, we still are paying no attention to one of the greatest cases of kleptocracy in history.

Umapagan Ampikaikan

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA I have never quite bought the notion that democracy delivers a government no better than what its people deserve. The phrase, often repeated in anger or haste, is clever, but it ignores political realities. We do not deserve the government we get if the government we get is the consequence of fear and uncertainty, poverty, weakened democratic institutions, systematic racism, gerrymandering and a system stacked in favor of those in power.

Malaysia votes on May 9 and almost every projection has Barisan Nasional, the ruling coalition led by Prime Minister Najib Razak, claiming electoral victory for the 14th consecutive time. To be precise: This coalition or a predecessor has governed Malaysia (and before it, Malaya) for over 60 years, without a break. Barisan Nasional and Co. probably is the longest-ruling political alliance in the world.

But Wednesday's election — hashtag: #GE14 — is being called “the mother of all elections” for other reasons as well.

Our disparate and desperate opposition recently came together to create the closest thing Malaysia has had to a two-party election, with all opposition candidates agreeing to campaign

Do Prime Minister Najib's sins become ours as well if we re-elect him?

under the flag and logo of the People's Justice Party of Anwar Ibrahim, who is in prison on sodomy charges (again). Mahathir Mohamad, Malaysia's nonagenarian ex-prime minister,

has reunited with Mr. Anwar — a former deputy he sacked and first had jailed — to lead the opposition against the very system he created and helped fortify during more than two decades in power.

What's more, Mr. Mahathir is doing this by campaigning for the political party that was set up to fight injustices allegedly perpetrated while he was in power. But never mind that. Facing a Trumpian Mr. Najib — another protégé of his — who promises to “Make Malaysia Great,” Mr. Mahathir has pledged to save the country from this scandal-ridden government.

Over nearly a decade in office, Mr. Najib and his administration have been plagued by wild allegations, ranging from various counts of financial impropriety to conspiracy to commit murder. Among all the kaffeeklatsch and the hearsay, all the tales of lavish living and cronyism, one story line stands out: a case of kleptocracy so immense that it is has spawned criminal and regulatory investigations in at least 10 jurisdictions around the world.

The scandal in question has to do with the sovereign wealth fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad, or 1MDB, which Mr. Najib set up in 2009 to spur economic development in Malaysia. According to the United States Department of Justice, money from the fund has been used to purchase ritzy apartments in Manhattan, mansions in Los Angeles, paintings by Monet and Van Gogh, a corporate jet, a luxury yacht — and even to finance the making of “The Wolf of Wall Street.” Some \$681 million



MANAN VATSAYANA/AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

may also have wound their way into our prime minister's personal bank accounts.

Yet 1MDB will play little to no part in Wednesday's election.

Why? For one thing, from the outset Mr. Najib used his power and influence to interfere with investigations into the scandal. He replaced the attorney general who was getting ready to file criminal charges against him and sacked cabinet members who were openly criticizing the government's handling of the allegations. Four members of the parliamentary accounts committee charged with investigating the case were promoted to cabinet positions, and the committee's work was suspended.

The Najib administration aggressively went after the media, blocking internet access to independent websites like The Malaysian Insider, The Sarawak Report and Medium. It suspended the publication of The Edge Weekly after the newspaper ran an investigative piece making the same claims the United States Justice Department would make about a year later.

In recent times, the Malaysian government has pushed through restrictions on free speech, arrested individuals for sedition and introduced repressive laws — including one, ostensibly aimed at terrorists, that allows suspects to be detained indefinitely and another that punishes individuals for maliciously spreading “fake news.”

While all of this was happening, Mr. Najib was off doing statesmanlike things: hobnobbing with world leaders at important economic summits, negotiating trans-Pacific trade deals, golfing with President Obama, building ties with China and setting up Malaysia as a key regional force in the fight against terrorism.

It must have helped that 1MDB was far too vast and far too complex a scandal for many people to fathom. In any event, the administration's strategy of information suppression and distraction worked. Because here we are, facing the mother of all general elections, and Malaysians still are not paying attention to this kleptocracy scandal, perhaps the biggest in the history of the world.

Last September, in a survey of Ma-

laysia voters aged 21 to 30 by the independent pollster Merdeka Center, just 6 percent of respondents said they still cared about 1MDB and approximately 5 percent about Mr. Najib's integrity. According to the social-media observer Politweet, the number of people tweeting about 1MDB dropped from 85,118 in 2015 to 19,459 in 2017.

This administration now has near-complete control over the government, the various bodies tasked with investigating the scandal and the media. We don't murder journalists in Malaysia yet, but we have become very good at making life difficult for them. Mr. Najib's administration has successfully wagged the dog and manipulated the electorate into thinking that the scandal doesn't matter. Come May 9, he may win yet another election in spite of it.

About a month ago, a series of videos titled #namasayanajib, or #mynameisnajib, began appearing here as ads on YouTube. The videos feature a boy — who just happens to share our prime minister's first name — and his many adventures as he encounters various situations that allow him to display his

virtues. He is hardworking. He is honest. He is enterprising. He is everything a good Malaysian should be.

In one episode, young Najib is accused of stealing a watch, when all he did was put it aside for safekeeping. In another, one of his classmates accuses a teacher after money from their school goes missing. When the boy is proved wrong, Najib lectures him about jumping to conclusions without knowing all the facts. (We never find out who is responsible for the theft.)

I don't know if Barisan Nasional ultimately is behind this thinly veiled propaganda. But the video series's 13 moralistic tales appear to be a myth-making exercise designed to invite the public to associate Najib the prime minister with Najib the boy and make us feel like the country's leader is one of us. Maybe even a bit better.

Which makes me wonder: If so, do Najib's sins then also become our own, especially if we re-elect him?

UMAPAGAN AMPIKAIKAN is the host of “The Evening Edition” on BFM 89.9, Malaysia's only independent English-language talk radio station.

A supporter wears a lapel pin bearing a portrait of Prime Minister Najib Razak of the ruling coalition party Barisan Nasional during a campaign event in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, this month.

Calling Washington a swamp is offensive to swamps

Washington could learn a thing or two about efficiency and cooperation from America's wetlands.

Martha Serpas

HOUSTON Washington is not a swamp and never was. Would that it were. (The tale that the Capitol was built on a drained swamp is apocryphal, I'm told.) The political expression “drain the swamp” has been traced back to Socialists in the early 1900s, during a time when swamps were drained to reduce the populations of malaria-carrying mosquitoes. For over a century, politicians have used the phrase to go after the perceived bloodsuckers of their day — lobbyists, corrupt officials, wasteful spenders. But after having killed half the wetlands in our country, we should not want to drain any more swamps.

Granted, the swamp is not well suited for human habitation, but humans depend on it all the same. It filters water, removing the excess nitrogen created by agricultural runoff. It supports hundreds of species, which in turn support hundreds of others. It absorbs floodwaters. The loss of wetlands — driven by development and rising sea levels — played a major role in recent flooding on the East and Gulf Coasts.

The swamp is also the perfection of paradox. A marsh with trees. Water. Land. Both and neither.

The use of “swamp” as a pejorative ignores all of this, while reflecting an

ecological ignorance and a general disparagement of the swamper regions of the country, particularly in the South. Denigration of the South often gets a pass in our society, indulged in even by those dependent on the South's political good will. That is to say, some of my best friends live near swamps.

In popular culture, swamp folk are depicted as not only illiterate but also nearly unintelligible. They are outlaws and bootleggers and, in our older mythologies, witches, ghosts and runaway slaves. Everyone knows alligators frequent swamps, and what good follows that primeval foe? Swamps are reminders of an unconscious past before subdivisions and municipalities, a threatening wilderness of spontaneous fires smelling of decay. To drain them seems almost a mercy.

Wes Craven's creature feature “Swamp Thing” countered this oversimplification in 1982. The film is based on the comic book character of the same name, a slimy mutant with a moral compass. The hero, Alex Garland, is working in a secret compound in the Louisiana swamps to create a formula to aid plant growth — both to speed production and to allow for cultivation in inhospitable climates. The swamp “is where the life is,” he says; “half the world could eat off the swamps.”

What you think of the literal swamp depends on your perspective, your



TIM LAHAN

species, your elevation. Alex says, “There's so much beauty in the swamps if you only look.” Not retweet, look: the wild stature of bald cypresses and their reflected knees, the grace of moss and water birds, an almost limitless variation of greens, the strangled music of insects and so on.

In other words, a cult film allows for more complexity and more serious ecological reflection than many a contemporary discussion — whether among politicians, journalists or the general public.

The etymology of swamp is German, from sponge or fungus. A sponge in

this context is presumably a bad thing, soaking up life-giving resources for itself. If one looks closely, however, other connotations are possible, such as abundance, efficiency or receptivity. What is thought as a stagnant hindrance might be a model of dynamic stasis.

If Washington really were more like a swamp, we'd be well served. Swamps are fecund and productive because of, not in spite of, their diversity. Swamps are adaptive, constantly reacting to the changing environment, while our legislators are paralyzed by the smallest challenges. The flexibility and

interdependence of swamps are conducive to the mutual well-being of thousands of different species (including, but not only, Homo sapiens). In short, if Washington were more like a swamp, it would be rich, responsive, efficient and ecologically minded — interested in balance, not domination.

“Drain the swamp” is a harmful cliché, a stereotype, used both by those who have never set foot in soggy wetlands and by those who depend on them. Its origin is ignored, and its connotations slur whole swaths of our country. It sounds like a taunt to environmentalists. Let's leave “drain the swamp” for future lexicographers and historians to ponder. We know better.

As I drive through the Chacahoula Swamp on my way to Galliano, La., where I grew up, I think of my cousin who used to catch crawfish in the Atchafalaya Spillway, slogging through the swamp, machete in hand, pulling his boat filled with 20 sacks to get to market. He cursed not the alligators or the heat but the parish pumps for emptying out so much water. From my car, among the abundant greens, I feel peace and loss. This is the swamp's true lesson: We must learn to wade through the complexities of our world with a receptive mind, rather than pave over what we don't understand.

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OPINION

The New York Times

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

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THE E.U.'S ILLIBERAL MEMBERS

The question of what to do about nations like Poland and Hungary is not as easy to answer as it might seem.

It is a matter of obvious irritation and concern to older members of the European Union that some of the new members in Central Europe are blatantly flouting the Western democratic values they purportedly signed on for when they joined. It grates all the more when Poland and Hungary, the two most visible violators, are among the biggest recipients of the union's aid.

Not surprisingly, as Steven Erlanger reports in *The Times*, this has led to talk in the European Commission, the European Union's bureaucracy, of linking aid in the next seven-year budget, which takes effect in 2021, to the status of the courts in member nations. The idea is that focusing on an independent judiciary as a prerequisite for sound financial management would avoid the impression of Brussels imposing its values on independent states.

It's a tempting notion. The bloc's funding is important to Central European countries. It accounts for 61 percent of infrastructure spending in Poland and 55 percent in Hungary; European Union-fueled economic growth has been a major factor in the popularity of Hungary's prime minister, Viktor Orban.

But it's not a very good idea. Financial sanctions have a poor track record in altering regime behavior. And however the sanctions are advertised, they would inevitably reinforce the sense among many in the former Soviet bloc countries of being second-class citizens in the union.

None of this means that leaders in Central Europe or anywhere else are free to do as they will. The European Union is obligated and within its rights to demand that all member countries adhere to its democratic standards, no matter their history.

But that must be done by persuading citizens of the new members that their rights, dignity and status as full-fledged fellow Europeans are being trampled when populist demagogues curtail their freedoms or the rule of law.

The transfer of wealth from rich to poor in the union was never meant as charity or reward, but as a way of raising the economic level of new members for the benefit of the entire bloc. Setting political conditions on aid would risk achieving the opposite — slowing development, alienating people, entrenching populist rulers and further deepening the fissures in the union.

THE NEW ERA OF ABSTINENCE

The Trump administration has prioritized abstinence-only education — a practice that's ineffective and spreads misinformation.

The administration of Donald Trump is promoting abstinence with a zeal perhaps never before seen from the federal government.

Mr. Trump's Department of Health and Human Services is quietly advancing an anti-science, ideological agenda. The department last year prematurely ended grants to some teen pregnancy prevention programs, claiming weak evidence of success. More recently, it set new funding rules that favor an abstinence-only approach. In reality, programs that use creative ways to educate teenagers about contraception are one reason teen pregnancy in the United States has plummeted in recent years.

The administration is promoting a "just say no" approach to adults as well as to teenagers. It's poised to shift Title X family planning dollars — funds largely intended to help poor adult women around the United States get birth control — toward programs that advocate abstinence outside of marriage, as well as unreliable forms of birth control like the rhythm method.

Nor are its sights limited to the United States. As BuzzFeed News reported, administration officials who attended recent closed-door meetings at the United Nations were preoccupied with abstinence.

The administration's approach defies all common sense. There is no good evidence that abstinence-only education prevents or delays young people from having sex, leads them to have fewer sexual partners or reduces rates of teen pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections. And given that almost all Americans engage in premarital sex, this vision of an abstinent-outside-of-marriage world is simply at odds with reality.

Abstinence-only education also spreads misinformation. A 2004 government report found that many such curriculums undersold the effectiveness of condoms and made unscientific assertions, like a claim that a 43-day-old fetus is a "thinking person."

Public health experts strongly recommend a comprehensive approach to sex education, one that informs young people about abstinence as well as about various forms of contraception and other aspects of sexual health.

Disinformation is at the center of this agenda. It makes it more difficult for women to acquire the knowledge they need to control if and when they become pregnant — a problem that is exacerbated by the administration's hostility toward abortion rights. Beyond that, abstinence-only education keeps all people who are subjected to it in the dark about critical aspects of their health, and treats a normal part of life — sexuality, and women's sexuality in particular — as aberrant and shameful.

The upside of envy

Gordon Marino

It might seem petty of me, but for some time now, I have been belly-aching about the graybeards in black tights — those sixty- and seventysomething fitness fanatics crowding about the umpteen miles they log on their high-priced specialty bikes. Riding behind my grimaces, of course, has been a moral judgment — that these upper-middle-aged exercise zealots are clear cases of modern-day self-care gone wild. My verdict is not without a basis, but honestly, I would not be so vexed about these aging supercyclists were it not for the fact that I am rabidly envious of people my age and beyond who can still experience the thrill of pushing their bodies to the red line. I've had so many injuries I can't do it anymore, and the hours I used to spend in the sweat parlor were once essential to keeping my sanity.

A few decades before Freud, Nietzsche preached that those of us who are called to search ourselves need to go into the inner labyrinth and hunt down the instincts and passions that blossom into our pet theories and moral judgments. In this labyrinth, Nietzsche detected the handwriting of envy everywhere, observing, "Envy and jealousy are the private parts of the human soul."

A therapist with some 30 years of experience recently confided to me that of all the themes his clients found difficult to delve into — sex included — there was no tougher nut to crack than envy. Aristotle described envy not as benign desire for what someone else possesses but "as the pain caused by the good fortune of others." Not surprisingly these pangs often give way to a feeling of malice. Witness the fact that throughout history and across cultures, anyone who enjoyed a piece of good fortune feared and set up defenses against the "evil eye." Of course, there is not much talk today about the evil eye, at least not in the West, but it surely isn't because we are less prone to envy than our ancestors.

In his essay "On Envy," the philosopher Francis Bacon wrote, "Of all other affections, it is the most importune and continual. For of other affections there is occasion given but now and then; and therefore it was well said, 'Invidia festos dies non agit.' " That is, "Envy keeps no holidays."

One of the reasons envy does not take a holiday is that we *never* give a rest to the impulse to compare our-

selves to one another. I have had students respond with glee to being admitted to a graduate program and then a few days later coyly ask: "Hey, Doc. How many applicants do you think were rejected?" — as in, the more rejected the merrier I can allow myself to be.

Social media has generated new vistas for this compulsion to compare and lord it over others.

Maybe it is a subtle form of what Nietzsche describes as the "will to power," but many advertisers promise that buying their product will not only raise your status, but also that pulling into the driveway with that shiny new sports car will give your neighbor a sour stomach.

It is a feeling as honest as a punch. And we can learn from it.

But is there anything to be learned from envy? If Socrates was right and the unexamined life is not worth living, then surely we should examine our feelings to find what we *really* care about as opposed to what we would like to think we care about. And what better instrument for this kind of self-examination than envy, a feeling as honest as a punch.

For instance, I often find a reason to become angry with people I am envious of. But if I can identify the lizard of envy crawling around in my psyche, I can usually tamp down the ire. That same awareness can also help mitigate moral judgments. Recognizing the envy when my sixtiesomething friend boasted that he had recently completed a marathon, I was able to restrain myself from giving rope to the indignant thought, "Instead of running miles every day, why don't you spend some time tutoring disadvantaged kids!"

Kierkegaard, who once remarked that he could offer a course on envy, commented on this tale from ancient Greece: "The man who told Aristides that he was voting to banish him, 'because he was tired of hearing him

everywhere called the only just man,' actually did not deny Aristides excellence but confessed something about himself, that his relationship to excellence was not the happy infatuation of admiration but the unhappy infatuation of envy." Then Kierkegaard adds the all-important, "But he did not minimize the excellence."

"Envy is secret admiration," Kierkegaard said. As such, if we are honest with ourselves, envy can help us identify our vision of excellence and where need be, perhaps reshape it. The Danish firebrand bemoaned the fact that unlike Aristides, the tendency of his Copenhagen brethren was to deny that ugly feeling and disparage the person who delivers those packages of resentment and ill-will, like those cursed geezers zooming by my house on their bikes. Oh, how I wish I could join them!

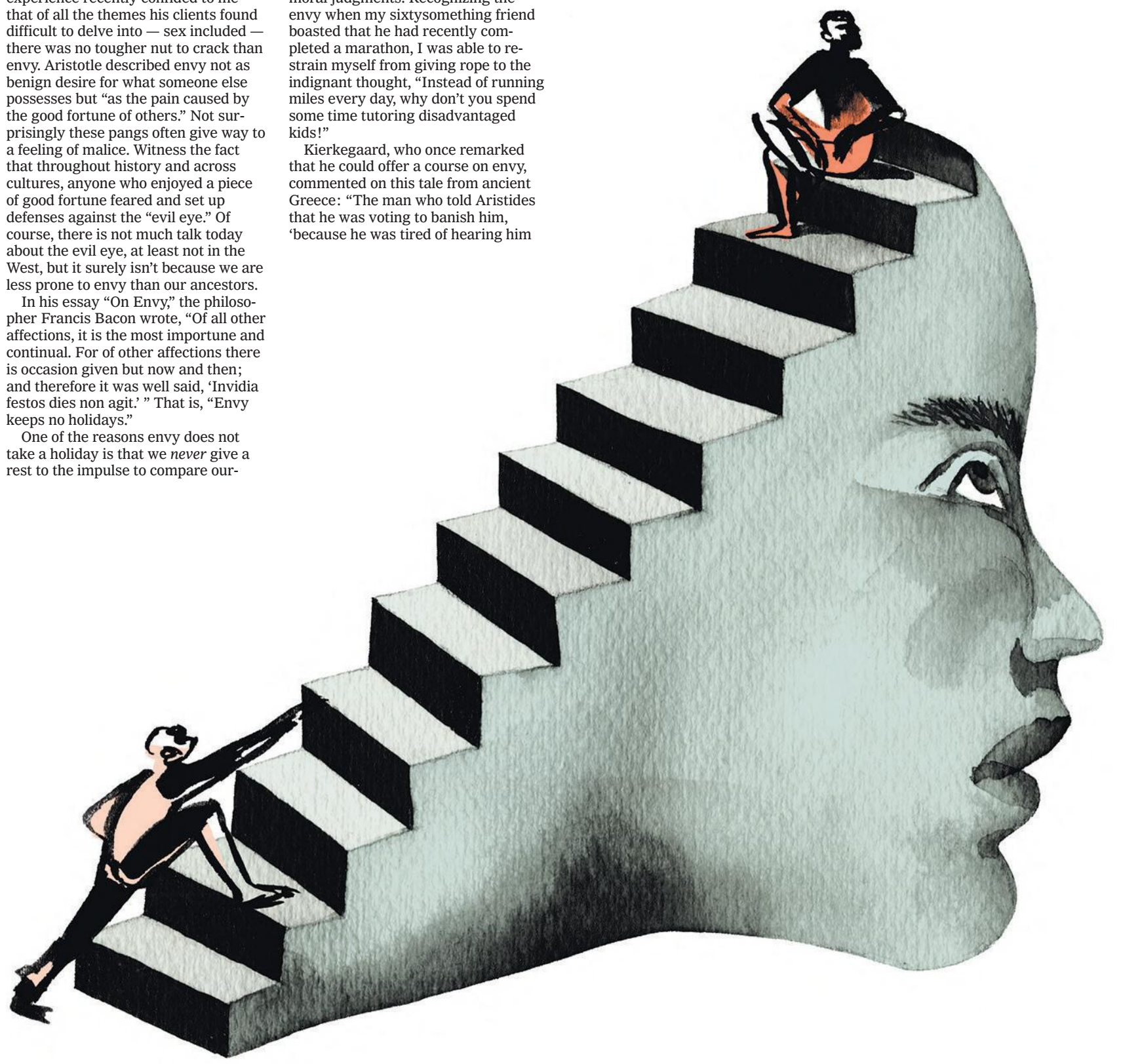
Camus wrote, "Great feelings take with them their own universe, splendid or abject. They light up with their passion an exclusive world. . . . There is a universe of jealousy, of ambition, of selfishness, or of generosity. A universe — in other words a metaphysics and an attitude of mind." We don't see the world as two-dimensional representations. Our emotions imbue our perceived universe with valence and color. Unpleasant as it might be, it is good to know when we are projecting

green — when most everyone seems to be making us feel smaller and less fortunate.

Today, there are people who are convinced that self-awareness is relatively useless, that self-knowledge is not going to change the feelings that we are knowledgeable about. Maybe these skeptics know something I don't know, but experience has taught me that while I can't choose what I feel, I do have sway over how I understand my feelings and that self-understanding can modify and sculpt those feelings, envy included.

Recently, I watched a documentary focused on some people who have committed much of their lives to keeping young people out of jail. Lying on my couch, I could have gone cynical with something like, "The system is hopeless," but it was manifest that I envied the devotion of these loving and generous souls. And so, I started to lacerate myself with the thought that instead of writing about envy, I should harken to it and spend more time helping those kids on the brink of falling into the slammer. And maybe I will.

GORDON MARINO is a professor of philosophy at St. Olaf College and the author, most recently, of *"The Existentialist's Survival Guide: How to Live Authentically in an Inauthentic Age."*



ARIANNA VAIRO

A cheat sheet to the Trump circus

Quinta Jurecic

A few short but very long days in the life of the Trump presidency: On Wednesday night, Rudy Giuliani, a newly minted member of the president's legal team, acknowledged on national television that Mr. Trump had been aware of his personal lawyer Michael Cohen's \$130,000 payment to an adult film actress on Mr. Trump's behalf — contradicting the president's previous claims. Mr. Trump promptly attempted damage control by tweet to ward off speculation that the payment to Stephanie Clifford, known professionally as Stormy Daniels, might have constituted a violation of campaign finance law. Though the president's tweets seemed to confirm Mr. Giuliani's account of events, on Friday Mr. Trump hinted that his lawyer needed to "get his facts straight."

Mr. Giuliani's comments came only a few hours after news broke out that another of Mr. Trump's attorneys would retire from the legal team handling the Russia investigation — the second to

depart in six weeks. The previous day, the president's personal doctor accused Mr. Trump's former bodyguard and others of "raiding" his office and removing Mr. Trump's medical records, while Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the White House press secretary, deflected questions about a New York Times story listing in detail a range of subjects about

The investigations swirling around the president are dizzying. Here's what really matters.

and attorney-client privilege fill the airwaves. The noise roars so loudly and from so many different sources that however much we strain to listen, it's next to impossible to make sense out of it. Or to put it another way: Does any of this matter?

Probably. But the unsatisfying answer is that we don't know — and we really don't know which parts will end up mattering in the long run. As the litigations and investigations move forward, though, it's worth taking a step back and considering the various legal fronts on which the president is fighting simultaneously — filtering out as much noise from the signal as we can so the stakes are clear. Think of what follows as a cheat sheet to the legal circus surrounding the White House.

THE MUELLER INVESTIGATION

The special counsel's investigation into Russian election interference is made up of several different threads — and each, as far as we know, could pose a degree of danger to the president. Mr. Trump can probably rest easy that he won't be indicted — not necessarily because of a clean legal bill of health, but because internal Justice Department guidelines bar the indictment of a sitting president, and the famously by-the-book Mr. Mueller is unlikely to pursue charges. So any untimely end to his presidency would probably come through impeachment.

Though impeachment has a legal

flavor, in practice it's a matter of politics. Congress would need to mutiny, and while Mr. Trump's approval ratings are bad, they are not bad at all among Republicans, which makes impeachment unlikely for now, given Republican control of both the House and the Senate.

ELECTION INTERFERENCE

This is at the center of Mr. Mueller's investigation, but it remains distant from the president himself. The Russian effort involved two prongs: first, the use of social media to spread disinformation and discord; and second, the hacking and leaking of emails belonging to the Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee. The special counsel laid out a comprehensive case on the former in the indictment of Russians affiliated with "information warfare against the United States." The indictment does describe how Russians posing as Americans reached out to Trump campaign officials, but Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein took pains to emphasize that "there is no allegation in this indictment that any American had any knowledge" of Russian activities.

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A cheat sheet to the Trump circus

JURECIC, FROM PAGE 10

There's also the hacking, on which Mr. Mueller has so far been silent. But the main legal theory on which he indicted the Russians — the conspiracy to defraud the United States — could theoretically expand to net both Russians and Americans involved in the hack-and-leak operation.

CAMPAIGN AND ADMINISTRATION CONTACTS WITH RUSSIANS

People close to the president had an unusual habit of meeting with Russian officials or individuals linked to the Russian government. The foreign policy adviser Carter Page — who, we now know, was later monitored by the F.B.I. as a possible Russian agent — might have been nothing more than a hanger-on, but there's also Jared Kushner, Donald Trump Jr., Michael Flynn, Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Paul Manafort, Rick Gates and George Papadopoulos, all of whom became entangled with Moscow-linked contacts. Mr. Papadopoulos is cooperating with the Mueller team and has acknowledged receiving of Russia's possession of "thousands of emails" about Hillary Clinton.

Meanwhile, there's the notorious Trump Tower meeting in which Mr. Trump Jr. apparently expected to receive incriminating information on Mrs. Clinton. According to The Times, the subjects about which Mr. Mueller wants to interview the president include many questions about collusion. What we don't know is whether Mr. Mueller has found any fire or whether any smoke reaches the Oval Office.

OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

This is the thread of the Mueller investigation that, so far, most directly implicates the president. Mr. Trump has reportedly tried to undermine the Russia investigation from the very beginning by trying to push James Comey, the F.B.I. director, to drop the bureau's probe into Mr. Flynn (which Trump denies) before firing Mr. Comey. He then apparently considered (two times that we know of) firing the special counsel as well — and that's only the start of it. Mr. Mueller is reportedly preparing a write-up on Mr. Trump's possible attempts at obstruction and considers the president to be a "subject" rather than a "target" (the latter is a person the F.B.I. is planning to indict) but that doesn't mean Mr. Trump should rest easy.

Obstruction requires the government to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant acted intentionally to impede a proceeding. That's why it's notable that so many of Mr. Mueller's potential questions for Mr. Trump seem to aim at determining the president's state of mind in dismissing Mr. Comey and pressuring Mr. Sessions not to recuse himself from the investigation. Keep in mind that Congress listed obstruction of justice among the articles of impeachment for both Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton.

THE COHEN INVESTIGATION

We know that Mr. Mueller is investigating various threads of possible financial wrongdoing by those around the president. Mr. Manafort and Mr. Gates have been indicted on charges including money laundering, tax evasion and bank fraud, and

reports indicate that the special counsel may also be looking into Mr. Kushner's business dealings during the presidential transition not only with Russians but also with Qatar, Turkey, China and the United Arab Emirates.

White-collar crime also appears to be central to the investigation into Mr. Cohen, whose office and residences were raided by law enforcement in April. The probe is apparently important enough to the president that Mr. Trump sent his own lawyer to argue alongside Mr. Cohen's in a preliminary court battle.

Theoretically, Mr. Cohen's involvement with the Trump family's work in real estate means that prosecutors digging into his finances might unearth information on the president's businesses as well. There's also the matter of Mr. Cohen's payments to Ms. Clifford in exchange for her silence on an alleged affair with Mr. Trump, and his reported involvement in trying to quash other negative stories, possibly including the "Access Hollywood" tape.

But the real danger of the Cohen investigation, so far as the president is concerned, may simply be that the investigations into Mr. Trump's inner circle have grown beyond the scope of Mr. Mueller's probe alone. The special counsel reportedly referred the Cohen

case to federal prosecutors in the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York. And that means that even if Mr. Trump fires the special counsel, his legal problems will not go away.

CIVIL LAWSUITS

The government investigations and prosecutions aren't the only action. The president is personally being sued by Ms. Clifford — she is suing Mr. Trump for defamation and seeking release from her nondisclosure agreement on her alleged relationship with him — and by Summer Zervos, a former "Apprentice" contestant who argues that Mr. Trump defamed her when he called her story of being sexually harassed by him a lie. (The other legal proceedings described here are federal, but Ms. Zervos's case is before the New York Supreme Court.)

Then there are two lawsuits over the hacking and leaking of Democratic National Committee emails: One was brought by the committee itself and the other by donors and a former staffer who claim that their privacy was invaded.

Mr. Trump isn't a defendant in the latter two cases — but they still implicate his business ties and his conduct on the campaign trail. The real risk to the president will most likely come if these lawsuits can make it to the phase in which the plaintiffs can start requesting information and testimony from Mr. Trump and those around him. Remember that the "discovery phase" in the Paula Jones case was ultimately what set in motion President Bill Clinton's impeachment proceedings.

The jokes of 2018 are all about nihilism: "Nothing matters!" we cheerfully, or not so cheerfully, declare. This is at its truest and most despairing when it comes to the legal chaos around the president. Perhaps none of this means anything, as Mr. Trump and many of his supporters believe. Or perhaps all of it will one day turn out to have meant everything — to the president, to the presidency, to the country.

Meanwhile, the president rages. And Mr. Mueller is nearing the one-year mark of his appointment as special counsel.

QUINTA JURECIC is the managing editor of Lawfare.

Our addiction to you-know-who



Nicholas Kristof

We in the commentariat complain about President Trump, but we're locked in a symbiotic relationship with him.

News organizations, especially cable television channels, feed off Trump — like oxpeckers on a rhino's back — for he is part of our business model in 2018. As long as our focus is on Trump, audiences follow.

It's not optimal to have as president an authoritarian who denounces journalists as enemies of the people, but he has given us a sense of mission and a "Trump bump." Every time he denounces us we get more subscriptions.

(If you're reading this, President Trump, I'd appreciate a good, thunderous exhortation. You've gone after Maggie Haberman, Don Lemon and Chuck Todd, but you've publicly denounced me only once — and so incoherently that I couldn't print out a quote to impress my kids. Next time you're on Twitter, how about firing off something concise like: "Crackpot Kristoff is the WORST lying reporter at the FAILING NYTimes EVER!!!")

Yet I worry that our national nonstop focus on Trump is helping to usher America into a hole: a Trump obsession. The danger is that Trump sucks up all the oxygen, so that other issues don't get adequate attention.

In America today, it's all Trump, all the time. We're collectively addicted to him. The nonstop scandals and outrages suck us in; they amount to Trump porn.

As president, Trump is enormously important, but there's so much else happening as well. Some 65,000 Americans will die this year of drug overdoses, American life expectancy has fallen for two years in a row, guns claim a life every 15 minutes and the number of uninsured is rising again even as a child in the U.S. is 70 percent more likely to die before adulthood than one in other advanced nations.

Those issues are rather more important than the question of whether Stormy Daniels slept with Trump.

Or look abroad. In Myanmar, the government is engaging in what many believe to be a genocide against the Rohingya minority. Gaza is erupting, and there's heightened threat of a new war in the Middle East. The U.S. has been complicit in Saudi Arabian war crimes in Yemen. The carnage in Syria continues.

The world's progress against malaria, which kills almost one person a minute, has stalled. A fifth of children under 5 worldwide are stunted from malnutrition. Bill Gates and others warn that one of our top risks is a pandemic for which we are ill prepared.

Progressive snobs like me bemoan Trump's inattention to these global issues, but the truth is that we don't pay attention, either. At cocktail parties, on cable television, at the dinner table, at the water cooler, all we talk about these days is Trump. So we complain about Trump being insular and parochial — but we've become insular and parochial as well. We've caught the contagion that we mock.

We're ignoring more important issues as we obsess on the nonstop scandals and outrages.

I'm addicted myself, which is why I write so much about Trump — or catch myself on a date night with my wife engaging in horrified conversation about Trump.

In fairness, there's good reason we're all Trump addicts:

President Trump truly is THE story in America today. He is systematically undermining American institutions and norms that underlie democratic government: courts, law enforcement, journalism, the intelligence community, truth. He is also being investigated for possibly obstructing justice and colluding with a foreign power's attack on our electoral system. Epic battles will follow.

Two thousand years from now, historians may be lecturing on Trump the way they now discuss, say, the challenge to Roman institutions from Galgula.

So I'm not arguing that we avert our eyes from Trump or mute our criticism. Far from it. But we have to figure out how to spare bandwidth for genocide in Myanmar, opioids in America and so on.

It would also be useful if we recognized that the biggest Trump scandals



FROM BRENNAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES

are not what he says, but what he does.

His tweets against immigrants may be cruel, but his actions are crueler, particularly the pattern of tearing children away from their refugee parents at the border and sending them to foster care. And his efforts to curb reproductive health programs, which will leave more women dying agonizing deaths from cervical cancer. And his lifting of environmental regulations, causing more infants in farm states to suffer brain damage from the Dow Chemical Company's nerve gas pesticide.

In other words, the biggest Trump scandals aren't those unfolding in Washington, but those devastating the lives of the poor and vulnerable in distant American towns.

There's some danger, I think, that progressives come to care primarily about issues where Trump is involved, allowing him to define the agenda. For example, the best single way to break cycles of poverty is probably with early childhood programs for at-risk kids, but because Trump doesn't care about this, liberals don't seem much interested, either. That's pathetic.

We can cover Trump and other things as well, and the best evidence is #MeToo. The #MeToo cascade drew on anger at how Trump prevailed even after boasting about sexually assaulting women, but it shined the spotlight elsewhere and had astonishing consequences that are still reverberating around the world.

In short, think of this as a multifront war. Trump is mounting one assault on our values, institutions and policies, and we have to fight back. But if we battle only on that front, we are in effect surrendering everywhere else.

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Don't scuttle the Iran nuclear deal

JOHNSON, FROM PAGE 1

been given extra powers to monitor Iran's nuclear facilities, increasing the likelihood that they would spot any attempt to build a weapon.

Now that these handcuffs are in place, I see no possible advantage in casting them aside. Only Iran would gain from abandoning the restrictions on its nuclear program.

Far better to police the deal with the greatest rigor — and the I.A.E.A. has certified Iran's compliance so far — while working together to counter Tehran's belligerent behavior in the region.

What has been gained from the nuclear deal? Imagine all the mutually contaminating civil wars and in-

ternecine conflicts that rage across the Middle East today. Then turn the dial and add the possibility of a regional nuclear arms race triggered by Iran dashing for a bomb. That is the scenario which the agreement has helped to prevent.

In a statement on Jan. 12, President Trump rightly identified Iran's dangerous actions as a central cause of instability across the Middle East. Britain shares his concerns about Iran's support for terrorist groups, its behavior in cyberspace and its long-range missile program.

We also, of course, agree that Iran must never get a nuclear weapon; indeed Tehran's obligation not to "seek, develop or acquire" such an arsenal

appears (without any time limit) at the top of the deal's preamble.

On all this, Britain and America are at one. Since the president's speech, United States and United Kingdom diplomats have been working alongside their French and German counterparts to reach a joint approach toward Iran, focused on countering Tehran's regional meddling, reducing its missile threat and ensuring that it can never build a nuclear weapon.

We all played our part in helping the Trump administration maximize the pressure on North Korea, a strategy that now appears to be bearing fruit. We share the same concerns about Iran. I believe we are very close to a position that would address President Trump's concerns and strengthen trans-Atlantic unity.

At this delicate juncture, it would be a mistake to walk away from the nuclear agreement and remove the restraints that it places on Iran. Mr. Netanyahu recently described how Iran conducted a secret project between 1999 and 2003 to research the technology for a nuclear weapon. But that project actually underscores the importance of maintaining the restrictions on Tehran's nuclear ambitions, including the I.A.E.A.'s ability to inspect key facilities.

I believe that keeping the deal's constraints on Iran's nuclear program will also help counter Tehran's aggressive regional behavior. I am sure of one thing: every available alternative is worse. The wisest course would be to improve the handcuffs rather than break them.



A member of the Iranian Army passes a mural in Tehran honoring the 1979 revolution. BORIS JOHNSON is the British foreign secretary.

TECH

Esports, with real crowds

Players are the new stars, malls and movie theaters are turned into arenas

BY NELLIE BOWLES

Video games are beginning their takeover of the real world.

Across North America this year, companies are turning malls, movie theaters, storefronts and parking garages into neighborhood esports arenas.

At the same time, content farms are spinning up in Los Angeles, where managers now see game players as some peculiar new form of famous person to cultivate — half athlete, half influencer.

And much of it is powered by the obsession with one game: Fortnite. Over the last month, people have spent more than 128 million hours on Twitch just watching other people play Fortnite, the game that took all the best elements of building, shooting and survival games and merged them into one.

How obsessed are people? After each of their wins this season, the Houston Astros — among many other sports teams — are doing a very specific dance, their arms in the air, fingers spread, their legs bent, toes tapping rapidly. It's a Fortnite dance.

Fortnite content received 2.4 billion views on YouTube in February alone, according to Tubular Insights. So yes, people love playing video games — but people also love to watch others compete at them.

Esports are, finally, just like any other sport.

SAVING AMERICA'S SHOPPING MALLS

These 150 million game players in America want to gather. They want to sit next to each other, elbow to elbow, controller to controller. They want the lighting to be cool and the snacks to be Hot Pockets, and they want a full bar because they are not teenagers anymore. It was inevitable. Movie theater attendance hit a 25-year low in 2017, while 638,000 tuned in to watch Drake play Fortnite recently. The Paris Olympics in 2024 are now in talks to include games as a demonstration sport.

Besides, game players already have been playing together, chatting live on headsets and messaging apps as they march through their increasingly beautiful digital worlds.

Oakland's new esports arena threw a pre-opening party recently. A line stretched down the block. Nearly 4,000 people jammed into the former parking structure and onto the street around it, right in the touristy heart of Jack London Square. The sponsor was Cup of Noodles. Inside it was cacophony.

There were game sound effects, hundreds of hands clicking on controllers, bags of chips opening and the periodic shrieks of "shoutcasters," who comment on game play for live streams that tens of thousands watch.

Tyler Endres, the co-founder of Esports Arena, said he had to speak at four community meetings to convince the community that it would, in fact, like an esports arena.

"They wanted a grocery store," Mr. Endres said, going on to speak at four community meetings to convince the community that it would, in fact, like an esports arena.

And yes, the arena had trouble getting a liquor license.

"The thought was, 'They're 13-year-olds, they're not drinking,'" said Jud Hanagan, 36, who is the chief executive of Allied Esports, an investor in Esports Arena. "But the average age is 25."

It was a big industrial-looking space with a raised floor to hide the warren of cables, designed flexibly for big stage events or for smaller, more intimate, would play. Tonight was a bit of both, with more than a hundred TVs and computers set up with different games.

On the glowing stage, two of the best Fortnite streamers were head-to-head, as the audience cheered and shoutcasters



At the Esports Arena in Oakland, Calif., the air is filled with the sound of hands clicking on controllers and the periodic shrieks of "shoutcasters," who comment on games.

on high presenter chairs narrated the play-by-play. A smoke machine blew over the whole scene.

Landon Trybuch, a 24-year old from Vancouver, British Columbia, said it was nice to be out from the sweaty back rooms of video stores where he used to play.

"It's amazing," he said, holding his own controller. Its cord had been covered in yarn by his girlfriend. "There's so much room here."

Six people ran a production studio in back, getting the game streamed live — audio, lighting, graphics, live cutting and instant replays.

Herb Press, 77, who designed the space, watched from the restaurant a few steps above the fray. This was his first esports arena, and he was not sure what to expect from the patrons.

"This is an audience involved in the particular time in the computer age, but I'm amazed how critical they are," he said. "They do have serious concepts and tastes. I heard one come out of the bathroom and say it looked cool in there."

Mr. Press is excited about Seattle, where he is working to transform a registered historic building, the four-story Union Stables, into an esports arena.

MAKE MONEY PLAYING GAMES

One recent afternoon in the Hollywood Hills, the guys were tired, but the creative director needed more Fortnite content, and so the break dancers got going.

The guys were FaZe Clan, an esports organization. Their job is to be cool gamers. They stream game play, and they make highly shareable videos about video games. Their workday goal is to leave with three to four pieces of viral-ready content. So they kept filming with a raised floor to hide the warren of cables, designed flexibly for big stage events or for smaller, more intimate, would play. Tonight was a bit of both, with more than a hundred TVs and computers set up with different games.

On the glowing stage, two of the best Fortnite streamers were head-to-head, as the audience cheered and shoutcasters



Clockwise from left: At the arena in Oakland, David Morris, 12, playing Super Smash Bros.; Tyler Endres, the co-founder of Esports Arena; a Super Smash Bros. battle onstage. Mr. Endres said he had a hard time convincing Oakland it would like an esports arena.



the fact that their parents are driving them there.

"The Make-a-Wish kids came over a couple weeks ago, and all they wanted to do was play Fortnite," said Ms. Salamone, who used to be on Kid Rock's



management team and wears a diamond on one of her teeth.

"They all have distinct personalities," Ms. Salamone said of the FaZe gamers.

"I've screamed all the time," Jimmy Jellinek, chief creative officer

Players want to gather. They want to sit next to each other, elbow to elbow, controller to controller.

of FaZe Clan and previously chief content officer at Playboy, said: "I've watched a Top 5 clip of amateur footage and then rage over the microphone, and those do extraordinarily well."

Thomas Oliveira, 24, who streams under the name Temperrr, took me down to his suite, where Barry the Bengal cat lives and where Mr. Oliveira streams Fortnite on Twitch and posts videos to his 1.6 million YouTube followers. He joined the collective when he was 15, playing Call of Duty when the clan was a handful of snipers. He went to school for business and was not even a full semester in when he stood up during a math test and walked out.

By 2012, the group decided to start professional gaming teams to compete in tournaments and take a percent of their earnings. Now they sign players to the FaZe teams across all games. At the

time, if your device is encrypted before performing a factory reset, any leftover data on the device will appear as a jumbled mess to anyone who tries to recover it, and your personal information will remain secret and safe.

iPhone users: Thankfully, every iPhone since the 3GS is encrypted by default. (In fact, there's not even a way to turn it off.) If you have an iPhone, you can securely erase your device by heading to Settings > General > Reset and tapping "Erase All Content and Settings." When the process is finished, it will return you to the "Welcome" screen you originally saw when you bought the phone.

Android users: Many Android devices are encrypted, but it varies, depending on the manufacturer and age of your device. So we recommend a few extra steps before erasing your Android-based smartphone. Head to Settings > Security and look for an "Encryption" setting. If you see something that says your phone is encrypted, you're good to go — otherwise, tap "Encrypt Phone" to start the process. (Again, these instructions may be slightly different depending on your phone.)

The encryption process may take a few hours, but once it's finished, you can now proceed to erase your phone. Head to Settings > System > Reset Options and choose "Erase All Data (Factory

Reset)." Once that's done, your phone will be as good as new.

If you have a particularly old Android phone, you may not have an option to encrypt it. You can, however, factory reset your phone, then use an app like iShredder 5 to erase the free space on the phone, then perform another factory reset.

GET YOUR PHONE READY FOR SALE Now that your device is wiped, you're ready to post your phone and get that cash! Now is a good time to remove your SIM card from the side of your phone using a small paper clip. This occasionally contains personal information, and it's also linked to your cellular account, so you'll need it to activate your new phone.

If you're using an Android phone with an SD card, you'll probably want to remove that as well. While you can erase the SD card and include it in the sale, it's more complex to erase it securely, so it's better to just keep it. If you want to include a microSD card to increase the sale price, you can buy a good one for \$10 or less.

Then, be sure to give your phone a good cleaning with a soft, dry cloth to get dirt, grime and fingerprints off of it (especially if you had a case, which can really cake dirt on the edges). Take good photos of the phone — somewhere with good lighting — and post it for sale.

How to sell your old phone safely

BY WHITSON GORDON

The high cost of a new phone can be a hard pill to swallow, but it becomes easier if you sell your old one. Here's how to make sure your personal information is securely wiped before you hand your phone off to a stranger.

FIRST: BACK IT UP

Before you do anything, back up all the data currently on your phone. Not only will this prevent you from losing precious photos, but it'll also make setting up your new phone a breeze, since you can restore all your apps, contacts and other data from the backup.

iPhone users: If you're signed into iCloud, there's a good chance your phone is already backing itself up automatically (you can check by going to Settings > Your Name > iCloud > iCloud Backup and making sure the switch is "On"). But iCloud storage is limited, and it takes a long time to download all that data, so if you're moving to a new phone, I recommend backing up manually to your computer.

To do so, plug your iPhone into your PC or Mac and launch iTunes. Click the iPhone button that appears in the top-left corner of the toolbar, and click the "Back Up Now" button. This process may take a few minutes, but when it's done, you'll have your important information backed up to your computer, and your new phone will prompt you to restore from iTunes during the initial setup.

Android users: Every Android phone is a little different, and you'll probably have to do some digging to make sure everything is backed up before continuing. Your contacts, calendar and other

settings are backed up somewhere, too. If you log into an app with an account, it probably backs up your data regularly to that account. In other cases, you may need to manually create a backup file from that app's settings. Then you can plug your phone into your computer, drag those backup files onto your desktop (I'd also drag your photos over, just in case) and store them safely for your next phone. If you aren't sure if you have everything, it might be a good idea to back up your new phone before selling the old one, so you can make sure you have what you need before wiping.

DEREGISTER YOUR ACCOUNTS Before you erase everything, you should "deregister" your phone from your account's. This ensures that the phone's new owner won't run into problems when trying to activate the phone, and that you can track the phone's location after you sell it.

iPhone users: First, head to Settings > Your Name and tap "Sign Out" at the bottom of the screen. This will remove the device from your account, allowing the new owner to activate the phone with his or hers. If you have an Apple Watch, you'll want to unpair that as well, and if you're moving to a non-iPhone, you'll want to deregister iMessage or you may not get text messages from other iPhone users on your new phone.

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Culture

Setting Beyoncé in motion

The star's secret weapons at Coachella included a pair of choreographers

BY GIA KOURLAS

Since November, Chris Grant and JaQuel Knight have been up to their elbows in marching bands, musicians and dancers — dozens of men and women from an array of traditions. Beyoncé may have been front and center at her spectacular performances last month at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in California. But two of her secret weapons were Mr. Grant and Mr. Knight, the show's main choreographers.

From the start, Beyoncé was clear about what she wanted. "She said, 'Let's do a homecoming,'" Mr. Knight said. "Boom. A nice, clear concept that we were all able to snap into and execute."

In the nearly two-hour show, references to homecoming at historically black colleges and universities (H.B.C.U.s) — complete with a marching band and a glittering majorette solo — lived alongside dance styles ranging from flexing, a form born on the streets of Brooklyn, to stepping, a percussive form popular in fraternities and sororities.

Beginning in December, Mr. Grant and Mr. Knight worked with Beyoncé's music team and started their preliminary dance preparations. In January, they started skeleton-crew rehearsals. "We worked with 12 dancers for a month just to start to further develop the ideas that we laid down in December," Mr. Knight said. "We started to build choreography."

Gradually, they added more dancers and used them to create the precision movements for the musicians. "When we got to the band, we simplified it even more," Mr. Grant said. "Some of them had their own natural feeling, which we loved."

But their favorite part of the experience, they said, was working with Beyoncé, who thrives on collaboration. They've worked with her for 10 years. (Among other credits, Mr. Knight is known for the "Single Ladies" video; Mr. Grant, Mr. Knight and Dana Foglia for "Formation.") "She's all about hearing us out," Mr. Grant said, "because you may have a perspective on something that can be really cool. No matter who it comes from, if it's magical, if it's hot," she's interested. In a telephone interview, Mr. Knight, 26, and Mr. Grant, 29, discussed their latest theatrical adventure and their devotion to Beyoncé. As Mr. Grant said: "I feel like I'm living in a generation where she is the new Michael."

These are edited excerpts from our conversation.

Did Beyoncé talk about the show's choices in terms of its politics?
JAQUEL KNIGHT We don't really consider it political. For us, it's embracing who we are. The show was very black, for a lack of a better word, from all aspects, and we wanted to show love through who we are. This is where we come from and this is how we love and this is how we jam and this is our world. I think the whole H.B.C.U.s and the homecoming experience is a very specific experience. If you've never been to a homecoming game, you don't know.

She wanted to introduce that to the world?
KNIGHT Yeah. That's something that hasn't been done before on the stage like this and it feels good. Beyoncé's all about how can we do things differently, but keep the musicianship and the showmanship and the precision of it all — it just made sense. She's been adding horns to her songs for the past couple of years and boom: Let's get a whole band. So much of what we've been doing made sense in this world —



PHOTOGRAPHS BY SEVEN MAGLIS/GETTY IMAGES

even with the things we were doing with "Formation."

What kind of movement looks good on Beyoncé? What is natural?
CHRIS GRANT She's really good with her neck. She can really hit and snap at certain moments, but also be cool and chill.

KNIGHT She can do anything. She's weird. I've seen times where she imitates people. When you put somebody magical in the room she will make them do it 10 times, 20 times. She's pulling and learning from you and toward the end it's like, "Wow — you are really studying me and you are really getting it."

One thing about Beyoncé is she pays attention to detail. That's what I learned from her. You've really got to pay attention and then on top of that, add your own sauce.

What kind of stamina does she need to get through a show like this? Do you work with her on cross-training?
KNIGHT She has a trainer and she also comes in and does a full dance warm-up and stretch with us. She just had twins, so we spent a lot of time strengthening her and getting her back into it. Your body goes into shock if you're not prepared to do a show of this caliber.

Is there a signature style for the female backup dancers?
KNIGHT We have created a language with the choreography that has a street vibe and a great line as well. So the body always looks good. And then it's a level of personality on top and feeling — things you really can't teach. It's a combination of technique, street and personality. And magic.

How did you put together the marching band for the show?
KNIGHT We flew quite a few people from Atlanta, because it was pretty difficult to cast in L.A. for the specific



swag and funk and charisma that we were looking for. We worked with Don Roberts, who was the consultant on "Drumline." We basically created our own professional level marching band.

How did you focus your time with a show like this?
KNIGHT No one does one job. There's no "you're the music guy, you're the choreographer, you're this, you're that." It's creative. [Beyoncé] allows us all to be open: What are your thoughts on this? Chris is the guy from choreography who also splits his time making sure the music is correct. He's even

built in his own tracks and presents ideas to Beyoncé. She's all about whatever's hot is hot.

Does Beyoncé like the rehearsal process?
KNIGHT Beyoncé's going to rehearse every day. [Laughs] We have rehearsal every day — forever — until the show: "Do it again, do it again. O.K., one more time. O.K., I'm gonna go, maybe y'all can do it once more and send me the tape." She just wants the show to be tight.
GRANT Everything we do, everything is choreographed — it's not just move-

ment. It's never going to be perfect, and that's the whole point of rehearsing to the last minute. Everything is choreographed to a T.

Do you wish it were looser?
GRANT We're so crazy like her that we're just kind of used to it. Anything can happen, but when you're so well rehearsed you're also prepared. You can just can hop off and hop right back in like nothing. And to me she's the queen of it.

Did you get to rehearse in the desert at all?

Beyoncé and dancers at Coachella. What kind of movement looks good on her? The choreographer Chris Grant says: "She's really good with her neck."

KNIGHT We had one day in the desert.
GRANT One day.
KNIGHT At Coachella, when it gets windy, you can't rehearse. It was super windy the day of our rehearsal. They had to bring the lights and the speakers down. They shut us down. So that was our one day spent in the desert: We ran it once in the hot sun with no lights. This goes back to what Chris was saying — we have to be prepared.

Why did you want to incorporate so many kinds of movement?
KNIGHT It keeps everything interesting and it doesn't allow your power to become stale. The audience can stay on its toes. We like to have technical moments — we have a duet with Jasmine Harper and King Harco, where they combined their worlds. She comes from a beautiful ballet background and he comes from a beautiful street background. Use the flexers here. Come out and boom — let's combine a bit of our African training here.

I think for Beyoncé, adding as many different elements of dance as we can is cool. As a pop entertainer, people see her as being one-dimensional: coming out, shaking her butt and going to the next song. So we really tried to steer away from that.

Do you think that she knew how historic this show would be?
KNIGHT I don't think any of us were expecting it to be this big of a thing. It's still blowing my mind. We even had a quick conversation with Bey as we were rehearsing for Week Two. She was like: "Wow. People really loved the show, huh?"
GRANT She was saying, "I guess we did our job."

In the heat of battle

REWIND

A restoration confirms "In the Year of the Pig" as a landmark in film history

BY J. HOBERMAN

To watch "In the Year of the Pig," the 1969 Vietnam War documentary by Emile de Antonio (1919-89) is to be dropped into the middle of a long-germinating and still-developing disaster. The movie, which the Metrograph theater in New York screened this past weekend in a newly restored 35-millimeter print, is not a history of the Vietnam War so much as an immersion in the ideas that were held while the war was going on.

"In the Year of the Pig" (which can be found on YouTube) is also a landmark in film history. Commonplace now, the notion of a documentary without a voice-

over, predicated on the juxtaposition of archival footage and contrapuntal interviews, was novel in 1969 and proved highly influential.

De Antonio's first feature, "Point of Order" (1964), a chronological assemblage of TV footage of the 1954 Army-McCarthy hearings made with Dan Talbot, was the first documentary feature to treat American politics as a media spectacle. "In the Year of the Pig" — a movie in which politicians, generals, journalists and academics posture and declaim against a backdrop of battle scenes and patriotic pageants — was described by de Antonio as "political theater."

Although not strictly chronological, the show has three acts. The first concerns France's futile attempt to keep its Indochinese colonies. The middle section mainly deals with the origins of South Vietnam and includes graphic sequences of the self-immolation that underscored the Buddhist uprising against the repressive, United States-backed government of Ngo Dinh Diem. Not until the movie's final third do American sol-

diers arrive, one with a helmet emblazoned "Make War Not Love."

Given the number of speaking parts and vast range of visual material, "In the Year of the Pig" is extremely well edited (the photographer Helen Levitt is among those credited) and creatively scored by Steve Addiss, who composed

The director described it as "political theater."

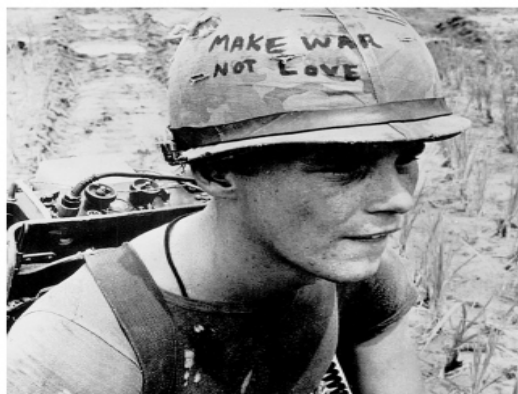
what de Antonio described as a "helicopter concerto" as the movie's overture. Vietnam was not yet a rock 'n' roll war, at least on film. Played on traditional Indochinese instruments, familiar anthems like "La Marseillaise" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" are rendered weird and melancholy.

"In the Year of the Pig" was not easy to distribute. After its theatrical premiere in Boston in February 1969, it was shown mainly at colleges. A Los Angeles theater was vandalized; bomb threats

discouraged bookings in Chicago and Houston. When the movie opened in New York, the New York Times critic Howard Thompson described it as "stinging, graphic and often frighteningly penetrating." Not simply an indictment of the Vietnam War, "In the Year of the Pig" is more broadly an illustration of American ignorance with regard to the history of other peoples and nations.

It's depressing but unsurprising when generals happily hold forth on the presumably innate "Oriental" indifference to human life or when President Lyndon B. Johnson compares the corrupt dictator Diem to Winston Churchill. What's really shocking is hearing Senator Thurston B. Morton, a moderate Republican from Kentucky, give a rational explanation why, from a Vietnamese perspective, the revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh was their George Washington.

Rewind is an occasional column covering revived, restored and rediscovered movies.



An American soldier in Vietnam as seen in the documentary "In the Year of the Pig."

The candidate and I

LOS ANGELES

Two Tony Award winners, and Hillary Clinton, upend Rodgers and Hammerstein

BY ROBERT ITO

Two and a half years ago, the playwright David Henry Hwang approached the composer Jeanine Tesori with an idea for a show. Mr. Hwang had seen a recent revival of “The King and I” at Lincoln Center in New York, which got him thinking about how much he loved that classic Rodgers and Hammerstein musical (the songs, the story, the moment the king dies, which never failed to make him cry) and yet, how much he didn’t (the play’s history of showing a mostly white cast in yellowface, its implicit racism).

How about a story that took all that and upended it? What if, instead of an English governess meeting the king of Siam and bringing the blessings of civilization to his backward-thinking country, we had a Chinese guy meeting Hillary Clinton on the eve of the 2016 election? And then what if, 50 years on, à la “The King and I,” that chance encounter became the stuff of myth, the basis of a blockbuster musical in China? The music would be gorgeous and entrancing — that’s where you come in, Jeanine — in the tradition of the golden age of Broadway musicals. It would be a play with music, or maybe a play that becomes a musical.

“There was nothing on paper,” Ms. Tesori recalled. “I don’t even remember an outline.”

Even so, she assented, persuaded by Mr. Hwang’s “genuine and ferocious” passion for the project.

The product of their alliance, “Soft Power,” will have its world premiere at the Ahmanson Theater in Los Angeles when it opens on May 16, signifying the first collaboration between the Tony Award-winning creators (Mr. Hwang for “M. Butterfly,” Ms. Tesori for “Fun Home”). Joining the pair is Leigh Silverman, who has directed several of Mr. Hwang’s plays, including “Yellow Face” and “Chinglish,” and who received a Tony nomination for her work on Ms. Tesori’s “Violet” in 2014.

The play is a homecoming of sorts for the Brooklyn-based Mr. Hwang, who was born and raised in the Los Angeles suburb of San Gabriel, and whose Tony-nominated reimagining of “Flower Drum Song” had its premiere at the nearby Mark Taper Forum in 2001. About a half-mile east of the Ahmanson is the David Henry Hwang Theater, home of the East West Players, the nation’s longest-running Asian-American repertory company, which teamed up with the Center Theater Group on the premiere of “Soft Power.”

In the play, Xue (Conrad Ricamora), a Chinese producer doing business in the United States, hires DHH — a thinly disguised Mr. Hwang, played by the actor Francis Jue — to create an American TV series set in Shanghai. The two go to a 2016 campaign fund-raiser for Mrs. Clinton, where Xue meets the presidential hopeful, played by Alyse Alan Louis. Later, the scene shifts from downtown Los Angeles to a Shanghai airport, from “real life” to the fantasy of a hit Chinese musical, one in which Xue falls in love with Mrs. Clinton and helps bring America back from the brink of war.

On a recent afternoon, in an interview at the Ahmanson, Mr. Hwang spoke of his deep love for Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals, the play’s themes of cultural appropriation and artistic homage,



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GRAHAM WALZER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



Top, Jeanine Tesori and David Henry Hwang during a rehearsal of “Soft Power.” Above, Conrad Ricamora, left, as a Chinese executive, and Francis Jue as a playwright.

and why we never hear the word “Trump” in a play about the 2016 election. (“Looking back at this moment 50 years in the future, maybe the Chinese won’t even remember the name of the guy who was president.”)

Work on the play began in 2014, when Michael Ritchie, the artistic director of the Center Theater Group, gave Mr. Hwang free rein to create a show for the 50th anniversary season of the group’s Mark Taper Forum in 2018.

Mr. Hwang knew he wanted to do

something about “The King and I,” a play that had captivated and rankled him for years. But he was equally intrigued by China’s increasing desire for “soft power:” “If hard power is your economic and military strength, soft power is your cultural and intellectual influence,” he said.

Mr. Hwang had seen that desire firsthand. As the only Asian-American playwright in history to win a Tony, he had become the target of Chinese producers hoping he could help them stage a play

set in China that would become a Broadway hit.

“I happen to be the only nominally Chinese person who’s ever written a Broadway show, so I end up going to a lot of these meetings” with Chinese producers, he said.

In 2015, Mr. Hwang enlisted the help of Ms. Silverman and Ms. Tesori. They met up at Columbia University, where all three of them were teaching, to bounce ideas back and forth. “The triangular mind meld on this one was very deep,” Ms. Silverman said.

Later that year, Mr. Hwang pitched his still-evolving play to Mr. Ritchie, along with a heads-up that it might turn out a bit bigger than what he had initially thought, what with all the music and Broadway-style numbers and narrative leaps into the future. Would that be O.K.? “I’ve worked with him before, so yeah, I totally trusted him,” Mr. Ritchie said.

Two weeks after that meeting, on Nov. 29, 2015, Mr. Hwang was stabbed in the neck as he walked home from the grocery store in his Brooklyn neighborhood, and his vertebral artery was severed. The crime, part of a rise in attacks on Asian-Americans in New York City at that time, made international news.

“In typical David fashion, I learned about it on Facebook,” Mr. Jue said. “He posted this very funny post about, ‘Hey, I’m in the hospital, I got stabbed.’ And then I started seeing the news reports, and there was a tremendous amount of blood on the sidewalk.”

Mr. Hwang found a way to work the stabbing into the show. Within the Ahmanson’s auditorium, Mr. Jue, as DHH, rehearsed that pivotal scene. As he slowly loses consciousness after the at-

tack, DHH imagines “a beloved Chinese musical,” and just like that, dancers appear, and a Chinese jumbo jet descends from the sky.

“I give David a lot of credit for translating that incident into this brilliant idea,” Mr. Jue said, “where maybe there’s happy endings, and maybe there’s romance, and maybe there’s a 23-piece orchestra following you around, helping you express your feelings.”

“I guess I felt like, oh, the election is terrible for the country, but maybe it’ll be good for the show.”

A lot of those transcendent moments come courtesy of Ms. Tesori’s compositions, which range from “It Just Takes Time,” an ode to budding love in which Mrs. Clinton learns to speak Mandarin, sort of, and “Good Guy With a Gun,” a hootenanny-style paean to concealed-carry gun laws and the joys of shooting “sex molesters” dead.

In September 2016, the company had the first reading of the play. By then, the character of Mrs. Clinton, as the newly elected leader of the country and the object of Xue’s affection, was established in the script. And then, President Trump won. “At 3 in the morning, when my daughter was sobbing, I just felt really out of control in a deep way,” Ms. Tesori said. “But I realized we needed to stay in the conversation, that times like this call for a strong response.”

Mr. Hwang saw it in a slightly different light: “I guess I felt like, oh, the election is terrible for the country, but may-

be it’ll be good for the show. Because it sort of shows the Chinese point of view is right. Democracy isn’t a good system. It doesn’t always elect competent people. It creates chaos.”

For the play, Mr. Hwang assembled a cast of 17, nearly all of them Asian-American. Many of them had fallen in love with the stage in productions of “The King and I,” as well as other problematic Asian-themed standards, including “Pacific Overtures” and “Miss Saigon.”

“One of the women in the company told me, ‘It’s so extraordinary to be in a show where I don’t have to bow to anybody,’” Ms. Silverman said.

Ms. Louis, who was reading Mrs. Clinton’s memoir “What Happened” between rehearsals, is hoping that the former first lady will see the play. “I would love that,” she said.

Mr. Ricamora, who recalled the “icky feeling” of playing one of the two Asian characters in a production of the 1934 musical “Anything Goes,” likes being on this side of things for once. “I remember doing ‘Miss Saigon’ and ‘The King and I,’ and having that feeling that we’re telling a story through a white person’s lens,” he said. “And now we get to feel empowered through telling our own story through our own lens.”

Even so, Mr. Hwang is quick to defend “The King and I,” the unwitting sire of his latest play. “Rodgers and Hammerstein were incredibly progressive and were being brave and innovative for their time,” he said. “And then society moves on, and certain things start to feel vestigial. But there’s not much in ‘The King and I’ that I would criticize as a musical. It’s beautifully crafted, and there are many moments that I’m moved by in the show.”

Woodrow Wilson’s flawed idealism

BOOK REVIEW

The Moralist: Woodrow Wilson and the World He Made

By Patricia O’Toole. Illustrated. 636 pp. Simon & Schuster. \$35.

BY JENNIFER SZALAI

Instead of “The Moralist: Woodrow Wilson and the World He Made,” Patricia O’Toole could have titled her new book “The Hypocrite.”

After all, as she herself points out, to lay claim to the moral high ground as often and as fervently as President Wilson did during his eight years in the White House was to court charges that he failed to live up to his own principles. He called for an end to secret treaties while negotiating secretly with the Allies in World War I. He declared himself unwilling to compromise with belligerents abroad while showing himself very willing to compromise with segregationists at home. He pursued a progressive economic agenda while approving a regressive racial one. He spoke of national self-determination in the loftiest terms while initiating the American occupation of Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

O’Toole’s is the third major biography of Wilson in the last decade, coming on the heels of substantial works by John Milton Cooper Jr. (2009) and A. Scott Berg (2013), an output of Wilsoniana that attests to the 28th

president’s complicated — and contested — legacy. O’Toole’s book doesn’t purport to be as exhaustive as Cooper’s or Berg’s; her project was born from her interest in World War I, and as she persuasively shows, American foreign policy throughout the 20th century adopted Wilson’s war-forged liberal internationalism, in word if not always in deed.

President Richard Nixon cynically used the rhetoric of Wilsonian idealism to escalate the war in Vietnam, saying that his plan would bring the United States closer to Wilson’s “goal of a just and lasting peace.” Wilson’s principle of national self-determination — a phrase that his own secretary of state deemed “loaded with dynamite” — has since been enshrined in the charter of the United Nations.

And by declaring that “the world must be made safe for democracy” in 1917, Wilson articulated how the American people, from World War I to Iraq, would prefer to imagine their military incursions abroad: as high-minded acts of pure altruism, imbued with benevolence and devoid of mercenary self-interest.

A biographer of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Adams, O’Toole is a lucid and elegant writer (her book about Adams was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize), and “The Moralist” is a fluid account that feels shorter than its 600-plus pages. Despite its length, there isn’t a passage that drags or feels superfluous. She gives each of her

many characters their due, rendering them vivid and also memorable — an effect not to be taken for granted in a serious history book covering an intricate subject.

The first 60 pages are a brisk tour of Wilson’s pre-presidential life — a Civil War childhood in the South, steeped in Presbyterianism; early struggles with reading and writing that failed to portend a flourishing academic career at Princeton; marriage and fatherhood to three girls; and, in 1910, the governorship of New Jersey. His short time as governor would be his only stint in public office before he won the presidential election as the Democratic nominee, two years later, at 55.

His meager political experience made Wilson the “change” candidate in 1912; there hadn’t been a Democrat in the White House since 1897, and Wilson’s immediate predecessor, William Howard Taft, was seen as an apologist for big business at a time of rampant inequality.

Wilson also took advantage of the growing disillusionment among black Americans with a Republican Party that seemed to take their votes for granted. “Let me assure my fellow colored citizens the earnest wish to see justice done the colored people in every manner,” he declared in an open letter courting African-American leaders. “Not merely grudging justice, but justice executed with liberality and cordial good feeling.”

Once he was in office, that “earnest



Patricia O’Toole.

NANCY CRAMPTON

wish” ran up against his fellow Southerners in Congress and his own cabinet, including the postmaster general and the treasury secretary (and future son-in-law), who proceeded to segregate their departments under Wilson’s watch.

Or maybe a campaigning Wilson overstated his earnestness, even if O’Toole doesn’t seem to see it that way. “The Moralist” suggests that Wilson’s betrayal of black Americans was born from simple expedience — that he allowed the segregation of the Civil Service because he desperately needed the votes of Southern congressmen in

order to pass his progressive economic agenda, including the introduction of a federal income tax.

“He knew the segregation was morally indefensible, but ending it would have cost him the votes of every Southerner in Congress,” O’Toole writes.

The second part of her sentence is largely correct, but how can she be so sure about the first? As evidence she cites Wilson’s own pleas to his critics. “I am in a cruel position,” he told the chairman of the N.A.A.C.P., insisting he was “at heart working for these people.” The testy exchange apparently left Wilson so rattled that he took to his bed for a week.

But as O’Toole herself shows, his cries of political constraints were later followed by his claims that politics were irrelevant to racism anyway. In 1914, Wilson told the African-American editor William Monroe Trotter that eliminating segregation wouldn’t do anything for racial animus, which he called “a human problem, not a political problem.” (Wilson took to his bed after that “bruising quarrel” with Trotter, too.)

The year after, Wilson gathered his daughters and his cabinet into the East Room of the White House for a screening of D. W. Griffith’s visually sumptuous and vehemently racist “The Birth of a Nation.” The film was based on a novel by an old acquaintance of Wilson’s and incorporated title cards that loosely quoted Wilson’s own work — including some strikingly sentiment-

tal descriptions of the Ku Klux Klan.

O’Toole mentions the screening only in passing. Which isn’t to say that she tries to exonerate Wilson; she enumerates his failings and points out that his hypocrisy around race wasn’t relegated to domestic issues. Black Americans “noticed a wide streak of racism in Wilson’s foreign policy,” as he contented himself with “strong language” when confronting white Europeans but resorted to military force “when crossed by nations inhabited primarily by people of color.”

Still, about the persistent racism — including Wilson’s flouting of his own democratic ideals in the Caribbean — O’Toole says some, but not enough.

In her opening pages, she says she is especially fascinated by how Wilson’s moralism became both an asset and a liability, ensuring that “his triumphs as well as his defeats were so large and lasting.” On Wilson’s tortured entrance into World War I, she is truly superb, assiduously tracing his journey from stubborn neutrality to zealous wartime president. As a study of Wilson’s relationship with Europe, and the intrigues of his foreign policy administration, the book is exemplary.

But like her subject, O’Toole occasionally gets trapped by her own noble intentions: A biography called “The Moralist,” which takes Wilson’s “great sense of moral responsibility” as its starting point, surely sets up expectations for a deeper exploration of just where he drew that line.

TRAVEL

Beer gets its own neighborhood

In stately Charleston, S.C., a free spirit reigns in a cluster of new breweries

BY MATT LEE
AND TED LEE

Charleston, S.C., is nice — “the jewel of the Lowcountry,” a travel writer recently proclaimed. But can a place so nice become too precious? There’s a point on the third or fourth visit when the perfection and elegance of the “Holy City’s” streetscapes, its meticulously restored and uniformly classical houses, begin to close in on your brain’s right hemisphere.

You may find yourself craving a moment of weirdness, modernism or merengue. And with the real estate stakes so high — the median sale price of a home on the lower peninsula was over \$850,000 in January — whimsy, experimentation and indolence seem to struggle for a foothold. The dazzling restaurant scene is so competitive, dining out on a Friday or Saturday can be as premeditated as a trip to the moon.

Those of us who live here may feel these limitations most acutely. Some recall a time in the last century when things were a little less battened-down, almost beachy, the pace decidedly slower. True, Charleston may have been even more formal and less sophisticated in many ways then — a Heineken and a platter of fried shrimp was the best you could hope for in the average restaurant — but Charleston fundamentally lived up to its billing as a hub of Southern adventure.

Fortunately, anyone — local or visitor alike — who chafes at Charleston’s staidness and decorum today can find an instant remedy: its beer, served fresh from the tank in a largely industrial neighborhood two miles north of the city’s tourist center.

Here in “The Neck,” where seven breweries have opened within a short bike ride of each other in just the last three years, serendipity is celebrated, dogs and children are welcome, and you can come as you are. Rust, gravel and the occasional puddle of hydraulic fluid are all part of the scenery, and the soundtrack is guaranteed to be esoteric.

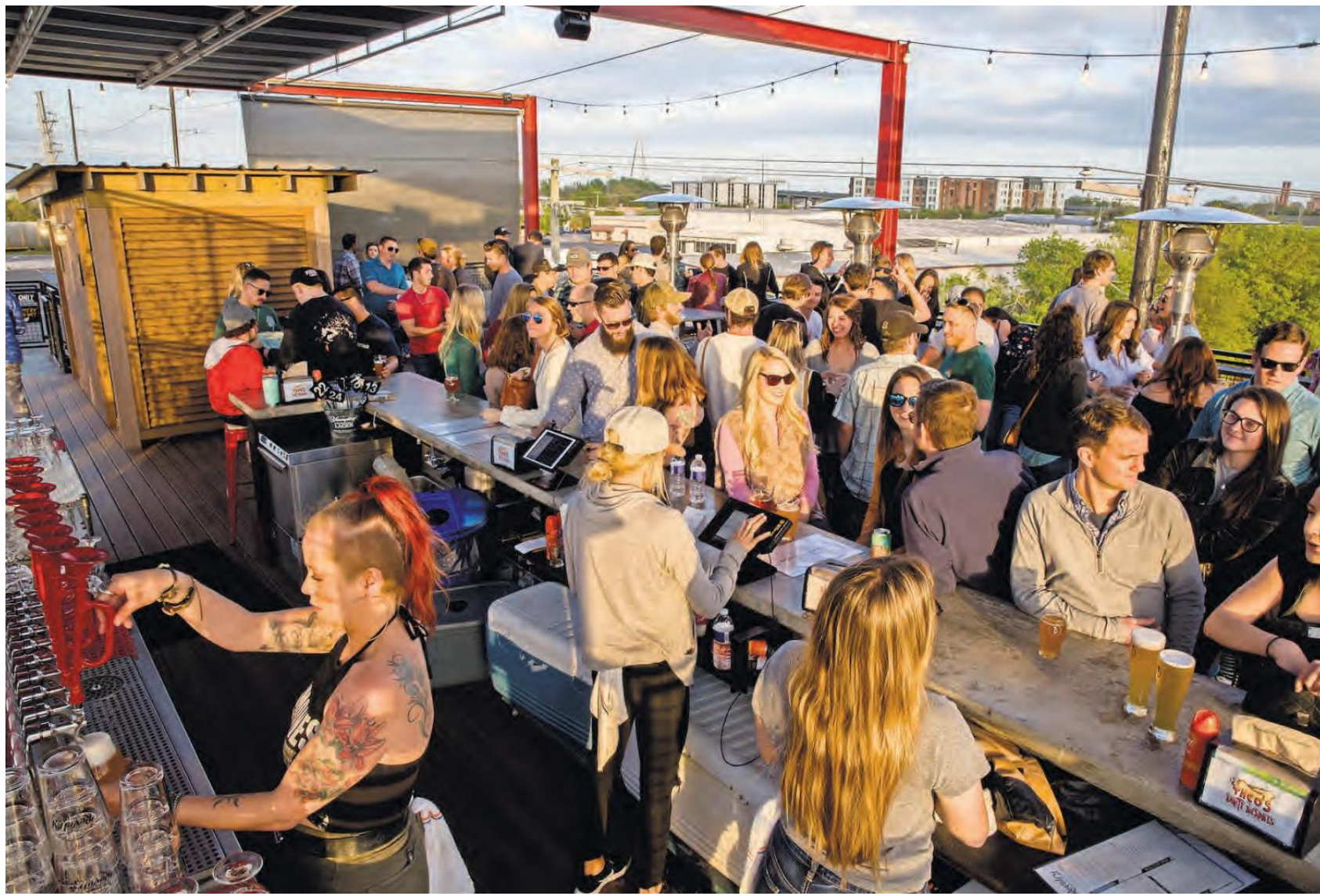
We recently set out to survey all seven new breweries, most of the food options, and a few of the entertainments in Charleston’s Brewery District, and can report that time spent here is refreshing in every sense of the word.

A perfect elevation for surveying the area is the observation deck at Sk8 Charleston, a \$4.8 million, three-quarter-acre skatepark that the city opened in 2017, offering sweeping marsh and Ashley River views to those who aren’t dropping into the park’s two polished-concrete bowls.

While Matt’s boys let out some excess energy at ground level, we sipped water on the deck and spotted ospreys and ibises working the huge expanse of spartina grass to the west. Alas, adult beverages are prohibited (sodas and snacks are sold, along with all manner of skate gear and apparel, in the store), but a spectator’s wrist band (\$1) entitles you to come and go all day.

As a post-skate reward, Cooper River Brewing, a short walk away, is typical of the new Charleston brewery model, retrofitted into a charmless steel warehouse building, but with enough Adirondack chairs, picnic tables and string lights in the parking lot to say “beer garden.” Indoors, tanks and brewing activity are on full display.

The bar (it’s technically a beer, wine and cider-only “taproom”); a full liquor license requires another level of paperwork) has a sporty feel, with three TV



Lily Sanford, left, pouring a beer at Revelry Brewing in Charleston, S.C., which is one of the oldest breweries in the city’s Brewery District. It opened in 2014.

screens blazing. Matt’s boys petted an old hound dog while we ordered pints from a list that aims to please every taste — a stout, porter, E.S.B. (extra special bitter), India pale ale, a golden ale — without flourish or gimmick, except for their (delicious) watermelon wheat.

Like most breweries in the area, Cooper River offers a range of volumetric options, including the humane, sample-enabling, five-ounce pour for \$2, but this time we claimed full pints of the I.P.A. and the session ale, and retreated to the outdoor picnic tables. In the open loading dock of the brewery, facing the beer garden, Pat Nelson stood behind a card table with a banner proclaiming “Big Boned Barbecue,” and we ordered smoky-tender brisket evocative of West Texas (\$11) and sausage (\$5), with mac

Here in “The Neck,” serendipity is celebrated, dogs and children are welcome, and you can come as you are.

and cheese, cornbread and the fixings (onion, pickle slices, white bread). The earthy smell of low tide crept into the parking lot, reminding us that The Neck is named for the point where the peninsula narrows to only a mile’s width of dry land between the Ashley and Cooper Rivers.

The next day, we began our beer crawl with a hearty lunch at Martha Lou’s Kitchen, which has fed Charlestonians and tourists for over 30 years from its pink cinder-block building on Morrison Drive, toward the south end of our focus.

To step into the restaurant is to enter a southern grandmother’s kitchen, with the pots in full view, bubbling at the back of the stove. Ted paired fried, salty pork chops with lima beans and cabbage, studded with neck bone; for Matt, red-

pepper-spiked chitlins with yams and collards.

After lunch we stopped a few blocks away on Conroy Street, at Revelry Brewing, the southernmost brewery on our trail and one of the oldest (opened in late 2014). Here was the jolt of architectural eccentricity we craved, an improvised structure that looks like a few shipping containers crash-landed on top of a warehouse.

In the high-ceilinged taproom, which shares floor space with the tanks, a broken spinet piano is incorporated into the bar. And a wacky approach prevails on the beer names: Funkmaster Brett (a Belgian I.P.A.), Poke the Bear (an American pale ale) and Peculiar Paradise (a saison) seem to hint at creative risks taken with yeasts and malts, though the extensive liner notes on each offering are beer-wonk reassuring.

Turning back north up Morrison Drive, past Santi’s Mexican restaurant — another fixture of this neighborhood and a source for child-friendly enchiladas and quesadillas — we made our way to Munkle Brewing, among the few new-construction breweries on our list. Its windowless exterior says funeral home more than fun house, but inside, a man-cave atmosphere prevailed: small clusters of people playing pool or stroking their dogs behind the ears. Strangely, tanks are hidden from view.

Another quirk: beer is dispensed into 14-ounce thistle-shaped glasses, a nod to the brewery’s inspiration, Belgium. Our bartender pulled a Gully Washer Wit and a Pout House Pale Ale (\$5 each), and we settled into rocking chairs on the outdoor porch, with a view of the train tracks and the sunset. A mobile, wood-fired pizza oven, Amanda Click’s First Name Basis, was parked nearby, and we split a thin, appealingly crisp “Collard Pie” (topped with Cheddar, red onion, mustard oil, and pancetta, \$17).

Our glasses were half empty when a man in a baseball cap and fleece vest came over and introduced himself — he was Palmer Quimby, who opened Munkle (long story, but his uncle was once a monk) in late 2017. We asked him why Charleston was in the throes of a brewing renaissance.

Two major legislative changes, he explained. A bill passed in 2014 permitted beer to be sold alongside food and in virtually any format: kegs, cans, bottles, pint glasses. Seven years before that, it was the “Pop the Cap” law, which was championed by the Coast Brewing Co. co-owner Jaime Tenney, and fundamentally changed the business model for beer here. Before 2007, brewers had to keep alcohol levels at or below 6.3 percent, and no one could imbibe on the premises.

“Everyone who has a beer bar, taproom or brewery in the entire state of South Carolina has Jaime to thank,” he said.

Less than 100 yards back down Meeting Street was Fatty’s Beer Works, which backs up to a cemetery. Fatty’s is pretty much any uncle’s dream: a two-door garage with an L-shaped bar, a drum kit and a bunch of tanks, next door to a tattoo parlor (Blu Gorilla). The five-ounce beers are \$2.50, but the \$10 flight of four makes a lot of sense, allowing you to survey almost everything on offer — a French saison, a porter, an I.P.A. and an E.S.B., all crisp and quaffable but with surprisingly subtle differences between the styles.

The next afternoon, we headed up the King Street Extension, just north of the skate park, to Tradesman Brewing, the place with the broadest gravel parking lot and the homeliest affect: an unmarked steel big-box with a refrigerated trailer and four porta-potties parked

outside. We soon learned: Do not judge a brewery by its appearance; the beers poured here — a double I.P.A. and a Boatwright (American pale), among five others — were riveting, with the heft and tropical curves we expected from a Charleston-made beer. Tradesman, it turns out, has been in the business since 2014, but moved to The Neck recently from James Island, a southern suburb.

Not all breweries we visited felt jury-rigged: Edmund’s Oast, the most ambi-

tious brewery in the area, opened in September 2017 in a gleaming new office development that includes The Workshop, billed as Charleston’s first food hall. Edmund’s, which is gearing up to ship its beers nationwide, has almost a half acre of production space, including a barrel-aging room exclusively for its sour, wild-fermented beers that is larger than most apartments in town.

The brewery’s full restaurant kitchen plays down as “pub fare” the excellent work they do, leaning heavily on their

wood oven to bake veggie-forward flatbreads, fish, chicken wings and even gyros. With 20 taps, the beers run the full spectrum from sour to serious.

The next Thursday we passed through the lunch line at Bertha’s Kitchen, at the far northern end of The Neck, for meltingly tender platters of stewed oxtails and turkey wings served over rice, before heading to Lo-Fi Brewing nearby. We saved Lo-Fi for last. Embedded in a construction zone for a highway interchange, it shares its lot with a muddy tow pound. A vinyl sign the size of a cafeteria tray, flapping against a chain-link fence and a pallet of beer cans in the loading bay were the only indication we were in the right place.

When we walked into the open-sided hangar just before happy hour, Frank Zappa’s free-form “Andy” was blasting on large speakers, and Jason Caughman, the owner, pattered around looking for his phone.

A rack of wooden barrels and a drum kit separated the tanks and equipment from an area of cement floor furnished with two long picnic tables. A woman in sparkly eye shadow was changing tap handles behind the smallest beer bar we’d ever seen.

Over the next hour, we’d nurse a totally O.K. Mexican lager and a fruity New England I.P.A. called Jacuzzi, and watch as a party slowly engulfed us. Two sacks of oysters materialized, then some people with dogs, then more dogs and people, and Mr. Caughman took the wheel of the forklift to move pallets of kegs around, to create a wind break. Once the steamed oysters started hitting the table, we recharged our glasses, grabbed oyster knives and joined in.

Eventually Mr. Caughman, whose shoulder-length hair and gray-speckled beard suggests Jeff Bridges’s “The Dude,” gave up his labors and approached the shucking table, can of Jacuzzi in hand. We asked Mr. Caughman about his graphic design philosophy — the electric pinks and yellows, as well as the unicorns printed on his cans and kegs, that feel like a brazen retort to the muted greens and browns, the palmettos and Spanish moss of the classic Lowcountry landscape.

“Breweries are inherently laid back,” he said, pausing to take a swig. “What do you feel when you see a unicorn? It’s playful. That’s what Lo-Fi is shouting: relax and have fun.”

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Top, a beer flight at Tradesman Brewing. Above, skateboarders at Sk8, a new park.