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The New York Times

INTERNATIONAL EDITION | WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2018

A new face in German diplomacy

Anna Sauerbrey
Contributing Writer

OPINION

BERLIN On May 23, Germany's new foreign minister, Heiko Maas, will meet his American counterpart, Mike Pompeo, for the first time. The meeting will take place in rough times for trans-Atlantic relations, amid European worries over Donald Trump's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal and a looming trade war. If Germany truly is the centerweight of Europe, then it matters enormously what its leading figure on foreign policy thinks. The thing is, no one knows.

Mr. Maas is no stranger to politics, but he is a novice when it comes to foreign policy. During Chancellor Angela Merkel's last term, the 51-year-old Social Democrat served as the minister of justice and consumer protection, his first federal office. Before that, he spent nearly 20 years as a representative and government minister in the Saar-land, a small state along the French border.

Heiko Maas, the new foreign minister, is a novice. That hasn't stopped him from revolutionizing foreign policy.

And yet, in just the 10 weeks since Mr. Maas took charge, he has already begun to leave his mark. On March 26, only two weeks after he took office, Germany joined 28 other countries in expelling Russian diplomats in response to the poisoning of a Russian-British double agent, Sergei Skripal, and his daughter.

A few weeks later, Mr. Maas flew to Moscow for his inaugural visit with Sergei Lavrov, his Russian counterpart. Mr. Lavrov is one of the world's most experienced diplomats, and someone known to bring the proverbial gun to every knife fight. One can only imagine the flurry of briefing papers and meetings at the German Foreign Ministry to get their new guy up to speed.

But by all accounts, the meeting went well. Despite years of acrimony between Russia and Germany — and especially between Mr. Lavrov and Mr. Maas's predecessors — the Germans came away promising to support a veterans' hospital, and the Russians committed to the so-called Normandy Format, an effort to resolve the crisis in eastern Ukraine involving France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine.

The day after meeting Mr. Lavrov in Moscow, Mr. Maas traveled to Lithuania for a meeting with the foreign ministers of the three Baltic States. It was a meeting with friends, and yet the whole drama of German foreign policy was in SAUERBREY, PAGE 11

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



The grave of James Guy, a dairy farmer from Simpson, Australia, who killed himself in 2016 while facing the prospect of losing his livelihood.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADAM FERGLUSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Tragedy on heels of prosperity

SIMPSON, AUSTRALIA

If Australia is booming, why are so many of its farmers killing themselves?

BY JACQUELINE WILLIAMS

James Guy had been a dairy farmer since he was 15, and at 55, he thought he'd be preparing for retirement. Instead, he struggled to make the payments on a bank loan after the price of milk fell and never recovered.

One night in November 2016, his wife, Mary, who was working part-time as a nurse to help make ends meet, came home to find he had hanged himself.

"When a farmer is looking down the barrel of having to sell his farm or lose his farm or give up the profession he'd done all his life, it's devastating," Ms. Guy said, her voice wavering, from her farmhouse in Simpson, a town in Australia's dairy heartland in the state of Victoria. "They just lose their identity."

Family farms like Mr. Guy's have been the producers of Australia's agricultural bounty and the bedrock of its self-image as a nation of proudly self-reliant types, carving a living from a vast continent. But as Australia's rural econ-



Jim Whelan, a cattle rancher, has struggled with depression and the difficulties of farming through drought. His son, also a rancher, killed himself in 2013.

omy has boomed on the back of growing exports, small farmers have not always shared in the rewards, with many forced into borrowing money or selling their farms.

The emotional cost of these losses has become visible in a slowly unfolding mental health crisis in rural regions,

seen most tragically in a rising number of suicides.

Nationwide, people living in remote areas now take their own lives at twice the rate of those in the cities: Every year, there are about 20 suicide deaths per 100,000 people in isolated rural areas, compared with 10 in urban commu-

nities, according to independent studies of local health figures.

In very remote parts of the country, the figure is closer to 23, the studies say.

The horrific potential of this mental health crisis burst into public view this month in the tiny town of Osmington, south of Perth, where a grandfather is believed to have killed six members of his family and then himself after they reportedly fell into economic difficulties.

But most of the tragedies involve someone quietly taking his own life. Research shows that farmers are among those at the highest risk of suicide.

In the state of Queensland, studies have shown that farmers are more than twice as likely as the general population to take their own lives. In remote parts of the state, the suicide rate for farmers was up to five times that of nonfarmers.

"There's a mental health crisis in rural Australia," said Hugh van Cuylenburg, the founding director of the Resilience Project, an organization that promotes mental health across Australia. He added that it had reached "epidemic proportions."

The problem of rural suicides is not unique to Australia. Countries as diverse as India and France also face problems of farmers killing themselves. In the United States, suicides have been increasing since 1999, as an opioid epi- AUSTRALIA, PAGE 4

Infighting stalls drive for trade agreement

WHITE HOUSE MEMO
WASHINGTON

Multibillion-dollar pact that Trump seeks with China is mired in chaos

BY MARK LANDLER
AND ANA SWANSON

By the time American negotiators wrapped up high-level talks with a visiting Chinese delegation last week, President Trump's ambitions for a multibillion-dollar trade agreement had, for the time being, shriveled into a blandly worded communiqué without any dollar figures. It was not clear that the talks set a path to success.

Ceaseless infighting and jockeying for influence on the White House's trade team helped deprive Mr. Trump of a quick victory on his most cherished policy agenda, several people involved in the talks said. The deep internal divisions carried over into how officials characterized the agreement and muddled the outlook for the next phase of the negotiations between Washington and Beijing.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said Sunday that the United States would hold off on imposing tariffs on China, putting the trade war "on hold," but hours later, the United States trade representative, Robert Lighthizer, warned the Chinese that the Trump administration might yet impose tariffs.

On Friday, Mr. Trump's chief economic adviser, Larry Kudlow, said that China had offered to reduce its trade surplus with the United States by \$200 billion. Two days later, he said that the number was merely a "rough ballpark estimate," and that the two countries never expected to reach an agreement; they merely planned to issue a statement laying out the next steps.

It was a muddled end to a chaotic process — one that revealed an American team riven by conflicts over tactics and policy, working for a president eager for a victory but torn by his desire to have a smooth summit meeting next month with North Korea, over which China wields enormous influence.

Now the future of the negotiations falls to Wilbur Ross, the 80-year-old commerce secretary, who will travel to China in the coming days to try to nail down the commitments that proved so elusive in last week's negotiations.

Mr. Ross brings uncertain credentials to this task: Last summer, he tried to strike a deal with China to reduce its steel production capacity. When Mr. Trump heard of the plan, he berated Mr. Ross and demanded that his advisers bring him a package of tough sanctions. TRADE, PAGE 8

A VICTORY LAP FOR BEIJING

Tariffs are postponed after talks in which China rebuffed offers and avoided specific pledges. PAGE 8

After 25 years, Yanni recalls magic of Acropolis

PHILADELPHIA

BY ZACHARY WOOLFE

The mustache is back. Yanni, the Greek-American god of sweeping, symphonic musical light syrup, says he goes back and forth about keeping his signature facial flourish. He shaved it off a few years ago — it's disconcertingly absent from the cover of his 2016 album "Sensuous Chill."

But during a recent concert here, it had returned to its rightful spot, framed by the familiar, gentle cascades of shoulder-length hair. (I regret to inform you that, at 63, Yanni is thinning on top.)

All this hair has been kept the same dark, dark brown it was 25 years ago, on Sept. 25, 1993, when Yanni gambled his savings to organize a concert of his music at the Acropolis in Athens, backed by a full orchestra and, crucially, filmed live. Promoted heavily — some might say sadistically — by PBS in the years that followed, the film was his breakthrough: It drove seven million sales of



Yanni performing in Philadelphia as part of a tour commemorating his breakthrough 1993 concert at the Acropolis in Athens, recorded as a popular film and album.

CAROLINE TOMPKINS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

the album version and helped make the world safe for the similarly soft-drama, lushly instrumental sounds of "Riverdance," Enya and Lindsey Stirling.

"They overplayed it, I felt," Yanni said of his pledge drive pre-eminence backstage at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts before playing here in Philadelphia this month, part of a three-month Acropolis anniversary tour that takes him across the United States through Aug. 5. He mimicked what he'd yell at Yanni-drunk PBS affiliates: "Stop playing it!"

But he plainly loves to recall the show. (As well he should: It's far and away the best thing he's ever done.) "There's no way you can redo the Acropolis," he said before going onstage at the Mann Center, its sides wide open to the chilly, rainy, decidedly un-Athenian night. "The only thing you can do is help the audience feel as close as we felt, bring them to that place."

Interested in glimpsing how and why hordes of people connect to music they perceive as classical — or at least classi- YANNI, PAGE 2

Democracy
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Issue Number
No. 42,048

PAGE TWO

A talent overshadowed by his 'Love' design

ROBERT INDIANA
1928-2018

BY JORI FINKEL

Robert Indiana, the Pop artist whose bold rendering of the word "love" became one of the most recognizable artworks of the 20th century, gracing hundreds of prints, paintings and sculptures, some 330 million postage stamps that he authorized and countless tchotchkes that he did not, died at his home in Vinalhaven, Me. He was 89.

His lawyer, James W. Brannan, said the cause of his death, on Saturday, was respiratory failure.

Mr. Indiana's famous image features the letters L-O-V-E rendered in colorful capitals, with the first two letters stacked on top of the other two and the letter "O" tilted as if it were being swept off its feet. Since he designed the earliest versions, in the 1960s, the logo has acquired a life of its own, appearing on everything from posters and album covers to T-shirts and jewelry.

Mr. Indiana called it the 20th century's "most plagiarized work of art," and he kept a collection of knockoffs in his home, a historic Victorian building, to prove it.

To be sure, he had a hand in spreading the word, creating many artworks in different mediums based on the motif. And he designed the red, blue and green version that was originally issued as an eight-cent stamp by the United States Postal Service for Valentine's Day 1973. It has since become one of the most popular holiday stamps in the United States.

But Mr. Indiana often pointed out that he received a flat fee of only \$1,000 for his stamp design. And he frequently complained that the runaway success of "Love" ruined his reputation in the New York art world.

"He was an artist of consequence who gets mistaken for a one-hit wonder," Maxwell Anderson, director of the Dallas Museum of Art, said in an interview in 2008.

Barbara Haskell, a curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art who organized the 2013 retrospective "Robert Indiana: Beyond Love," said, "There's a new wave of critics today who are reappraising Indiana in the context of Pop Art, seeing how he reflects it with the darker side of the American dream."

She added: "The work he did in the '60s in particular is very powerful, both dark and celebratory, with layers of autobiographical and cultural references. It's not this superficial, optimistic, cliché design people associate with his monumental sculpture."

Questions of authenticity continued to swirl around Mr. Indiana at the very end. The day before he died, a company agent said it was Mr. Indiana's longtime assistant who had the right to some of his important works used a New York art publisher and a man who had become his caretaker, accusing them of forging Indiana pieces and selling them. The publisher said the work was authorized, and the caretaker did not respond to a request for comment.

Mr. Indiana, who retreated to Vinalhaven, a remote island, decades ago to escape the New York art scene, had grown reclusive in his final years. Some longtime friends and business associates said their efforts to contact him had been unavailing, or had been put off by his lawyer, Mr. Brannan. Mr. Indiana was not able to see them.

Born in New Castle, Ind., on Sept. 13, 1928, Robert Indiana was the only child of Earl Clark and Carmen Watters and grew up as Robert Clark. He often described his childhood as "hardcore," noting that he had moved 21 times within the state of Indiana by the age of 17. His mother "couldn't bear to live in one house longer than a year," he said in



Robert Indiana in 1964 with a poster for the New York State Theater at Lincoln Center. "There's a new wave of critics today who are reappraising Indiana in the context of Pop Art," a museum curator said.

"The work he did in the '60s in particular is very powerful, both dark and celebratory."

an interview for the Smithsonian Archives of American Art.

His family's financial struggles also contributed. After losing his job at Western Oil, his father managed a gas station and also pumped gas before finding another administrative job at Phillips 66. His parents divorced before he was a teenager.

Priized for his drawing skills as early as the first grade, Mr. Indiana was not especially interested in the oil industry, but he later said that he had been mesmerized by the bold neon signs at gas stations. He graduated from Arsenault Technical High School in Indianapolis as valedictorian of his class and attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago on the G.I. Bill after three years in the Air Force (known as the Army Air Forces when he began his service).

In 1954 he moved to New York to start his career as an artist. He worked at an art supply store on West 57th Street, where he was putting a Matisse poster in the window when the painter Ellsworth Kelly came in and asked about it. They began talking and later became lovers. Mr. Kelly helped him find a loft on Coenties Slip in Manhattan, which, when it was still receiving ships, funded a mention on the first page of "Moby-Dick."

The seaport figured heavily in Mr. Indiana's early sculptures. He used repur-

posed wood masts from ships, beams from old waterfront buildings and 19th-century stencils found in his loft to make a series of enigmatic assemblages that he called herms, after the classical figures. Most had human dimensions, rising to heights exceeding five feet. Some also had priapic pegs in front.

It was on Coenties Slip that he met neighboring artists like Jack Youngerman, Agnes Martin and Cy Twombly, with whom he shared his studio for a time. And it was there that he adopted Indiana as a sort of stage name, widely read as a celebration of his ties to the American heartland.

A particular sort of peppy, Midwest-seeming earnestness soon became a central theme in his work, as in his 1961 oil painting "The American Dream #1," in which four flat, colorful discs contain signs like "tilt" and "take all." Alfred Barr Jr., who acquired that work for the Museum of Modern Art, called it "spell-binding" but admitted, "I don't understand why I like it so much."

Mr. Indiana himself called it "a comment on the superficiality of American life." The critic Lawrence Alloway called it "Pop poetry of the highway." Ms. Haskell, at the Whitney, described his use of language as one of his most important contributions.

"It's very different than, say, Johns, who embedded words in gestural brush strokes," she said, referring to the artist Jasper Johns. "Here words are the content."

Several of Mr. Indiana's paintings revolve around monosyllabic action words like "eat," "bug" or "die," a rather



Mr. Indiana's iconic creation, in sculpture form, at John F. Kennedy Plaza in Philadelphia.

direct, bare-bones alternative to the sophisticated exhortations of Madison Avenue. In 1964, at the New York World's Fair, he installed a flashing 20-foot electric sign that read "East." It was unplugged almost immediately because it drew too many tourists looking for a bite.

That year he also starred in the Andy Warhol film of the same name, which featured Mr. Indiana very slowly and languorously eating a mushroom. Then came "love."

The art historian Susan Elizabeth Ryan revealed in her monograph on Mr. Indiana that the first version of his most

famous work was markedly different. Completed "within complex circumstances" at the end of 1964, after Mr. Indiana and Mr. Kelly had broken up, Ms. Ryan wrote, it had a cruder four-letter word in place of "love," in a similar composition with a tilted "u."

Mr. Indiana never fully discussed, at least not in public, why he made the transition to the G-rated version, which he used as his Christmas card that year.

The next year, he turned it into a Christmas card for the Museum of Modern Art in New York. By 1966 he had done enough variations on the theme to have a show of "Love" prints, paintings and

sculptures at Stable Gallery in New York.

By 1970, when he built a 12-foot-tall steel version for the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the image was famous enough to be invoked — some would say stolen — by the book jacket design for Erich Segal's best-selling novel "Love Story" (This was long before Mr. Indiana's deers started chasing after any copyright infringements.)

Mr. Indiana believed the piracy of the image harmed his reputation in the New York art world, and he retreated to Maine in 1978. But many critics countered that he had appropriated his own work shamelessly for decades. He created dozens of versions of "Love" in different mediums, planted "Love" sculptures in cities from Indianapolis to Tokyo, and cast it into different languages, including Hebrew ("Ahava") and Spanish ("Amor").

He also revamped the slogan for political ends. In 1976, he recast "Love" as "Vote" for a poster commissioned by the Democratic National Committee. In 2008, he built a sculpture for the Democratic National Convention using the word "Hope" and authorized the image's reproduction on T-shirts, buttons and limited-edition prints sold by Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

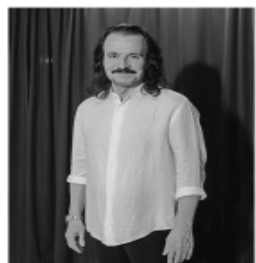
Mr. Anderson, of the Dallas Museum, said that "Love," too, should be remembered in a broader political context, as a product of the 1960s. "To be true to the artist's intentions," he said, "we should see 'Love' in relation to the antiwar moment, and not as a decal on a baby boomers' Volvo."

Yanni celebrates magic of Acropolis show

YANNI, FROM PAGE 1
cal-adjacent — I approached the Philadelphia concert as a kind of lapsed fan. An impressionable and theatrically inclined child who the Acropolis film was omnipresent, I loved it, probably for the same reason I fell for opera around the same time: It had the kind of preposterous grandeur that matched my aspirations. (Among the similarly besotted was Jiang Zemin, who, as the president of China, eased the way for a follow-up performance at the Forbidden City a few years later.)

I'm not the only one who has kept the campily delightful show in the back of his mind: It's firmly lodged in our cultural semiconscious. Asked in an interview with The New York Times where he'd like to spend the rest of his life, John Turturro said he wanted to play the Acropolis. "Just because only Yanni has done that so far," down an Instagram rabbit hole recently, I found a short video of a young composer and his husband at home, doing a deadpan the start of "Santorini," the stirring opener in 1993, on piano and maracas.

I haven't really followed Yanni's career since Athens. He may have blurred in my memories, too. He played at the Taj Mahal in 1997, opening up a vibrant market for his music in India. He dropped the Acropolis-style drama to dab in even-easier listless "If I Could Tell You"; pan-global flutes ("Ethnicity"); and collaborations with crossover opera stars like



Yanni may have faded for some, but he still has the power to make grown women cry.

Plácido Domingo and Renée Fleming ("Inspiration").

A passionate fan base stuck with him through a few years' hiatus around the turn of the century, attributed to exhaustion and depression, but it's telling that he played only one Radio City Music Hall date on this tour, as opposed to 10 sold-out shows there in 1998.

On offer in Philadelphia was a stellar rendition of songs from "Live at the Acropolis" and other records, running two and a half intermissionless

With Yanni in white shirt, pants and shoes, beatifically smiling and earnest, his appeal came slowly into focus.

hours — the 1993 concert clocked in at a tight 70 minutes. There was no orchestra this time, but the backing band dwelled on feverishly virtuosic solos — fretted drums, shredding violins — as if to compensate for the lack of Acropolis-scale forces.

Yanni's brass fanfares stand out in tiny nuggets, as if begging to become TV spots theme music. Suddenly changing gears from somnolent piano lines to driving propulsion and back again, the music has the blank moodiness of a score for a nonexistent film. Without lyrics, and with only the barest nudges toward feeling "sad" or "happy," the show creates a woozy sensation of — only a Yanni song title will do here — standing in motion.

He spoke from the stage, as he had 25 years ago, about an astronaut looking down on our planet and seeing one of the borders we irrationally insist on. But mostly he was, as he described himself in the interview, apologetic. "Politics is irrelevant to me right now," he told me, "even though it's very relevant."

The only bit of current events he dwelled on, both backstage and to the audience, was his recent experience playing in Saudi Arabia at the invitation

of its government — concerts at which, he said, no restrictions were made on the activities or dress of women, either performers or attendees. (Photos show his female musicians playing, unlike in Philadelphia, with covered shoulders.)

"This country has taken steps in what I think is the right direction," he said from the stage, echoing the message of another recent American tour: that of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the 32-year-old heir to the Saudi throne.

With Yanni in white shirt, pants and shoes, beatifically smiling and earnest, and sometimes awkwardly skipping around, his appeal came slowly into focus, captured by the title of his most recent record: He lets you chill. He playfully forces his hand to do solos again and again, first faster, then slower, like a circus ringleader, but he almost never imposes directives on his audience.

The spectacle is one of gentle stimulation. All the garish demonstrations of instrumental technique, the vaguely uplifting invocations of a changing society in the Middle East, give off an impression of sophistication — delivered with a grin that makes it all fun and manageable. A handful of audience members who had paid an extra couple of hundred dollars lined up backstage afterward for a meet-and-greet. Grown women cried in Yanni's presence, one of them in front of her children. Another said that if she died tomorrow, she would die happy.

"When they like me," Yanni had said before the concert, "they really like me."

Every 202,500 years, Earth takes another path

BY NICHOLAS BAKALAR

It happens every 405,000 years. The Earth's orbit gradually changes shape from almost circular to slightly elliptical over a period of 202,500 years, and then starts returning to form over the next 202,500 years — like a metronome swinging side to side.

Right now, we are in an almost perfectly circular orbit around the sun, and soon — within some thousands of years, that is — we will start moving toward the elliptical.

This happens because of the Earth's gravitational interactions with other planets, especially Jupiter and Venus — Jupiter because it is very large, and Venus because it is very near.

In new research published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, scientists tracked the orbital cycle by analyzing a 1,700-foot-long rock core drilled in the Petrified Forest National Park in Arizona.

The 405,000-year cycle, they found, has held uniform into the very distant past — back to at least 215 million years ago.

By comparing the amount of decay of uranium to that of lead trapped in zircon, the layers in the Arizona core can be dated quite accurately. The rock is 202 million to 253 million years old.

Two areas in the Northeast United States, 2,000 miles away, the sedimentary layers clearly show climate cycles reflecting the 405,000-year cycle of orbital changes, but without the reliable uranium-lead dating of the Arizona sample. So the scientists linked the climate cycles of the Northeast sediments with the uranium-lead dates from the Arizona core. The timing matched: the variations in both showed that the cycle has been going on precisely as scientists had calculated.

Right now, we are in an almost perfectly circular orbit.

What does knowing this mean? The lead author of the study, Dennis W. Kent, a professor of earth and planetary sciences at Rutgers University, said that it will give scientists a much more accurate method of dating prehistoric events — the dates of fossils, for example. "The dream is to have a framework independent of the fossils that you can plug the fossils into and see more interesting things — the coexistence of disparate forms, or of similar forms widely separated in location. Now we can place things more accurately in time rather than depending on the fossils to tell us what the time is."

World



From left, I Gusti Mangku Sasak, a 76-year-old Balinese healer, working the rice fields; his sister-in-law with offerings for a ceremony; I Gusti Mangku, in front of an image of his deceased father; I Gusti Ngurah Sasak, from whom he inherited his practice.

A spiritual path to healing

Balinese method uses hands-on holistic therapies and medicinal herbs

BY MALIN FEZEKAI

I Gusti Mangku Sasak, a 76-year-old Balinese healer, begins and ends each day by meditating. He focuses on his third eye, the tip of his nose, the tip of his tongue and his throat. He then goes to the rice fields, where he works with his son. When he returns home, around dusk, patients arrive from his village in the regency of Gianyar and beyond.

He is a third-generation healer who has simple advice for well-being: "Know oneself, be in control of your food intake and be aware of your body."

I Gusti Mangku is one of about 8,000 healers, or "ballians," versed in Usada Bali, the ancient practice of using medicinal plants, oils, herbs and spices, as well as hands-on holistic therapies and ancient teachings, to treat physical and mental pains. In Bali, a province in Indonesia that has a population of more than four million people, healers outnumber doctors by four to one.

He considers part of his practice healing mostly local patients, who donate what they can afford in exchange for treatment. "People that come and see me are sick and are already having problems, and if you force them to pay, you make their situation worse," he said. "And that's not healing."

Today, there is an industry of spiritual healing tourism as people from all over the world flock to Bali, drawn by wellness vacation packages and meditation retreats that advertise restorative experiences for body and mind. The number of people going there increased a dozen years ago with the release of the best-selling memoir "Eat, Pray, Love," which featured a Balinese medicine man named Ketut Lijer.

The number of self-professed healers grew alongside the tourists seeking enlightenment. As a result, there is a healthy skepticism among the Balinese people toward these self-proclaimed healers. But I Gusti Mangku has never heard of "Eat, Pray, Love," and the interest by foreign tourists does little to alter his daily routine.

While Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim country, the population of the island of Bali is almost 90 percent Hindu. Layers of tradition run thickly through the fabric of the society.

Being a healer is a respected position



I Gusti Mangku leading his family in prayer for Pagerwesi, a holiday celebrated every six months. Healers are respected in Bali, where they outnumber doctors by four to one.

In Balinese society, one that is handed down over generations, I Gusti Mangku, one of about four healers in a village in Gianyar, is a third-generation healer who has devoted much of his adult life to the family trade. In addition to inheriting his father's profession, he also passed down his Lontar scribes, which are collections of thin palm leaves tied together with string, inscribed with medicinal recipes, diagnoses and other ancient wisdoms written in Kawi, an old Javanese language still used in traditional arts and during ceremonies.

He remembers his father as a disciplined man who would refuse to ride in cars no matter how long the journey. "It's healthier to walk," he would say.

When I Gusti Mangku was a young man he didn't want to follow in his father's footsteps. He was in the middle of his exams to join the Indonesian Navy when his father asked him, the youngest of five children, to take over the family practice. He remembers his father being inundated with patients. "I never wanted to be that busy," he said.

On a recent warm afternoon in March, people across Bali were celebrating Pagerwesi, a holiday observed every six months, during which a series of prayerful rituals and offerings are done to fortify their minds and hearts against encroaching evil forces.

As the sun weighed heavy on the rice fields where I Gusti Mangku and his son

worked, they made their way back to their compound, a collection of homes where about 30 family members, including his wife and two sons, live. Around 7 p.m., it buzzed with activity as his extended family, including siblings, in-laws, nephews, nieces and cousins, gathered in the northeast corner of the compound, where a family shrine commemorates and honors spirits, Hindu gods and family ancestors. The family's compound is designed in a traditional Balinese style that follows ancient architectural principles containing elements of both Buddhism and Hinduism.

He rang a bell. The sharp sound quieted the family, as they began to put their hands together and he led his family

in prayer.

Later that day, the sun dipped below the horizon as members of the community started arriving at the compound to seek treatment. They described their problems in detail: hair loss, stomach ailments, chest pains.

I Gusti Mangku carefully examined his patients' eyes and the way they breathed, one of the steps of an examination in his specialty, neurological disorders. He then used his hands, working with pressure points and mixing together formulas based on the person's needs.

Ibu Made Surati, 67, a long-term patient of I Gusti Mangku, said that she first came to him seeking help after giving birth. She was vomiting blood, and

doctors couldn't find anything wrong with her. After I Gusti Mangku treated her with his own compounds and put her on a dietary regimen that eliminated roasted pork, she said, her symptoms subsided. Whenever she is sick, she first goes to a medical doctor, but if modern medicine can't help, she turns to healers.

One patient sat at the side of his house, waiting for I Gusti Mangku's son, I Gusti Ngura Chinarsa, who is being trained in the hope that he will take over the practice. According to I Gusti Mangku, the two healers "have different energies." In Usada Bali teaching, there is a section on unblocking, purifying, releasing and balancing different energies in the body. This particular patient had muscular and joint problems, and I Gusti Mangku is teaching his son to understand anatomy so that he can unlock those varied energies.

I Gusti Mangku said he had treated heart conditions, headaches, deafness, breast cancer and other illnesses. He also recognizes that there are some illnesses he can't treat. For example, when he sees patients with typhoid or cholera he tells them to seek treatment at the hospital.

"A healer should never guarantee that they can heal people," he said.

As foreign dollars flow in to the practitioners and communities of Usada Bali, some worry that the practice might become compromised. There are now guides that have set up services to serve as intermediaries between tourists and healers.

Although I Gusti Mangku primarily heals those in his village and does not disclose his exact location, he says that foreigners started showing up on his doorstep in the 1980s. He has treated people from New York, Singapore and Australia. He is not always sure how they find him, because he is not listed on a tourism site. He never turns patients away, no matter how late. "I never lock my door," he said. "If people show up at night, I will wake up."

I Gusti Mangku said that the traditions of Usada Bali must not be shared frivolously. He explains that there is a saying in Bali: "Don't just tell people who are not asking." It is very important that the teachings don't become distorted or misused, he said.

On the other hand, if people are sincerely seeking help or information, and they want to learn about Usada Bali, he said, "We have an obligation to tell them because all of these teachings do not belong to us."

Fixer-uppers in Venice, a perfect place to spend an afterlife

VENICE

You can now bid for a plot in one of 4 chapel tombs on the 'isle of the dead'

BY ELISABETTA POVOLEDO

To let: four small lots with a 99-year (renewable) lease, on an exclusive Venetian island. Fixer-uppers. Illustrations: neighbors: Igor Stravinsky, Joseph Brodsky, Emilio Vedova. Starting auction price: around \$300,000.

It was not, admittedly, quite so straightforward. But that was the gist of a call for bids that appeared on Venice's municipal website in March. Up for grabs were four chapel tombs in the cemetery of San Michele, Venice's "isle of the dead."

The cemetery, built after Napoleon's administration ordered the residents of Venice to bury their dead outside the city center, has for more than 200 years been a final resting place for Venetians, as well as a few chosen foreigners given special dispensation to be buried there.

Now, that honor will go to the highest bidder.

Last year, Mayor Luigi Brugnaro decided to put up for auction five private chapels built by old Venetian families but abandoned for years. The proceeds will be used to restore older sections of the cemetery that have been worn by exposure to the elements.

It may not be a palazzo on the Grand Canal, but it's a rare chance to spend the hereafter — or at least 99 years of it, renewable for 50 more — in an exclusive haunt that is normally open only to Venice residents, relatives of those buried in the cemetery and celebrities with a strong connection to the city.

Be forewarned, however: The chapels need considerable work and, like a Venice palazzo, will require eternal care. A chapel here needs "the same maintenance as a palazzo in the historic center," Massimiliano De Martin, the municipal councilor responsible for urban planning, said during a stroll through the cemetery grounds.

In March, a French entrepreneur secured the Salvati Chapel by bidding 350,000 euros, or around \$410,000, in the first auction. The chapel — part of the hemicycle entrance to the cemetery, where two other chapels are up for auction — was in good shape after a recent restoration paid for by the city.

The new owner — Dominique Vacher, the director general of Laboratoires Genievrier, a pharmaceutical company — and his wife already owned an apartment in the lagoon city and decided to extend their stay.

Venice is billed "as the city where happiness is eternal," he said in a statement issued by City Hall.

There will be plenty of room: The tomb chamber previously held seven corpses.

The two nearby chapels available — the Testolini Quadri, with a base price of more than €256,000, and the slightly



Brothers are pictured on their tombstone in the cemetery of San Michele in Venice. In an auction in March, a French entrepreneur paid about \$410,000 for a chapel tomb.

larger Azzano, starting at over €277,000 — each sleep, so to speak, two corpses and countless funerary urns for ashes or bones. Two other chapels — the Venier and the Olivieri — are in other quadrants.

The cemetery was built during the French occupation of Venice, when it was decreed that burying the dead on the main islands was unsanitary. It was later enlarged.

Until 1954, all private tombs in the city, whether below or above ground, were leased for eternity. Since then, the

city of Venice has leased tombs for a varying number of years. In some cases, leases can be renewed.

Otherwise, graves are exhumed on a schedule posted at the cemetery entrance and on its website. Exhumations take place throughout the year, aside from July and August, when "it's too hot," said Maurizio Zaranzo, the cemetery's manager. The remains can be cremated, and the ashes can go into a columbarium niche for 30 years, renewable for 20 more. Or bones can be deposited into the cemetery's common ossuary.

"There are more dead Venetians than live ones — it's a fact."

Since 2011, the city has also allowed ashes to be scattered in the lagoon, as long as an official is present and the city's mortuary police have granted approval. This is true for foreigners' ashes, too.

In the San Michele cemetery, relatives of the deceased typically tend the tombs.

Yet many older tombs are in need of specialized restoration, an issue that has grown more dire as Venice's population has dwindled. There are now 85,000 people resting in peace on the island, compared with 56,000 Venetians living in the historic center, down from 175,000 in 1951.

"There are more dead Venetians than live ones — it's a fact," Mr. De Martin said.

The areas of the cemetery overseen by the Protestant and Orthodox churches are in disrepair, even though most luminaries buried on the island are in these sections. In the case of the Reparto Evangelico, the Protestant grounds, a foundation has begun fundraising in Europe and the United States to pay for a restoration.

As with the Roman Catholic section of the cemetery, the Protestant graves are the responsibility of the families, but many no longer live in Venice. With a smaller population, "we don't have the same pressure faced in the Catholic

part" to make space for new tombs, said Oddbjorn Sormoen, an art historian and director of the fund-raising foundation.

So far, the group has mapped its quadrant to identify the areas most in need of repair and assess ways to redress them. "Our next project is restoring the gateway to the chapel," said John C. Mowinkel, the foundation's president. His great-grandfather, Johan Ludvig Mowinkel — a Norwegian businessman who traded in salted cod, used in the traditional Venetian dish baccalà — is buried at San Michele.

"Oh, if we could get a dollar from every Protestant in America," the fundraiser added wistfully.

Restoration efforts on the Catholic side are, for now, financed by money raised in the auctions.

The first lot included five chapels, and officials said other chapels had been identified for future bidding. "We're promoting the auction throughout the planet, because Venice has always been a city open to the world," said Mr. De Martin, the city councilor.

While far from the maddening crowds that throng the city's famous St. Mark's Square, the cemetery has become a tourist magnet, both for those paying homage to the celebrities buried there and for those wanting to savor its peace and solemnity.

"You see, you're smiling here in the cemetery," Mr. De Martin said. "You don't die here. This is the sense we want to give: that in Venice, no one dies. You live forever, in another way, but you continue to live."

WORLD

Godless of volcanoes awes all in lava's path

PAHOA, HAWAII

Even amid destruction, many Hawaiians embrace eruption as deity's work

BY SIMON ROMERO
AND TAMIR KALIFA

When the rivers of lava forced thousands to flee this month, many people on Hawaii's Big Island pointed with awe toward the drizzle-shrouded volcanic crater where Pele — known as “the woman who devours the earth” — usually dwells.

“Our deity is coming down to play,” said Lokelani Puha, 52, a hula dancer and poet who evacuated as the lava encroached, referring to Hawaii's goddess of volcanoes and fire. “There's nothing to do when Pele makes up her mind but accept her will.”

Hawaiians have endured the overthrow of their kingdom, annexation by the United States and policies aimed at obliterating the Hawaiian language. But in a striking display of the resilience and adaptability of Native Hawaiian culture, the exaltation of Pele has not only persisted through the centuries, but seems to be strengthening with every bone-rattling eruption of Hawaii's volcanoes.

The Kilauea volcano has already laid waste to dozens of homes this month, causing earthquakes, releasing lethal gases and setting forests ablaze, and has shown few signs of subsiding.

A lava stream over the weekend blocked a highway that people have been using as an escape route. It reached the ocean to produce a caustic plume of acid fumes laced with fine volcanic glass specks. On Monday, a new flow began moving toward a geothermal plant, raising fears over the potential release of volcanic gases from wells on the site.

Flying lava shattered a man's leg while he was on the third-floor balcony of his home on rural Noni Farms Road.

And yet many living in Kilauea's shadow welcome the eruption, express reverence for Pele and thank her — even when the lava destroys their home.

“My house was an offering for Pele,” said Monica Devlin, 71, a retired schoolteacher whose home was destroyed by a lava flow. “I’ve been in her backyard for 30 years,” she reflected, doing the math on when she moved here from Northern California. “In that time I learned that Pele created this island in all its stunning beauty. It’s an awe-inspiring process of destruction and creation, and I was lucky to glimpse it.”

In a state where ethnic tension sometimes simmers beneath a veneer of tranquility, proclaiming veneration for Pele is something uniting many Native Hawaiians and outsiders, though their methods for doing so often vary.

Scholars of the Hawaiian culture point out that the honorific name for Pele (pronounced PEH-eh) is Pelehonua, incorporating the deity's sacred connection to the earth, the oceans and the red color of lava. Many Hawaiians call the goddess Madame Pele or Tutu Pele, an affectionate term for grandmother while making it implicitly clear they are Pele's descendants.

Legends vary as to her origins, but chants suggest that Pele followed her star to Hawaii from elsewhere in Polynesia, similar to seafarers who reached the Hawaiian Islands in an epic feat of navigation and migration at a time Europe was mired in the Dark Ages.

Some say Pele was born in Tahiti to the fertility goddess Haumea, but was forced to flee to Hawaii in a great canoe after seducing the husband of her older sister, the goddess of the sea. At different islands in Hawaii, Pele used her stick to dig out fire pits, forging the archipelago's magnificent volcanic craters.

After the United States formally took



A visitor honoring Madame Pele, the Hawaiian goddess of volcanoes and fire, as Kilauea erupted on the Big Island. “There's nothing to do when Pele makes up her mind but accept her will,” one resident said.



Kimmo Awa exhorted the goddess to bring peace and security to the island.

control of Hawaii in 1898, appeasing Pele and accepting her force didn't seem to be much of an official priority. Before rising to prominence as a general during World War II, George S. Patton, then the Army's chief intelligence officer in Hawaii, tried bombing the lava flow from the eruption of the Mauna Loa volcano in 1935 in an attempt to divert it.

While that tactic had mixed results, some on the Big Island put their faith in making offerings to Pele of items including crystals, money and incense, or foods such as whole cooked piglet and poi, a staple made from the taro plant. Many venture near fissures to place the leaves of the ti plant, also called the palm lily, in the cracks in the earth.

“We believe in 40,000 gods, but Pele is

in the highest echelon for obvious reasons,” said Kimmo Awa, 67, a hula teacher and lecturer on Hawaiian culture. “Pele created Hawaii; she is that primordial force that exists within all land masses. And she can be vengeful, so watch out.”

In Pahoa, a counterculture outpost where ganja smoke wafts through the air, a lava flow in 2014 threatened the town, but in the end destroyed just one home, stopping at the recycling facility. Paintings of Pele, often portrayed as a woman cradling fire in her hands, hang in shops. Visitors can dine at Pele's Kitchen or stay at a bed-and-breakfast near Volcanoes National Park called Pele's Breath.

Some newcomers express an almost erotic fascination with Pele, comparing



A mural of Madame Pele painted on the wall of a school in the town of Pahoa.

the experience of getting so close to steaming lava flows to sensual experiences.

Richard Schott, 34, a bearded Pennsylvanian who moved here after teaching English in South Korea, trekked barefoot to a remote location in the Malama-Ki Forest Reserve over the weekend where he giddily performed yoga postures within feet of the lava flow.

Mr. Schott, who goes by the moniker Son of Pele on social media, grinned as the police called on him to retreat. “The energy I’m feeling after seeing Pele up close is beyond anything I’ve ever experienced,” said Mr. Schott, racing over the jungle floor without shoes.

There are some Kanaka Maoli, as Na-

tive Hawaiians call themselves in their resurgent language, who express irritation over such interpretations of Pele, contending that the deity is growing angry with outsiders settling in the forest without thoroughly learning about her ways.

“It’s not the outsiders’ fault,” said Mr. Awa, the hula teacher, who has recited chants in recent weeks in an effort to appease the goddess. He emphasized that Puna, the region of the Big Island that is home to Kilauea, holds a position of religious significance in Hawaii that is unfamiliar to some newcomers.

“Puna is to believers of Pele what the Vatican City is to Roman Catholics,” Mr. Awa said. “The outsiders, some of them, they don’t know any better.”

“Pele created Hawaii; she is that primordial force that exists within all land masses. And she can be vengeful, so watch out.”

Written tales in Hawaiian of Pele flooded in the 19th century, but after Americans outlawed the teaching of the Hawaiian language in schools in 1896 — a restriction enduring until the 1970s — the newspapers in which writers published versions of Pele's ways went under.

In their place, white writers like the mythologist Nathaniel Emerson published their own simplified descriptions of the deity, producing caricatures of her as an excitable goddess or irritable old woman. A new generation of Hawaiian scholars is now seeking to describe Pele in her full complexity.

Doing so, however, involves dealing with a deity who remains sacred for many Native Hawaiians. Some feel at ease describing how stoic they can be in accepting the destruction unleashed by Pele, while others express hesitance about divulging too much information about a figure of extreme importance to many people here.

Some in the lava's path are embracing the uncertainty involved in their deity's dances around the island.

“Pele is a shape-shifter who can easily appear in human form,” said Ms. Puha, the hula dancer and evacuee who is waiting to see if Pele destroys her home. “If you see her hitchhiking, pick her up. If you have a bottle of gin, even better. Pele, like her descendants, likes a little mischief.”

In Australia, a booming economy with a tragic price

AUSTRALIA, FROM PAGE 1

demis has also disproportionately struck poor and rural areas.

But in Australia, the crisis seems to be worsening at a time when, at least on paper, the rural economy is quite robust.

It is also an epidemic that few Australians fully recognize, even in rural areas.

Experts say social stigmas prevent many people from talking about mental or emotional difficulties. This is particularly true in rural Australia, where the majority of farmers are men, who are expected to display an image of rugged individualism.

Men represent the vast majority of rural Australians who kill themselves, according to experts.

HELP IS SPREAD TOO THIN

The problem is compounded by the difficulty of getting help. With just a small number of mental health centers and trained professionals scattered across Australia's vast rural areas, residents are only able to access mental health services at a fifth of the rate of city dwellers, according to a 2015 report by the Center for International Economics in Canberra.

Mr. Cuylenburg of the Resilience Project, who travels around Australia giving talks on ways to improve mental health, says he finds the biggest need in rural areas.

On a recent trip to Clermont, a remote Queensland town of about 2,000 people that's an 11-hour drive north of Brisbane — hundreds of people showed up to hear him speak, he said.

Many came up afterward to share their stories about suicide attempts, their own or those of friends.

“There are always issues around mental health everywhere I go,” Mr. Cuylenburg said. “No one talks more about suicide, no one seems to be more affected by the numbers of suicide, than in the rural parts of Australia.”

The problem has become so severe that rural communities have gone on suicide watch. In some towns, residents have compiled lists of warning signs such as sudden withdrawal from society.

Despite such community-based steps, many cases require professional care.

“If prevention and treatment services got to them earlier, we’d see less deaths,” said Martin Lavery, chief executive of the Royal Flying Doctor Service, one government-backed effort to improve access to health care in rural areas.

The service relies on small planes to cover three million square miles of the most rural parts of Australia, flying in doctors and other professionals who offer basic and emergency care.

Mr. Lavery said the service is spread too thin. Last year, it provided almost



Gathering for a men-only talk on the theme of resilience in Clermont, Queensland. Men represent the vast majority of rural Australians who kill themselves, experts say.

25,000 people with mental health counseling.

New federal funding will allow it to triple that number next year, a sign of how dire the situation has become. But Mr. Lavery said even that will barely scratch the surface.

“There's no more important topic,” Mr. Lavery said. “We need to make city

folk aware that the food bowl of Australia — the area in which our crops are grown, and our milk and meat is produced — needs their support.”

STRAINS OVER GLOBALIZATION

The causes of rural Australia's crisis vary.

Some farming areas have been pum-

meled by drought, which many blame on global warming. Other communities, like Pyramid Hill, Victoria, have desperately needed workers and are turning to immigrants for help.

But economists and mental health experts say a common thread is the changes unleashed by a globalizing economy.

There is a painful irony here, they say, since Australia has embraced free trade while raising the cost of tractor fuel, forcing nations to liberalize their markets, in the belief that agriculture is one of its most competitive industries.

And Australian farm exports are growing: Last year, they totaled \$4.8 billion Australian dollars, or \$33.5 billion, up more than a fifth from just six years earlier, according to the National Farmers Federation.

But many experts say the biggest beneficiaries are larger corporate farmers.

Family farms are less able to ride out fluctuations in far-flung global markets that can drive down prices of their crops while raising the cost of tractor fuel.

Brian Sporne, a cattle rancher in Clermont, said people in the area had been working themselves “into a frazzle.” “Everything is so competitive now,” said Mr. Sporne, a strong man with work-

hands who raises his herd on a dry landscape of low scrub and sandy orange earth. Mr. Sporne said he himself has suffered from depression. “Everything's more expensive — land's more expensive, then you've got to have bigger debt.”

Farms are forced into debt to make ends meet.

Across Australia, total borrowing from banks by farmers has ballooned to about 70 billion Australian dollars, seven times the level in the early 1990s, according to the Australian Farm Institute.

When they can no longer make the payments, many farmers go bankrupt. Across Australia, the total number of farmers declined by about 40 percent over the 30-year period ended in 2011 — a decline, on average, of nearly 300 farmers every month.

Losing a farm is more than just losing a place of work. The properties are also homes that have been in families for generations.

Farmers speak of losing their sense of purpose, even their will to live. “Faced with the prospect of losing his dairy farm, something inside James Guy simply broke, his widow said.

“This is happening to more and more people, and it's not their fault,” said Mr. Guy, who now rents out part of the farm but still lives on the property. “People are slowly disappearing because we're being squeezed out.”

Some fancy footwork exposes tricky turf

WASHINGTON

Attempts to appease Trump may undermine Justice Dept., experts say

BY KATIE BENNER

As President Trump and his allies repeatedly take aim at the Justice Department investigation into his campaign's possible links to Russia's election meddling, Rod J. Rosenstein, the deputy attorney general overseeing the inquiry, has mostly evaded the attacks through inventive maneuvers.

To protect the inquiry, Mr. Rosenstein has agreed to meet increasingly onerous demands from Mr. Trump and his allies on Capitol Hill. But legal scholars and former law enforcement officials fear that the measures Mr. Rosenstein has resorted to could weaken the Justice Department's historic independence, allowing the department to be used as a cudgel to attack the president's political enemies.

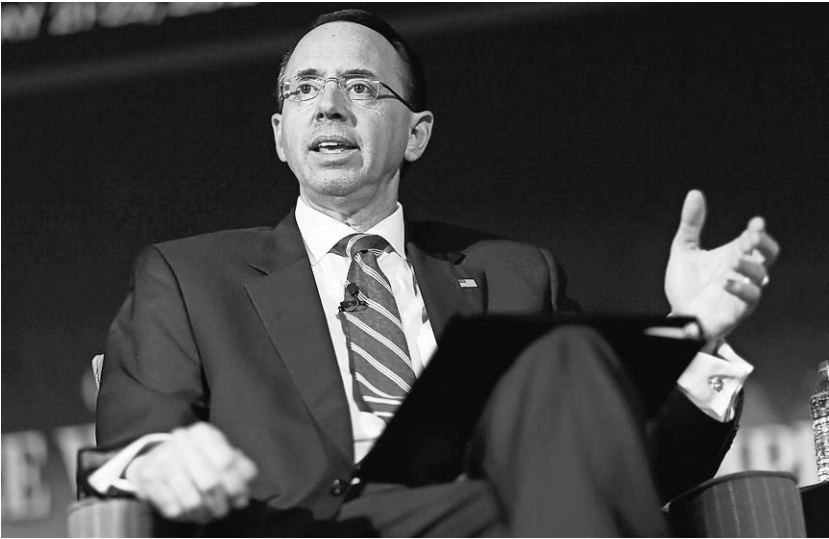
That dilemma intensified earlier this week when Mr. Trump demanded that the department investigate the F.B.I., infuriated by reports that a government informant had met with officials from his campaign in the early weeks of the investigation.

Mr. Trump's request violated decades of established Justice Department independence from presidential intervention into what it investigates, and it targeted one of the most sensitive secrets of law enforcement officials: the identity of a source. Nonetheless, Mr. Rosenstein responded by asking the department's inspector general to examine the president's allegations.

Mr. Rosenstein's supporters said his response was a deft deflection that achieved three immediate needs: It neutered a troubling request, appeared responsive to the president's demands and allowed Mr. Rosenstein to keep his job. But, some cautioned, his short-term strategy could have longer-term costs for the Justice Department's independence from the White House, which was established to prevent political meddling after Watergate.

"Ideally, the Justice Department would not respond," said Robert Litt, a former Justice Department official. "But under the current circumstances and the place this president is coming from, they can't do that."

The department's inspector general, Michael E. Horowitz, will look into whether the F.B.I. acted inappropriately in investigating the campaign as part of an existing review into the department's decision to put Carter Page, a former Trump campaign adviser with links to Russia, under surveillance. The White House announced the new aspect of the review after a meeting on Monday between the president and top law enforcement and intelligence officials, including Mr. Rosenstein; Christopher A.



Rod J. Rosenstein, the deputy attorney general, in Washington on Monday. Some legal experts are worried that the Justice Department's historic independence is threatened.

Wray, the F.B.I. director; and Dan Coats, the director of national intelligence.

The officials agreed that John F. Kelly, the White House chief of staff and a supporter of Mr. Rosenstein, will set up a meeting between the officials and congressional Republicans "to review highly classified and other information they have requested."

Mr. Trump has made public demands of the Justice Department in the past, but until Sunday his allies in Congress had made the strongest demands of Mr. Rosenstein. They have pushed him to act in ways that could compromise some of the department's most sensitive investigations, demanding access to more documents and other information and threatening to hold Mr. Rosenstein in contempt of Congress or impeach him.

"A lot of people feel that the department has gone too far in terms of turning over vast amounts of investigative files," said Mr. Litt, the former official.

Supporters said that Mr. Rosenstein's decisions to refer demands for investigations of the Russia inquiry to the inspector general were astute moves that prevented criminal investigations of the department's own investigators. Opening such an investigation could create a fear within the department that if F.B.I. agents act on valid intelligence they could someday be investigated for being at odds with the White House, they said.

"Rosenstein is in the very tricky position of supervising and protecting the integrity of an investigation of the president's associates even though the president, his boss, possesses lots of constitutional power to control investigations and is trying to wreck this one," said Jack Goldsmith, a Harvard law professor who headed the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel under President George W. Bush. "In this situation, it's appropriate to refer the president's concern to the Justice Department's nonpartisan inspector general, who is already investigating related matters."

Mr. Trump's demands prompted a new test for Mr. Rosenstein — whether he shares the name of the F.B.I. informant. "The Justice Department must go to the mat to protect the identity of an F.B.I. informant," Mr. Goldsmith said. "Informants are the lifeblood of many investigations. To be able to attract informants, the F.B.I. must never give these names out."

Representative Devin Nunes, Republican of California and the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, has subpoenaed the department for all documents referring to or related to the source, prompting the latest battle between Mr. Rosenstein and Mr. Trump's allies on Capitol Hill. They have asked the president to direct Mr. Rosenstein to reveal the name.

If the president or his aides direct Mr. Rosenstein to reveal the name to congressional leaders, Mr. Litt predicted, Mr. Rosenstein would be forced to comply or to resign. A Justice Department spokeswoman would not comment on the situation.



President Trump has pressured officials to allow congressional Republicans to view highly classified information related to the Russia investigation.

Trump tries to turn the tables

NEWS ANALYSIS
WASHINGTON

President's new strategy aimed at limiting inquiries and attacking investigators

BY PETER BAKER

Frustrated and impatient, fed up with waiting and eager to fight back, President Trump has embarked on what amounts to a two-prong strategy to contain the threat and undercut the credibility of the escalating investigations targeting him and his associates.

The blizzard of Twitter messages combined with a string of public statements by his lawyer, Rudolph W. Giuliani, in recent days seemed aimed at turning the focus away from the conduct of the president or his team to that of their pursuers while laying out a series of red lines to limit the reach and duration of the primary inquiry.

"I think we're finally seeing some semblance of a strategy emerge," said Alan M. Dershowitz, the Harvard Law School professor emeritus who speaks with the president from time to time but has declined to join his legal team. "They have now decided that they need to be more proactive, more aggressive and more anticipatory, and I see that happening."

While he has assailed the investigations for a year, Mr. Trump's latest assertion of bad faith by the United States Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation went beyond talk and resulted in an extraordinary meeting on Monday at the White House, where the president pressured intelligence and law enforcement officials to allow congressional Republicans to view highly classified information related to the Russia investigation that they had previously refused to divulge.

The president has seized on reports that the F.B.I. sent an informant to talk to three of his advisers during the 2016 presidential election and contended that

that meant his campaign was infiltrated for political purposes.

Rod J. Rosenstein, the deputy attorney general, who has resisted past pressure from Mr. Trump to open or close politically charged inquiries, agreed in this case to request that the Justice Department's inspector general investigate the investigators.

At the same time, Mr. Giuliani, a former New York City mayor, in recent days has publicly outlined limits for the special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III. Mr. Giuliani said that any interview of Mr. Trump by prosecutors could last no more than two hours, that Mr. Mueller had accepted the view that he does not have the power to indict a sitting president and that Mr. Mueller hopes to wrap up the obstruction of justice part of his investigation by Sept. 1.

Mr. Mueller has agreed to none of those publicly, and in the weeks since Mr. Giuliani began representing Mr. Trump, the former mayor has contradicted himself and the president on several occasions, so it is not known whether he reflects the special counsel's views.

But in drawing these lines, analysts said, Mr. Giuliani may be signaling to Mr. Mueller the boundaries of the president's tolerance or even laying a predicate for later firing the special counsel.

In an interview on Monday, Mr. Giuliani said the goal was not to undercut the investigators, but to shed light on their conduct. "I don't think we put them on the defensive," he said. "I think the revelations have put them on the defensive."

Mr. Giuliani emphasized that the latest questions did not implicate Mr. Mueller since he was appointed last May, long after the original investigation was opened.

"Everything that we've heard so far involves questionable practices by the Justice Department or the F.B.I. in utilizing this informant, not revealing earlier what this informant found or didn't find," he said. "I guess it's a problem that Mueller inherits, but he didn't create it."

Still, Mr. Giuliani said the accumulation of questions that Republicans have



Rudolph W. Giuliani, the president's lawyer, questioned the F.B.I.'s conduct.

raised about the origins of the investigation has bolstered his view that it should be shut down.

"I've thought that for a while," he said. "There seems to be more facts leading to that conclusion. But let's see what Horowitz comes up with," Mr. Giuliani added, referring to Michael E. Horowitz,

"This is an effort by the president to distract from his legal troubles and throw as much mud into the air as he can."

the Justice Department inspector general. "He's very good. I'm very comfortable with him doing it because I think he'll do it very evenhandedly."

Mr. Giuliani's deference to Mr. Mueller has not been shared by Mr. Trump, who again accused the special counsel of running an office filled with partisan Democrats with conflicts of interest. But both Mr. Trump and Mr. Giuliani share a favorite target in James B. Comey, the former F.B.I. director, who was fired by the president last year and is now one of his most outspoken critics as well as a

potential witness against him.

"This is an effort by the president to distract from his legal troubles and throw as much mud into the air as he can," said Representative Adam B. Schiff of California, the ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee. "But it's doing enormous damage to the Justice Department. If they think they can placate him, they'll probably find that doesn't work. That doesn't placate a bully."

Mr. Trump has maintained from the beginning that the investigation into Russia's involvement in the 2016 election was a "witch hunt" inspired by Democrats who paid for research used to justify the inquiry.

But he has recently parted ways with lawyers who urged him not to attack Mr. Mueller and assured him that cooperation would ultimately exonerate him. In their place now is Mr. Giuliani and the guns-blazing approach that suits Mr. Trump more.

Robert F. Bauer, a former White House counsel under Mr. Obama who now teaches law at New York University, said part of the audience for Mr. Giuliani's public blasts may be Mr. Trump, to assuage the president that someone is fighting for him. "The other audience for this of course is the political world that he needs to satisfy that he's not in trouble, that he's not going to be bullied," Mr. Bauer said.

Mr. Dershowitz said that the president's new White House special counsel, Emmet T. Flood, is "working the inside game" and gaming out the legal questions confronting Mr. Trump while Mr. Giuliani is laying the public ground for a confrontation if the inside game does not work.

"He has Rudy Giuliani out there in some senses preparing for a worst-case scenario in which he has to try to delegitimize the investigation, at least among his base, and make it into a red-blue issue," Mr. Dershowitz said. "If he can make it a red-blue issue, he wins because Americans don't want to see a president impeached based on partisanship."

By demanding an investigation, president crosses a new line

NEWS ANALYSIS
WASHINGTON

BY CHARLIE SAVAGE

When President Trump publicly demanded that the Justice Department open an investigation into the F.B.I.'s scrutiny of his campaign contacts with Russia, he inched further toward breaching an established constraint on executive power: The White House does not make decisions about individual law enforcement investigations.

"It's an incredible historical moment," said Rebecca Roiphe, a professor at New York Law School who helped write a coming scholarly article on the limits of presidential control over the Justice Department. Mr. Trump's move, she said, "is the culmination of a lot of moments in which he has chipped away at prosecutorial independence, but this is a direct assault."

Almost since he took office, Mr. Trump has battered the Justice Department's independence indirectly — lamenting its failure to reopen a criminal investigation of Hillary Clinton that found no wrongdoing, and openly com-

plaining that Attorney General Jeff Sessions recused himself from the Russia inquiry. But he had also acknowledged that as president, "I am not supposed to be involved with the Justice Department," as he told a radio interviewer with frustration last fall.

As part of that pattern, he has also denied the account by James B. Comey, the F.B.I. director he abruptly fired, that the president privately urged him to drop an investigation into Michael T. Flynn, Mr. Trump's first national security adviser.

But Mr. Trump has also been flirting with going further, as he hinted late last year when he claimed in a New York Times interview that "I have an absolute right to do what I want to with the Justice Department." And now, by unabashedly ordering the department to open a particular investigation, Mr. Trump has ratcheted up his willingness to impose direct political control over the work of law enforcement officials.

Mr. Trump's demand was part of the latest cycle in the campaign by his allies in Congress and conservative news media outlets to discredit the special counsel investigation into whether his campaign conspired with Russia in its inter-

ference in the 2016 election and whether he committed obstruction of justice.

One of Mr. Trump's most stalwart defenders, Representative Devin Nunes, the California Republican who is chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, has been using his oversight powers to investigate the F.B.I.'s investigation, portraying several early steps in 2016 as scandalous. Most recently, with backing from Speaker Paul D. Ryan, Mr. Nunes has been trying to force the Justice Department to identify a confidential source who assisted the F.B.I.

As a result of that battle, the existence of the source has shaken into public view. The informant, an American academic who has taught in Britain, approached several of the members of the Trump campaign who had been in contact with suspected Russian agents and tried to find out what they knew about Russian hackers' theft of Democratic emails. Mr. Trump's allies have portrayed this as the F.B.I. infiltrating his campaign with a spy.

On Sunday, Mr. Trump wrote on Twitter: "I hereby demand, and will do so officially tomorrow, that the Department of Justice look into whether or not the

FBI/DOJ infiltrated or surveilled the Trump Campaign for Political Purposes — and if any such demands or requests were made by people within the Obama Administration!"

In response, the deputy attorney general, Rod J. Rosenstein, referred the matter to the department's independent inspector general, Michael E. Horowitz,

"He has chipped away at prosecutorial independence, but this is a direct assault."

and issued a statement clearly intended to mollify Mr. Trump: "If anyone did infiltrate or surveil participants in a presidential campaign for inappropriate purposes, we need to know about it and take appropriate action."

The Justice Department rarely discloses when it has opened a criminal investigation, but it appeared on Monday that Mr. Rosenstein's move had satisfied Mr. Trump for the time being without opening a criminal investigation. Still, he established a significant new precedent by directly demanding that the de-

partment scrutinize specific actions.

"Yesterday made explicit what before was implicit, which is that Trump is crossing every line that protects the independence of the Justice Department," said Neal Katyal, who drafted the department's special counsel regulation in 1999 for the Clinton administration and served as acting solicitor general in the first term of the Obama administration. Mr. Trump's suggestion that Obama-era officials may have abused their investigative authority to spy on his campaign for their own political purposes complicates his demand for the Justice Department to investigate itself now. Still, senior law enforcement officials appointed by Mr. Trump already knew what steps the department took in 2016 and had not previously deemed those facts a sufficient basis to open an investigation, noted Bruce Green, a Fordham University law professor who wrote the article with Ms. Roiphe.

Legally, it is ambiguous and contested whether a president has the lawful power to order the attorney general to open or close a case — especially one involving his personal interests. But either way, as a practical matter, it may

make little difference. That is because attorneys general who view a president's request or demand as unjustified can refuse it. But the president can fire the attorney general. The primary check against a president abusing that power is the willingness of Congress to impeach him, as well as voter backlash.

A few weeks before leaving office last year, President Barack Obama published a piece in the Harvard Law Review about the president's role in advancing a criminal justice overhaul. In it, he nodded to the importance of constraints on presidential intrusion into specific Justice Department case decisions, citing the need "to avoid even the appearance of politicization" when it comes to administration of criminal law.

"For good reason, particular criminal matters are not directed by the president personally but are handled by career prosecutors and law enforcement officials who are dedicated to serving the public and promoting public safety," Mr. Obama wrote. "The president does not and should not decide who or what to investigate or prosecute or when an investigation or prosecution should happen."

SCIENCE

Giving up a weapon in the opioid crisis

CHARLESTON, W.VA.

Drug issues revive debate once heard in big cities on tolerable countermeasures

BY JOSH KATZ

To its critics here, the needle exchange was an unregulated, mismanaged nightmare — a “mini-mall for junkies and drug dealers” in the words of Danny Jones, the city’s mayor — drawing crime into the city and flooding the streets with syringes. To its supporters, it was a crucial response to a growing crisis and the last bulwark between the region and a potential outbreak of hepatitis and H.I.V.

When Charleston closed the program last month after a little more than two years of operation, it was the latest casualty of a conflict playing out in a growing number of American communities. At least seven other such exchanges have closed in the past two years, even as dozens of others have opened.

Needle exchanges dispense sterile syringes to drug users and give them somewhere to discard their used syringes safely. Often, as in the case of Charleston, an exchange will offer supporting services, too: on-site medical care, hepatitis/H.I.V. screening, counseling and connections to drug treatment.

They were once a largely urban phenomenon. But the opioid crisis is changing the landscape. After an H.I.V. outbreak among injection drug users in Scott County, Ind., in 2015, health officials opened many exchanges in suburbs, rural areas and small cities in more conservative parts of the country. Some of these communities have had second thoughts.

Public health experts now find themselves relitigating questions that in their view were settled decades ago, while political leaders worry that harm reduction — that is, mitigating the risks from drug use — means enabling drug use.

The research is unambiguous: Needle exchanges reduce the spread of blood-borne diseases like hepatitis C and H.I.V. and do not increase drug use. They’ve been shown to reduce overdose deaths, decrease the number of needles discarded in public places and make it more likely that drug users enter treatment. They also save money: One recent study estimated that \$10 million spent on needle exchanges might save more than \$70 million in averted H.I.V. treatment costs alone.

Health experts say the programs create relationships between deeply addicted people and the health care system, an essential step if they are to be reintegrated into society. “It’s the most low-threshold way for people who use drugs to have contact with any kind of public health professional,” said Alex H. Kral, an epidemiologist with RTI International, a nonprofit research organization. “And that’s a powerful intervention.”

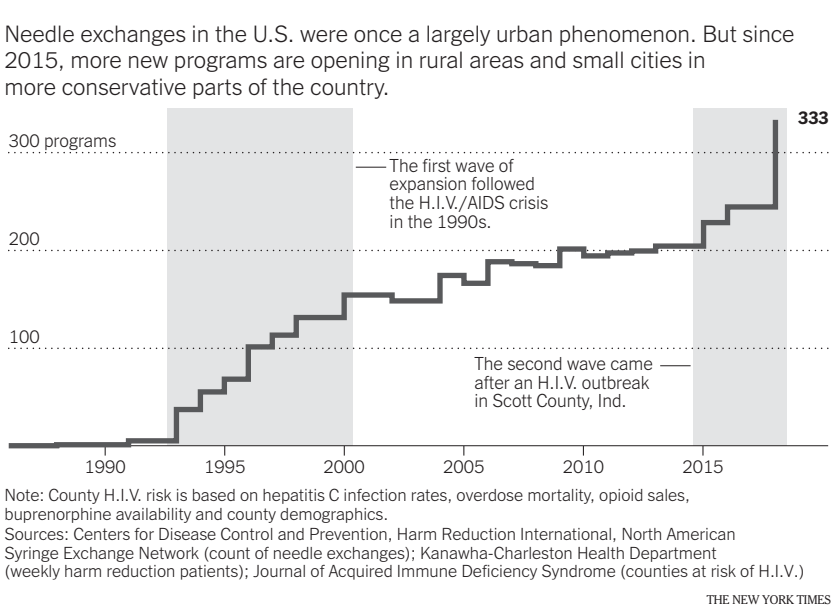
Yet needle exchanges have struggled to gain public acceptance in the United States, which still lags far behind many other countries in their adoption. According to the North American Syringe Exchange Network, 333 such programs operate across the country, up from 204 in 2013. In Australia, a country with fewer than a tenth as many people, there are more than 3,000.

VICTIM OF ITS OWN SUCCESS

When Dr. Michael Brumage began working as director of the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department in August 2015, the lessons of Scott County



Tending to an overdose victim in Charleston, W. Va. As small cities and rural areas struggle with opioids, remedies like needle exchanges have failed to catch on in some places.



were on his mind: He was determined to bring a syringe exchange to Charleston, and it opened four months later with broad support.

Daniel Raymond, the deputy director of planning and policy for the Harm Reduction Coalition, a nonprofit advocacy group, said he had considered the Charleston program “to not only be a huge success story, but also a potential model for other communities.”

It might have been too successful. At its busiest, 483 drug users passed through the exchange in just eight hours — in a city of 50,000 people. “Nobody expected the numbers to grow so rapidly,” said Brenda Isaac, the president of the Kanawha County Board of Health, who explained that the pace left little room for individualized, focused care.

As the health department struggled to

manage the crowds, it began to hear more complaints from law enforcement officials about discarded needles. By the summer of 2017, the initial enthusiasm for the exchange among city officials was waning. In early 2018, news accounts of a 5-year-old girl who had accidentally been stuck with an uncapped syringe in a McDonald’s bathroom captured public attention. A local TV segment described Charleston as buried under “needles everywhere.”

For the mayor, the location of the exchange made its existence untenable. It was housed in the health department building, a squat structure across the street from the gleaming, newly renovated civic center. The civic center — a \$100 million development project — was intended to be the linchpin of a revitalized city.



Danny Jones, mayor of Charleston and a recovering alcoholic, says he understands what addicts go through. He just wants them to go through it away from his community.

“We can do that,” Mr. Jones said, gesturing to pictures of needles sitting in front of him, “or we can do this,” he said, holding up a piece of paper where he’d outlined his administration’s economic development deals.

The mayor is in recovery himself — an alcoholic, he says, 24 years sober — and father to a son who has struggled with heroin addiction. He argues for prescription heroin, saying it should be provided to people where it can be used safely under supervision. He just wants those services far from Charleston, and definitely far from the new civic center. “I understand recovery,” Mr. Jones said. “I’m in it myself, and I believe in it. But I don’t believe we have to destroy a city over it.”

In early March, the mayor began using his daily radio show to rally public

Needle exchanges have struggled to gain public acceptance in the United States, which still lags far behind many other countries in their adoption.

sentiment against the health department, citing discarded needles and rising crime, which he attributed to an influx of people using drugs.

Last month, the police chief imposed new rules on the program, loosely based on those used by a much smaller exchange run by West Virginia Health Right, a clinic nearby. Participation would be limited to people who could prove — with picture ID — that they lived in the county. Testing for hepatitis

and H.I.V. would be mandatory. Needles would be dispensed only in strict one-for-one trades.

Public health experts condemned the measures. An ID requirement would be prohibitive for many people, said Mr. Raymond, particularly for the quarter of the program’s patients who are homeless. And strict one-for-one exchange is counter to decades of public health research showing that greater flexibility is a better policy. “I would rather close down the needle exchange altogether than follow those rules,” said Dr. Dan Ciccarone, a professor of family and community medicine at the University of California, San Francisco. “This is really, truly backwards.”

Hours after the chief’s announcement, health department leadership suspended the syringe exchange rather than comply with the new regulations.

DRUG USERS CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

In the middle of this dispute are the estimated 3 percent to 4 percent of Charleston’s residents who inject drugs, typically heroin or meth.

Trent Farr, 54, says he has cancer and is homeless. He has lived in Charleston almost 26 years and has multiple medical problems, many related to chronic drug use. “I go through more pain in a day than some people do in their entire lives,” he said while waiting for the Crossroads Shelter to begin meal service. “I hate — I absolutely hate — using needles,” Mr. Farr said, explaining that his drug use was the only thing he had found to dull his pain. For him, the health department’s closing “changes everything.”

Amber White, 24, agreed. “Now people have to go out and rob and steal to get points,” she said, referring to unused needles. She said that when the exchange was running, unused needles had become so plentiful that people could afford to give them away. Now that they’re becoming scarce again, she said, drug users would face a choice of either sharing them or resorting to crime to get money to buy unused ones.

With sterile syringes harder to find, Ms. White worries about contracting H.I.V. or hepatitis, both of which she has managed to avoid — to her surprise — despite heavy drug use. Twenty-six percent of the injection drug users looked at by the health department tested positive for hepatitis C.

Both Mr. Farr and Ms. White expressed frustration at what they said were the small minority of users who left discarded needles in the open. “If I see them laying on the ground, I’ll pick them up and throw them away,” Ms. White said.

FEARS OF THE NEXT H.I.V. OUTBREAK

The harm reduction program remains active in Charleston, but it is now seeing only a dozen clients each week for counseling, H.I.V. testing or medical care. The mayor and city officials have spoken openly of dismantling the department altogether.

But Dr. Brumage said: “The only way to address the opioid epidemic is to engage the people who are using. These are modern-day lepers that no one wants to see or touch. The syringe services program was a place these people could go and be treated like real human beings.”

While the exchange was open, the health department collected data on its patients. These records show at least eight people with H.I.V. among the injection drug users the department tested. All but one of them live in Charleston. If they share needles in the months ahead, Charleston is at “grave risk for an H.I.V. outbreak just like the one in Scott County,” Dr. Brumage said. “We’re sitting on a powder keg.”

New dive into old data invigorates musings on alien life

BY KENNETH CHANG

Europa is an ice-encrusted moon of Jupiter with a global ocean flowing beneath its surface. NASA is planning a mission soon that will look for signs of possible life there.

Now, a new finding from old data makes that mission more tantalizing.

In recent years, the Hubble Space Telescope has spotted what look like plumes, most likely of water vapor, reaching heights of more than 100 miles above the surface.

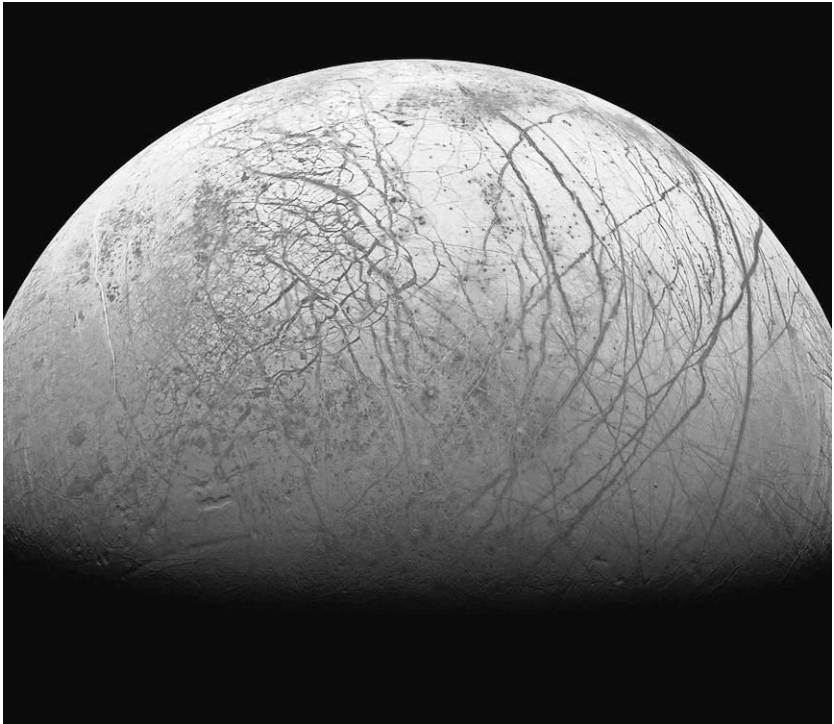
The plumes, if they exist, could contain molecules that hint at whether Europa possesses the building blocks of life.

In a study published in the journal Nature Astronomy, scientists have reported a belated discovery that Galileo, an earlier NASA spacecraft that studied Jupiter, appears to have flown through one of the Europa plumes more than 20 years ago. And the incident occurred near one of four regions where Hubble has apparently observed plumes.

“That’s too many coincidences just to dismiss as ‘There’s nothing there’ or ‘We don’t understand the data,’” said Robert T. Pappalardo, the project scientist for NASA’s coming Europa Clipper mission, which may begin as soon as 2022. “It sure seems like there’s some phenomenon, and plumes seem consistent.”

Galileo arrived at Jupiter in 1995 and spent almost eight years examining the planet and its moons.

During a flyby of Europa on Dec. 16,



New calculations suggest NASA’s Galileo spacecraft may have flown through a plume, probably of water vapor, erupting from Jupiter’s moon Europa over 20 years ago.

1997, instruments on Galileo measured a swing in the magnetic field and a jump in the density of electrons.

At the time, scientists noted the unusual readings, but they did not have an explanation.

Then, in 2005, another spacecraft

passing by another moon around another planet made a startling observation.

NASA’s Cassini spacecraft — which completed its mission last September — found geysers of ice crystals erupting from Enceladus, a small moon of Saturn.

Enceladus, it turns out, also has an ocean of liquid water under its ice.

That discovery spurred renewed curiosity about Europa and whether it too might expel bits of its ocean into space. The Hubble first recorded signs of possible plumes in 2012, then again in 2014 and 2016. But at other times, Hubble has looked and seen nothing. That suggests the phenomenon is sporadic.

Last year, Melissa A. McGrath, a senior scientist at the SETI Institute in Mountain View, Calif., who was not involved in the new study, took a look at some radio experiments conducted by Galileo that examined the way signals bent as Europa passed between Earth and the spacecraft. The experiments showed Europa possesses an atmosphere.

Some of the flybys indicated a higher density of particles near the surface — possible plumes. Before heading to a meeting of scientists working on the Clipper mission, a thought occurred to Dr. McGrath: “Gee, I really should check to see if any of them line up with any of the claimed plume detections,” from Hubble.

One of them did.

Margaret G. Kivelson, an emeritus professor of space physics at U.C.L.A. who was the principal investigator for Galileo’s magnetometer, was at Dr. McGrath’s talk. She remembered the odd magnetic readings from 1997.

For years, she had been thinking of taking another look at the data for signs of plumes, but “There are always other things to do,” she said.

This time she followed through.

“With the Hubble data in hand,” Dr. Kivelson said, “we had an idea of how big a plume might be reasonable. That we could translate into how long it would take Galileo to move across a plume that had been proposed.”

The three-minute-long magnetic anomaly seemed to fit with the apparent size of the Hubble plume.

Next, they turned to William S. Kurth, an astronomer at the University of Iowa who had contributed to Galileo’s plasma wave experiment, which listened to the radio waves generated as charged particles bobbed back and forth along magnetic fields around Jupiter and its moons. That instrument had also noticed a burst of radio waves during the flyby — and it occurred right in the middle of the magnetic anomaly.

The final piece was a computer model of a plume by Xianzhe Jia, a professor of climate and space sciences and engineering at the University of Michigan, that created the same effects on the magnetic field and the plasma waves.

“It all seemed to hang together,” Dr. Kivelson said.

The location was close, though not exactly the same, as the site Dr. McGrath reported. But Dr. McGrath said the new paper was convincing. “They did a really good job of the modeling and made a strong case,” she said.

Also convinced is John Culbertson, a Texas congressman who is chairman of the House subcommittee that sets NASA’s budget. Mr. Culbertson has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Clipper

mission, repeatedly adding more money to the project than NASA officials requested.

He has also been pushing for a follow-up mission that would land on Europa and drill into the ice.

At a recent subcommittee meeting, Mr. Culbertson handed out the article, which was not yet available for public discussion, to his colleagues. “It’s worth noting that the scientific journal Nature Astronomy just reported that the Galileo mission, back in 1997, flew through a water plume on Europa,” he said. “So, the ocean of Europa is venting directly into outer space.”

Astronomers will certainly be taking more looks at Europa with Hubble, trying to better understand how often the plumes erupt.

Dr. Pappalardo said it might be possible to adjust the trajectory of Europa Clipper so that at least one of the more than 40 planned flybys passed over a potential plume site. But that would have to be weighed against other science goals and the amount of fuel that would be needed to alter the spacecraft’s trajectory.

“Obviously this is a place we would want to suss out with the Europa Clipper mission in the future,” he said. “I think this is going to make for a lively debate at our next science mission meeting.”

A European Space Agency spacecraft, called Juice or Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer, will also fly by Europa, as well as two other Jovian satellites, Ganymede and Callisto. It could also take off as soon as 2022.

Business

Paragon of German finance is tarnished

FRANKFURT

Deutsche Bank chairman is blamed by investors for institution's missteps

BY JACK EWING

Ever since he was a 38-year-old Goldman Sachs executive helping to auction off bankrupt East German factories, Paul Achleitner has been known as a relentless modernizer shaking up Germany's sleepy corporate world.

Now Mr. Achleitner is being cast in a new role: the man responsible for the sorry state of one of Germany's most important industries.

Mr. Achleitner has been the chairman of Deutsche Bank's supervisory board since 2012, overseeing the company's top management and signing off on major business decisions. As the bank stumbles from one crisis to the next, investors blame him for the missteps that have brought the company to one of the most perilous moments in its nearly 150-year history.

It is the latest blow to the reputation of a man who had been one of Germany's most renowned bankers since the fall of Communism. Mr. Achleitner is increasingly viewed as responsible for a series of ill-fated mergers and questionable decisions over the past two decades that have left Germany, and indeed all of Europe, without a serious rival to the likes of Goldman Sachs or JPMorgan Chase.

Even today, Mr. Achleitner — who is not German, but Austrian — embodies corporate Germany. In addition to his role at Deutsche Bank, he sits on the oversight boards of three other blue-chip German companies, including the automaker Daimler. Friends and acquaintances describe him as a master networker who is quick to reply to text messages and has a knack for making people feel important.

Mr. Achleitner's wife, Ann-Kristin Achleitner, a professor of business at the Technical University of Munich, also sits on the supervisory boards of several large German corporations. They are one of Germany's premier power couples.

But Mr. Achleitner's grasp on power appears increasingly tenuous.

When Deutsche Bank's shareholders gave the company's annual meeting on Thursday one of the items on the agenda will be a motion to oust Mr. Achleitner.

Mr. Achleitner is expected to survive, at least for now, protected partly because the bank's chief executive, John Cryan, was ousted just last month. The departure of Mr. Achleitner could throw the bank into even greater turmoil.

Mr. Achleitner, who declined to comment for this article, should be given "one last chance," Institutional Shareholder Services, which advises investors on how to vote, said in a report this month. Removing Mr. Achleitner could disrupt the supervisory board from "the truly precarious situation at hand: the entire future strategy and survival of the bank."



The Deutsche Bank towers in Frankfurt. Shareholders this week will consider a motion to oust Paul Achleitner, the chairman of the bank's supervisory board.

Mr. Achleitner made a name for himself in the 1990s when the German government was selling assets like chemical factories that had belonged to the Communist government of East Germany.

Other German bankers turned up their noses. But Mr. Achleitner, who was the first native German speaker to run Goldman Sachs in Frankfurt, recognized an opportunity. He used the assignment to forge political and corporate ties and establish Goldman as a player in Germany.

Mr. Achleitner's approach paid off in 1994 when Deutsche Telekom, the German telephone monopoly, prepared to sell shares to the public for the first time. The German government chose Goldman Sachs to be one of three banks handling the large share sale, alongside Germany's Dresdner Bank and Deutsche Bank.

Goldman's lead role came as a rude awakening to the German banks, which had taken it for granted that they would share such transactions among themselves. That led Deutsche Bank in particular to hastily bulk up in investment banking to fend off foreign competitors. One fateful result was Deutsche



Mr. Achleitner made a name for himself in the 1990s and became one of Germany's most renowned bankers.

Bank's purchase of Bankers Trust in 1996 for \$10.1 billion. The transaction instantly made Deutsche Bank a presence on Wall Street, as well as the biggest bank in the world by assets. Goldman Sachs advised Deutsche Bank on the transaction, with Mr. Achleitner playing a supporting role as head of the Frankfurt office.

The Bankers Trust deal was troubled

from the start. The price was considered steep for a bank that had recently suffered a series of scandals, including accusations of selling derivatives without warning customers about the risks.

But Mr. Achleitner's reputation as a deal maker continued to grow. In 2000, he left Goldman to become chief financial officer at Allianz, the German insurer. Back then, Allianz, Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank owned stakes in one another as well as in many of the largest German companies and dominated their supervisory boards. The network was unofficially known as Germany Inc. and scared away foreign investors.

Mr. Achleitner's job was to either unload Allianz's holdings or find a way to make them more valuable.

Among Allianz's biggest stakes was 21 percent of Dresdner Bank, one of Germany's biggest banks. First Mr. Achleitner tried to orchestrate a merger between Dresdner and Deutsche Bank, in which Allianz also owned a stake. When that idea was torpedoed by investment bankers at Deutsche Bank, he took a different tack, engineering Allianz's 2001 acquisition of the majority of Dresdner.

The plan was to use the bank's retail network to sell insurance products. But

Dresdner's huge portfolio of problematic loans left Allianz financially vulnerable. In 2002, after reporting a loss of 2.5 billion euros in the third quarter, the company found itself in serious trouble.

Still, Mr. Achleitner managed to emerge from the crisis as a hero. In 2003, he arrived late to a management board meeting in Munich. He looked weary and unshaven, according to Emilio Galli Zugaro, the former head of communications for Allianz who was present at the meeting.

Mr. Achleitner had just come from an all-night negotiating session in Hamburg with potential buyers of Allianz's stake in Beiersdorf, a German company best known as the maker of Nivea face cream. Allianz badly needed the cash.

A group of German investors had agreed to pay €4.4 billion for the Beiersdorf shares, Mr. Achleitner reported. The Allianz executives, normally a restrained group, gave Mr. Achleitner a standing ovation.

The Dresdner Bank deal, however, remained a problem for Allianz. In August 2008, as a global financial crisis gathered force, Allianz sold Dresdner to Commerzbank. The price was €9.8 billion, less than half of Dresdner Bank's

Many fault Paul Achleitner for decisions that have left Germany without a serious rival to the likes of Goldman Sachs or JPMorgan Chase.

value when Allianz acquired its stake in 2001.

Mr. Achleitner left Allianz in 2012 to become chairman of Deutsche Bank, overseeing the executives who run the company on a day-to-day basis.

Deutsche Bank had grave problems. The culture was toxic. Large swaths of the business were poorly managed. Risks were not controlled. The bank had a tendency to needlessly antagonize regulators. It was caught up in just about all of the industry's worst scandals: rigging interest rates, selling toxic mortgages, laundering money, violating sanctions.

Rivals like UBS and Credit Suisse scaled back their investment banks in the wake of the financial crisis. But Deutsche Bank, with Mr. Achleitner's backing, continued to try to play in the Wall Street big leagues.

Mr. Achleitner insisted that Europe needed a counterweight to the big American investment banks. "If we don't watch out," he said in an interview with a German magazine in May 2015, "we'll have the same American dominance that we already have in the internet."

Weeks later, the bank's co-chief executive, Anshu Jain, one of the architects of the investment bank, resigned under pressure from shareholders and regulators unhappy with the way the bank had responded to government investigations.

Mr. Achleitner chose Mr. Cryan, his colleague on the supervisory board, to succeed Mr. Jain. Mr. Cryan tried to refine Deutsche Bank's strategy and to instill a more ethical corporate culture.

Less than three years into Mr. Cryan's tenure, Mr. Achleitner grew disenchanted. He contacted a number of executives at rival financial institutions to gauge their interest in taking over as chief executive.

In late March, Mr. Achleitner was on an Amazon River cruise with his family when The Times of London reported that he had secretly been talking to possible replacements for Mr. Cryan. Mr. Achleitner rushed back to Frankfurt.

Mr. Cryan was in limbo for more than a week. Mr. Achleitner remained silent. Finally, in early April, the board voted to replace him with Christian Sewing, a risk expert who has spent his entire career at the bank.

Mr. Sewing quickly announced plans to scale back the investment bank. But Deutsche Bank is years behind European rivals in reorienting itself toward other lines of business that are less prone to scandal and losses.

"There have been a series of mistakes going back quite a while, and I do think Chairman Achleitner is part of the problem," said Jeffrey A. Sonnenfeld, a professor of leadership at Yale School of Management. "At some point someone should be accountable."

Comcast could make a move on Disney's Fox deal

LOS ANGELES

BY BROOKS BARNES

As empires hang in the balance, two hardened commanders engage in tug of war on an epic scale.

It could be the plot of a summer blockbuster: the latest "Star Wars" movie, perhaps. Instead, it may soon play out in real life, with one American media giant, Comcast, led by Brian L. Roberts, trying to pry the bulk of another, 21st Century Fox, away from Disney and its chief executive, Robert A. Iger.

"It will be a bloody battle," said Michael Nathanson, a longtime media analyst.

The Walt Disney Company struck a \$52.4 billion, all-stock deal in December to buy most of 21st Century Fox, the global conglomerate controlled by Rupert Murdoch. Regulators in the United States are now scrutinizing the transaction. Fox and Disney shareholders are expected to vote on the agreement sometime this summer.

Comcast had also pursued Fox, making a proposal in the fall that exceeded Disney's bid by 16 percent on a per-share basis. The Fox board cut off talks over antitrust concerns. At the time, the United States Justice Department had just filed a lawsuit to block AT&T's \$85.4 billion offer for Time Warner.

But Comcast, which owns NBCUniversal, thinks it has a new opening. Media and legal experts believe that AT&T will win its fight for Time Warner. The United States government did not appear to prove its case that a bulked-up AT&T would harm consumers and stifle competition. A judge will rule by June 12.

If the outcome is favorable to AT&T, Comcast intends to mount a campaign to snatch Fox from Disney, according to two people briefed on the strategy who spoke on the condition of anonymity to

discuss private conversations. Comcast is likely to offer roughly \$60 billion for Mr. Murdoch's assets — in cash — while matching other terms of the Disney deal and making a public case to Fox shareholders that regulatory concerns have vastly lessened.

Cue the battle royale.

HOW SERIOUS IS COMCAST ABOUT A POTENTIAL HOSTILE BID?

Extremely. Contrary to the belief of some in Hollywood, this is not about casual rumblings from the Comcast camp as a way to torment Mr. Iger. Comcast is mobilizing. It has already lined up bridge financing with investment banks, for instance, according to the people briefed on the company's strategy.

At the same time, it's possible nothing comes of that maneuvering. Comcast, which declined to comment, is waiting for the outcome of the AT&T case to make up its mind.

WHAT ARE THE FOX ASSETS?

Under his deal with Disney, Mr. Murdoch is selling stakes in two behemoth overseas television providers, Sky of Britain and Star of India; a portion of Hulu; the cable channels FX and National Geographic; a chain of 22 regional cable networks dedicated to sports; a television studio with more than 30 series in production; and the 20th Century Fox movie studio, which controls the "Avatar" and "X-Men" franchises.

Fox News, the Fox broadcast network, a chain of local television stations and the FSI sports network are not for sale. Mr. Murdoch is building a new company around those.

WHY DOES COMCAST WANT THE FOX ASSETS?

It boils down to this: Comcast, like Disney, wants to add bulk as a counter-attack against Netflix and other tech gi-



Robert A. Iger, chief executive of Disney, in Shanghai. Analysts expect a "bloody battle" between Disney and Comcast.

ants that have aggressively moved into the entertainment business. "There will only be a handful of global scale players," Todd Juenger, an analyst at Bernstein Research, wrote in a research report on May 9. "We think Disney and Comcast increasingly view Fox as the seminal defining point, and this the moment in time, in determining which company ascends to that role."

Comcast, the largest cable and broadband provider in the United States, wants Mr. Murdoch's overseas businesses in particular — so much so that it made a \$31 billion offer last month for the 61 percent of Sky that Fox doesn't already own.

NBCUniversal has been white-hot — revenue soared 21 percent in the first quarter, compared with a year earlier. In

the longer term, however, NBCUniversal likely needs a bigger content war chest to compete against Netflix, Amazon, Apple and their ilk.

HOW IS DISNEY LIKELY TO RESPOND

Mr. Iger has given no public indication, and a Disney spokeswoman declined to comment.

But analysts predict scorched earth. Disney could sweeten its bid, resurface horror stories about Comcast's customer service, remind Fox shareholders that Disney's regulatory process will be faster — it has a six-month head start — and raise questions about whether Comcast adhered to conditions the government put on past acquisitions, like NBCUniversal.

Comcast has some deal baggage. A 2015 attempt to buy Time Warner Cable collapsed under pressure from regulators, who found that the combined company would have had the power and incentive to inhibit the future of streaming video.

Some lawmakers have continued to scrutinize Comcast's 2011 acquisition of NBCUniversal. In a letter to the Justice Department in December, Senator Richard Blumenthal, Democrat of Connecticut, asked for a renewed investigation on the effects of that purchase, writing that it "has been roundly criticized by experts who argue that it has caused anticompetitive harm."

IF THE AT&T DEAL GOES THROUGH, DOES THAT MEAN EASY REGULATORY SAILING FOR A POTENTIAL COMCAST-FOX UNION?

No. Timothy Horan, an analyst at Openheimer who has expressed support for a Comcast move on Fox, wrote in a May 9 research note that approval for the AT&T deal would help open a regulatory path but that Comcast would still face a "difficult" road.

Analysts expect note that Comcast-Fox would have more overlapping businesses than AT&T-Time Warner. Comcast-Fox would also control more of the overall entertainment supply chain — "a content and distribution superpower like we've ever seen," as Mr. Nathanson put it in a phone interview.

COMCAST, PAGE 8

BUSINESS



Steel pipes at a factory in Zouping, China. “The Chinese government has always resolutely fought back,” a commentary in the state media said after trade talks with Washington.

China takes a victory lap

Tariffs are postponed after Beijing rebuffs offers and avoids specific pledges

BY KEITH BRADSHER

China has called President Trump's bluff.

Chinese negotiators left Washington over the weekend with a significant win: a willingness by the Trump administration to hold off for now on imposing tariffs on up to \$150 billion in Chinese imports. China gave up little in return, spurning the administration's nudges for a concrete commitment to buy more goods from the United States, and avoiding limits on its efforts to build new high-tech Chinese industries.

The trade fight is far from over. And large Chinese technology companies in particular could be vulnerable if the United States starts punching again, with administration officials appearing to back away from Mr. Trump's pledges to help ZTE, a Chinese telecommunications equipment maker that has been hit with severe American penalties.

Still, the latest round of negotiations showed that a confident China could be more than a match for divided American officials who have made often discordant demands. Mr. Trump, who proclaimed this year that “trade wars are good, and easy to win,” and his advisers may find that extracting concessions from China is much harder than they expected it would be.

China's propaganda machine took a victory lap after the talks, proclaiming that a strong challenge from the United States had been turned aside, at least for now. “Whether in Beijing or Washington, in the face of the unreasonable demands of the United States, the Chinese government has always resolutely fought back, never compromised, and did not accept the restrictions set by the other side,” the official Xinhua news service said in a commentary on Sunday.

In a cheeky expression of China's rising power, two juxtaposed photos were widely circulated on Chinese social media, a post that was shared (but later deleted) by the Communist Youth League. One photo was taken during the trade talks in Washington, appearing, if with somewhat of a bias, to trumpet the youthfulness of Chinese delegates compared with American lawmakers. Another, dated from 1901, showed the opposite as representatives from China and colonial powers signed an accord to end the Boxer Rebellion, considered a national humiliation.

On Monday, Mr. Trump defended the approach, promoting the talks as a success. On Twitter, he said that barriers would “come down for the first time,” and that China would “purchase from



President Trump and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, at their meeting in Beijing in November. The trade imbalance between their countries has widened since then.

our Great American Farmers practically as much as our Farmers can produce.”

But American negotiators were dealing with a China eager to show its strengths. During last week's talks, China for the first time sent a strategic bomber to an island reef in the South China Sea, an area where Beijing has laid claims of sovereignty — claims the United States has challenged.

China's success partly comes from its ability to stick to a single strategy in trade. Even as Beijing has shown a willingness to talk and make peace offerings in the form of multibillion-dollar import contracts, it has held fast to its refusal to make any commitment for a fixed reduction in its trade gap with the United States. The trade imbalance between the countries has actually widened since Mr. Trump visited Beijing in November and oversaw the signing of import deals on goods as varied as beef and helicopters.

Beijing also has not bent on its Made in China 2025 initiative, an industrial modernization program that Washington and American business groups complain forces foreign companies to share their best technology while potentially creating state-sponsored rivals.

China said that it welcomed more talks. “The two sides have come to recognize that only through consultation can we properly handle trade disputes,” Lu Kang, the spokesman for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said during his daily news briefing on Monday.

Chinese propaganda was quieter on signs that the Trump administration may be backing away from Mr. Trump's pledge to help ZTE, which Washington moved to punish for breaking American sanctions on Iran, North Korea and other countries.

A ban on selling American-made

chips and other equipment to ZTE has brought the company's factories to a halt. But on Sunday, Steven Mnuchin, the Treasury secretary, said that the United States was not prepared to revisit the penalties and that Mr. Trump wanted to be “very tough” on ZTE.

China's problems in technology could get worse. American officials are investigating whether a much bigger Chinese tech company, Huawei Technologies, also flouted American trade controls. Huawei has said it adheres to international conventions and local laws.

Despite that vulnerability, China has plenty of negotiating strengths.

White House trade officials have more expertise with trade law, but China has a small but cohesive team of negotiators who report directly to Liu He, a vice premier and nearly lifelong friend of Xi Jinping, the country's top leader. The group has also streamlined Beijing's ability to make economic policy decisions, a benefit in evaluating the impact of any concessions to the United States. Policy decisions that once took a month can now take as little as a day, said a person with a detailed knowledge of the process who insisted on anonymity because of the political sensitivity of the issue.

By contrast, the United States has shifted its demands and struggled to send out a consistent message.

The internal divisions were on display again on Sunday. Mr. Mnuchin said in the morning that any tariffs were “on hold.” Later that day, Robert E. Lighthizer, the United States trade representative, issued a statement in which he said, “As this process continues, the United States may use all of its legal tools to protect our technology through tariffs, investment restrictions and export regulations.”

In March and early April, Mr. Trump

and his trade advisers threatened to impose tariffs unless Beijing agreed to curb long-term subsidies for high-tech industries.

The president then shifted to conciliation.

His financial policy advisers, led by Mr. Mnuchin, sought a fixed reduction of up to \$200 billion in the \$375 billion American trade deficit with China. Beijing's trade negotiators resisted again, and the Trump administration ended the weekend with a joint statement from the two countries that did not commit China to any specific concessions.

Chinese and American officials did exchange lists last week of extra goods that China might buy to narrow the deficit. But China only committed to continue buying ever-rising quantities of American food and fossil fuels, a position reflected in the joint communiqué issued at the close of the talks.

The United States has also explicitly tied the trade talks to its efforts to negotiate with North Korea. Mr. Xi met with Kim Jong-un, North Korea's leader, in northeastern China this month. It is not clear what they discussed, but Mr. Trump suggested on Thursday that China might have prodded Mr. Kim to threaten to cancel the summit meeting planned for June 12.

While experts on Chinese policymaking are deeply divided on Mr. Xi's influence, Mr. Trump's perception of a link indicates that at the very least the North Korea issue may have been a constraint on American officials' willingness to confront their Chinese counterparts.

Even in small ways, the White House has sent mixed messages. Mr. Liu, the vice premier, last week held meetings with Mr. Trump and Vice President Mike Pence in Washington even as the Chinese official resisted American pressure for compromises. Chinese state media presented the move as a minor victory, as Mr. Liu was not allowed to meet with Mr. Trump at a meeting in February. While Mr. Liu held a lower-ranked government position then, his eventual rise to a top post had already been widely signaled.

In some ways, Beijing may find it almost impossible to agree to the American demands. The United States exports only \$130 billion in goods a year to China. Finding more goods to buy to reduce China's trade surplus by \$200 billion would be extremely difficult, except if China cut its own exports to the United States.

“It is kind of unrealistic — and if Chinese officials agree, they will face a lot of pressure from public opinion,” said Tu Xinqian, the head of the China Institution for World Trade Organization Studies at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

Javier C. Hernández contributed reporting. Ailin Tang contributed research.

Infighting stalls drive for trade agreement

TRADE, FROM PAGE 1

On Monday, Mr. Trump put the best face on the talks, highlighting a Chinese pledge to buy more American agricultural exports. “Under our potential deal with China,” he said on Twitter, “they will purchase from our Great American Farmers practically as much as our Farmers can produce.”

It was far from the take-no-prisoners tone he struck before the Chinese arrived, when the president talked about a deal that would overhaul almost every element of the commercial relationship between the United States and its greatest economic competitor.

“The U.S. has very little to give,” he posted on Twitter last week, “because it has given so much over the years. China has much to give!”

In fact, the Chinese were well aware of the divisions in the administration's trade team — and set out to exploit them, according to people briefed on the deliberations. They recognized that Mr. Trump's advisers were split between implacable critics of China, like Mr. Lighthizer and Peter Navarro, the director of the White House National Trade Council; and free traders who were more sympathetic, like Mr. Kudlow, Mr. Ross and Mr. Mnuchin, a former Goldman Sachs executive.

The divisions within the American team revolve around whether the United States should try to secure a short-term deal with China that would benefit some industries and avert a potential trade war, a path that Mr. Mnuchin prefers, or whether it should pressure China to make more fundamental changes to its economy, a path that Mr. Navarro and Mr. Lighthizer say is preferable.

Mr. Mnuchin led the Treasury Department in declining to label China a currency manipulator, defying one of Mr. Trump's campaign promises. He joined Gary D. Cohn, Mr. Trump's former chief economic adviser, in quietly arguing against trade measures — like withdrawing from the North American Free Trade Agreement — that could provoke retaliation and roil the American economy.

For months, the Chinese cultivated Mr. Mnuchin as part of a concerted effort to establish him as the primary American interlocutor. And to the dismay of some of his colleagues, he embraced that role — most visibly when Mr. Trump sent his own trade delegation to Beijing early this month.

During that trip, Mr. Mnuchin agreed to a private meeting with China's top economic official, Liu He, without Mr. Navarro or any other members of the American delegation. He and Mr. Navarro stepped outside to engage in a profanity-laced shouting match, an unmistakable demonstration to the Chinese of their deep differences of opinions. Mr. Mnuchin sought to play down tensions between the American officials, saying on CNBC that Mr. Navarro was “an important part of the team.”

Last week, the Chinese came to the United States prepared to deal, both by making numerical commitments to buy American goods and by promising structural changes to their economy. Over a period of years, that combination could equal \$200 billion in additional trade — a figure echoing Mr. Trump's target of reducing the trade deficit by \$200 billion.

But the Chinese were not willing to make an outright commitment to reduce the trade deficit by a specific dollar figure, believing that trade balances are the result of broader economic factors, such as currency valuations and economic growth, and such a commitment could prompt more conflict with the United States down the road.

It is not clear that the Chinese ever saw the \$200 billion figure as realistic or even relevant, people briefed on their plans said. But they realized its symbolic importance for Mr. Trump, and they were making an effort to give Mr. Trump some kind of victory.

In return for its concessions, the Chinese were expecting the administration to offer relief to the Chinese telecommunications firm ZTE, which had been crippled by national security sanctions that prevented it from purchasing any American technology.

The Sunday before the Chinese arrived, Mr. Trump said on Twitter that he might rethink the company's punish-

ment in return for trade concessions — and as a personal favor to Mr. Xi. But by the time Mr. Liu touched down last week in Washington, the president's statements had provoked a fierce backlash in Congress, and the politics around ZTE had shifted.

The Chinese also found new resistance to their requests to relax the export controls that prevent them from buying militarily sensitive products. Mr. Mnuchin's openness to this request set off fierce opposition within the administration, especially among Pentagon officials, who feared the sales could compromise American national security.

As the talks began, Trump officials put out word — first in private, and then publicly — that the Chinese were prepared to meet the \$200 billion target. Their motives differed: Some may have blared the figure in an effort to lock the Chinese into their promises. Others may have leaked it as a warning that the administration was focused on reducing the trade deficit at the expense of other priorities, like overhauling the Chinese economy and ending its pattern of forcing American companies that do business in China to hand over intellectual property.

Whatever the motivation, the leaks set off a backlash from the Chinese. On Thursday, Beijing's Ministry of Foreign Affairs denied that it had offered to reduce its trade surplus by \$200 billion. On Friday, the state-run People's Daily labeled the reports “a misunderstanding.”

Also on Friday, Mr. Kudlow told reporters that “the number's a good number.” But on Sunday, he said, “Maybe I got ahead of the curve.”

Mr. Trump, Mr. Kudlow said, liked the number, “but it's too soon to lock that in.”

After expecting to wrap up talks on Friday, the two sides argued into the night about the wording of their joint statement, and the talks extended into the next day.

The leaks set off a backlash from the Chinese, who then denied that they had offered to shrink their nation's trade surplus by \$200 billion.

The final product was vaguely worded and lacked numerical commitments or any firm details.

In multiple TV appearances after the announcement, Mr. Mnuchin, Mr. Kudlow and Mr. Ross presented the deal positively in an effort, some trade analysts say, to paper over divisions with the Chinese until after the summit meeting next month with the North Koreans.

Not everyone was so pleased. On Sunday, Mr. Lighthizer released a statement on the talks that many in Washington saw as a not-so-veiled critique of Mr. Mnuchin's choice to prioritize the trade deficit.

“Real work still needs to be done to achieve changes in a Chinese system that facilitates forced technology transfers in order to do business in China and the theft of our companies' intellectual property and business know how,” it said.

“Getting China to open its market to more U.S. exports is significant,” Mr. Lighthizer continued, “but the far more important issues revolve around forced technology transfers, cybertheft and the protection of our innovation.”

Critics said Mr. Trump was at risk of jeopardizing a trade policy that had put China on the defensive for the first time in decades.

“It's absolutely stunning how we snatched defeat from the jaws of victory,” said Stephen K. Bannon, the president's former chief strategist and a prominent representative of the nationalist wing.

“China is still in a trade war with us,” he said. “It's just that we're unilaterally calling a truce.”

But after the talks in Washington, the Chinese, too, seemed bewildered by the divisions, saying that even if they were able to secure concessions from Mr. Mnuchin, they were not sure those promises would ultimately hold, according to people briefed on the discussions.

For the moment, it is Mr. Ross, not Mr. Mnuchin, who will be sitting across the table as the two sides continue to work toward a deal.



DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. He said that the United States would hold off on imposing tariffs on China. Hours later, a trade official threatened the opposite.

Comcast could make move on Disney's Fox deal

COMCAST, FROM PAGE 7

Comcast has a bigger broadband business than AT&T, which could raise government concerns that Comcast could use that power to hurt competitors, especially as the internet grows in importance as a video pipe.

Disney has its own regulatory risks in buying the Fox businesses.

The melding of ESPN, already owned by Disney, with Mr. Murdoch's regional sports networks may be an issue for the government.

Disney would also become a movie colossus; based on 2017 ticket sales, Disney-Fox would control about 35 percent

of the domestic theatrical business.

WOULD A LACK OF SHAREHOLDER SUPPORT MAKE COMCAST BACK OFF?

No. Comcast does not need shareholder approval for a cash offer.

Executives at Comcast probably see a 24 percent decline in shares since January as temporary and not entirely related to the hostile bid rumblings. Comcast's cable competitor Charter has seen a similar decline over the same period.

DOES COMCAST HAVE THE MONEY?

The company would borrow to make a cash offer, and banks are willing. Com-

cast has healthy financials.

It would, however, mean taking on an amount of debt — at least \$164 billion — that Moody's last week called “staggering” and said would probably imperil Comcast's A3 credit rating.

“That sounds like a nearly impossible level of debt to sustain,” Richard Greenfield, an analyst at BTIG Research, wrote in a recent report.

But he argued that it was not as scary upon a closer look. Given Fox synergies and cash flow, “Net debt by the end of 2020 would drop to below \$130 billion — essentially in line with a combined AT&T Time Warner.”

WHERE DOES THIS LEAVE FOX SHAREHOLDERS?

In the catbird seat. Even if Disney ultimately wins — as predicted by Mr. Nathanson, the media analyst — Comcast can drive up the price.

For his part, Mr. Murdoch has made no public comment about a potential bid by Comcast. His son Lachlan Murdoch, chairman of 21st Century Fox, told analysts on a May 10 earnings call, “We are committed to our agreement with Disney.”

He added, “Our directors, though, of course, are aware of their fiduciary duties on behalf of all shareholders.”

Opinion

Mourning our baby as Ireland votes

Allowing Irish women to end pregnancies doesn't require insisting on the inhumanity of those who haven't been born yet.

**Aoife Walsh
Davin O'Dwyer**

DUBLIN Walking around this city at the moment involves negotiating an unsettling array of campaign posters: Lampposts and billboards are covered in images of fetuses.

The posters have been put up ahead of the referendum on Friday on whether to repeal the Eighth Amendment, which has enshrined the right to life of the unborn in the Irish Constitution since its introduction in 1983.

These images are meant to provoke a strong response, of course, but the sight of so many fetuses on the streets is particularly distressing for us. A few months ago, our daughter, Cara, who suffered from a chromosomal abnormality, died at 20 weeks.

The initial diagnosis came after the 12-week scan. Our consultant could see something wrong on the grainy image, and a test soon confirmed our worst fears. Cara's condition was, in that blunt medical phrase, "incompatible with life."

In other countries, such a diagnosis would usually lead to a termination,

We can't help feeling that abortion opponents are exploiting our lost child.

hastening the inevitable end. But in Ireland, that's prohibited by the Eighth Amendment. If we wanted to take that route, we would have to follow in the footsteps of the

170,000 or so women who have made this traumatic journey across the Irish Sea to England and Wales over the years. The reality is that with or without the Eighth Amendment, women in Ireland already have access to abortion, just not on our soil.

Heartbroken by our daughter's diagnosis, we contacted a hospital in England and began making arrangements. We felt an acute anger that we had to plan a surreptitious trip, that we had to leave behind our caring doctors and midwives. The sense of enforced furtiveness was degrading, a result of the shame that surrounds the journey. When we were at our most vulnerable, having to make these plans was an added torture.

As the day of our departure approached, one of us, Aoife, suffered an intense panic. The prospect of the procedure was daunting enough; the prospect of checking onto a plane, booking accommodations, all of it, was just too much to bear. We didn't make the journey. We couldn't.

Instead, we gave Cara her name — in the Irish language, it means "friend" — and decided to embrace the time we had with her. For nearly two months, between getting the diagnosis and her



ANNA PARINI

death, we got to see our daughter grow in weekly ultrasound scans, we got to hear her heartbeat, we got to see her move. We made memories. We became a family.

And then, a scan just before Christmas showed there was no heartbeat, no movement. The sense of loss was overwhelming. That time together with Cara was precious, and the love we have for her and the grief we feel leaves us in no doubt — Cara was not born alive, she never got to take a breath of air, but she was most certainly a person in her own right.

Emphasizing the personhood of the unborn is the point of all those posters and billboards showing pictures of fetuses. Whether you have been through an experience like ours or not, that's a legitimate perspective.

But we have encountered a contra-

diction: Our Constitution and traditional culture champion the right to life of the unborn, but we have found that actually mourning the unborn is still taboo. Talking to other parents in the same situation, we find again and again a sense that our grief is not recognized as valid.

People don't want to accept a baby's death or the attendant sadness; to have experienced both birth and death in the same moment feels like a transgression. Losing a child in pregnancy is a very lonely burden precisely because you are not supposed to talk about it. Not coincidentally, it is a silencing of a pain borne first and foremost by women.

This sad reality is in keeping with the traditional Roman Catholic culture that still permeates society. The same Catholic ideology that campaigns to

protect the unborn didn't believe that the unbaptized — never mind the unborn — were worthy of full burial rites (as grimly demonstrated by the story of Davin's hometown, Tuam, where 796 children were buried unrecorded). To this day, it is a culture in which the lives of the unborn are sacred in some respects and largely disregarded in others.

This fundamental contradiction ultimately makes those posters and billboards so difficult to look at.

On a superficial level, they resemble those precious ultrasound scans of Cara, but it doesn't feel as though she is being championed by this campaign. Instead, we can't escape the feeling that Cara and all those lives represented by the posters are being exploited. Far from coming from a place of love and compassion, the images are

being used to provoke shock and, sometimes, disgust.

We decided not to go to England, and it was the right choice for us. We are grateful for the time we had with Cara, and we are proud to be her parents. But it isn't the right choice for everyone in that situation — other parents, acting out of a sincere love and concern for their child, might make a very different decision.

Our heartbreaking experience taught us that such a decision should never be shrouded in shame and stigma. This referendum is a chance for everyone in Ireland to leave such shame and stigma behind. We have, instead, the opportunity to replace them with trust and real empathy.

AOIFE WALSH and DAVIN O'DWYER are editors and writers.

In India, journalists face shaming and rape threats

Criticizing Hindu nationalists made me the target of a social-media mob attack.

Rana Ayyub

MUMBAI, INDIA I work as an investigative and political journalist. Two years back, I published a book — after going undercover for eight months — about the complicity of Narendra Modi, now prime minister of India, and Amit Shah, now president of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, in riots in 2002 in the western state of Gujarat. I also reported on several extrajudicial murders in the state between 2002 and 2006 that Mr. Shah was accused of being involved in.

Like many of my colleagues, I regularly write and speak about the violence against India's minorities and lower-caste groups and have called out Mr. Modi's silence on the violence and his dog-whistle politics.

For the past few years, like several female journalists critical of the Hindu nationalist politics and government, I have been targeted by an apparently coordinated social media campaign that slut-shames, deploys manipulated images with sexually explicit language, and threatens rape. Mr. Modi and several of his ministers embolden the virtual mob by following them on social media.

Yet nothing had prepared me for what was thrown at me in the past month. On April 22, I was alarmed to find a quotation supporting child rapists falsely attributed to me and going viral on Twitter. A parody account of Republic TV, India's leading right-wing television network, had posted the quotation.

I received numerous messages shaming me for supporting child rapists. A Facebook page called, Yogi Adityanath Ki Sena, or the Army of Yogi Adityanath, translated the tweet into Hindi and circulated it on social media. Mr. Adityanath is the firebrand Hindu nationalist monk who was elected the chief minister of Uttar

Pradesh, the most populous state in India, last April.

I tweeted a clarification about the falsehood to no avail: My social media accounts and my phone were inundated with WhatsApp messages urging others to gang-rape me. Various leaders of Mr. Modi's party, who promoted the lie, refused to delete their tweets despite my pointing it out.

The following day, on April 23, another tweet was generated using Photoshop and attributed to me. "I hate India and Indians," it said. The online mob asked me to pack my bags and leave for Pakistan, some threatened to tear my clothes and drag me out of the country while invoking the genocidal violence between Hindus and Muslims during the partition of India in 1947.

In the evening, an activist from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the Hindu nationalist mother ship, alerted me to a scurrilous pornographic video being shared on various WhatsApp groups. He had received it from a group with many Bharatiya Janata Party members: a two-minute, 20-second pornographic video of a sex act with my face morphed onto another woman.

Despite our political differences, he was upset at this new low. He urged me to take legal action to keep it from spreading further.

A minute later, he shared the video with me. I was with a friend in a cafe in New Delhi. I saw the first two frames and froze. I wanted to vomit and fought tears. My friend got me a glass of water. "How could they?" I threw up and burst into tears.

I called a friend who worked in tech forensics. He said it was a clear fake, probably produced with a new app called Deepfake. His words did not console me. The video was on my phone and on numerous others across the country.

Minutes later, my social media timelines and notifications were filled with screenshots of the video. Some com-



MOHD ZAKIR/HINDUSTAN TIMES, VIA GETTY IMAGES

Protesters in New Delhi in October demanded justice for Gauri Lankesh, a journalist and critic; Govind Panesar, a left-wing politician; Narendra Dabhalkar, a rationalist; and M.M. Kalburgi, a scholar, all of whom have been killed in the past few years.

mented on how prostitution was my forte. I went into a frenzy blocking them, but they were everywhere, on my Instagram, Facebook and Twitter accounts. Some commenters asked what I charged for sex, others described my body. Many claiming to be nationalist Hindus sent pictures of themselves naked.

I started getting screenshots from friends of a Twitter account created in my name. I was doxxed. A tweet with my name, picture, phone number and address was being circulated. "I am

available," it said. Someone sent my father a screenshot of the video. He was silent on the phone while I cried. After a while he spoke in a sad, heavy voice. "I am surprised this did not happen earlier," he said. "They want to break you. The choice is yours."

I asked a friend to take charge of my Facebook account and send me screenshots and links of every message posted to my inbox. The reporter in me wanted the digital record, but I shuddered every time my phone beeped. I have no way of finding out who

produced the video. What I do know is this: Most of the Twitter handles and Facebook accounts that posted the pornographic video and screenshots identify themselves as fans of Mr. Modi and his party, and argue for turning India into a "Hindu rashtra" — a country for Hindus only, where religious minorities have almost no rights. I reported several of those accounts to the cybercrime section of the Delhi Police.

That night the administrator of a Facebook page called Varah Sena wrote, "See, Rana, what we spread about you; this is what happens when you write lies about Modi and Hindus in India." The comment was posted along with the concocted video on Facebook and Twitter. (The page was deleted after I filed the police complaint.)

The slut-shaming and hatred felt like being punished by a mob for my work as a journalist, an attempt to silence me. It was aimed at humiliating me, breaking me by trying to define me as a "promiscuous," "immoral" woman.

As I collected myself, I thought of Gauri Lankesh, the editor and outspoken critic of Hindu nationalists, who was murdered outside her home in Bangalore last September. She had published my book in the Kannada language.

Several handlers of these social media accounts, who posted and circulated the pornographic video, had celebrated her death. And some of them were and continue to be followed on Twitter by the prime minister of India.

Mr. Modi has repeatedly talked about changing Indian lives through technology. Four years into his term, his followers have indeed found a vigorous use for technology: curtailing criticism and normalizing hatred and misogyny.

RANA AYYUB is an Indian journalist and the author of "Gujarat Files: Anatomy of a Cover Up."

OPINION

The New York Times

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POMPEO'S FLAWED IRAN PLAN

The new secretary of state is engaging in wishful thinking after President Trump renounced the nuclear deal.

Since President Trump renounced America's commitments under the 2015 Iran nuclear deal this month, the question has been what comes next. On Monday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced what he expected to happen — Iranian capitulation.

In a belligerent speech to the conservative Heritage Foundation, Mr. Pompeo said the administration intended to use all of America's economic and military might if Iran did not stop uranium enrichment, developing nuclear-capable missiles and supporting Hezbollah, Houthi rebels in Yemen and Iranian forces in Syria.

The demands — 12 points in all — are so extensive that it is unlikely Iran could comply any time soon, even if it wanted to. And any benefits it would achieve in exchange — sanctions relief, the re-establishment of diplomatic and commercial relations — would be at some unspecified point in the future.

Mr. Pompeo promised to bring "unprecedented financial pressure on the Iranian regime," to track down and "crush" Iranian operatives and their Hezbollah proxies around the world, and to inflict "bigger problems than they'd ever had before" if Iranian leaders resume their nuclear program.

We're at this absurd point because Mr. Trump cast aside a multinational deal under which Iran curtailed its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. Mr. Trump objected that the deal did not address concerns it was never meant to address, like Iran's regional activities.

Mr. Trump and his lieutenants act confident that reimposing American sanctions will bring Iran, hampered by a weak economy and political unrest, to heel. But the sanctions that preceded the 2015 nuclear deal were effective because they were broadly supported by the international community, especially Europe, Russia and China.

Although Mr. Pompeo said the administration's aim was a comprehensive agreement with Iran, the real goal seems to be to break the regime. The world's experience with regime change in Iraq should make clear why this is a terrible idea.

Over the past several weeks, the Iranians have had a reasonably measured response to the American provocations, even as President Hassan Rouhani, a moderate, has faced pressure from hard-liners eager to push back against the United States and restart the nuclear program. The world is left to hope — with no help from Washington — that restraint can hold.

VENEZUELA'S SHAM ELECTION

Sunday's vote giving Nicolás Maduro another term was flawed. Venezuela's Latin neighbors must unite to isolate and force him from office.

The issue in Venezuela is not whether Nicolás Maduro won another term fairly or not. Neither the Lima Group of Latin American countries plus Canada, nor the United States or the European Union recognized the election as legitimate. The question is how to get rid of Mr. Maduro before he completes the destruction of his country.

The devastation he and his leftist firebrand predecessor, the late Hugo Chávez, have visited on Venezuela is hard to fathom, especially as the country has the world's largest oil reserves. For the fourth straight year, Venezuela has been ranked the world's most miserable economy by Bloomberg.

More than a million people have fled the country since 2015; the health care system is in such dire straits that malaria, once almost wiped out, is soaring; about three quarters of the population has involuntarily lost nearly 20 pounds of weight.

In the midst of this horror, the election on Sunday was less a contest than a dictator's classic reach for a false patina of legitimacy. Mr. Maduro has continued blaming the country's problems on what he terms an economic war waged by the United States. He has given no indication how he plans to halt the economic meltdown.

It is clear that Mr. Maduro must go. But that emphatically does not mean American military action. It's hard to see how a violent regime change led by the Trump administration would improve Venezuela's lot, and the saber-rattling inevitably feeds into Mr. Maduro's propaganda as evidence of American perfidy. As the Colombian president, Juan Manuel Santos, said at the time, "The possibility of a military intervention shouldn't even be considered."

The best means of eventually ousting Mr. Maduro is in collective action by the Western Hemisphere, led by Latin America, to further choke off funds to his government while supporting the National Assembly. The United States and many other countries have already imposed various economic sanctions against the Maduro government, and less than 24 hours after the sham election, the Lima Group announced it would take further steps to strengthen the controls. The group also said its members would reduce diplomatic ties with Venezuela.

That may not do the trick quickly, given Mr. Maduro's readiness to destroy his country to stay in power. But he and his suffering countrymen must understand that in the eyes of their neighbors, he and his ilk are the root cause of their misery.

What's so good about original sin?

Crispin Sartwell

The doctrine of original sin has often been held to be intolerably dark, a source of despair. It says we are by nature morally flawed, that we are born in error and live in it irremediably, that each of us deserves punishment and will receive it, unless redeemed by God's arbitrary grace. It insists that we cannot cure ourselves by our own efforts, and it has led some people to make extraordinarily disturbing claims, such as that children who die in infancy could burn in eternal hellfire.

It's hard to argue with the fact that inherent depravity is a profoundly pessimistic idea, and one with potentially bad effects. A rejection of the idea of original sin might argue that if we believe we can be good and do good by our own efforts, we are likelier to strive to do so. If we believe we are intrinsically evil, it follows, we will cease trying to make ourselves the world better. Why not, then, think more positively about ourselves and believe in the possibility of human goodness and our potential for improvement right here in this world?

Perhaps it's time for a new Puritanism. With fewer witch trials this time around, it could make the world a better place. It would take a book or a shelf of them to examine original sin as a theological doctrine, going back to Augustine's interpretation of Adam and Eve. Even so, it is not clear that the preachers of original sin have managed to explain why a benevolent God would create such profoundly flawed creatures as they believe us to be. And if you don't believe in God at all, or not in that sort of God, the whole line of argument is moot.

Despite all of that, I would like to entertain the notion that a secularized conception of original sin is plausible, and that believing it might have good effects. In short, perhaps it's time for a new Puritanism, though with fewer witch trials this time around.

When I look within, I see certain extreme failings. I have not been able to get rid of most of them, and I have accumulated others as I've gone along. Perhaps you've done better, but most of us certainly come up short of our own ideals, ones I hope most people, religious or not, generally share — to be generous, peaceful, energetic in helping others and hesitant to help ourselves at their expense; to take care of the world we inhabit; to not only not kill one another (or even think



Detail from "The Fall," after 1478, by Hugo van der Goes.

about it), but to love one another. Even by our own mortal standards, we are profoundly flawed.

To complicate matters further, action undertaken for apparently good motives can often yield unintended harmful consequences, outweighing any possible good effects. We can intend, at best, only a tiny proportion of the effects of any of our actions. In trying to make the world an excellent place for human beings to live by developing and applying ingenious technologies, for example, we may wind up rendering it uninhabitable. Or in trying to keep ourselves safe and secure by stockpiling defensive weaponry, we may annihilate life on earth. There's really no need for God's punishment when you're making your own hellfire. As Paul told the Romans (according to David Bentley Hart's excellent recent

translation of the New Testament), "I do not know what it is that I accomplish" and "what I wish, this I do not do; instead, what I hate, this I do."

Even the sheer fact that we are finite in our knowledge and in our power leads us to make terrible moral mistakes. But many of us commit those errors of judgment knowingly, because we have malicious or violent impulses and motivations. We may even justify or defend them.

There is some level of self-scrutiny too merciless for most of us, some inner corridor too dark. We are mystified, or purport to be, by mass shooters, for example. What could possibly motivate a person to want to kill — everyone? What could turn them so against their own species? I suggest that to answer a question like that we must look within ourselves — at our

own violent fantasies, the ways we hate or negate the world, our moments of imagined annihilation of people we fancy to be our enemies, our feeling at times that we are being arbitrarily persecuted or misunderstood. Perhaps, if we were wretchedly honest, we might see a school shooter within us, or a bully or abuser of the sort that helped create people like that.

This insight is not the exclusive province of Christian theology. Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote, "I have within me the capacity for every crime." Not long after, the American feminist Voltairine de Cleyre amplified this sentiment. Few readers of Emerson, she wrote, believed that he truly meant those words, but rather they took it as an attempt by Emerson to "say something large and leveling." She went on:

But I think he meant exactly what he said. I think with all his purity Emerson had within him the turbid stream of passion and desire; for all his hard-cut granite features he knew the instincts of the weeping and the slave; and for all his sweetness, he knew the tiger and the jackal in his soul. I think that within every bit of human flesh and spirit that has ever crossed the enigma bridge of life, from the prehistoric racial morning until now, all crime and all virtue were germinal.

We may regard a shooter — or a racist, a sexual predator, an addict or someone who commits suicide (as de Cleyre herself tried to do at least once) — as alien. This reinforces, to ourselves and others, our sense of our own sanity and goodness; it is a way to keep us safe not only from those who would commit such crimes, but from the parts of ourselves who are like them, or who could have gone down that road.

But what if we put aside such defenses? What if, by connecting with the criminal, with the deranged or patently evil — and I believe this is what Emerson was striving to do — we gain some deeper understanding?

The doctrine of original sin — in religious or secular versions — is an expression of humility, an expression of a resolution to face our own imperfections. In undertaking any such act there is risk. To allow the self-scrutiny required in this act to turn to self-loathing would be debilitating. But a secularized doctrine of original sin, a chastened self-regard, doesn't entail consigning ourselves to the flames. There is much to affirm in our damaged selves and in our damaged lives, even a sort of dignity and beauty we share in our imperfect awareness of our own imperfection, and our halting attempts to face it, and ourselves.

CRISPIN SARTWELL teaches philosophy at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pa. His most recent book is "Entanglements: A System of Philosophy."

What's the matter with Europe?



Paul Krugman

If you had to identify a place and time where the humanitarian dream — the vision of a society offering decent lives to all its members — came closest to realization, that place and time would surely be Western Europe in the six decades after World War II. It was one of history's miracles: a continent ravaged by dictatorship, genocide and war transformed itself into a model of democracy and broadly shared prosperity.

Indeed, by the early years of this century Europeans were in many ways better off than Americans. Unlike us, they had guaranteed health care, which went along with higher life expectancy; they had much lower rates of poverty; they were actually more likely than we were to be gainfully employed during their prime working years.

But now Europe is in big trouble. So, of course, are we. In particular, while democracy is under siege on both sides of the Atlantic, the collapse of freedom, if it comes, will probably happen here first. But it's worth taking a break from our own Trumpian nightmare to look at Europe's woes, some but not all of which parallel ours.

Many of Europe's problems come from the disastrous decision, a generation ago, to adopt a single currency. The creation of the euro led to a temporary wave of euphoria, with vast amounts of money flowing into nations like Spain and Greece; then the bubble burst. And while countries like Iceland that retained their own money were able to quickly regain competitiveness by devaluing their currencies, other nations were forced into a pro-

tracted depression, with extremely high unemployment, as they struggled to get their costs down.

This depression was made worse by an elite consensus, in the teeth of the evidence, that the root of Europe's troubles was not misaligned costs but fiscal profligacy, and that the solution was draconian austerity that made the depression even worse.

Some of the victims of the euro crisis, like Spain, had finally managed to claw their way back to competitiveness. Others, however, haven't. Greece remains a disaster area — and Italy, one of the three big economies remaining in the European Union, has now suffered two lost decades: G.D.P. per capita is no higher now than it was in 2000. So it isn't really surprising that when Italy held elections in March, the big winners were anti-European Union parties — the populist Five Star Movement and the far-right League. In fact, the surprise is that it didn't happen sooner.



Supporters of the populist anti-European Union Five Star Movement celebrated its victory in the general elections in March.

A discredited elite and dark forces rising. Sound familiar?

autocracy, ruled by an ethnonationalist ideology. Poland seems well down the same path.

So what went wrong with the "European project" — the long march toward peace, democracy and prosperity, underpinned by ever-closer economic and political integration? As I said, the giant mistake of the euro played a big

role. But Poland, which never joined the euro, sailed through the economic crisis pretty much unscathed; yet democracy there is collapsing all the same.

I would suggest, however, that there's a deeper story here. There have always been dark forces in Europe (as there are here).

When the Berlin Wall fell, a political scientist I know joked, "Now that Eastern Europe is free from the alien ideology of Communism, it can return to its true path: fascism." We both knew he had a point.

What kept these dark forces in check was the prestige of a European elite committed to democratic values. But that prestige was squandered through mismanagement — and the damage was compounded by unwillingness to face up to what was happening. Hungary's government has turned its back on everything Europe stands for — but it's still getting large-scale aid from Brussels.

And here, it seems to me, is where we see parallels with developments in America.

True, we didn't suffer a euro-style disaster. (Yes, we have a continentwide currency, but we have the federalized fiscal and banking institutions that make such a currency workable.) But the bad judgment of our "centrist" elites has rivaled that of their European counterparts. Remember that in 2010, with America's economy reeling from mass unemployment, most of the Very Serious People in Washington were obsessed with . . . entitlement reform.

Meanwhile our centrists, along with much of the news media, spent years in denial about the radicalization of the G.O.P., engaging in almost pathological false equivalence. And now America finds itself governed by a party with as little respect for democratic norms or rule of law as Hungary's Fidesz.

The point is that what's wrong with Europe is, in a deep sense, the same thing that's wrong with America. And with such cases, the path to redemption will be very, very hard.



Don't give Trump the benefit of the doubt



Michelle Goldberg

After Donald Trump signed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in December, a number of companies gave their employees one-time bonuses, ostensibly sharing their new corporate windfall. As a PR stunt, these checks were a savvy investment; they allowed the companies to pander to the administration and made themselves look beneficent without incurring any long-term obligation to their workers.

Critics of the new law tried to point out that one-time bonuses are not the same as pay increases, and that the overwhelming majority of corporate savings from the tax cut was likely to go to shareholders. Nevertheless, in parts of the media, the idea that Republicans had been vindicated took hold. "Democrats scramble on taxes as Republicans claim victory," said a CNN headline. "Democrats go on defense as the Republican tax plan grows more popular," said CNBC.

Five months later, everything liberals said about the tax bill turned out to be true. Contrary to Republican claims, wage growth has been anemic. Instead of sharing the wealth with employees, companies have spent record amounts of money buying back their own stock. The tax cuts are creating larger deficits than Republicans predicted, and those deficits are now being cited as a pretext for cutting spending on the poor. They remain unpopular. Republicans in some districts have abandoned them as an election issue.

Watching this unfold should have helped inoculate commentators against Trumpist bamboozlement. It has not. In March, Trump spontaneously accepted

an offer, conveyed to him by a South Korean envoy, to meet directly with the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.

North Korea has sought a one-on-one meeting with a sitting American president for years, believing it would legitimize it as a global power, but previous administrations have refused. "No American president has ever agreed to meet a North Korean leader before because that is a huge concession in and of itself," Robert Kelly, a political science professor at South Korea's Pusan National University, told me.

Nevertheless, credulous commentators praised Trump for bringing North Korea to the table, as if a seat at the table wasn't what North Korea wanted all along. And pundits, including some who are broadly critical of the president, heaped us to give him credit.

In *The Daily Beast*, Rory Cooper asked us to entertain "the possibility that Trump actually is on the precipice of this type of geopolitical achievement." Jeff Greenfield wrote an essay in *Politico Magazine* headlined, "Thinking the Unthinkable: What if Trump Succeeds?" He urged those of us appalled by the president to "to consider seriously the proposition that this misbegotten president has somehow achieved an honest-to-God diplomatic success."

To be fair, there is one sense in which this is true. Due to Trump's ignorance and vanity, South Korea's dovish leader, Moon Jae-in, has been able to manipulate him into a position where he might make concessions to North Korea that no other president would dare. Given the risk of war, Moon's maneuvering has been admirable. "In South Korea, it's basically an open secret that this whole thing is flattering Trump," Kelly said. "It kind of amazes me that Trump's staff hasn't picked up on this."

Now, three weeks away from a summit that may or may not actually happen, reports show a president terrifyingly unprepared for high-stakes diplo-

macy. After being conciliatory for several weeks, Kim Jong-un has started pushing back against the United States, exactly as experts predicted he would. "Mr. Trump's aides have grown concerned that the president—who has said that 'everyone thinks' he deserves a Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts—has signaled that he wants the summit meeting too much," David Sanger reported in *The New York Times*. The U.S. government has even issued a commemorative coin about the summit featuring Trump and "Supreme Leader" Kim Jong-un face-to-face, signaling to the world that it's now the American president who craves legitimization from the North Korean dictator.

Even a casual newspaper reader—which, of course, Trump is not—knows that when North Korea talks about "denuclearization," it doesn't mean unilaterally giving up all its nuclear weapons. A hastily arranged meeting between two belligerent egomaniacs, premised on a basic misunderstanding, is unlikely to resolve one of the world's most intractable geopolitical conflicts; a flimsy agreement that roughly preserves the status quo seems like a best-case scenario. Yet for weeks, the pull to give Trump pre-emptive credit for a hypothetical victory has felt like a cultural undertow; you had to plant your feet firmly to resist it.

Pushing against such a current can be hard for fair-minded journalists, who rightly pride themselves on being open to new information and willing to re-examine their own assumptions. But Trump, whose only real talent is the manipulation of reality, exploits this impulse.

Of course, we all have a motive in playing along with the fiction that Trump has achieved a Korean breakthrough—it might stop him from starting a war. But it's one thing to humor our idiot president, and another to let the gravitational pull of presidential power, and the deep desire for a minimally competent leader, warp reality. We all want to be open-minded, but can men should never be given the benefit of the doubt.

What moral heroes are made of



David Brooks

Recently, I've been lucky enough to be around a lot of people who I would regard as moral heroes. They spend their lives fighting poverty, caring for the young or the sick, or single-mindedly dedicated to some cause. I've been wondering what traits such people tend to have in common.

The first is that they **DIDN'T OVERTHINK THEIR DECISION** before choosing to live this way. They didn't weigh the costs and benefits or wage any internal battle with themselves. As Anne Colby and William Damon write in "Some Do Care," a book that has organized my thinking on this subject: "We saw an unhesitating will to act, a disavowal of fear and doubt, and a simplicity of moral response. Risks were ignored and consequences went unweighed."

At some point in their lives, **SOMEBODY PLANTED AN IDEAL**. Somebody set a high example of what a good life looks like, and the person who went on to become a moral hero just assumed that, of course, that's what one should do.

They tend to have a **"THIS IS WHAT I DO"** mentality. They don't have a lofty sense of themselves. They don't have a sense that they are doing anything extraordinary. "What I do is as simple and common as the laughter of a child," Mother Teresa once said.

THEY HAVE A **WEIRD OBVIOUSNESS TO INFERIOR PLEASURES**. They are not tempted by worldly success because they are not interested in worldly success. They don't talk much about personal happiness, because they're not particularly interested in themselves, period.

That's because, as Colby and Damon argue, **THEIR SELF-IDENTITY IS FUSED WITH A MORAL IDEAL**. Their identity is not based on being a lawyer or a pianist. Their identity is defined by a certain moral action. They feel at home in the world when they are performing that moral action and feel out of sorts when they are not.

We see them tirelessly serving the poor or risking their lives for democracy

and think they are performing great acts of self-sacrifice, but it doesn't feel that way to them. It feels like the activation of their own nature. Doing that work seems to them as ordinary as doing the dishes. Something needed to be done, so they did it.

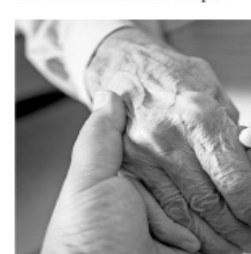
Another quality you see in **CONSTANT GOAL EXPANSION**. Some believe that a person's character is set in childhood—that after age 18, people don't change all that much. That's not how it is with these people. They are to moral life what lifelong learners are to intellectual life. Some series of problems get presented to them—say, in the form of a parentless child landing on their doorstep or a new social wrong in their community. They see needs and respond with an instinctive and sometimes reckless series of "yeses"—and

later on figure out how they're going to address them.

"Never look down to test the ground before taking the next step," Dag Hammarskjöld once advised.

"Only he who keeps his eye fixed on the far horizon will find the right road."

You often see such people **EXPANDING THEIR AMBITIONS IN THE FACE OF HARDSHIP**. Andrei Sakharov was a Soviet scientist who became so concerned with the radioactive fallout from nuclear weapons tests that in 1961 he wrote to Premier Nikita Khrushchev. Khrushchev dismissed him, portending decades of government intimidation and eventually internal exile. But every time the Soviets punished him, he expanded his activism and widened his critique.



GUTTY IMAGES

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A new face in German foreign affairs

SAUERBREY, FROM PAGE 1
this visit, too. With Britain leaving the European Union—along with its sizable military—the three small states, in fear of Russian aggression, are looking to Germany to fill the security void. Mr. Maas left them feeling reassured, without yet making the sort of concrete commitments the Baltics are looking for.

And all of this—Russia, Ukraine, the Baltics—account for just one part of Germany's foreign policy portfolio. As the representative of a country that is only now figuring out its leadership role, Mr. Maas is walking a narrow line—but he seems to be relishing the challenge. "I still have to get used to not going to the office but to the airport every morning," he joked on the flight back.

Mr. Maas is energized by his new office, almost boyishly excited by it. In public he is reserved and, well, diplomatic; in one-on-one meetings he's more casual, leaning back deeply into the seat of the plane, holding a pretzel stick between two fingers like a cigar, as if discussing world politics in some fancy Berlin bar.

The Foreign Ministry has changed Heiko Maas, but how will he change German foreign policy?

The list of past foreign ministers includes some of the leading figures in German politics, from Willy Brandt to Joschka Fischer, and each of them left a significant imprint. It's early still, but Mr. Maas will likely follow them. He has strong policy convictions and knows how to make himself visible, how to use the media not just to get information, but to tell a story.

As minister of justice, Mr. Maas made the fight against populism his trademark. He worked out a controversial bill that levies fines on Facebook and other networks if they don't remove hate speech and fake news quickly enough from their sites.

He is carrying this same narrative



Heiko Maas, the German foreign minister, during a meeting in Berlin this month.

into his new job. In his inaugural speech as foreign minister, Mr. Maas sketched a world divided between those who believe in international cooperation and those who see the world in zero-sum terms. These division lines, he said, reached "deeply into the West," certainly hinting at, though not naming, Mr. Trump.

At the same time, and unlike his immediate predecessor, Sigmar Gabriel, he sees value in continuing strong trans-Atlantic ties, regardless of Mr. Trump. He once took a road trip around the United States, and he draws optimism from the energy of American civil society.

In this he resembles the French president, Emmanuel Macron—and, perhaps not coincidentally, he also holds a strong emotional bond to France. He likes to tell an anecdote about his grandmother, who over the course of her life in the Saarland held five passports, in part

because the region changed hands between France and Germany. In fact, his first visit as foreign minister was to Paris, the very day he took office.

A third close emotional relation is with Israel. In his inaugural speech, Mr. Maas said that he has entered politics because of Germany's crimes at Auschwitz, and the need for his country to atone for them by supporting the Jewish state.

Strong ties with France and Israel and a belief in the trans-Atlantic relationship are conventional positions for a German foreign minister; what matters, now, is his commitment to strengthening them.

Where he truly differs from the recent norm is on Russia. While Ms. Merkel has always been clear in condemning Russian aggression in Ukraine, her Social Democratic foreign ministers, Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Sigmar Gabriel, tended to be more ambivalent. Many Social Democrats still feel nostalgic about Brandt's "Entspannungspolitik," or détente.

Mr. Maas, in contrast, has called Russia "increasingly hostile"; despite his conservative-leaning positions for a German foreign minister; what matters, now, is his commitment to strengthening them.

It will be months, if not years, before we know what a "Maas Doctrine" looks like. But the outline is clear: activist, strongly European and anti-populist. He will insist on Germany getting a place at the table alongside the United States, France, China and Russia, and he will not be quiet in pursuing his goals. For a Germany long used to foreign policy half-steps, we can expect a bracing change of pace.

ANNA SAUERBREY is an editor on the opinion page of the newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel*.

For her, a Real Madrid win on Saturday would make all of the stress worth it. What she and thousands of others have been through, though, has made it just a bit more likely that there will one day be a Champions League final much closer to her home in Miami.

Culture

Back to the tried and true blue-chip

New York auction buyers favored works fresh from long-term collections

BY SCOTT REYBURN

Following the excitement of \$21.1 million paid for a painting by the African-American artist Kerry James Marshall at Sotheby's last Wednesday night, the top end of the art market returned to more tried and tested brands at the Christie's and Phillips evening contemporary auctions that concluded New York's spring season of marquee sales.

Buyers on Thursday were looking for works fresh to the market from long-term collections, rather than resales.

Christie's included an impressive gold-framed 1977 "Study for Portrait" by Francis Bacon fresh from the Monaco-based collection of Magnus Konow, a friend of the artist, who acquired the work soon after it was painted. It was estimated to sell for at least \$30 million and — pushed by four telephone bidders — it reached \$49.8 million with fees, the top contemporary price of the week.

The 78-inch-high canvas features a partially clothed male figure and bloody shadow — inspired by Bacon's lover George Dyer, who committed suicide in 1971, just before the opening of the artist's first retrospective in Paris. Paintings from this period that evoke Bacon's grief for Dyer are among the British artist's most admired works, and this was a work that had never been offered at auction before.

"It was a good picture and a good price," said Ivor Braka, a London dealer who specializes in Bacon.

Market freshness was also on tap with "Blueberry," a sumptuous 1969 painting by the French-based Abstract Expressionist painter Joan Mitchell offered by the Hillman Family Foundation. It had been bought by the distinguished American collectors Rita and Alex Hillman in 1970.

Three telephone bidders and one in the room fought for "Blueberry." Measuring 79 inches high and thickly worked in yellow, white and blue, the painting climbed to a winning telephone bid of \$16.6 million with fees, beating the previous auction high of \$11.9 million for the artist.

"Historians are recognizing the importance of female artists' contribution to the Abstract Expressionist movement," said Andrew Turner, a private dealer and collector based in New York. "And this was just such a beautiful painting."

On the other hand, there were fewer takers for salesroom "retreads." Estimated by Christie's at \$30 million each, Andy Warhol's 1963 black and white silk-screen painting, "Double Elvis [Ferus Type]" and Mark Rothko's monumental 1954 abstract "No. 7 (Dark Over Light)" were both reappearing at auction.

The Warhol was offered by the beleaguered casino magnate Steve Wynn, who declined to donate \$70 million Picasso had been withdrawn from Christie's Tuesday evening sale of Impressionist and modern art. Mr. Wynn bought the "Double Elvis" in 2012 for \$37 million. This time around, despite a major Warhol retrospective in the office at the Whitney Museum of American Art in



"Blueberry," painted by Joan Mitchell in 1969, sold for \$16.6 million, beating her previous auction high of \$11.9 million.

New York, it sold for \$37 million with fees to the New York dealer Brett Gorvy.

The 90-inch-high Rothko was owned at one time by the former Yahoo chief executive and Warner Bros. chairman Terry Semel. Its latest, unidentified owner paid \$21 million for it at auction in 2007. On Thursday, just over a decade later, it sold to one bid from its guarantor for \$31.1 million.

For many, the lots to watch at the Christie's auction were a group of 12 paintings by Richard Diebenkorn, an artist traditionally regarded by the market as "second tier" but whose association with the Bay Area Figurative Movement of the 1950s and 1960s could

"Historians are recognizing the importance of female artists' contribution to the Abstract Expressionist movement."

prompt reassessment in today's internet economy. Eleven of these had been collected by the New York real estate developer Donald Zucker and his wife, Barbara, including the large-scale 1984 canvas "Ocean Park #126," from the artist's admired series of abstract paintings.

Estimated at \$16 million to \$20 million, the work sold for \$23.9 million, setting

a new auction high for the artist.

"We're always looking to canonize new heroes and take them to a new level," said Mr. Braka, the London dealer.

Christie's auction raised \$397.2 million from 64 lots, down from the \$448.1 million from its contemporary sale of 71 lots last year.

Earlier in the evening, Phillips auction house had offered 35 works in its latest sale of 20th-century and contemporary art. The obvious standout here was the 1984 Jean-Michel Basquiat acrylic and oilstick on wood painting "Flexible," entered from the artist's estate and estimated at \$20 million.

Unlike Basquiat's much larger but



Francis Bacon's 1977 "Study for Portrait," above, reached \$49.8 million. Andy Warhol's 1963 "Double Elvis [Ferus Type]," below left, fetched \$37 million, and Mark Rothko's 1954 "No. 7 (Dark Over Light)," below right, brought \$31.1 million.



writing-dominated "Flesh and Spirit," which sold for \$30.7 million the previous evening at Sotheby's, the Phillips painting featured a powerful half-length figure with one of the artist's trademark mask-like faces. However, it was painted on wooden planks, rather than more orthodox canvas, a form of support that has put off buyers.

Nonetheless, it was bid up to a final

price of \$45.3 million. "Collectors are beginning to pay greater attention to Jean-Michel's 'wood slat' pictures," said Scott Nussbaum, head of the 20th-century and contemporary art department at Phillips, who added that the previous high for a Basquiat on a similar support was \$17 million.

Phillips's sale raised a total of \$131.6 million, slightly higher than the \$110.3 million the company's equivalent auction achieved from 37 works last year.

Still evolving, but bidding the road goodbye

MUSIC REVIEW
VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

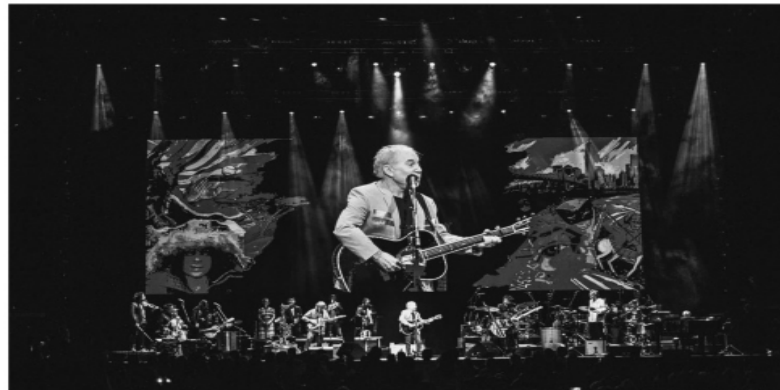
Paul Simon and his band kick off what he says will be his farewell tour

BY JON PARELES

Paul Simon couldn't resist introducing some ambiguity to the first night of what he has billed as "Homeward Bound — the Farewell Tour," at Rogers Arena here. After singing "50 Ways to Leave Your Lover" — itself a song about an ambivalent exit — he joked: "I lied about the final. I was just trying to raise the ticket prices." Then he backtracked. "Yeah. This is it." But he continued, "I don't know what the 'it' is," and went on to elaborate. "Is this about the final iteration of these songs? Is this, like, where I'm freezing them? I honestly don't know what the thing is."

As it stands, the tour will end with three shows in New York City in September. Like Elton John (whose farewell tour is scheduled to persist into September 2019), Mr. Simon, 76, has announced an end only to his touring, not to making music or to performing. And with the opening show last week, he was far more a curious musician than a self-congratulatory, self-repeating pop star.

His set of two dozen songs could all have been hits; he has more than enough. But Mr. Simon juxtaposed his own idiosyncratic favorites with his crowdpleasers, and he is still tweaking — or iterating — songs that he could easily have delivered as jukebox cop-



Paul Simon onstage and on a video screen at Rogers Arena in Vancouver, British Columbia.

ies. He did keep enough landmarks to summon the pop pleasure of familiarity, like the "ta-na-na" singalong in "Diamonds on the Soles of Her Shoes" (which also played up the intertwined guitars of Blodun Kuti and Mark Stewart) and the pristine guitar introduction to "Homeward Bound" (which, suiting a farewell tour, featured a video montage of Mr. Simon's half-century-plus career). Bakithi Kumalo, on bass,

thumb-popped the solo that he played on the 1986 hit "You Can Call Me Al." But Mr. Simon still isn't freezing his music. "The Boxer," which always had a tinge of country, now hints openly at the sound of Johnny Cash's the Tennessee Three. Mr. Simon is still an analytic listener to his own songs.

He is touring with 16 backup musicians, mingling the six-member chamber music ensemble yMusic with the

rest of his own slowly gathered rock-pop-folk-jazz-world-music band. Their numbers and flexibility give Mr. Simon an instrumental arsenal that can include, as needed, a button accordion, a piccolo, a clay drum, a French horn, a prepared piano (with assorted objects placed on and between its strings) or a penny whistle. There's a big video screen, but the tour's real special effects are its arrangements and orches-

trations. Mr. Simon gathered yMusic on its own to back him in radically reworked, brilliantly realized chamber-pop versions of "Rene and Georgette Magritte With Their Dog After the War" and "Can't Run, But," two deep-catalog songs.

Mr. Simon's songwriting has long treated pop as a force of inclusion and adaptation, learning constantly from different idioms and discovering where they can overlap or coalesce. At times, he has acted as a canny tourist of

"I honestly don't know what the thing is."

regional styles, hearing the pop potential of reggae in "Mother and Child Reunion" or paying direct homage to Louisiana zydeco in "That Was Your Mother."

But many more of his songs are hybrids with multiple, tangled, personalized sources — ones that he has scrambled further on tour through the years. "Me and Julio Down by the Schoolyard" has evolved toward a New Orleans-flavored beat, and this night the eerie, choppy synopses of "The Cool, Cool River" led to a piano solo by Mick Rossi that splashed toward free jazz.

Mr. Simon, long known as a perfectionist, may have physical reasons to make this his last tour. His voice had scratchy moments as the concert began, though he did warm up along the way. By "That Was Your Mother," he even had some zydeco-style dance steps. Opening night in Vancouver also had visual glitches that are likely to smooth out on the road. With a

crowded stage, the video crew didn't always point the camera at the player with the key part.

While Mr. Simon's music pulls disparate ideas together, his songs' narrators are often lonely and isolated, teetering between estrangement and a longing for connection, between hope for the next generation and intimations of doom. His prophetic "The Boy in the Bubble," with its weighty Sotho-style African accordion riff, envisioned technological advances coupled with constant surveillance; the band lingered, in vocal harmony, over the phrase "Don't cry." A toe-tapping song from 2011, "Rewrite," sounds whimsical until the narrator reveals the parental trauma that destroyed his family.

Mr. Simon's characters find refuge, often temporary, in marriage, spirituality and especially music. The full band's final appearance was with "Late in the Evening," a musician's victory strut with an exultant extended groove. But Mr. Simon returned alone to praise the biologist Edward O. Wilson's Half-Earth Project (and put on its baseball cap), trying to save the environment, and to sing "Questions for the Angels," pondering the entire significance of human life. He chose (spoiler alert) to end the concert, still solo, with his despairing 1964 Simon and Garfunkel hit "The Sound of Silence."

Most pop arena headlines tout togetherness, the unity of a shared good time. Mr. Simon, after all these years, wanted listeners to remember that they, too, might well have to go it alone. His final words were what, he said, was a Spanish saying: "We are not mountains. We will meet again."

CULTURE

Reasons to watch 'Reasons'

A controversial TV series is being marketed as a catalyst for family dialogue

BY KATHERINE ROSMAN

In the second episode of the new season of "13 Reasons Why," the high school student Courtney Crimsen publicly reveals that she is a lesbian. Wanting to be understanding and caring parents as the news ripples through town, her two fathers hold a family movie night. They flip through a stack of DVDs — all about lesbian relationships.

"Movies and shows are a wonderful way to open up a dialogue," one of the dads says to the other, as Courtney sighs, annoyed.

If the show's writers were aiming for coy self-reference, they achieved it. Far more overt is the opening of the first episode of the new season, which has just begun streaming on Netflix. The show's stars address the camera directly, out of character, and issue trigger warnings. "By shedding a light on these difficult topics, we hope our show can help viewers start a conversation," says Katherine Langford, after introducing herself as the actress who plays the character Hannah Baker, the teenager whose suicide is the centerpiece of the show's story line.

The first season of "13 Reasons Why" did spark its share of fraught discussions, much to the surprise of the producers and Netflix. Based on the 2007 novel "Thirteen Reasons Why" by Jay Asher, the first season of the show became a viral sensation among teenagers and young adults, inspiring memes, "promposals" and cassette-shaped slime. But it also alarmed parents, mental health care professionals and school administrators who worried that the show glamorized suicide without providing meaningful context or relevant information for young viewers.

"We knew when we were making Season 1 that we were telling a challenging and suspenseful story in a pretty unflinching way," said Brian Yorkey, the playwright ("Next to Normal") who adapted the book for Netflix and is the series' showrunner. "We suspected that we would be some strong conversation. What we didn't expect was the amount of the conversation."

Mr. Yorkey and Netflix executives have spent the last year trying to figure out both the story line for a second season and how to get ahead of any blowback the show's return could cause. First, there was the creative question of where to take the characters now that the show's original source material had been exhausted?

The first season faithfully followed the arc of the novel, organized around 13 audiotapes. Hannah records a cassette for each high schooler she feels tormented her (and for one person she just wants to explain herself to), explaining why she feels their behavior contributed to her misery. For the new season, Mr. Yorkey settled on a court trial as the plot device. It is set into motion by Hannah's mother, played by Kate Walsh, who sues the school for being negligent in failing to prevent the bullying that culminated in Hannah's suicide.

"We started with the idea of the trial as the engine of the story and the engine of discovery," Mr. Yorkey said. "Is it possible to get justice for what happened to Hannah, and what does that look like?"

Simultaneously, Netflix executives enlisted Zeno Group, a public relations



BETH DUBOIS/NETFLIX



BETH DUBOIS/NETFLIX



NETFLIX

In the first season of "13 Reasons Why," Katherine Langford, above with Dylan Minnette, played the high schooler Hannah Baker, who committed suicide. In the new season, from far left, Kate Walsh plays Hannah's mother, and Michele Selene Ang is Courtney Crimsen.

Wartella said. (The study did not ask specifically about "suicidal ideation," but it did survey respondents about depression, loneliness and social anxiety, she said.)

Among Professor Wartella's recommendations: The cast should address the audience directly as actors, not characters, to help convey to teenagers the fiction of it all, and direct them to talk to adults about their problems and to seek information on the web. (Mr. Wright says his team came upon that idea independently.)

At the end of each episode, a character in voice-over directs viewers to 13ReasonsWhyinfo, a resource site created by Netflix with guidance from nonprofit groups like the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and the American School Counselor Association.

"Netflix is taking their responsibility seriously," said Jill Cook, the assistant director of the American School Counselor Association. (She says the association has no financial ties to Netflix.)

Ms. Cook initially contacted Netflix last year to express her organization's concern that the depiction of adults on the show as clueless — a counselor doesn't report concerns to the principal, parents have no idea that their children are having torrid sex upstairs after a school-night family dinner, dads watch DVDs instead of Netflix — would discourage students from seeking help. For the show's resources site, it helped create the discussion guide and for its own website it recently posted a template letter that school administrators can send to parents.

One person who planned to binge-watch the new episodes as soon as they dropped is Polly Conway, the senior editor for television for Common Sense Media, a digital resource for parents trying to assess what movies, TV shows and books are appropriate for their children.

Netflix didn't respond to Common Sense Media's request to screen the new series ahead of its release. So relying on the trailer that Netflix shared earlier this month, the organization cut a quick video titled "5 Things Parents Need to Know About 13 Reasons Why Season 2."

Among the warnings are that story lines revolve around suicide, gun violence and sexual assault.

"This year we want to be ready," Ms. Conway said. "Last year we didn't know how huge it would be, and it happened fast."

and marketing firm, to conduct a study that Netflix used to promote the idea that TV shows help parents and their children to bond over difficult issues.

Netflix then released the research and infographics like one titled "What Should Parents Be Watching? A Netflix Guide to Connecting with Your Teen." If you want to have "a tough convo" about stress, you should watch "Grey's Anatomy." If you are trying to "find more in common" with your child, you should watch "Gilmore Girls" or "Friends." If the goal is to "understand my teen," Netflix says, watch "13 Reasons Why."

"What we didn't expect was the amount of the conversation."

By the fall of last year, Netflix took a more serious tack. Through Zeno, it reached out to Professor Ellen Wartella, the director of the Center on Media and Human Development at Northwestern University. University administrators negotiated a deal with Netflix, in which Professor Wartella and her team would have autonomy in creating the questions and

analyzing the data collected by a third party, even though Netflix partially funded the research. "We wanted a rigorous, independent academic study to help us understand the far reaches of the conversation" ignited by the show, said Brian Wright, the Netflix executive who oversees family and young adult original series.

The study found that the show was for many a positive catalyst. "Parents and kids reported that they actually talked about the show itself, that the program was an enabler for parents to talk to their teens about life," Professor

Can't stop thinking about tomorrow

BOOK REVIEW

The Restless Wave: Good Times, Just Causes, Great Fights, and Other Appreciations
By John McCain and Mark Salter. 402 pp. Simon & Schuster. \$30.

BY JENNIFER SZALAI

United States Senator John McCain has sustained a long political career by seeming to have it both ways: praised as a fiery maverick when times are bland and as a bipartisan consensus-seeker when they're not.

This isn't so much an accusation as an observation — one that McCain himself repeatedly alludes to in "The Restless Wave: Good Times, Just Causes, Great Fights, and Other Appreciations," his latest collaboration with his former chief of staff Mark Salter. The sizzling McCain, who learned last year that he had brain cancer, makes clear it might also be their last.

The tough-guy titles of their previous books — "Worth the Fighting For" and "Character Is Destiny" — "Hard Call," among them — spoke to McCain's obstinate, martial side. They also exhibited an adamant righteousness that "The Restless Wave," with its rolling title, occasionally strives for but fails to reach. You can see McCain in this book struggling to reconcile himself to what his Republican Party has largely become, even if he declines to come right out and say so; aside from a pointed rebuke of the Iowa Republican Steve King for his "ethnocentrism" and "crude insults," McCain mostly

resorts to the gentle politicking of the blind item.

"To refuse the obligations of international leadership for the sake of some half-baked, spurious nationalism cooked up by people who would rather find scapegoats than solve problems is unpatriotic," he writes in his preface, a scolding he directs at no one in particular.

One of the striking aspects of this new book is how often McCain — who says his dire medical prognosis leaves him "freer" to speak his mind and vote his conscience "without worry" — insists on playing it safe. The six-term senator from Arizona slips in a few careful mentions of Donald J. Trump, and expresses concern about the rancor that has overtaken the United States, but he generally stops short of calling out the president or his cabinet, issuing just a brief eye roll at the "thoughtless America First ideology" now ascendant in the White House. Blink and you might miss his critique.

But then "The Restless Wave" seems to be trying to do several things at once: reflect on the past, express gratitude, burnish a legacy. As the subtitle suggests, this book is largely appreciative. McCain, at 81, would prefer to "celebrate a happy life lived in imperfect service to a country made of ideals, whose continued success is the hope of the world," rather than linger on how the current state of the union might come up short.

"We are living in the land of the free, the land where anything is possible, the land of the immigrant's dream, the land with the storied past forgotten in the rush to the imagined future, the



John McCain on the presidential campaign trail in 2008 in Phoenix.

land that repairs and reinvents itself," he writes. "We are blessed, and in turn, we have been a blessing to humanity." McCain takes to this kind of patriotic hyperbole, and always has. As much as he comes under intermittent fire for being more of an opportunistic flip-flopper than a steadfast straight talker, he returns again and again to what seems for him to be a core commitment: a fervent belief in American exceptionalism.

"Our founding ideals and our fidelity to them at home and in our conduct in the world make us exceptional," he writes in a chapter that is otherwise about the American use of torture after

9/11. McCain, who spent five-and-a-half years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, recalls being disgusted when he learned that the United States was using "enhanced interrogation techniques" like waterboarding, which would fit most people's definition of "cruel, inhuman or degrading." "My captors had, on the whole, treated prisoners more humanely than the American soldiers at Abu Ghraib treated prisoners," he writes. (He recently called on the Senate to reject the nomination of Gina Haspel as director of the C.I.A.; Haspel oversaw a secret prison in Thailand where detainees were tortured.)

"The Restless Wave" contains a few other eruptions of unmitigated candor. McCain concedes that the Iraq War, which had his unequivocal support from the very beginning, "can't be judged as anything other than a mistake."

But his faith in his country's beneficence remains unshaken. Exceptionalism, for him, apparently has less to do with the harsh reality of what happens when the United States wields its power abroad than the presumed goodness of its intentions. The country's behavior, he says, should match its ideals; and when it doesn't, the exceptionalism still holds — it's simply a matter of getting the behavior to fall into line.

On the subject of Sarah Palin, the gun-toting populist he picked as his presidential running mate in 2008, he expresses little regret, saying he "liked her right away." He praises her as "uncannily self-possessed," a quick study who performed "slightly better" than Joe Biden in their vice presidential debate. (Perhaps realizing how that might be too generous, he adds: "At worst, the contest was a draw.")

The line from Palin to Trump is one he doesn't touch, let alone contemplate. If there's a villain in this book, it's "our implacable foe" Vladimir Putin, an "audacious despot" who gets a steady flaccidation over the course of two chapters. McCain admits to receiving the dossier compiled by the former British spy Christopher Steele, outlining Trump's possible ties to Russia, and passing it on to James Comey, then the director of the F.B.I. Anyone who doesn't like what McCain did "can go to

hell," though he underscores that he's agnostic about the dossier's contents.

Just as McCain is agnostic about Trump in general, in his cautious assessment, "it is hard to know what to expect from President Trump." Seeing McCain strain to be optimistic is almost uncomfortable to read, as he strenuously points to "glimmers of hope" that Trump might yet take on the "moral obligation" of being the "leader of the free world."

What McCain means by this obligation is more American involvement on the world stage, more American intervention. He's an unabashed proponent of regime change, and a good portion of "The Restless Wave" is given over to recounting how besieged peoples from other lands have been grateful for American support.

McCain recalls the hero's welcome he received in Myanmar in 2012, after a yearslong campaign on behalf of democracy activists there. "There is nothing so rewarding as contributing, even if only in the most modest way, to the defense of another human being's dignity, all the more so when the person is otherwise a stranger to you."

Assigning a special nobility to his country's role abroad, even (or especially) now, is a way for McCain to keep believing that Americans are untruly united, instead of terribly divided. Domestic politics are too disappointing, too grinding, too inglorious. "The Restless Wave" is a wistful book; McCain wants to rally Americans around helping an imperiled world, rather than accept that the call might be coming from inside the house.

TRAVEL

A Mediterranean mood on Croatia’s coast

CHECK IN

BY ANJA MUTIC

Before a recent tourism boom elevated Croatia to the top rungs of European beach destinations, hotels along the Dalmatian coast had lingering whiffs of socialism in their dusty design and no-frills vibes. Now, two boutique waterfront properties showcase wow-worthy swimming pools: the chic Brown Beach House Croatia in a repurposed tobacco warehouse in the ancient town of Trogir and the stunning Hotel Lemongarden in a sleepy fishing village on Brac island.

HOTEL LEMONGARDEN

RATES
Rooms from 300 euros (high season), about \$370.

BASICS
When the hotel’s Austrian owners visited Sutivan 15 years ago, they swooned over this tranquil fishing village on Brac island. Ilic Dvor, a Renaissance mansion from 1505, was the first building they bought and renovated. Over the years, they restored two nearby buildings that also had long histories, the seafront-facing Vesna and the tucked-away Definis with its stone terraces and passageways. What steals the show is the swimming pool lined with tall palm trees and fragrant gardens with roses, bougainvillea and hibiscus. The 23 suites and 12 rooms, many with private terraces overlooking the garden or the sea, showcase wood furniture by island craftsmen and floors made of renowned Brac marble. Designer finishes like Murano chandeliers and silk fabrics and carpets by Missoni and Paul Smith, together with bold flashes of color inspired by local herbs, give the décor a decidedly Mediterranean mood.

LOCATION
The hotel is on the car-free waterfront of Sutivan on the northwest coast of Brac, a short ferry ride from Split.

THE ROOM
I booked a maisonette but got upgraded to a duplex suite, with a coral and sea theme reflected in the color of the carpets and furniture. The marble-floored living room had two windows facing the

Adriatic Sea; two windows faced the back wall of the hotel. A seating area had striped blue-white armchairs and a sofa beneath a sea-themed painting. A flat-screen television sat on top of a beige cabinet; the mirror above the desk area created a sense of space. The seafront-facing bedroom had an armchair, a king-size bed with a blue and white headboard and a huge walk-in closet stocked with beach towels and bags. Upstairs was a cozy attic bedroom with its own walk-in closet and a bathroom.

THE BATHROOM
Both bathrooms were clad in solid wood and marble. The downstairs one had a roomy shower with a Naturals hair and body wash dispenser, a bidet and, surprisingly, a urinal. The beige marble countertops had generous space. The terry cloth towels and all-cotton robes were notably soft. Flooded with light, the upstairs bathroom had a tub, a shower and a two-sink counter.

AMENITIES
In the living room, a tall blue cabinet had a minibar stocked with snacks and drinks. Wi-Fi was free but spotty. The reception was staffed until 10 p.m.; when I called at 10:30 to alert them to the hallway lights erratically going on and off, the call got routed to someone in Austria. The hotel’s private pine-shaded beach was a 10-minute bike or golf cart ride away (both complimentary); it had parasols, lounge chairs, showers and a small bar.

DINING
The rates included breakfast and dinner, served at the seafront restaurant with interiors featuring citrus-inspired fabrics, stones and Bisazza mosaics, and a few tables on the edge of the sea. Breakfast was all made to order; freshly baked croissants hold you over until food arrives. The four-course dinner showcased Mediterranean classics with a contemporary twist (I chose an almond-crusted John Dory). Vegetables come from the hotel’s organic farm on a plateau above Sutivan, herbs are harvested from the garden, and the seafood picked from the fishermen’s morning catch. The lounge bar had a colorful interior with sea-themed paintings, and served a great white wine spritzer with lemons and herbs from the hotel’s garden.



ASSAF PINCHUK

Above, the pool at Brown Beach House Croatia in Trogir, Croatia. Below, a suite at Hotel Lemongarden on the island of Brac.

THE BOTTOM LINE
An island standout etched into the fabric of a Dalmatian fishing village, this ancient compound blends heritage with luxury but with a slight bend toward kitsch.

BROWN BEACH HOUSE CROATIA

RATES
Rooms from €250 (high season).

BASICS
Riding the wave of small boutique hotel openings that has swept Croatia’s Dalmatian coast, Brown Hotels opened Brown Beach House Croatia in 2016, the Tel Aviv-based group’s first venture outside Israel. Chic and playful, it features 42 rooms and suites on three floors of a former tobacco warehouse inside a white-stone building with green shutters. Though the beach across the road is a pretty fab affair (with a full bar, sun chairs and a D.J. setup), what steals the show is the gorgeous black-and-white-tiled swimming pool. With bespoke furniture and potted palms, pines and olive trees, the airy ground-floor library gives off a decidedly Mediterranean vibe, which extends to the rooms showcasing



CHRISTIAN HUSAR

interior design by the Amsterdam-based Saar Zafrir, who created a swank and retro aesthetic.

LOCATION
The hotel sits alongside a seafront road a 15-minute walk or a quick bike ride away from the ancient harbor of Trogir town, a Unesco World Heritage Site (bikes are complimentary). The Split

airport is just three miles away.

THE ROOM
My top-floor room, a twin double with a seaside view, was sleek and clean-lined, though the trio of windows seemed slightly too small and ceilings too low. I had hoped for expansive Adriatic vistas, but the room looked over the narrow channel onto the mainland. As I walked

What inspires Manolo Blahnik

BY CAITLIN KELLY

Any devotee of the television series “Sex and the City” knew who Manolo was and why Carrie happily blew thousands of dollars on his shoes. Born in the Canary Islands to a Spanish mother and a Czech father, the footwear designer Manolo Blahnik studied art and languages in Geneva before moving to Paris and working as a theater set designer. In 1970, the editor of American Vogue, Diana Vreeland, encouraged him to design shoes. Two hundred of his designs, shoes, boots and sketches recently went on display in Toronto, in a show called “Manolo Blahnik: The Art of Shoes,” at the Bata Shoe Museum. It’s the exhibit’s only North American visit, the final stop in a tour that included St. Petersburg, Milan, Madrid and Prague. The show runs until Jan. 6, 2019. His colorful and exuberant designs include beads, feathers, lace and even semiprecious stones. His favorite materials are textiles — especially silk, satin and taffeta. “I belong to the 18th century,” he said. The following are edited excerpts from a conversation with Mr. Blahnik about his work, the show and the museums he likes to visit.

How has the exhibition been received so far?
The show at the Hermitage in St. Petersburg was the first one they’ve done fo-

cused on fashion and on shoes. I feel very proud of that, but was also nervous. An incredible amount of people came, old and young. They saw the shoes as objects, not as a shoe. I found them much more observant of the work than other Europeans. I was shocked, but also inspired to have a reaction like that. Russia really was the most interesting, as this kind of exhibition is unusual for them. They even wrote me poems in Cyrillic. Prague is a small, beautiful town, and I am also half-Czech. The show in Madrid was very successful. On the first day, we had 3,500 visitors lining up. After all, Madrid is my city. As for Milan — I work there and people really admire me there.

Do you enjoy meeting the public at these shows?
I do think I owe people this moment of contact. I like to meet people. I like to see their reaction. This is the only way to share with people what I do. To give them some pleasure. Every day should be fun in your work.

Tell us about some of the designs in the show.
The idea for the thigh-high Rihanna boots came to me from a visit outside Paris. I saw some fishermen in the river with boots that high, so I did it in satin. I see something no one else does. The Ossie Clark shoes from 1971 are my favorite — ivy green with ivy leaves

going up the leg. It includes cherries, something I’m still doing. I love cherries! I put them everywhere. I do an incredible amount of flats. Sometimes a woman is more feminine in flat shoes. But high heels do have one advantage. It’s a transformation, a piece of theater. You move differently. You sway.

What inspires you?
Galleries, museums, the world. I’m very curious. I’m a museum addict. It’s like a drug to me. In New York, I do love the Met and MoMA, which is right next to our office. But my favorite, favorite, favorite is the British Museum. I love the huge rooms filled with Greek statues.

What tools do you use? Camera? Instagram?
I’m a visual person, so I remember what I see. I don’t even do mood boards. I think social media is very, very dangerous for creative people now. The internet doesn’t do anything for me. Most of the time it’s confusing to see other people’s work. It’s too much.

How has your work evolved over 45 years?
If I think I’ve done a design before, immediately it’s out. I try to edit myself when I see something I’ve done before. I might try using new materials, like titanium or PVC. I use all the new materials. I’m now using farmed crocodile from Louisiana. I love it!

Slovenia is sweet on its honeybees

BY JEANINE BARONE

Slovenes have a deep respect for honeybees. “If I see dead bees, I call a police SOS number, and they send a special inspector to check out the situation,” said Blaz Ambrozic, the beekeeper at Beekeeping Ambrozic-Kralov med, his family-owned apiary just outside the popular resort town of Bled. With such passion, it is no surprise that the Slovenian Beekeeper’s Association successfully petitioned the United Nations to proclaim May 20 — the birthday of the native Slovene pioneer of modern beekeeping, Anton Jansa — as World Bee Day, celebrating the importance of honeybee preservation and increasing the public’s awareness of how significant bees are to the food supply. For at least the rest of the month, the medieval Bled Castle is hosting an exposition on bees and beekeeping in the area. Kralov med has introduced an apitourism (that is, tourism focused on and for people who love bees) project where visitors will don protective gear and spend up to two hours working with Mr.



JEANINE BARONE

A beekeeper leading a tour at Beekeeping Ambrozic-Kralov med in Slovenia.

Ambrozic, including opening a hive with Carniolan bees — a subspecies under the protection of the Slovene government. In essence, guests become immersed in bees and beekeeping, such as learning how to distinguish honey from propolis (a waxy bee glue used to seal up hives), and how to extract honey from the hive’s cells.

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