The New York Times Magazine

December 17, 2017

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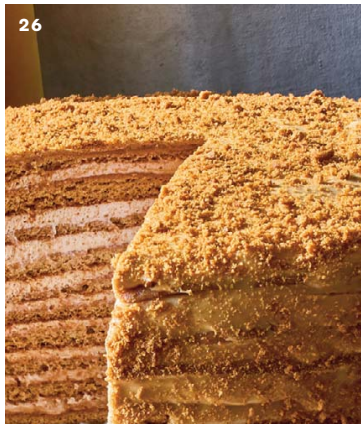

Behind the Cover *Gail Bichler, design director: "We liked the idea of giving women the last word on our cover. Period." Lettering by Jessica Walsh.*

Continued on Page 6

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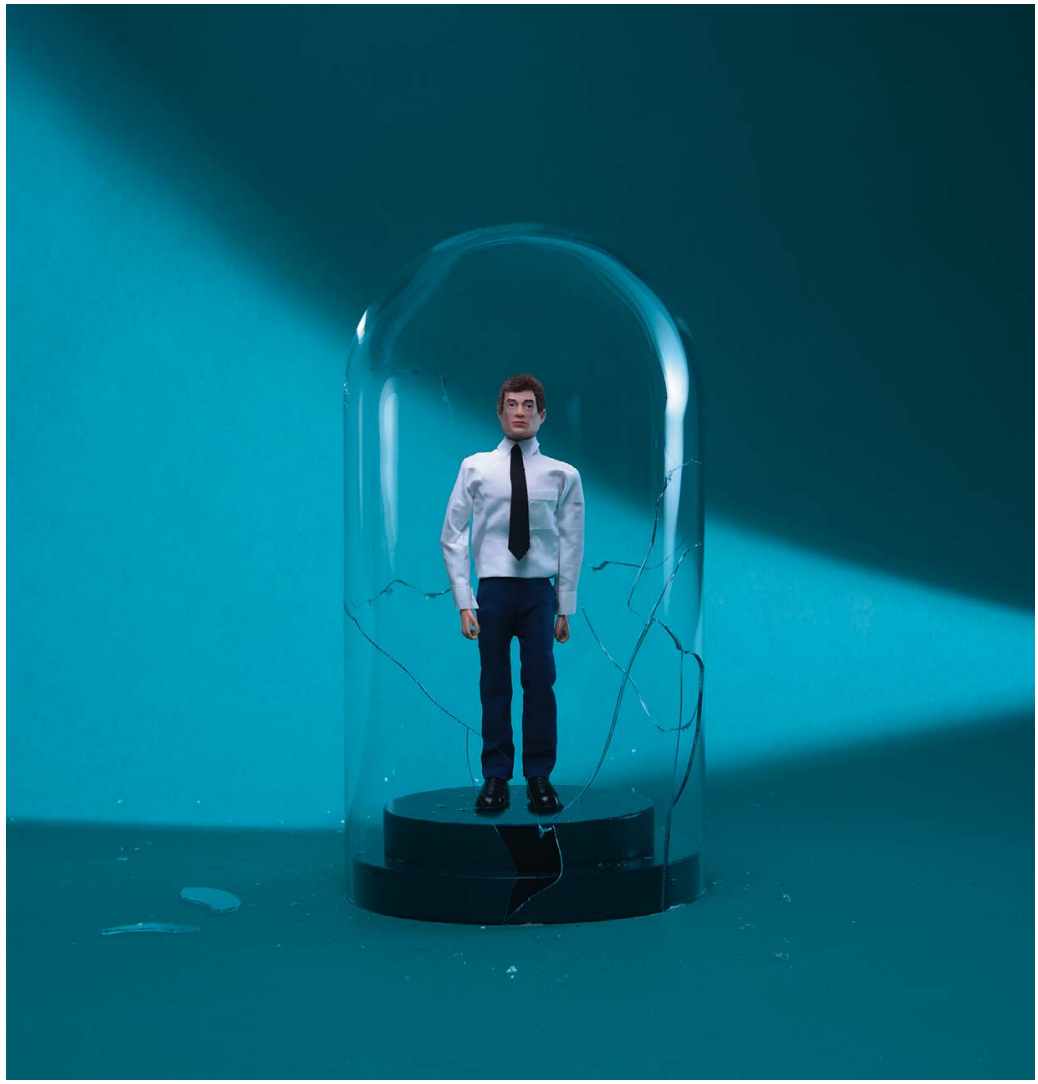

SARAH ILLENBERGER
"SEXUALLY OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOR BY PEOPLE IN POWERFUL POSITIONS HAS BEEN PROTECTED FOR FAR TOO LONG. THE SHIELD IS CRACKING, EXPOSING THE PROBLEM."

Photograph: Johannes Berger

GOOD DELIGHTS

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Photographed by Kathy Ryan at The New York Times on Dec. 4, 2017, at 4:17 p.m.

Vivian Gornick *"What Anger Can Do," Page 41*

Vivian Gornick is a New York-based essayist, memoirist and literary critic. She is a recipient of a Ford Foundation grant and a Guggenheim Fellowship. She is the author of more than 10 books, a number of which have been nominated for major prizes. Her last book, "The Odd Woman and the City," was a love letter to New York. Speaking as a Second Wave feminist, Gornick says, "This newest uprising of the women on behalf of the right to be treated with the civility and respect due any citizen of the Republic is heartwarming."

Dan Amira *Talk, Page 66*

Dan Amira is a writer for "The Daily Show" and a former editor at New York Magazine. He is one of the magazine's new Talk columnists.

Ferris Jabr *"Mind Blender," Page 28*

Ferris Jabr is a writer in Portland, Ore. His last feature article for the magazine was about the language of prairie dogs.

Brooke Jarvis *"Mother of Last Resort," Page 36*

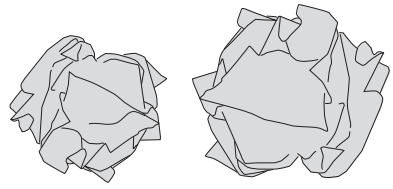
Brooke Jarvis is a contributing writer for the magazine. Her last article was about flood insurance amid rising sea levels.

Joshua Keating *First Words, Page 11*

Joshua Keating is a staff writer at Slate and the author of the forthcoming book "Invisible Countries." This is his first article for the magazine.

Dear Reader: Are You Trying To Keep It Clean?

Every week the magazine publishes the results of a study conducted online in June by The New York Times's research-and-analytics department, reflecting the opinions of 2,903 subscribers who chose to participate. This week's question: *Have you ever confronted a passer-by for littering?*



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Readers respond to the 12.3.2017 issue.

RE: HANNITY

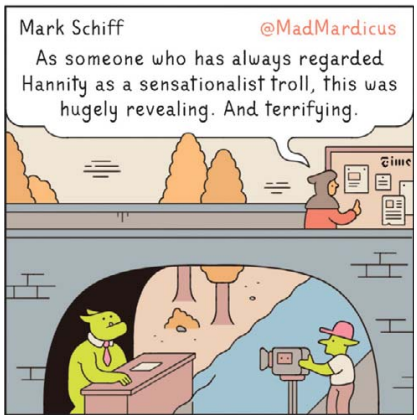
Matthew Shaer profiled the Fox News host — and consistent defender of the president — Sean Hannity.

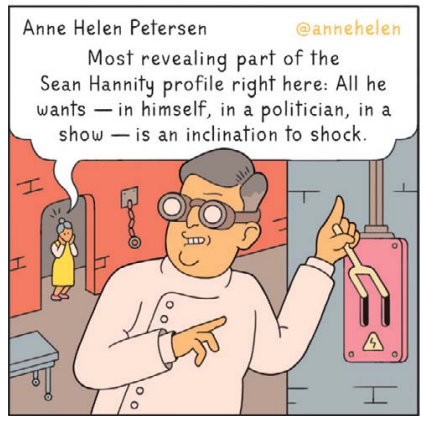
The feature "How Far Will Sean Hannity Go?" does not come anywhere close to sufficiently capturing the scope and scale of Sean Hannity's rank deceit and conspiracy-peddling, nor does it properly convey to your readers the destructive effects of Hannity's propagandizing.

At Media Matters, we analyzed all of Sean Hannity's monologues on his Fox News show from May 15 through Sept. 1 of this year. We found that in 51 percent of the monologues, Hannity dismissed or diminished the notion that Trump may have colluded with Russia. Robert Mueller, whom Sean Hannity has spent considerable time maligning, is not mentioned once in the magazine profile. Yet our research shows that between May 17 and Nov. 3, Hannity called for Mueller to be removed from the Russia probe on 40 separate instances and claimed that Mueller has "conflicts of interest" (he doesn't) a total of 183 times.

The destructive consequences of Hannity's persistent propaganda and fueling of conspiracy theories are real, dangerous and destructive. Advertisers have recognized this. Contrary to the profile's implication that advertisers only merely threatened to abandon Hannity, I have been in touch with dozens of advertisers that are now refusing to advertise on Hannity's show after reviewing his recent content.

The true scope of the danger Hannity presents can be fully understood only





when looking at his program over time: Hannity's purpose is to undermine the truth itself to serve Donald Trump's agenda. The profile, whatever its other merits, missed that entirely.

Angelo Carusone, president, Media Matters for America, Washington

The senior executive producer at Fox Porter Berry has the nerve to say, "Our audience is regular people." I am so tired of reading stuff like this. As if Democrats aren't "regular" people. I'm a liberal Democrat, 65, a white lady living on Social Security and the salary from a part-time job. I probably have more in common with Berry's Oklahoma family than Hannity, the multimillionaire, does. To claim that Democrats aren't "regular" is just another way to drive a wedge between people. Hannity thinks he has his finger on the pulse of this country, but he's wrong.

Linda Porter, Seattle

RE: EL SALVADOR

Azam Ahmed wrote about the bloody warfare between the gangs and the police force in El Salvador.

I realize this may sound like a quantum leap, but I believe this sort of failed state is where income inequality ultimately can take even the United States. El Salvador, like all of Central America except Costa Rica, has always been defined by a tiny minority of the rich controlling the vast majority of commerce and wealth. When vast swaths of the populace cannot even envision what economic stability looks like, no army is large enough to control them, and society breaks down into primitive tribal clusters dedicated only to survival. If you had asked me five years ago, I'd have said, "Never here," but I'm learning not to assume the certainty of anything anymore.

Jordan Sollitto, Los Angeles

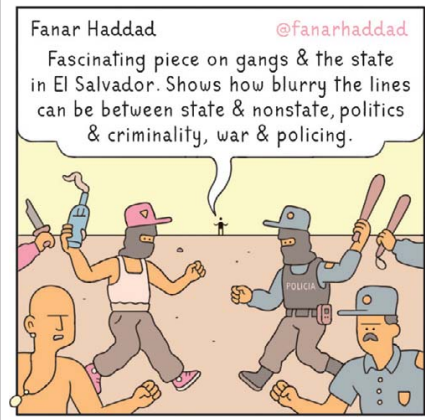
THE COVER, ON TWITTER

When I saw the cover this week, I tore it off and threw it in the trash. Never did that before, ever. @ShawnLCook

'Many young people see only two choices: Emigrate or live long enough to become a gang member.'

It is a difficult situation in El Salvador. Gangs are a social problem because of the lack of fundamental liberties like the right to a good education, good public health, good transportation and good paying jobs. El Salvador's government, regardless of the political party, has never cared for dignifying the lives of its citizens and has looked out only for the benefit of the politicians and their families and of the high-earning families (the famous 14 families) who have ruled El Salvador from its very beginning. Many young people see only two choices: Emigrate or live long enough to become a gang member. It is sad to look at the country where you were born and find out that the war was never really over and that the people who suffer the most are the best of us: the humble and warm people who define what it really is to be Salvadorean. All that is left is hope that in our last hours we find a way to turn this around and turn El Salvador around, to end the corruption, to stop the selfishness of our time and to finally care for all citizens in El Salvador and not just a select few.

Name withheld, San Salvador



CORRECTION

An article on Dec. 10 about Luke Bryan misspelled the middle name of a country-music artist. He is David Allan Coe, not Allen.

Send your thoughts to magazine@nytimes.com.

Photograph by Christopher Griffith

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Leaders and diplomats around the world are rushing to call just about anything an ***'act of war.'*** *Does that mean open conflict is looming — or that it's less of a risk than ever? By Joshua Keating*

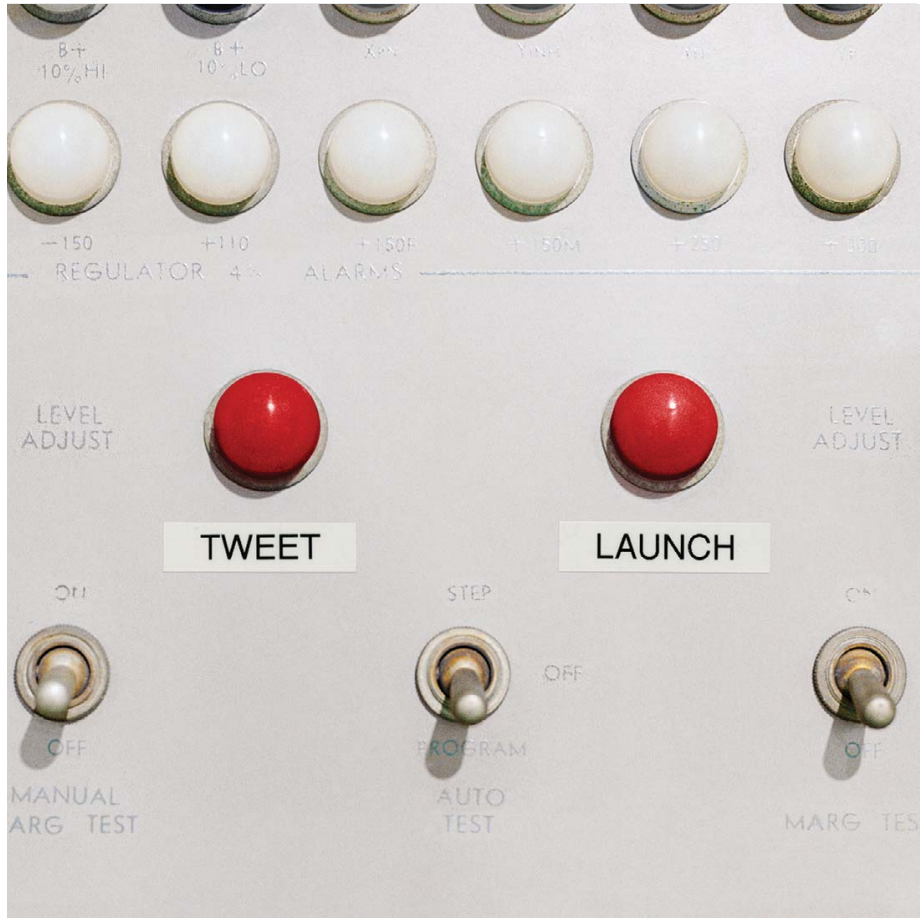
Battle Lines

A long-range missile, fired directly at your capital, is generally considered an act of war, even under the strictest of definitions. So early in November, when a missile was fired from Yemen toward Saudi Arabia's Riyadh airport, there was little question on the matter: The Saudis have spent the past two years in an open war with the Houthi rebels responsible for the launch. ¶ The bulk of the kingdom's ire, however, wasn't directed at the Houthis. It was directed at Iran, which the Saudis accused of supplying the missiles. (Iran denied it.) "We see this as an act of war," the Saudi foreign minister Adel al-Jubeir told CNN. "Iran cannot lob missiles at Saudi cities and towns and expect us not to take steps." In something of a diplomatic bank shot, the Saudis also accused Lebanon, and its Iran-backed Hezbollah factions, of the same thing — the Gulf Affairs minister Thamer al-Sabhan told Al Arabiya television that his government considered aggressive acts by Hezbollah to be "acts

of a declaration of war against Saudi Arabia by Lebanon and by the Lebanese Party of the Devil."

The U.S., too, has found itself on both sides of such rhetorical acts of war. We've stood accused: In September, the North Korean foreign minister Ri Yong-ho told reporters in New York that "since the United States declared war on our country, we will have every right to take countermeasures, including the right to shoot down United States bombers." The declaration of war he was referring to was a tweet in which President Trump suggested that if the minister "echoes thoughts of Little Rocket Man, they won't be around much longer!" We've also lobbed our own charges. Senior lawmakers, including Senators John McCain and Ben Cardin, have labeled Russia's interference in the 2016 election "an act of war." As of October, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, agreed, declaring that "when a country can come interfere in another country's elections, that is warfare."

An act of war, or *casus belli*, is supposed to be an action that justifies a military response — something along the lines, historically, of sinking a battleship or assassinating an archduke. But the striking thing about all these "acts of war" over the past year or so is that none have led to war between the nations involved, and few people seriously thought that they would. Yes, tensions are growing between Saudi Arabia and Iran, but they remain well short of military confrontation. North Korea and the United States are technically *already* at war — the Korean War ended in a 1953 armistice, not a peace treaty — but neither side has unleashed any of its leaders' threatened "fire" (Kim) or "fire and fury" (Trump). The offending acts may be dangerous or egregious, but none are quite as profound a break from the status quo as all those statements claim. So what, exactly, is the goal of labeling them so dramatically?



The 19th-century Prussian general and strategist Carl von Clausewitz famously argued in "On War" that war is a "continuation of policy by other means." The quote is generally and correctly taken as an argument that war is a natural extension of political conflict, but the "by other means" part is just as critical. War, von Clausewitz wrote, is defined by the "peculiar nature of the means which it uses" — acts like killing, the destruction of property and the taking of prisoners, most of which would be considered criminal in peacetime. It had already been said that the special circumstances of war made such peculiar acts justifiable, or even noble. Hugo Grotius, the 17th-century Dutch scholar considered a founder of international law, argued in "The Rights of War and Peace" that wars can be legally justifiable and that "for the attainment of their objects," they "must employ force and terror as their most proper agents."

An act of war, then, is a moment of transition from one sort of politics, with one set of rules, to another. (At times, these transitions have been bizarrely formal: In 1609, Spain and the Dutch Republic agreed to stop fighting for 12 years, then seamlessly resumed hostilities when the truce was over.) Franklin Roosevelt's 1941 "date which will live in infamy" speech illustrates just such a transitional moment. In its second line, it notes that as of the day before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor — a quintessential act of war — the "United States was at peace with that nation." Following the attack, however, "hostilities exist," and so the president asked Congress to declare that since the moment the first bomb dropped, a "state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire."

The striking thing about all these 'acts of war' over the past year or so is that none have led to war.

If that language sounds a bit stilted today, it may be because countries rarely officially go to war with one another anymore. Yes, the world may be full of armed conflicts, from Afghanistan to Myanmar to South Sudan; it may be full of terrorism and political violence. But the traditional form of conflict that defined much of the last few centuries — in which one national government declares war on another, and armies are dispatched into opposing territory — just about never happens. Opposing nations are far more likely to use economic sanctions, or wage cyberwar, or sponsor rival militias in conflicts like Yemen and Syria. This is still policy

Panel: Richard Ross/Getty Images

Photo illustration by Derek Brahney

by other means; it's just that the means carefully skirt anything von Clausewitz might have recognized as a war.

There are plenty of explanations for this: economic globalization, the high costs involved with modern weaponry, perhaps the centuries-long "civilizing process" described in the Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker's 2011 book "The Better Angels of Our Nature." But in their own recent book, "The Internationalists," the Yale legal scholars Oona A. Hathaway and Scott J. Shapiro make a surprising argument: Governments don't declare war on one another anymore because doing so is *illegal*. Their argument traces back to the Kellogg-Briand pact, a 1928 agreement in which most of the world's nations pledged to renounce war as an instrument of national policy. The pact is often ridiculed by historians and international-relations scholars, mostly because it was quickly followed by what turned out to be the single bloodiest war in human history. But Hathaway and Shapiro trace the agreement's DNA through the Nuremberg trials to the establishment of the United Nations, and to today's long-lasting state of (official) peace. Even those skeptical about this argument will have to acknowledge the authors' point that something has changed: "Today," they write, "war is regarded as a departure from civilized politics," whereas once it "*was* civilized politics."

The obvious complication, of course, is that the world's major powers are, in another sense, *always* at war. Vladimir Putin's Russia has famously employed hybrid war tactics to destabilize wayward neighbors like Ukraine. China touts its own "peaceful development" while deploying military assets into the South China Sea. And the killing, in October, of four U.S. Green Berets in Niger — a country where most Americans, and many lawmakers, most likely had no idea U.S. troops were stationed — is prompting another round of debate over the legality and objectives of an American "war on terror" that has now lasted more than 16 years. The U.S. hasn't declared an actual war since World War II, but we remain embroiled in some of the world's deadliest conflicts — many under an "Authorization for Use of Military Force" passed immediately after 9/11's act of war, despite the fact that many of the groups currently being targeted didn't exist at the time. Our "war in Iraq" and "war in Afghanistan" seem less like distinct conflicts than facets in the larger pattern of how we interact with dozens of nations around the world.

When you call something an adversary does an act of war, it is generally intended as a justification for the actions *you* plan to take. It's a signal governments send to rally their people around the flag, bring allies to their aid and warn enemies away from aggressive actions: The gloves are coming off, and extraordinarily violent actions are permitted in order to make things right. But when war never comes — when there's no Rubicon to cross, and the line between war and nonwar is illegible — the power of that signal is steadily diminished. It becomes nothing more than countries calling foul on one another in a game whose rules haven't been fully defined.

If describing something as war doesn't actually require *fighting* a war, then why not talk tough?

Right now, the cost of throwing around terms like "act of war" and "declaration of war" seems remarkably low. If describing something as war doesn't actually require *fighting* a war — backing up your description with military force, and committing to either victory or surrender — then why not talk tough, ramping up the hyperbole and threatening a crisis?

That's assuming, of course, that it's all hyperbole and can be trusted to stay that way. A pessimistic person might just as easily take all these claims of warfare as a different kind of warning — a sign that the decline of war was announced prematurely, and that the world is at risk of slipping back, at any moment, toward the "peculiar" means of old. One of these days, it's easy to imagine, an "act of war" might provoke something astonishing: an actual war. ◆

Illustration by Kyle Hilton

New Sentences By Nitsuh Abebe

From U2's "Love Is All We Have Left," the first track on the band's 14th studio album, "Songs of Experience" (Island/Universal Records, 2017).

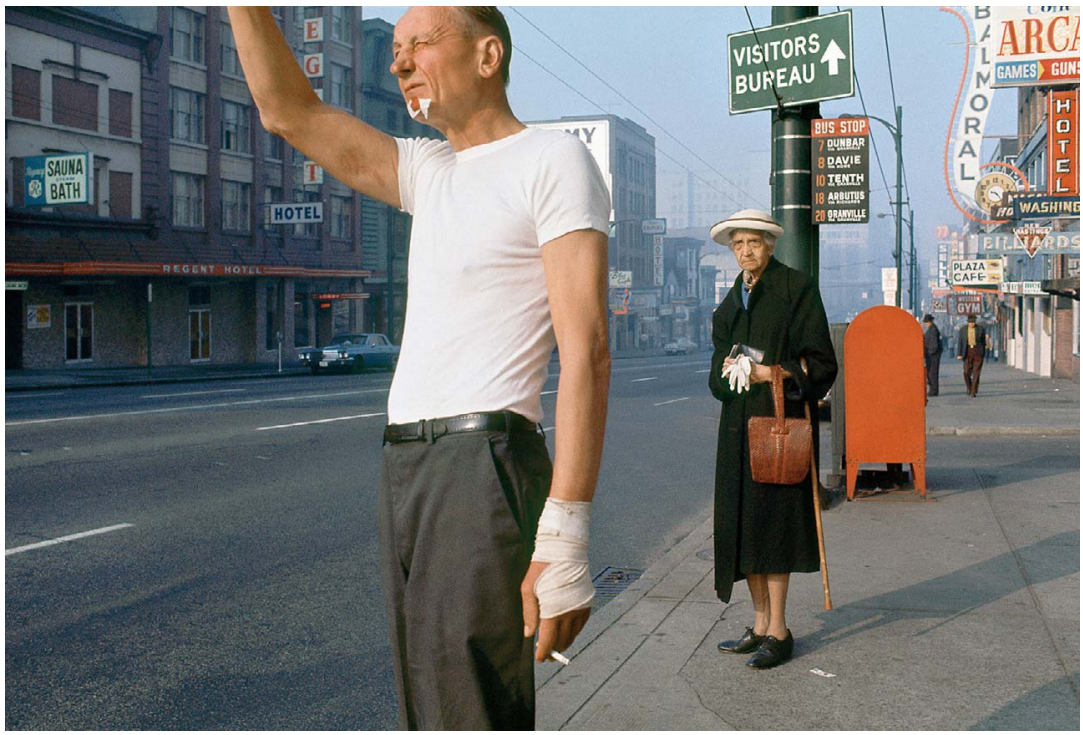
'Love and love is all we have left/A baby cries on a doorstep.'

It would be gratuitous to pick on a modern-day U2 lyric, and I do not intend to do so. Bono's writing has its comic qualities — messianic grandiosity, overambitious clunkers about refugees and rock 'n' roll — but that is essentially the guy's job description. Sometimes the task of a star is to spend decades being a sitcom neighbor, a cartoon of yourself for the fond enjoyment of others.

I do, however, want to stick up for that poor crying baby! It is all alone in a world of abstract nouns. Apart from the doorstep, the only other physical object mentioned in this song is a telescope, and that's mostly a metaphor about seeing stars; everything else exists on the level of anthem talk, devoid of scene or event, laden with lines like "all we have is immortality." Hence the whiplash in this remarkable couplet: One moment you're safe among airy statements about love, and then you turn midsentence and *bam*, plunked suddenly down on the concrete is what appears to be a human infant.

The tragedy here is not that this child was born to, say, a troubled young mother with no means of providing for it. Its misfortune is that it was brought screaming into the world for the sole purpose of creating a passing note of pathos in a song lyric. This may be more purpose in life than most of us are born with, but it's still quite a thing to do to a defenseless baby. In the span of approximately six words, the poor child accomplishes all it was ever meant to, and the singer wanders off, abandoning it to the care of the San Girolamo Home for Orphaned Rhetorical Devices. But the line has the wrong effect, at least on me: I am left completely stuck on this sudden hypothetical midsentence baby. Whatever will become of it?

Fred Herzog's photographs of the Vancouver street, with their odd, otherworldly glow, can feel like small prophecies.



Just down the road from where I live, a store is trying out a new retail marriage: pricey eyewear and photography books. Its patron saint ought to be Ralph Eugene Meatyard, who was an optician and a photographer, but his books, as far as I could make out, were nowhere to be seen. The volume in the window that caught my eye — possibly because the cover image was of a (barber)shop window — was Fred Herzog's "Modern Color." Herzog's work offers the latest instance of a form of eye exam that has enjoyed increasing visibility in the last several years.

Traditionally, exams test your knowledge of the syllabus. These latest exams, by contrast, reveal the syllabus to be in a state of constant revision. Histories of photography require enough newly discovered names to be inserted in the middle chapters as to shuffle or reshape the accepted narrative. Especially when it comes to color. So much color work, it turns out, was being done before William Eggleston's paradigm-shifting show of color photographs at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1976. Along with Saul Leiter, Luigi Ghirri and others, Herzog is a pioneer who mastered color photography before such a thing respectably existed.

Another photographer lifted retrospectively from obscurity, William Gedney, copied out in his notebooks some lines from W. H. Auden's "In Praise of Limestone": "examine this region/Of short distances and definite places." Herzog, born in Germany in 1930, immigrated to Canada in 1952, where he lived out the poet's admonition with benign dedication. Although he took some photographs in various places in the world, Vancouver remained his colorful stamping ground from the late 1950s onward. As with Leiter, the sense of a distinct and determining sensibility is enhanced by the relatively limited geographical frame of reference. Because the same bits of real estate crop up in multiple frames, a given view can be triangulated with other shots so that we are enclosed within an artist's world. To look at Herzog's work is to inhabit it.

A quiet belter of a photograph from 1968, "Man With Bandage," might justifiably be called Herzog's signature shot — and not just because one of the many signs on view helpfully directs first-timers to the VISITORS BUREAU. Wires connect the heads of the titular man to the old lady behind him so perfectly that they serve

Photograph by Fred Herzog
Next Week: On Money, by Brook Larmer

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almost as a perspectival diagram. The two are further associated both by his white bandage and her white gloves and by the way that his manly injury (wrist) is sympathetically echoed by her implied infirmity (legs, walking stick). Someone better acquainted with Vancouver's geography and the picture's orientation would know whether the long shadows are pointing toward evening or morning. The shaving cut on the man's chin tends to suggest the hurry of a.m., but if this is rush hour, where's the traffic? By the same token, if it's happy hour, where's the happiness? More to the point, where's the *bus*? Each figure stares into the distance, straining to make out which of the buses routinely promised by the sign might be approaching. The light is hazy, but the man is squinting, as if staring into the face of divine radiance — a reminder that buses are anticipated as eagerly as the Second Coming and that timetables are best regarded as prophecies of dubious reliability. Who is to say that the bandaged hand did not result from a botched crucifixion served up by the serial obstacles of daily life, with the bloodied tissue paper on his chin covering a wound self-inflicted by safety razor (as opposed to a spear in the ribs) and the bus stop as a station of the commuter's cross? The blob of blood on his chin is amplified, behind the old lady, by what I'm assuming is a mailbox — though the red is so featureless that, if painted, it would appear as a solid abstraction. Beyond that is a dense tangle of signage, which can be more fully decoded in a corroborative or Q.E.D. sort of way by reference to another photograph taken farther down the street.

Thus alerted, the curious visitor soon becomes conscious that Herzog's world — especially as revealed by the abundance of signs — is simultaneously covetous and quasi religious, sensual and unworldly. A photographed ad for Mount Pleasant Chapel urges us to "Give thought to the reason for this holiday season." Um, O.K.: to *buy* stuff? Except even something as practical as a sledgehammer displayed outside a storefront window becomes an article of faith when offered at a "Sacrifice Price." Gamblers at a fair or casino gaze beyond the frame in an ecstasy of optimism, keeping faith with the idea of an against-the-odds windfall (a.k.a. a miracle), while visitors to an airshow turn their eyes skyward as if Christ might, at this very moment, be ascending to heaven. All transactions, however mundane, are the manifestation of some deeper testament of which Herzog is the patient stenographer. Rarely have the neon dreams of night looked as tangible as they do when rendered in Herzog's colors.

The relatively lengthy shutter speeds necessitated by Kodachrome — a slow, not very light-sensitive film — meant that Herzog was not only temperamentally unsuited but technically unable to snap events on the fly in the sly manner

Above: "Granville Street From Granville Bridge," 1966. Previous page: "Man With Bandage," 1968.

Geoff Dyer
is a writer whose new book, "The Street Philosophy of Garry Winogrand," will be published in the spring.

Photographs from Equinox Gallery

of Cartier-Bresson. Drama passed him by. He waited for time either to slow down or — in another diagrammatic shot of watches, clocks and cameras in an aptly named secondhand store — to come to a functional standstill. In lieu of the fast time of second hands and their snatched fractions, a strong sense of photographic history can be seen to converge on Herzog's work.

From the past there is Walker Evans, whose photographs Herzog encountered in 1962 or 1963. In the vicinity of Evans's stilled, often empty buildings, all sense of hurry has vanished. There was no need for Evans himself to rush, because of his faith in his own vocation. "It's as though there's a wonderful secret in a certain place, and I can capture it," he claimed. "Only I, at this moment, can capture it, and only this moment and only me." I like to think that Herzog accidentally alluded to his great predecessor's sentiment in a picture of a smartly dressed black man on a street corner in San Francisco in 1962. A sign to the right of his head is cropped by the edge of the frame so that only that single word — ONLY — is visible. (If the picture had been taken in Alabama, where Evans was photographing in the 1930s, the word would, of course, have had an added and unwelcome abbreviated meaning.)

Evans famously declared color photography "vulgar," and a number of Herzog's shots seem to teeter on that edge. The problem is that Kodachrome encourages reds to blossom so powerfully that unless the slow work of time makes itself felt — corroding, fading — then this red gobbles up attention with the ghastly insistence of a child's plastic plate. At its best, Herzog's color palette is resiliently, sometimes drearily muted, a testament (that word again!) to what Jeff Wall, in an introductory essay, calls "the aging of paint, the transformation of color over time."

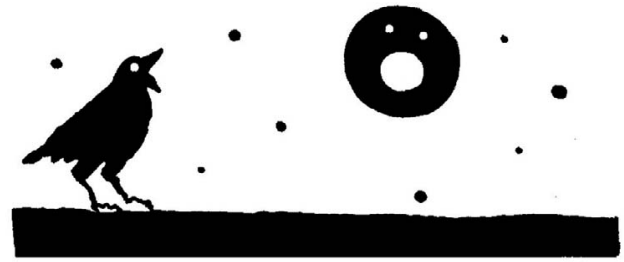
Born and bred in Vancouver, Wall is the force converging on Herzog from the other side of Evans — again in several senses. First, he is from the future (our present), living and working in the city at a time when many of the buildings photographed by Herzog have gone the way of those documented by Eugène Atget in Paris. Second, he represents another alternative to speediness, eschewing decisive moments in favor of large, meticulously constructed tableaux. The stalled life of Wall's streets and sealed interiors is as free of urgency as the painted still lifes of old.

Herzog's world is simultaneously covetous and quasi religious, sensual and unworldly.

As it happens, Herzog occasionally chanced upon small-scale Walls in real life. In 1973, he had just enough time to preserve kids fighting on a neat square of lawn in such a way as to make it look exactly like the kind of enigmatic scenario painstakingly created by Wall years later. This is not to say that Herzog was ahead of his time. Pictures like the one of the fighting kids have acquired an extra quality — a kind of glow — in the light of Wall. And it's not just that we view Herzog's work differently on the other side of the Wall, as it were. Our whole sense of what constitutes the street and street photography has been reconfigured by Wall's art of animate suspension. Herzog enables *us* to see this with a clarity that is both new and old. ◆

Poem Selected by Terrance Hayes

This poem houses several floors, windows and a frosted basement. Mr. Poe and the gothic opening lead to days of black and white: blackbirds, snow. The floors creak at the poem's midsection (a volta?), and we turn to the outside world. My vote for second-most-haunting line goes to: "For a long time the wheels have been spinning, Mr. Poe." First vote goes to the closing echo of Robert Frost's enchanting, uneasy "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."



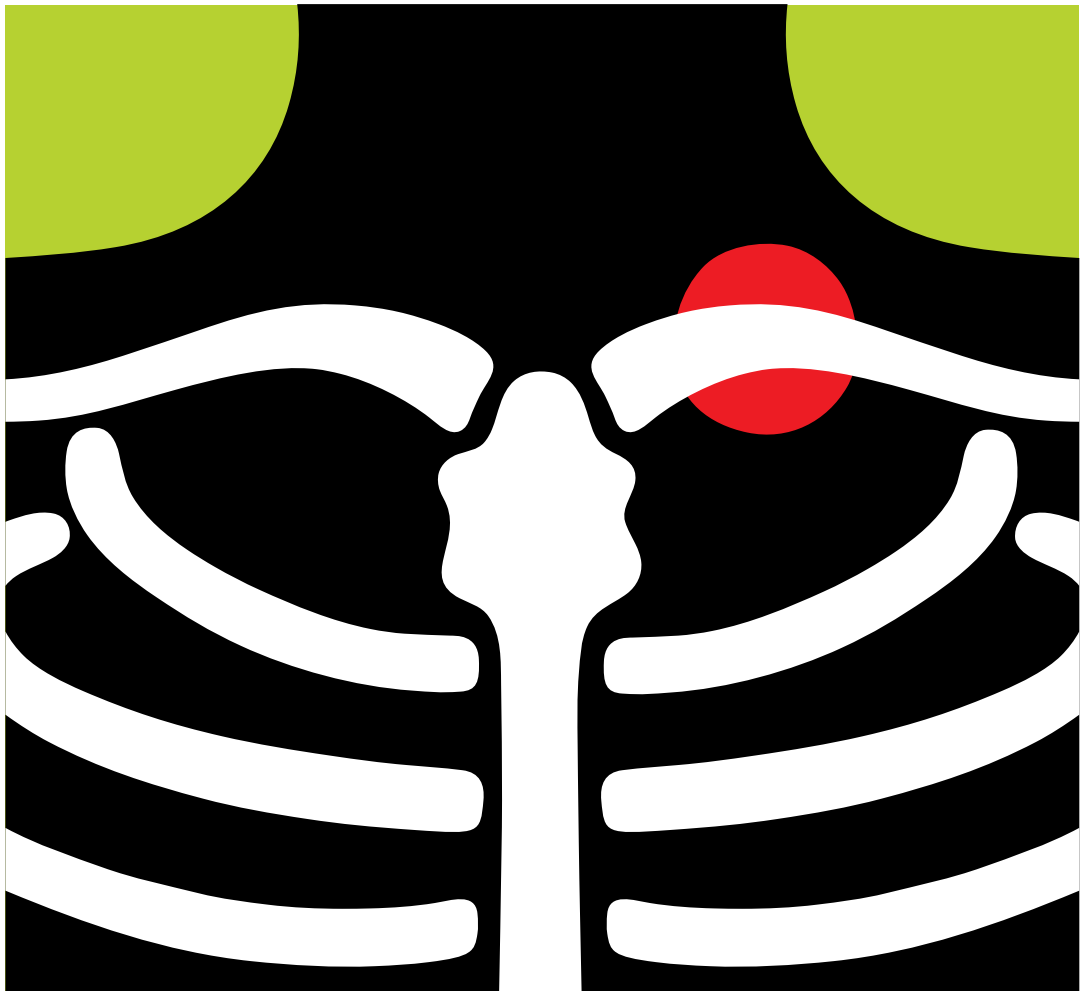
Poem With Its Heart Buried Under the Floorboards
By Kathy Fagan

You have been frowning a long time now, Mr. Poe.
For a long time grandfathers & their charges have been
walking from the library into days of black & white.
Large cars move funereally under black trees, black
birds; the sky is white, the lawns white where snow
has fallen. In spite of the snow, nothing is beautiful,
& it is always 4 o'clock on a Sunday, post meridiem.
The floor may creak — a *cri de coeur* —
but outside two teens outpace a white panel truck
climbing uphill in the slush. For a long time
the wheels have been spinning, Mr. Poe.
Our charges do not hear. Nor do they speak,
their earbuds white as snow.
They have some place to get to & they go.

Terrance Hayes *is the author of five collections of poetry, most recently "How to Be Drawn," which was a finalist for the National Book Award in 2015. His fourth collection, "Lighthead," won the 2010 National Book Award.* **Kathy Fagan** *is a poet who teaches at Ohio State University. Her fifth collection of poetry, "Sycamore," was published last spring by Milkweed Editions.*

Illustration by R. O. Blechman

The patient was a veterinarian. Could his continuing illness be related to his handling of animals?



The patient was angry. Dr. Antoinette Rose, an internist at the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, could hear it in his email. The patient trusted her, he wrote, but he'd been suffering for months, and no one seemed to care. She immediately picked up the phone, but her call was sent to voice mail. The patient was a veterinarian in a large Northern California practice; he was always busy.

Reviewing his chart, she was surprised to see that he'd been sick for nearly three months. It started with an infected tooth and swollen glands. Two rounds of antibiotics hadn't helped. After six weeks of feeling ill, he called Rose's office. She was booked, she recalled, so he saw her physician assistant.

The P.A. thought the lymph nodes were enlarged as a result of the dental infection. She sent him to the lab to check his white-blood-cell count. If he was still infected, the count would be high even after the antibiotics. It wasn't. She also ordered a test for mononucleosis — that could certainly cause swollen glands and fatigue. And she checked his thyroid level; too little thyroid hormone can make you tired. Both results were normal. A reasonable work-up, Rose thought at the time. She still thought so.

↓

Swollen Glands

Shortly after seeing the P.A., the patient had his tooth pulled. That got rid of the pain but not the tender glands. A few weeks later, he emailed Rose saying he felt worse. Some of the glands had gotten smaller, but not all. And he felt a tiny, tender lump behind his collarbone. He'd never had those glands swell up before. And now he was exhausted. His body ached as if he had worked out too hard — though he was too fatigued and sore to go to the gym.

Rose was out of town, so she arranged for him to see her P.A. again. And again, the P.A. found nothing except the single node behind his clavicle. She checked his white-blood-cell count again. She tested him for H.I.V., though he was in a monogamous, long-term relationship with his partner. She also checked for tuberculosis. One form of TB, scrofula, shows up in the glands of the neck. All the tests came back normal. But because the lymph node was in an unusual place and because it was persistent, she

Illustration by Andreas Samuelsson

Advanced genomic testing led to the discovery of new options to treat Cecil Lee's cancer

Cecil Lee,
Lung Cancer Patient

Cecil's story began when his upper chest started to feel congested. Nothing relieved the pain, so he scheduled an appointment with his doctor. After two rounds of antibiotics didn't help, he had a CAT scan that revealed a mass in his upper left lung.

"I was shocked when the doctor told me it was lung cancer," Cecil remembered. "We did surgery and followed up with chemotherapy. Everything looked clear. But a few months later, my cancer had spread to my right lung."

Cecil Lee and his care team

In search of more treatment options, Cecil's journey led him to Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA). Routine molecular testing of the cancer did not reveal any treatable abnormalities, so his team of doctors created a treatment plan that utilized advanced genomic testing.

"We tested Cecil's tumor for over 300 cancer related genes," said Dr. Sagun Shrestha, Cecil's medical oncologist. "And we found two mutations."

> "We tested Cecil's tumor for **over 300 cancer related genes** and we found two mutations."
>
> *Dr. Sagun Shrestha*

The discovery of the mutations in the DNA of the tumor pointed his doctors toward a targeted therapy with which Cecil is being treated today.

"When Dr. Shrestha identified the drug I needed, she gave me a new level of confidence and hope," he said. "Today, I feel strong, my energy is up—we're making progress."

Cecil is staying the course with his treatment, while staying busy with his 16-year-old son.

"Cecil has tolerated the targeted drug very well," concluded Dr. Shrestha. "Follow-up scans that were performed in September and December of 2016 showed significant improvement."

No case is typical. You should not expect to experience these results.

PATIENT TIMELINE

Cecil's battle with lung cancer

2012

- Diagnosed with stage 3 lung cancer
- Completes surgery to remove tumor + undergoes chemo
- Cancer spreads to other lung after being clear for three months
- Decides to explore treatment options at CTCA
- Advanced genomic testing reveals two gene mutations

2016

- CTCA doctors match Cecil to a targeted therapy

What is advanced genomic testing? Genomic tumor assessments help identify the DNA alterations that are driving the growth of a particular tumor. As we understand more about these gene mutations, doctors are better able to provide cancer treatment therapies designed to specifically target an individual's cancer when standard of care no longer works.

Cancer Treatment Centers of America®

Atlanta
Chicago
Philadelphia
Phoenix
Tulsa

Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA) is a network of five hospitals across the U.S. offering an integrative approach to cancer care. CTCA® combines advanced technologies to fight cancer and evidence-informed therapies to help manage side effects. Our precision cancer treatments provide our patients with truly personalized care. For more information on CTCA, ***visit cancercenter.com or call 855-587-5528.***

referred him to an ear, nose and throat specialist to have the lump biopsied.

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No Appointments Available

Trying to get in to see an E.N.T. was the last straw. No one had any openings for weeks. That's when he wrote the angry email. Really? he fumed. Was this the only way to find out why he, at age 44, felt like an old man, with aches and fevers and swollen glands? Now the spot behind the other clavicle was tender, and so were his underarms. For the past week, he'd been taking some antibiotics he got from a friend — just in case they helped. They didn't.

Rose replied immediately. She didn't usually see patients on Fridays, but could he see her then? She felt a little guilty. Once you develop a plan, patients will fall off your worry list as you wait to see results. And if something goes wrong with the plan, it's hard to know and put them back on the list. Until they complain.

↓

Feeling Terrible

When he came to the office, Rose thought the patient looked tired and thin. With him finally in front of her, she got the whole story. He'd felt off-and-on sick since the tooth. He'd get a little better, then worse. Now he was achy all the time. He'd gone through two bottles of ibuprofen — that helped, but why did he have to take anything? He always felt hot, though he didn't think he had a fever. He'd thrown up a couple of times and twice had sweats so bad he had to change the shirt he was sleeping in.

On exam, his arms and hands were covered with scratches and scars, souvenirs from a practice devoted to reptiles, birds and what he called pocket pets — ferrets, rabbits and small rodents. On his thumb was a healing laceration — an injury from the talon of an irritable falcon.

The spot where his tooth was removed looked well healed. She didn't find any enlarged lymph nodes in his neck. But she found one in the hollow behind his collarbone, and that was worrisome. Those glands would not react to an infected tooth. His underarms were tender, though again she couldn't feel any abnormal lumps. When she examined his stomach, however, she felt the tip of his spleen. This organ, basically a very large lymph gland, is on the upper left side of the abdomen and is mostly hidden by rib and bowels. The only time you feel it is when it's enlarged.

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Dangerous Possibilities

Rose quickly organized her thoughts. All these enlarged lymph nodes suggested some kind of infection. The infection in his tooth could have gone to his heart — quite rare in someone like him, with a normal heart, but potentially deadly. She would get a test to look for that kind of infection. Lymphomas — cancers of the lymph nodes — can cause these kinds of symptoms. That's why he was scheduled for a lymph-node biopsy.

As a vet, he was at risk of catching something from his patients: Cat-scratch fever can cause enlarged lymph nodes, fatigue, fever and malaise. Tularemia, transmitted by rabbits, has the same kinds of symptoms, although it is often preceded by an ugly rash. He went to Hawaii earlier that year and swam, which might have put him at risk for leptospirosis — a common infection among wild animals transmitted through contaminated water.

The patient himself brought up the possibility of Lyme disease — unlikely in Northern California, but possible. She also wanted to check again for the most ordinary causes of fatigue, malaise and enlarged lymph nodes — mono. He'd had a negative rapid mono test, which was pretty accurate. But no test is perfect. And that test looked only for the most common cause of mono. There are several others.

Finally, she arranged for him to be sent to an infectious-disease doctor to make sure she hadn't missed anything. And he was already scheduled to see an ear, nose and throat doctor to get a needle biopsy of his enlarged gland.

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Unusual Illnesses

Rose was grateful for another opinion because the first batch of tests didn't show much. The biopsy was normal. It wasn't Lyme or tularemia. It wasn't cat-scratch fever. He hadn't picked up leptospirosis in Hawaii.

The only positive results were for the two types of viral mononucleosis. Most cases of mono — up to 90 percent — are caused by the Epstein-Barr virus. His blood tests showed that he'd had that, but not recently. Rose had looked for another type of mono, caused by an Epstein-Barr cousin, called cytomegalovirus, or CMV. And that test suggested that he was infected and recently. Cytomegalovirus is a virus in the herpes family. It's common and gets more common with age. Just over one-third of children under 12 have had it, but nine of 10 adults over 80 have. But the virus rarely causes mono, or any other symptoms.

Rose was dubious. Could all these months of aches and pains, night sweats, vomiting and diarrhea really be from mono? She called the infectious-disease consultant and shared the results. She was also surprised. She ran the test again. Still positive. He could have had so many exotic infections. But it looked as if what he had was mono.

Rose called her patient to let him know what he had. You are going to get better, she assured him, probably very soon. But it was not soon. When it was verging on six months, she referred him once more to have the lymph node biopsied. But by the time that appointment came, the node was no longer enlarged, and the patient was starting to feel better.

Doctors often don't take diseases like mono very seriously. Self-limited, we call them. What that means is there's nothing we can do but wait and let the body recover, a task much easier for the doctor than the patient. ◆

Lisa Sanders, M.D., *is a contributing writer for the magazine and the author of "Every Patient Tells a Story: Medical Mysteries and the Art of Diagnosis." If you have a solved case to share with Dr. Sanders, write her at Lisa.Sandersmd@gmail.com.*

Illustration by Andreas Samuelsson

Franciacorta

START A NEW HOLIDAY TRADITION

Nothing says "celebration" like a bottle of sparkling wine — and while many reach for a bottle of Champagne, there's a refined and iconic Italian sparkler just waiting to be discovered: Franciacorta.

Considered the country's most prestigious sparkling wine, Franciacorta has long been the bubbly of choice among Italians. Now, this crisp, elegant, fruit-forward wine, with its delicate floral notes, is quickly catching on in the rest of the world.

Franciacorta is the first Italian wine to be made using the traditional method known as *metodo classico*. This renowned "champenoise" style, introduced to the region in 1961, is what makes Franciacorta so different from other Italian sparklers such as prosecco and Asti Spumante. Franciacorta is made according to strict guidelines: Winemakers may use only four grapes — chardonnay, pinot nero, pinot bianco and the indigenous erbamat — and all must be harvested by hand and aged naturally in the bottle for a minimum of 18 months. These stringent standards earned Franciacorta the status of Controlled and Guaranteed Designation of Origin (DOCG), Italian wine's highest classification, in 1995.

Franciacorta shares the name of the region of Lombardy where it's produced, in the foothills of the Alps, an hour east of Milan. Here the mild climate and cool, foggy nights allow the grapes to develop a crisp acidity. No wonder wine has been produced in Franciacorta since the 1500s. Today, the region is home to some 117 wine cellars and 7,000 acres of vineyards producing Franciacorta DOCG.

There are several styles of Franciacorta wines — each distinctive in character, all sparkling. The classic nonvintage Franciacorta is a fresh, food-friendly wine featuring citrus and dried-fruit notes. Franciacorta Rosé, blended with pinot nero grapes, is well structured, with a delicate color and notes of red fruit. And Franciacorta Satèn (a term exclusive to Franciacorta bubbly) boasts a "satiny" softness and creamy flavor achieved by a less-aggressive fizz.

Fresh and food-friendly, Franciacorta pairs wonderfully with many dishes.

Among the select vintages are the Millesimato, produced when the harvest is of excellent quality and matured for at least 30 months, and the Riserva (reserve), made from particularly excellent vintages and bottle-aged for over 60 months. The wines are categorized by sweetness, ranging from pas dosé (the driest variety, which pairs well with aged cheeses, fish, goose and roasted meats) to brut (dry, slightly smooth, and extremely versatile) to demi-sec (ideal with fruity desserts, crème brûlée and blue cheese).

Make this celebrated Italian sparkler your choice for the holiday season. ❄

CAMPAIGN FINANCED ACCORDING TO EC REGULATION N° 1308/13

Can I Talk to My Dad About His Affair?

My mother recently let slip that my father had an affair several years ago. I'm the oldest sibling in a family that I have always considered extremely close. The news was a devastating shock. Immediately after her disclosure, my mother told me that I could never tell my father that I knew. She insisted that the counseling they went through afterward resulted in a much happier marriage. Apparently, they decided to keep it a secret; only one other sibling knows.

Since I learned of his affair, my interactions with my father have felt stilted. He has always been one of the most important people in my life, but now when we talk I'm distracted by anger and distrust. My gut tells me that I should have a conversation with him about what happened in order to move on, but I also believe I have an ethical obligation to respect my mother's wishes. My sibling's view is that further discussion would only bring unnecessary turmoil to our conflict-averse family. Should I hope that forgiveness comes with time, or risk broaching this difficult topic with my father?

Name Withheld

Your mother asked you to keep what she said in confidence, and it would seem you accepted her request. You're right, then, that you owe it to her to keep your word. At the same time, you might want to consider why your relationship with your father has been so damaged. True, he risked the family's tranquillity a while ago, but his biggest betrayal was of your mother, and she has forgiven him. Things are now fine with them. Then there's the fact that your sibling — looking at the same situation, with the same knowledge of the characters involved — judges that nothing good will come from confronting the past.

So there's a case for doing as your sibling counsels. You'll forgive your father eventually, or just get used to thinking of him as imperfect in this way. Recognizing our parents' failings is part of growing up. And it's hard for parents to discuss their sins with their children. They're used to things being the other way round. They think, correctly, that some of their authority comes from your respect for them. (Indeed, your own response to your father's affair confirms this.)

The trouble with your sibling's position, though, is that it entails maintaining a serious and corrosive dishonesty at the heart of your relationship with your father. You're going to be tempted at some point to bring up the affair when you're angry or upset, and he's going to ask how long you've known — or worse, deny it, and add to the lies between you. If intimacy with your father matters to you as much as it evidently does, this attempt at *omertà* may simply not work. In some cultures, families are conflict-averse and not very intimate; in others there's space for conflict (and its resolution) and a good deal of intimacy. I offer it as an anthropological hypothesis that those are the stable combinations.

There are issues about why your other siblings should be kept out of all of this, but the situation is complex enough considering just you, one sibling and your parents. Right now, your father doesn't realize that two of his children know about his affair. This is a troubling situation, even for him, because it creates an atmosphere of brittle conspiracy. I'd suggest that you try to get your mother to see that keeping her confidence is unfair to your father and damaging to your relationship with him. She may feel that bringing this all up will upset the carefully achieved improvements in their relationship. But no solution here is without costs.

My sister-in-law, her ex and her children have bankrupted my in-laws by taking advantage of their generosity over the years. My in-laws have little for retirement and recently had to sell their house. My sister-in-law and her family are now in a better financial situation, spending on vacations and cars. How can I encourage them to repay my in-laws in some way? I don't know how my in-laws would feel, but it's heartbreaking to see them struggle after their hard-earned funds were wasted, seemingly with little gratitude or sense of obligation. But I also wonder if interference would make a difference. These people have proved to be selfish. I can barely stand the prospect of spending time with them, and if I do, I feel like a fraud for not standing up for my in-laws. Each time they bring up the latest vacation or new car, I feel sick.

Name Withheld

You see a retired couple that has been exploited by their daughter, her ex-husband and her children, a cohort whom you regard with some revulsion.

To submit a query: Send an email to ethicist@nytimes.com; or send mail to The Ethicist, The New York Times Magazine, 620 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018. (Include a daytime phone number.)

Bonus Advice From Judge John Hodgman

Grace writes: I am an American living in Iceland. Here, many men purchase snuff tobacco, called *neftobak*, wrap it in toilet paper and stuff it in their upper lip. When done, my fiancé removes it and leaves what looks like an owl poop on the bedside table, free for my son to pick up. I ask you to order him to stop putting nose tobacco in his mouth.

————

Tobacco is a carcinogen no matter which hole in your head you put it in, so I order him to dispose of his owl turds safely. But I can't order a grown-up to forgo his national traditions of self-harm; I can only warn him that it is imperiling his marriage. You chose to wander amid a certain cultural strangeness when you self-deported; to borrow an own-bed-making metaphor, you wrapped your *neftobak* in your own toilet paper, and now it is time for you to chew on it.

Illustration by Kyle Hilton

Illustration by Tomi Um

Once our bad behavior is made explicit, it's harder to excuse ourselves.

If you're right about the situation, your feelings are appropriate. Part of being a decent person is having what philosophers call the appropriate "reactive attitudes." The philosopher Peter F. Strawson described these as "essentially natural human reactions to the good or ill will or indifference of others toward us, as displayed in their attitudes and actions." He mentioned resentment, gratitude and anger, among other such emotions that we have in response to how we ourselves are treated. But we can usefully extend the idea to the attitudes we have to those who display good or ill will or indifference toward others, especially those we care about.

When you don't have such attitudes about people — second-order reactive attitudes, like the anger and indignation you feel — you treat them as if you weren't enmeshed in relationships with them. When you do have such attitudes, and they're justified, you are entitled to express them. You have every right to tell your sister-in-law what you think.

Why haven't you done so? Perhaps because you fear her first response will be reactive attitudes of her own: anger and resentment at you for saying these things. It can be hard to forgive those who point out our sins, especially if we are half-aware that we're not doing the right thing. Once our bad behavior is made explicit, it's harder to excuse ourselves.

So you're justified in wondering whether bringing the topic up will do any good. Indeed, the first effect may be that you cease to have the kind of family gatherings that you now dread, because they stop speaking to you altogether. If your husband shares your view, it will make things easier; he can support your arguments and accept with you the social consequences of speaking up. But if he doesn't, the costs will be higher still.

Consider, instead, getting together with your ingrate kin (and any other members of the family who could help) and discussing how you can all help your in-laws. You'll probably achieve more if, rather than confronting these moochers with their moral debts, you adopt a line like: "After all they've done for us over the years, I feel we should do something for them." ◆

Kwame Anthony Appiah *teaches philosophy at N.Y.U. He is the author of "Cosmopolitanism" and "The Honor Code: How Moral Revolutions Happen."*

Indian Butterscotch Ice Cream

By Ben Crair

Butterscotch is one of those cultural exports that become more authentic in its overseas market.

Travelers in India who are not searching for themselves often instead come searching for culinary transcendence. The possible food quests are endless, something I've learned over the course of repeat reporting trips to the country, and I visited Delhi in October with an agenda of my own. I looked forward to local delicacies, like *chhole bhature*, a fried-bread-and-chickpea breakfast, and *daulat ki chaat*, sweetened milk froth with pistachios and cardamon. But there was one food I anticipated more than any other, a taste I had been craving since I first visited India a year before. It was then, on an impossibly humid day in Bangalore, that I sought relief in the freezer box of a local shop and found that is was full of butterscotch ice cream cones.

Butterscotch is commonly thought to be Scottish in origin, or at least contain Scotch, but those are probably myths. Another theory has it that its name comes from "scorch" — a reference to how it is made, by heating brown sugar with butter to the soft-crack stage of caramelization. Regardless, it's a flavor few think of as Indian. It lacks Indian cooking's signature spices, like saffron, ginger, clove and cardamom, but nevertheless butterscotch ice cream is available from the tip of the subcontinent to the Himalayas. After I discovered the cones in Bangalore, I ate them everywhere I went. I even wolfed a few down in Shravanabelagola, a holy Jain town where the most devout nuns and monks renounce all food and starve themselves to death.

Food stylist: Maggie Ruggiero. Prop stylist: Rebecca Bartoshesky.

Photograph by Will Anderson

Of course, I hadn't come back to India just to eat ice cream, but it was something I could count on wherever my reporting took me. From Delhi, I went first to Haridwar, a sacred Hindu city; then to Amritsar, where Sikhs worship at the Golden Temple; then to the Muslim city Srinagar in Kashmir; and finally to Leh, a Buddhist city in the Himalayas. Across cultures and climates, I found the same cones everywhere. A paper wrapper identified the brand, like Amul, Creambell and Kwality Wall's, but there was little difference between them. The waffle cone was usually chewy and lined with chocolate; the ice cream was pale yellow, like churned butter, and topped with more chocolate and crumbled nuts.

Like disco music in Italy or Kit Kat bars in Japan, butterscotch is one of those cultural exports that, by some coincidence of taste or style, comes to seem more authentic in its overseas market. "Despite the name, most of us treat butterscotch as Indian," says Pushpesh Pant, the author of "India: The Cookbook." Butterscotch almost certainly came to India with the British, but the flavor was redolent of traditional Indian sweets. The common Indian combination of ghee and jaggery, a natural sweetener, produces a rich and nutty taste similar to butter and brown sugar. "As you enjoy butterscotch, you subliminally recall *chikki* in Mumbai or chewy *sohan halva* from Delhi," Pant told me.

Despite their popularity with Indians, the cones are everything a visitor's dream of Indian street food is not: packaged, mass-produced and artificially flavored. I asked the cashier at Shakes Square, a famous Delhi milkshake parlor, how they made the butterscotch flavor. He disappeared behind a curtain and returned with a dark glass bottle. "Butter Scotch," it read. "FL C 9930." It was manufactured by a company called International Flavours and Fragrances India Private Ltd., and the first listed ingredient was something called "propylene glycol." I removed the cap and took a whiff. It smelled like concentrated bitterness, with only the faintest note of the taste I loved.

And yet a few drops of Butter Scotch FL C 9930 produced the most satisfying milkshake I have tasted. Shakes Square served it in a milk bottle with a thick plastic straw. As I drank my shake on the sidewalk, a man with a skullcap and hennaed sideburns sat beside me. "Hello, my friend," he said. He removed a small notebook from his pocket, which was filled with testimonials from tourists in English, German and French: "Do not fear!" someone had scribbled. The man reached back into his pocket and removed an extremely long cotton swab. He was one of India's famous *kaan saaf wallahs*, or professional ear cleaners. "I am very good," he said.

Indian butterscotch ice cream transported me back to my childhood, where a cup of butterscotch pudding was a staple of school lunches.

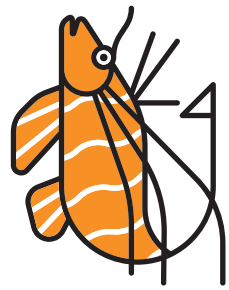
It was the sort of novel encounter you read about in guidebooks to India. What I did not anticipate was that new experiences would coincide with the awakening of old memories and tastes. Indian butterscotch ice cream transported me back to my childhood in upstate New York, where a cup of butterscotch pudding was a staple of school lunches. I often ate it before my sandwich, first licking the bottom of the foil lid. But Americans tend to outgrow the flavor, and I guess I thought I had, too.

In "An Area of Darkness," V. S. Naipaul wrote how, against the dusty squalor of Indian cities, "one was able to learn again the attraction of primary, heraldic colors, the colors of toys, and of things that shone, and to rediscover that child's taste, so long suppressed." This was true, perhaps as well, for flavors. Traveling long distances by myself in India sometimes reduced me to fits of childlike helplessness, and butterscotch ice cream was a childlike solution. But its flavor reminded me that I was never as far from home as it may have seemed. Sometimes a bite to eat holds its own form of self-discovery. ◆

Ben Crair
is a writer based in Berlin.

Tip By Malia Wollan

How to Get Rid of Lionfish



"Catching a lionfish is like picking up trash on the side of the highway," says Rachel Bowman, a commercial fisherwoman in Florida who is known as the lionfish huntress. In recent years, the ornate fish, native to the South Pacific and Indian Oceans and popular in home aquariums, have invaded the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. In an effort to stymie their rapid takeover, government agencies have called on citizens to eat lionfish. You can locate them hovering near reefs or rocks. To catch one, use scuba gear and a pole spear. "Just swim right up and shoot them," says Bowman, who dives from her 25-foot motorboat named Britney Spears.

Don't worry about rules, in Florida at least: There aren't any for lionfish. "There's no limitations on season, how many you can get, the size limit — it's an absolute free-for-all," Bowman says. This year, she was part of a three-woman team that caught 926 lionfish in 48 hours to win the Lionfish World Championship in Pensacola, Fla.

Be careful not to get stuck by the fishes' long, venomous spines. "I've seen grown men curled up in balls, crying," Bowman says. The neuromuscular toxin will make your skin swell and can even cause heart failure. To avoid the spines, transfer the fish directly from your spear into a plastic containment device called a Zookeeper without touching it. If you do get stung, immediately put the affected area in hot water, which destroys proteins in the venom and reduces its potency. "As hot as you can stand without scalding yourself," says Bowman, who has been stung dozens of times. Wear gloves while filleting the fish.

Eating lionfish is the easy part: cooked, the venom is harmless, and the meat is flaky and mild. Cut off the spines before using it raw in ceviche or sushi. Aside from people like Bowman, who sells her catch to restaurants and markets, lionfish have few natural predators, but they eat more than 50 species of fish. Scientists have called their invasion one of the greatest emerging threats to global biodiversity. "You're not going to be able to spear every lionfish," Bowman says, "but if you get the ones you do see, that's doing a lot more than doing nothing at all." ◆

Illustration by Radio

A Dream Dessert

The secrets of Russian honey cake, revealed.

Ten (sort of) easy layers: Russian honey cake.

When Michelle Polzine opened 20th Century Cafe, a tiny pastry shop in San Francisco in 2013, her majestic Russian honey cake enchanted sweet tooths everywhere. Food writers and pastry chefs flew in from across the country to marvel at the gravity-defying stack of airy cake layers slathered with glossy honey-cream frosting. With just two components, the cake seems simple, but those components unite to release a wave of malty, bittersweet and delightfully tangy notes with each bite.

Though I'd heard repeatedly that Polzine was adamant about keeping the recipe to herself, I began frequenting the bakery and sending friends to buy slices for me, determined to decode the cake myself by tasting it over and over again. I suspect my constant presence wore Polzine down, because she eventually offered to teach me to make the cake. I accepted and scheduled a lesson before she could change her mind. So one morning this summer I visited the bakery, notebook in hand. Scanning the ingredient list for anything out of the ordinary, I was surprised: Though the recipe was full of lively writing to "quit your kvetching" or that the batter will "smell a little weird," there was no secret ingredient — only a few brilliant twists that came as a result of years of baking, tasting and obsession.

Polzine first encountered her honey cake's progenitor, the medovik torte — seven or eight cookielike layers alternating with sour-cream frosting — on a cake-tasting tour of Vienna, Prague and Budapest, where she visited dozens of traditional coffeehouses. Building upon a nearly two-decade-long career as a pastry chef, Polzine immersed herself in medovik research, poring exhaustively over vintage cookbooks and making multiple visits to San Francisco's traditional Russian bakeries in an effort to wheedle out secrets from suspicious babushkas. She developed a vision of her dream cake — light, airy, not too sweet and 10 layers tall. "After a dozen tests, I felt like I was

Photograph by Gentl and Hyers

Food stylist: Maggie Ruggiero. Prop stylist: Amy Wilson.

close to nailing it," she recalled. "Then, one morning I woke up and realized it was all wrong. I knew what I needed to do."

First, Polzine added more butter to the batter, transforming the cookie-crisp layers into thin, spongy cakes. And instead of relying on sour cream for tang, she did her signature move: "I'm a sugar burner." By caramelizing the honey, she could introduce some toffee notes, bitterness and even acidity without sacrificing the floral honey flavor. "It took me 23 tries to nail it," Polzine said, "but I figured out the cake that same day."

The answer to the frosting lay in a slightly less conventional place: a promotional internet video for a Czech honey cake that she clicked on randomly. "I couldn't understand a thing, but I spotted a baker opening an unlabeled can of brown gooey stuff, and it hit me!" Polzine said. "Dulce de leche!" The sugars in the burned honey and dulce de leche keep the frosting shiny and stable without butter. "This recipe, it wasn't an easy win. That's why I've waited so long to share it."

Before I headed into my own kitchen, I asked Polzine if she really thought this cake was achievable for home bakers. "Definitely. It's not hard, just time-consuming." It's true. You'll reach a point when you'll wonder why you ever set out to do this. You'll end up sticky with honey and dulce de leche, and probably curse my name and Polzine's. And then you'll have to summon all your patience and wait, because after hours of baking, you still don't get to taste it. But the next day, all your favorite people will come over to eat this glorious thing you made by yourself, and you'll forget about the stickiness, the harried dance in and out of the oven. All you'll be left with are a few honey-flavored crumbs.

'This recipe, it wasn't an easy win. That's why I've waited so long to share it.'

Russian Honey Cake

Time: 4 hours, plus overnight chilling

- **1½ cups (18 ounces) wildflower honey, divided**
- **¼ cup (2 ounces) water**
- **1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (8 ounces) sugar**
- **14 tablespoons (7 ounces) butter, cut into ½-inch pieces**
- **6 large eggs**
- **2½ teaspoons baking soda**
- **2½ teaspoons Diamond Crystal Kosher Salt or 1¼ teaspoons fine sea salt, divided**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **3¾ cups (16 ounces) all-purpose flour**
- **1¼ cups (1 13.4-ounce can) dulce de leche**
- **4¾ cups heavy cream, chilled and divided**

1. Preheat oven to 375. Trace circles around a 9-inch pie or cake pan onto 12 baking-sheet-size pieces of parchment paper. Set aside.

2. Make a water bath: Fill a small saucepan with 1 inch of water, and set over medium heat.

3. Place ¾ cup of honey in a 2-quart saucepan, and set over high heat. Bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to medium. After about 3 minutes, the honey will begin to foam intensely. Stirring occasionally with a wooden spoon, keep a close eye on the honey. Cook until it begins to smoke, then turn off the heat and carefully add water. Allow the honey to sputter until it stops bubbling. Whisk to combine, and pour into a heatproof measuring cup with a spout, then place in prepared water bath to keep honey liquid.

4. Fill a medium saucepan with 2 inches of water, and bring to a simmer. Combine ¼ cup burned honey, ¾ cup honey, sugar and butter in a large metal mixing bowl, and place over the pot of water.

5. Crack eggs into a small bowl, and set aside. Stir together baking soda, 1½ teaspoons kosher salt or ¾ teaspoon sea salt and cinnamon in a separate small bowl.

6. When the butter has melted, whisk the honey mixture to combine. Use your finger to test the temperature of the mixture. When it's warm, add the eggs while whisking. When the mixture returns to the same temperature, add the cinnamon mixture, and continue whisking for another 30 seconds. The batter will begin to foam and emit a curious odor. Remove the bowl from the heat, and allow it to cool until it's warm.

7. Place the flour in a fine-mesh sieve, and sift over the batter in three batches, whisking to incorporate the flour completely with each addition. The batter should be completely smooth. The batter will spread more easily when it's warm, so pour half into a small bowl, and cover with plastic wrap. Place in a warm spot, such as atop the preheating oven.

8. Place a piece of parchment tracing-side-down on a baking sheet, and spoon in a heaping ⅓ cup of batter. Use an offset spatula to evenly spread the batter to the edges. It will seem like just barely enough batter; do your best to get the layer even and perfectly circular. Repeat with remaining layers until you're out of pans, and then continue with remaining batter and parchment sheets, laying batter circles out on a flat surface. You'll end up with 11 or 12.

9. Bake as many layers at a time as possible, for 6 to 7 minutes, until the cake turns a deep caramel color and springs back at the touch. For the first round, set the timer for 4 minutes to rotate pans if needed to ensure even cooking. Check the cakes again at 6 minutes. Do not overbake!

10. When each layer is done, slide the parchment off the pan to prevent overbaking. If reusing baking sheets while they are still hot, reduce cooking time to 5 to 6 minutes.

11. When the cake layers are cool enough to handle, examine them. If any spread outside the traced circles as they baked, use a sharp knife or pair of scissors to trim them. Before the cakes cool entirely, pull each one carefully from the parchment, then place back on the parchment on a flat surface, and allow to cool completely.

12. When all the layers are baked, reduce the oven temperature to 250, and allow the cake to cool for 30 minutes. Return the least attractive layer (or 2, if you got 12) to a baking sheet, and place in the oven to toast until deep reddish brown and dry, about 15 minutes. Allow it to cool, then use a food processor to grind into fine crumbs. Cover and set aside.

13. Place ½ cup burned honey, dulce de leche and 1 teaspoon Diamond Crystal Kosher Salt or ½ teaspoon fine sea salt into a medium bowl. Whisk by hand until combined, then slowly pour in ¾ cup cream and mix until homogeneous. Chill until completely cooled, about 30 minutes.

14. Pour 4 cups heavy cream into the bowl of a stand mixer, and affix whisk attachment. Whip at medium speed to soft peaks, about 6 minutes, then add honey mixture and whip frosting to medium stiff peaks. If your mixer holds less than 5 quarts, make frosting in 2 batches and then combine in a large bowl, or use a large bowl and a hand mixer.

15. Assemble the cake on a 10-inch cardboard circle or flat serving plate. Place a cake layer in the center of the cardboard, then spoon a heaping cup of frosting onto the center. Use an offset spatula to spread the frosting evenly, leaving a ¼-inch ring unfrosted around the edge. Place the next layer atop the frosting, center it and continue as above. Don't be afraid to manhandle the cake to align the layers as you continue stacking. If necessary, make up for any doming in the center by spreading more frosting to the outer half of each layer than the inner half. After you place the 10th layer, spread another scant cup of frosting over the top. Use any leftover frosting to smooth out the sides of the cake, but don't fret if the edges of some cake layers poke through the frosting. Sprinkle the top and sides with cake crumbs.

16. Chill overnight. Serve chilled. Cake can be made up to two days in advance. Refrigerate leftovers for up to 3 days.

Makes 1 9-inch cake.
Adapted from Michelle Polzine. ◆

A Vanderbilt neuroscientist has discovered an unusual but shockingly fruitful way to study the brain: Purée it.
By Ferris Jabr / Photographs by Jeff Minton


Box 9
Box 8
ORGANIZA & CONSERVA
TOP
STOCK
Box 6
Box 10
Box 12
Box 16
Box 18
Box 19
Box 15
Box 37
Box 36
New!
with dividers
Box 25
Box 17
Box 34
Box 27
Box 29
Box 35

in June 2012, at São Paulo's international airport, Suzana Herculano-Houzel hauled two heavy suitcases onto an X-ray-machine conveyor belt. As the luggage passed through the scanner, the customs agent's eyes widened. The suitcases did not contain clothes, toiletries or any of the usual accouterments of travel. Instead, they were stuffed with more than two dozen curiously wrapped bundles, each enclosing an amorphous blob suspended in liquid. The agent asked Herculano-Houzel to open her bags, suspecting that she was trying to smuggle fresh cheese into the country; two people had been caught doing exactly that just moments before.

"It's not cheese," Herculano-Houzel said. "It's only brains."

She was a neuroscientist, she explained, and she had just returned from an unusual — but completely legal — research expedition in South Africa, where she collected brains from a variety of species: giraffes, lions, antelopes, mongooses, hyenas, wildebeests and desert rats. She was taking the organs, sealed in containers of antifreeze, back to her lab in Rio de Janeiro. The customs agents reviewed her extensive collection of permits and documentation, and they eventually let her pass with suitcases in tow.

In the last 12 years, Herculano-Houzel, now a researcher and professor at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, has acquired the brains of more than 130 species. She has brains from commonplace creatures — mice, squirrels, pigeons — and more exotic ones, like Goodfellow's tree kangaroo and the Tasmanian devil. She has brains from bees and an African elephant. She prefers to obtain whole brains if possible, and she goes to great lengths to protect the organs during transport.

A brain is a precious thing, containing many of science's greatest unsolved mysteries. What we don't know about the brain still eclipses what we do. We don't know how the brain generates consciousness. We aren't sure why we sleep and dream. The precise causes of many common mental illnesses and neurological disorders elude us. What is the physical form of a memory? We have only inklings. We still haven't cracked the neural code: that is, how networks of neurons use electrical and chemical signals to store and transmit information. Until very recently — until Herculano-Houzel published an important discovery in 2009 — we did not even know how many cells the human brain contained. We only thought we did.

Before Herculano-Houzel's breakthrough, there was a dominant narrative about the human brain, repeated by scientists, textbooks and journalists. It went like this: Big brains are better than small brains because they have more neurons, and what is even more important than size is the brain-to-body ratio. The most intelligent animals have exceptionally large brains for their body size. Humans have a brain seven times bigger than you would expect given our overall size — an unrivaled ratio. So, the narrative goes, something must have happened in the course of human evolution to set the human brain apart, to swell its proportions far beyond what is typical for other animals, even for our clever great-ape and primate cousins. As a result, we became the bobbleheads of the animal kingdom, with craniums spacious enough to accommodate trillions of brain cells: 100 billion electrically active neurons and 10 to 50 times as many supporting cells, known as glia.

By comparing brain anatomy across a large number of species, Herculano-Houzel has revealed that this narrative is seriously flawed. Not only has she upended numerous assumptions and myths about the brain and rewritten some of the most fundamental rules about how brains are constructed — she has also proposed one of the most cohesive and evidence-based frameworks for human brain evolution to date.

But her primary methods are quite different from others' in her field. She doesn't subject living brains to arrays of electrodes and scanners. She doesn't divide brains into prosciutto-thin slices and carefully sandwich them between glass slides. She doesn't seal brains in jars of formaldehyde for long-term storage. Instead, she demolishes them. Each organ she took such great care to protect on her trans-Atlantic journey was destined to be liquefied into a cloudy concoction she affectionately calls "brain soup" — the key to her groundbreaking technique for understanding what is arguably the most complex congregation of matter in the universe. In dismantling the brain, she has remade it.

The history of studying the brain is a history of learning how to perceive it, literally and figuratively. Just as technological advances have allowed us to better examine the moon, stars and planets, they have significantly improved our ability to chart and inspect the thick constellations of cells in our own heads. The prevailing metaphor for the brain has long been a piece of biological machinery, but our conception of that machine has evolved in parallel with our technological prowess. At first, the brain was viewed as the body's coolant system, a hydraulic pump for "animal fluids." Then it was a collection of self-winding springs or an "enchanted loom," then a clock, an electromagnet, a telephone switchboard, a hologram and, most recently, a biological supercomputer.

Despite all the advances we've made, there are still many fundamental aspects of the brain that we do not understand at all. This is mainly because the brain is a many-layered mystery, demanding intense scrutiny at vastly different scales, from the molecular to the perceptual. But it's also because neuroscience has sometimes neglected, rushed or botched what should be its most elementary tasks, chasing holy grails before establishing primary principles. Case in point: We are well into the 21st century, and we are only now getting an accurate census of the brain's cellular building blocks.

In part because the scientific portrait of the brain remains so patchy, it has long been embellished with numerous myths and misconceptions. For example, there's no truth to the idea that the brain is half android and half artist, with a left hemisphere dedicated to logic and analytical thinking and a right hemisphere for intuition and creativity. You don't have a primitive reptilian brain tucked inside your more sophisticated mammalian tissues. You can't increase brainpower by eating nuts, blueberries, fish and other so-called brain foods. Entire books have been written to counter such falsehoods.

Misinformation about the brain is not isolated to the general public; it is surprisingly prevalent in academia too. By the time Herculano-Houzel was old enough to pursue graduate studies in science, she had long been inoculated with a strong dose of skepticism. When she was growing up in Brazil, her parents emphasized that "it was a good thing to not take somebody's word, no matter how respected they were," she recalls, "and rather ask: 'Why? How do you know that?' " It was not until she earned a Ph.D. in neuroscience in Europe and returned to Rio de Janeiro in 1999, however, that she confronted neuromythology head on.

Instead of pursuing postdoctoral studies — which she thought would be too intellectually restricting — she persuaded the city's recently opened Museum of Life to offer her a job giving presentations on the brain to the public. One of her first projects was a survey regarding general beliefs about the brain: E.g., did consciousness depend on the brain? Did drugs physically alter the brain? She was shocked to learn that 60 percent of college-educated people in Rio de Janeiro believed that humans used only 10 percent of their brains — a longstanding fallacy. In truth, the brain is highly active across its entirety just about all the time, even when we are spacing out or sleeping. She couldn't let it go. Where did such a prevalent falsehood come from? How did it spread?

She started looking for clues in research papers and popular science writing. In the foreword to the first edition of Dale Carnegie's "How to Win Friends and Influence People," the American

Suzana Herculano-Houzel holding a wildebeest brain in her lab at Vanderbilt University. Previous photograph: Brains of several dozen species of mammals and birds stored individually in antifreeze.

psychologist William James is misquoted as declaring that "the average man develops only 10 percent of his latent mental ability." In the '30s and '40s, another pioneering psychologist, Karl Lashley, discovered that he could scoop out large portions of a rat's brain without seriously impairing its ability to solve a maze. Herculano-Houzel also recalled that early editions of the textbook "Principles of Neural Science," along with countless studies, claimed that the human brain contained at least 10 times as many glial cells as neurons. Glia are now known to be every bit as important as neurons, facilitating electrical and chemical communication, clearing cellular detritus, protecting and healing injured brain cells and guiding the development of new neural circuits. But until the mid- to late 20th century, scientists mostly regarded glia as passive scaffolding for neurons. Perhaps the widely cited fact that glia outnumbered neurons by at least 10 to one helped cement the notion that only 10 percent of the brain really mattered. But where were the studies establishing the oft-repeated glia-to-neuron ratio?

After an exhaustive search, Herculano-Houzel concluded that there was no scientific basis for the claim. She and her collaborator Christopher von Bartheld, a professor at the University of Nevada School of Medicine, published a paper last year summing up their detective work. In the 1950s and '60s, a few scientists proposed that glia were about 10 times as common as neurons, based on studies of small brain regions, ones that happened to have particularly high glia-to-neuron ratios. In a decades-long game of telephone, other researchers repeated these estimates, extrapolating them to the entire brain. Science journalists parroted the numbers. Soon this misconception spread to textbooks and educational websites run by the government and respected scientific organizations. Even the latest edition of "Principles of Neural Science" states that the brain as a whole contains "two to 10 times more glia than neurons." The truth is that not a single study has ever demonstrated this. "I realized we didn't know the first thing about what the human brain is made of, much less what other brains were made of, and how we compared," Herculano-Houzel says.

So she decided to find out herself. For decades, the standard method for counting brain cells was stereology: slicing up the brain, tallying cells in thin sheets of tissue splayed on microscope slides and multiplying those numbers by the volume of the relevant region to get an estimate. Stereology is a laborious technique that works well for small, relatively uniform areas of the brain. But many species have brains that are simply too big, convoluted and multitudinous to yield to stereology. Using stereology to take a census of the human brain would require a daunting amount of time, resources and unerring precision.

In a study from the 1970s, Herculano-Houzel discovered a curious proposal for an alternative to stereology: Why not measure the total amount of DNA in a brain and divide by the average amount of DNA per cell? The problem with this method is that neurons are genetically diverse, the genome is a highly dynamic structure — continuously unraveling and reknitting itself to amplify or silence certain genes — and even small errors in measuring quantities of DNA could throw off the whole calculation. But it gave

Photograph by Jeff Minton for The New York Times

Herculano-Houzel a better idea: "Dissolve the brain, yes! But don't count DNA. Count nuclei!" — the protein-rich envelopes that enclose every cell's genome. Each cell has exactly one nucleus. "A nucleus is a nucleus, and you can see it," she says. "There is no ambiguity there."

By 2002, Herculano-Houzel had moved from the Museum of Life to a new science-communications job at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, where she also had access to lab space and the freedom to pursue research of her choice. She began experimenting with rat brains, freezing them in liquid nitrogen, then puréeing them with an immersion blender; her initial attempts sent chunks of crystallized neural tissue flying all around the lab. Next she tried pickling rodent brains in formaldehyde, which forms chemical bridges between proteins, strengthening the membranes of the nuclei. After cutting the toughened brains into little pieces, she mashed them up with an industrial-strength soap in a glass mortar and pestle. The process dissolved all biological matter except the nuclei, reducing a brain to several vials of free-floating nuclei suspended in liquid the color of unfiltered apple juice.

To distinguish between neurons and glia, Herculano-Houzel injected the vials with a chemical dye that would make all nuclei fluoresce blue under ultraviolet light, and then with another dye to make the nuclei of neurons glow red. After vigorously shaking each vial to evenly disperse the nuclei, she placed a droplet of brain soup on a microscope slide. When she peered through the eyepiece, the globular nuclei looked like Hubble photos of distant stars in the black velvet of space. Counting the number of neurons and glia in several samples from each vial, and multiplying by the total volume of liquid, gave Herculano-Houzel her final tallies. By reducing a brain, in all its daunting intricacy, to a homogeneous fluid, she was able to achieve something unprecedented. In less than a day, she accurately determined the total number of cells in an adult rat's brain: 200 million neurons and 130 million glia.

In the early years of Herculano-Houzel's research, especially once she graduated from rats to primates, she encountered substantial resistance from her peers. Here was a young, essentially unknown scientist from Brazil not only proposing a radically different way of studying the brain but also contradicting centuries of conventional wisdom. "At first I shared the same opinion as everyone else," says Andrew Iwaniuk, an evolutionary neuroscientist at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada. "This is insane. This can't possibly work. What do you mean you are blending an entire brain and coming up with the number of neurons?" As Herculano-Houzel's data set expanded, however, reservations began to recede. In the last few years, several independent teams of scientists have validated the brain-soup technique with carefully controlled studies, winning the confidence of most researchers. "The technique works — no doubt about that," Iwaniuk says. "It's hundreds or thousands of times faster than using traditional methods. And that means we can rapidly compare so many different species and see what might make the human brain special — or not."

Rat brains were just the beginning. "Once I realized I could actually do this," Herculano-Houzel told me, "there was a whole world of questions out there just waiting to be examined." Which is to say, there was a whole planet of brains waiting to be dissolved.

By 2016, Herculano-Houzel had migrated to Vanderbilt University. When we walked through the doors to her new lab, one of the first things I noticed was a row of four large white freezers covered with souvenir magnets: a toadstool-red crab with jiggling legs, the Loch Ness monster sporting a plaid bonnet and a bear chasing a human stick figure with the caption "Canadian fast food!" "That's one of my airport pastimes — the gaudier the better," Herculano-Houzel told me with a characteristically boisterous laugh. Her personality, much like her approach to science, is defined by exuberance. During our conversations, she punctuated her speech with vigorous head shakes and staccato guffaws, leaning halfway across the table when she really got excited. Unlike many of her peers, Herculano-Houzel does not shy away from a little showmanship; a TED Talk she gave has been viewed nearly two and a half million times. One neuroscientist I spoke to referred with mild disapproval to her "self-aggrandizement."

She swung one of the freezers open, revealing shelves crowded with Tupperware boxes. Each container was labeled with a bit of masking tape inked with a numerical ID: Box 19, Box 6, Box 34. "What's in here?" I asked. "Oh, all sorts," she said. "About 200 different brains. Birds and mammals." One particularly large brain sat in its plastic bin as casually as a sliced cantaloupe. As I leaned in for a closer look, its distinctive exterior came into view: a labyrinth of flesh, now sallow and cold, that once fizzed with electric current and pulsated with freshly pumped blood. "Here you have different carnivoran species," she continued. "Lion, leopard, dogs, cats, raccoons. There are ostrich brains. A few primates. A bunch of giraffes — their spinal cords as well. Four meters' worth of spinal cord."

At this point, Herculano-Houzel has published studies on the brains of more than 80 species. The more species she has compared, the clearer it has become that much of the dogma about brains and their cellular components is simply wrong. First of all, a large brain does not necessarily have more neurons than a small one. She has found that some species have especially dense brains, packing more cells into the same volume of brain tissue as their spongier counterparts. As a rule, because their neurons are smaller on average, primate brains are much denser than other mammalian brains. Although rhesus monkeys have brains only slightly larger than those of capybaras, the planet's largest rodents, the rhesus monkey has more than six times the number of neurons. Birds appear to have the densest brains of all, but their brains are not particularly large. An emu, one of the biggest birds alive today, has a brain that weighs about as much as an AA battery. Were there a bird with a brain the size of a grapefruit, however, it would probably rule the world.

The brain-soup technique further revealed that the human brain, contrary to the numbers frequently cited in textbooks and research papers, has 86 billion neurons and roughly the same number of glia — not 100 billion neurons and trillions of glia. And humans certainly do not have the most neurons: The African elephant has about three times as many, with a grand total of 257 billion. When Herculano-Houzel focused on the cerebral cortex, however — the brain's wrinkled outermost layer — she discovered a staggering discrepancy. Humans have 16 billion cortical neurons. The next runners-up, orangutans and gorillas, have nine billion cortical neurons; chimpanzees have six billion. The elephant brain, despite being three times larger than our own, has only 5.6 billion neurons in its cerebral cortex. Humans seemed to possess the most cortical neurons — by far — of any species on earth.

A cross-section of a preserved human brain looks like a slice of gnarled squash, with an undulating cream-colored interior outlined by an intensely puckered gray rind. That rind — composed of layers of densely packed neurons and glia — is the cerebral cortex. Its deep grooves and ridges significantly increase its total surface area, providing more room for cells within the confines of the skull. All mammals have a cortex, but the extent to which the cortex

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is wrinkled depends on the species. Squirrels and rats have cortices as smooth as soft-serve, whereas human and dolphin brains look like heaps of udon noodles. Over the years, some researchers have proposed that the more corrugated the cortex, the more cells it contains, and the more intelligent the species. But no one had precise cell counts to back up those claims.

The cerebral cortex is the difference between impulse and insight, between reflex and reflection. It is essential for voluntary muscle control, sensory perceptions, abstract thinking, memory and language. Perhaps most profound, the cerebral cortex allows us to create and inhabit a simulation of the world as it is, was and might be; an inner theater that we can alter at will. "The cortex receives a copy of everything else that happens in the brain," Herculano-Houzel says. "And this copy, while technically unnecessary, adds immense complexity and flexibility to our cognition. You can combine and compare information. You can start to find patterns and make predictions. The cortex liberates you from the present. It gives you the ability to look at yourself and think: This is what I am doing, but I could be doing something different."

The sheer density of the human cortex dovetails with an emerging understanding of interspecies intelligence: It's not that the human mind is fundamentally distinct from the minds of other primates and mammals, but rather that it is dialed up to 11. It's a matter of scale, not substance. Many mental abilities once regarded as uniquely human — toolmaking, problem-solving, sophisticated communication, self-awareness — turn out to be far more widespread among animals than previously thought. Humans just manifest these talents to an unparalleled degree. Herculano-Houzel thinks the simplest explanation for this disparity is the fact that humans have nearly twice as many cortical neurons as any other species studied so far. How, then, did our species gain such a huge lead?

The standard explanation for our unrivaled intelligence is that humans bucked the evolutionary trends that restricted other animals. Somehow, perhaps because of a serendipitous genetic mutation millions of years ago, the human brain inflated far beyond the norm for a primate of our body size. But Herculano-Houzel's careful measurements of dozens of primate species demonstrated that the human brain is not out of sync with the rest of primatekind. In both mass and number of cells, the brains of all primates, including humans, scale in a neat line from smallest to biggest species — with the exception of gorillas, orangutans and chimpanzees. The great apes, our closest evolutionary cousins, are the anomalies, with oddly shrunken brains considering their overall heft. While contemplating this incongruity, Herculano-Houzel remembered a book she read a few years earlier: "Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human," by the Harvard anthropologist Richard Wrangham.

Wrangham proposed that the mastery of fire profoundly altered the course of human evolution, to the extent that humans are "adapted to eating cooked food in the same essential way as cows are adapted to eating grass, or fleas to sucking blood." Cooking neutralized toxic plant compounds, broke down proteins in meat and made all foods much easier to chew and digest, meaning we got many more calories from cooked foods than from their raw equivalents. Because our digestive systems no longer had to work as hard, they began to shrink; in parallel, our brains grew, nourished by all those extra calories. The human brain makes up only 2 percent of our body weight, yet it demands 20 percent of the energy we consume each day.

Herculano-Houzel realized that she could extend and modify this line of thought. In the wild, modern great apes spend about eight hours a day foraging just to meet their minimal caloric requirements, and they routinely lose weight when food is scarce. In the course of their evolutionary history, as they developed much larger bodies than their primate ancestors, with larger organs to match, their brains most likely hit a metabolic growth limit. Great apes could no longer obtain enough calories from raw plants to nourish brains that would be in proportion with their overall mass.

Herculano-Houzel tested this insight with math. Based on their body size, gorillas and orangutans should have brains at least as large as ours, with neuron counts to match. Knowing how much energy a neuron needs on average, however, and how much time an ape can spend foraging, Herculano-Houzel calculated that modern great apes are physiologically restricted to brains with about 30 billion neurons. There simply aren't enough hours in the day, or enough calories in raw plants, to push them over that threshold. "That's not something I thought about," Wrangham says. "It's an ingenious way of looking at things."

Cooking liberated our ancestors from this same physiological straitjacket and put us back on track to develop brains as large as expected for primates our size. And because primates have such dense brains, all that new brain mass rapidly added a huge number of neurons. It took 50 million years for primates as a group to evolve brains with around 30 billion neurons total. But in a mere 1.5 million years of evolution, the human brain gained an astounding 56 billion additional neurons. To use the metaphor of our time, cooking tripled the human brain's processing power.

There is something almost comical about this revelation. For so long, we have struggled to keep the human brain perched on its pedestal. We have insisted that although we are the product of evolution just like any other animal, our evolutionary journey was special — that we inherited decently large brains from our ape ancestors and transformed them into the most formidable thinking machines on the planet. As it turns out, quite the opposite is true. The evolutionary path of the human brain is not one of inordinate growth, but rather a long-overdue game of catch-up.

Even if we now have more cortical neurons than any other species, the true significance of that discrepancy remains unclear. Consider that the elephant, which has three times fewer cortical neurons than humans, is one of the smartest animals ever studied: It crafts tools, recognizes itself in the mirror and even seems to have some understanding of death. Likewise, the octopus — an invertebrate with no cerebral cortex, a meager 100 million neurons in its brain and 300 million more in its arms — is one of the most intelligent species in the ocean, capable of remembering individuals, opening complex puzzle boxes and escaping "escape-proof" tanks. Honeybees have minuscule brains, yet their talents for collaboration and communication exceed those of many more densely brained creatures. Then there are organisms like plants, which, despite having no neurons whatsoever, are exquisitely sensitive to their environments, adapting to changes in light and moisture, recognizing kin and eavesdropping on one another's chemical alarm signals.

Ultimately, the brain-soup technique's central strength — its reductionism — is also its weakness. By transforming a biological entity of unfathomable complexity into a small set of numbers, it enables science that was not previously possible; at the same time, it creates the temptation to exalt those numbers. In her book, "The Human Advantage," Herculano-Houzel stresses the distinction between cognitive capacity and ability. We have about the same number of neurons as humans who lived 200,000 years ago, yet our respective abilities are vastly different. At least half of human intelligence derives not from biology but from culture — from the language, rituals and technology into which we are born. Perhaps that is also why parrots, dolphins and apes raised by scientists in intellectually demanding environments often develop a degree of intelligence not seen in their wild counterparts: Culture unlocks the brain's latent potential.

For centuries, we have regarded the brain as a kind of machine: a ludicrously convoluted one, but a machine nonetheless. If we could only pick it apart, quantify and examine all its components, we could finally explain it. But even if we could count and classify every cell, molecule and atom, we would still lack a satisfying explanation of its remarkable behavior. The brain is more than a thing; it's a system. So much of intelligence is neither within the brain nor in its environment, but vibrating through the space in between. ◆

Avani Hakim was born with a benign growth called a hemangioma on her forehead. It started small. By the time she was 18 months old it was dangerously large and people started to stare. But it wasn't just a cosmetic issue. Eventually, it would impact her eyesight, since it was starting to push down on her eyebrow.

Local doctors knew that little Avani desperately needed surgery, but didn't have the training to help. So her mom turned to social media and a network of mothers whose children suffered from the same condition. Eventually, she found her way to a renowned surgeon at the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai.

OUR DO

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Not only had he performed the procedure many times, his own daughter suffered from the condition and was successfully treated as a baby.

Avani's case was unique. Her tumor was not just large, but also deep. The surgeon removed the tumor and also cosmetically reconstructed her forehead in a single surgery. Avani returned to her home country with a smile on her face. And without the tumor. **For you. For life.**

1-800-MD-SINAI
nyee.edu/avanisstory

New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of **Mount Sinai**

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URE. HE WASN'T LYING.

MORE THAN A THOUSAND CHILDREN ARE COUNTING ON NORA SÁNDIGO TO BECOME THEIR GUARDIAN IF THEIR UNDOCUMENTED PARENTS ARE DEPORTED. HOW MANY OF THOSE PROMISES WILL SHE NOW HAVE TO KEEP?

MOTHER OF LAST RESORT

BY BROOKE JARVIS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER MORRIS

Because she didn't know what to tell her children, she tried not to tell them anything. When they asked where their father was, she gave flimsy excuses: Yes, he came home last night, but he left while you were still asleep. He's working late, he's working early, he just stepped out, he'll be back soon. "You just missed him," she found herself repeating.

The strategy worked, for a few days at least, with the youngest three. They were all under 5 and were used to the world going about its strange business without them. But then there was Kelly. She was 8 and sharp-eyed, a good student who preferred English to Spanish and wanted to someday be a doctor, or maybe a gymnast, and who had watched a presidential candidate on television say he wanted to send people back to Mexico, where both her parents grew up.

Kelly came home from school one day in October last year and demanded to know where her father was. Because his construction job started so early in the morning, Javier was usually the first home. That was part of how he and Kelly's mother, T., fell in love. They boarded in the same house more than a decade ago, when she was 19 and freshly arrived in South Florida, having followed her sister from their small village in southern Mexico. T., who is being identified by her first initial to shield her identity, quit school after sixth grade. She helped her parents plant corn and beans but dreamed of something better for herself and her infant son; she decided to leave him in her mother's care and support him from afar. Javier was from the same region, and because he finished work early, he cooked for her while she was still out in the Florida sun. The food was delicious and tasted like home. Soon they were a couple, and then Kelly was born, and her father, who fainted with anxiety in the birthing room, adored her, and she adored him back.

"He's late from work," T. told her daughter.

But Kelly wasn't having it. Before heading to school that morning, she saw uniformed men come to the door and ask her mother for her father's passport; she heard her mother on the phone, asking what had happened, what to do. "Don't lie to me," Kelly said, and started to cry. "Where did they take him? What did he do?"

By now T. knew. One of her first phone calls was to an immigrant advocate and former refugee named Nora Sándigo, who, in this poor area south of Miami, was the most powerful person in many people's worlds: She knew lawyers, county commissioners, even members of Congress. After T. called her, Sándigo quickly discovered that Javier had been detained by the Department of Homeland Security. T. didn't tell Kelly the details she had learned from Sándigo, or from Javier, when he was finally able to make a brief call. That they arrested him just a few yards away from their home, as he stood waiting for his ride to work. That now he was on the edge of the Everglades, in a gray-and-tan detention center adjacent to a

state prison, a half-hour's drive away, a distance that, for T., had suddenly become unbridgeable. "He was arrested," she told Kelly, simply. "We have no papers to be here, like you do."

"Will they take me, too?" Kelly asked. She didn't know what papers her mother was talking about, what this thing was that she had and her parents didn't.

T. didn't tell her daughter the other reason she called Sándigo. Across South Florida, T. knew, undocumented parents of citizen children were preparing for possible deportation by signing power-of-attorney forms that allowed Sándigo to step in should their own parenthood be interrupted by a surprise visit from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE. If they were taken away, at least Norita, as they called her, could provide stability while the family sorted out what to do; she could also sign forms on their children's behalf at school, or at the hospital, or in federal court.

Sándigo's responsibilities extended to many hundreds of children, and were growing all the time. Parents, some of whom had never met her in person, were desperate for any solution. Her qualifications were simple. She was compassionate. She was willing. And, like their children, she was a United States citizen.

For years, T. never felt the need for such an extreme contingency plan. Now she was thinking of adding her own children to Sándigo's list. "Imagine if they detained me too," she said after Javier was gone. She couldn't envision taking her American children with her to Mexico, where she "wouldn't be able to give them education, shoes, clothes," and where they would be separated from their friends and lives and ambitions, from the only home they had ever known. But what would happen if they stayed behind, with no parents left to care for them?

Gifts for children in the home of Nora Sándigo, a former Nicaraguan refugee now living in Florida.

There's a common misconception that having a citizen child — a so-called anchor baby — allows undocumented parents to gain legal status in the United States. In fact, parents of citizen children are deported annually by the tens of thousands, according to ICE's own reports to Congress. Randy Capps, a demographer with the Migration Policy Institute, estimates that as many as a quarter of the people deported from the United States interior (who are counted separately from those deported at a border) are the parents of American children. Though immigration law prioritizes family connections, including legal status for the family members of Americans who petition on their behalf, children are the exception. They cannot, by law, petition for anyone until they turn 21 — by which time, of course, they won't need their parents nearly as much.

Families like Kelly's are known as "mixed status" — a reminder that the way we talk about immigration, with clear lines of legality separating groups of people, is often a fantasy. The reality is a world of families with separate legal statuses but intertwined fates. More than four million American children are estimated to have a parent in the country illegally. If deported, those parents face a difficult choice: Take their children to a country they do not know, whose language they may not speak and one that lacks the security and opportunities they have in the United States; or leave them behind, dividing the family. Courts have regularly responded to the argument that a parent's deportation will deny a child, as one lawyer put it, "the right which she has as an American citizen to continue to reside in the United States," with the counterargument that such children are not, in fact, deprived, because they retain the right to stay in their country and the right to live with their parents — just not both at the same time. "That's what I call a choiceless choice," says David B. Thronson, a professor at the Michigan State University College of Law, who helped found the Immigration Law Clinic.

But it's a choice that's familiar to millions of families, including Sándigo's. "I lived that," she said one day when I met her at her office in the suburbs of Miami, a one-story stucco house that serves as the headquarters of the Nora Sándigo Children Foundation. When she was 16, her parents sent her away from Nicaragua to escape the violence of its civil war; her family, she says, was targeted for opposing the Sandinistas. "I feel like I am one of those kids," she continued, "because I came with the same problem. I had my father and mother, but I was an orphan without them. Separate from their parents, they become orphans, like me." She remembers sobbing as she watched the country of her birth recede from the plane window.

When she left Nicaragua, Sándigo went to Venezuela, then France, "trying to get something legal," and in 1988 finally ended up in the United States, where the organization that helped her settle here offered her a job working with other refugees from Central America and advocating for their asylum. The Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act was passed in 1997. In Miami, she helped other immigrants with paperwork and resettlement matters, like looking for apartments or jobs. She also started a business of small nursing homes, which, along with a plant nursery, helps cover her foundation's bills. She never went back to Nicaragua, not even when her father was dying. He told her to stay in the United States and be safe. It was her country now, he said.

As Sándigo's reputation grew, it became common for strangers in Miami's immigrant communities to seek her out, asking for help; the requests opened Sándigo's eyes to the depth of people's need. She remembers bringing six towels to a woman with five children, who was shocked at the abundance: "So many!"

One call, in 2006, was for a new kind of assistance: A Peruvian woman, whom Sándigo had never met, was being held in a detention center, and she wanted to give Sándigo power of attorney to make decisions about her children's care. (Unlike full legal guardianship, which is conferred by a court, power-of-attorney forms don't involve a transfer of parental rights.) Others in the center had warned her that if she didn't do something, she might lose her children to the child welfare system. Sándigo doesn't know why the woman thought of her, but she felt honored, and obligated, by her trust: "When she called she had the papers signed and notarized already in my name."

The Peruvian woman's children never called on Sándigo, but word of what she had done got out. In 2009, a brother and sister, ages 9 and 11, showed up at Sándigo's door with their uncle; their mother, they said, was in detention, and they weren't going to eat until she was released. Sándigo remembers the oldest, Cecia, now a student at Georgetown University,

Photographs by Christopher Morris/VII, for The New York Times

A few of the 1,252 American citizens, at last count, who may someday need Sándigo's help.

saying, "We'll stay with you," to which she replied, "But this is an office, baby." Still, she made a place for them. Jerryann, one of Sándigo's two biological daughters, recalled: "You were like, 'Oh, they're going to stay the night.' And then one night became forever." The children moved in — they ended up staying for six years — the case attracted a lot of publicity and soon there was a steady stream of requests. "That gave the perception to the people, probably, that I was accepting the power of attorney from everyone in the same situation," Sándigo said.

Many of the people who contacted Sándigo wanted only a temporary backup, a documented adult whom their kids could call in the moment of crisis to avoid ending up in the child-welfare system. According to an ICE spokeswoman, "ICE is committed to ensuring that the agency's immigration-enforcement activities, including detention and removal, do not unnecessarily disrupt the parental rights of alien parents and legal guardians of minor children." But navigating the immigration and child-welfare systems simultaneously can be difficult. Emily Butera, a senior policy adviser at the Women's Refugee Commission, told me that many parents have come to believe that they will lose their rights automatically: "We've started explicitly saying to people, 'Your children are not the property of the U.S. government.'"

Other parents planned for their children to stay with their undocumented friends or relatives, but wanted Sándigo to sign papers or fill official roles that they couldn't. Still others hoped that their children would live with her, maybe for the remainder of their childhoods — something Sándigo wasn't promising and worried that people assumed she was. But still, she never said no. When people came to her looking for help, Sándigo found it impossible to deny them. The numbers grew into the dozens, and then to the hundreds. "We never planned this," Sándigo said one day. "It was planned by nobody. It just came."

After the election of President Trump, who proposed a border wall and tighter enforcement of immigration law, more families than ever began asking for Sándigo's help. Some parents wanted her to be their child's backup guardian, while others simply wanted advice or help understanding what they called *la carta poder* — the power letter. "Hello Señora," one message read in unpunctuated, hurried Spanish. "I live in North Carolina and I live in fear and stress what do I do I have three children and I don't go out and my husband does what can we do." Sándigo, now 52, tried to keep up with all the new requests for help and advice but shook her head at how often she failed. Several times, I saw her taking two calls at once, a cellphone held to each ear.

In April, a volunteer updated Sándigo's spreadsheet of names and, before she had finished, showed Sándigo a number that made her quail. "We are now at 1,089!" she gasped — more than a thousand kids who might call her at any moment to say that their parents were gone and they needed help figuring out what to do. "I don't want to say that," Sándigo said. "It's too much! Too many kids, in the last few months with Mr. Trump. The increase is incredible." The latest count is 1,252.

Sándigo's office is decorated with American and Nicaraguan flags and pictures of her — in neat makeup, her long auburn hair worn loose — meeting various politicians. Beyond the public spaces are two emergency bedrooms, their shelves filled with picture books and SAT prep guides, and a hallway stacked with beans and rice and diapers and condensed milk.

The filing cabinets in her office are filled with photos and birth certificates and power-of-attorney letters. She opened one drawer of one cabinet and began flipping through folders of families, some of whom she still knew and some she'd never met and had only heard from once, in the form of a packet of documents and a note asking for help in case something happened. "If they call me," she said, "I will go immediately." Responsibilities looked back at her: a toddler asleep on a Looney Tunes pillow; an 11-year-old girl in a headband sitting up rod-straight; a chubby boy in a yellow baseball uniform. She pointed to a name in a folder marked "Ramírez," with a Post-it note on the outside: *"madre deportada* (2007)." The boy, she said, stayed in the country with his father. He was now an adult and a professional, and after 10 years his mother was able to return.

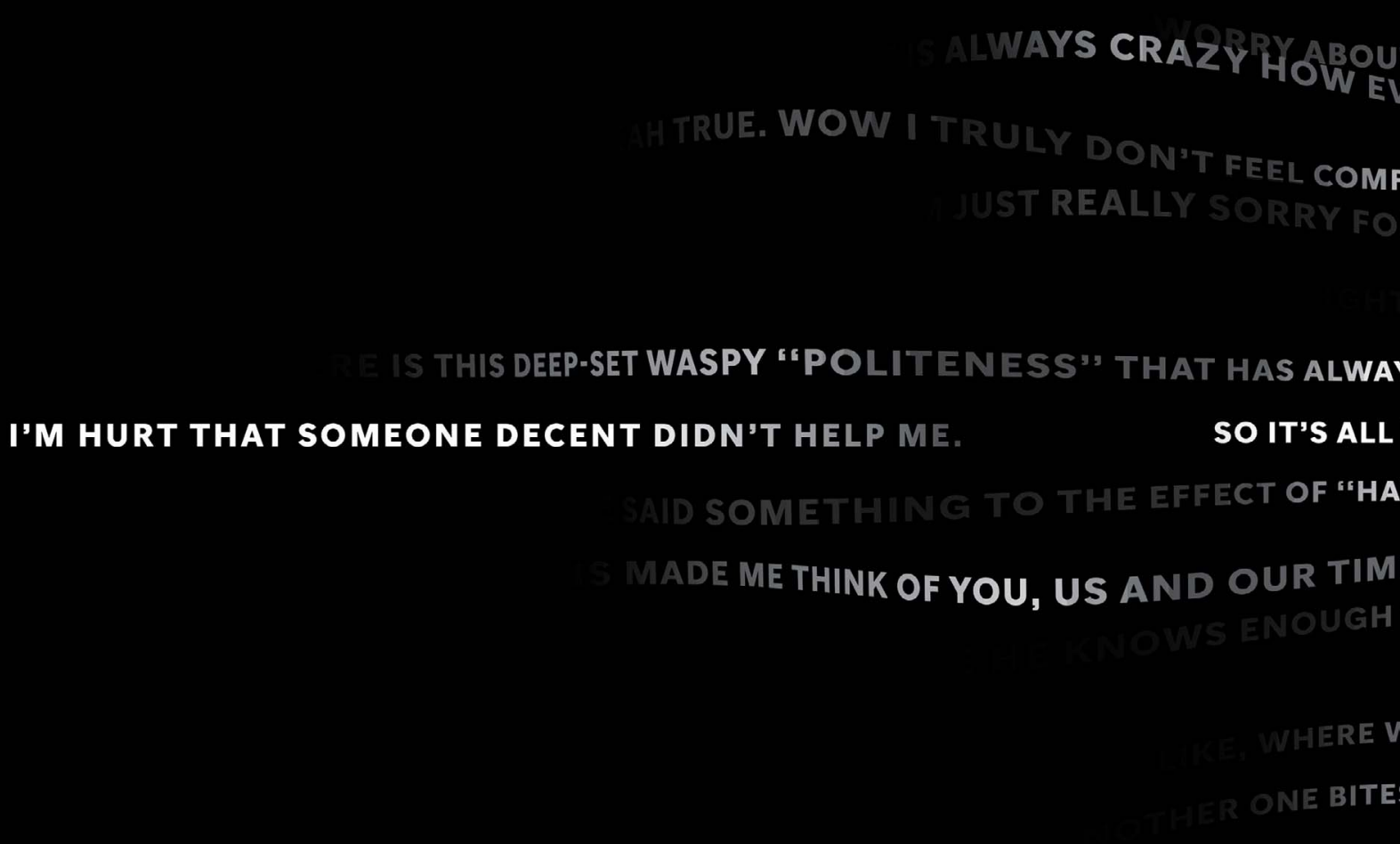
The chance that many of these children would need her help all at once seemed higher now. In the past, it was unusual for ICE to deport both parents of a child — fathers were more common — but the immigrants Sándigo knew feared that the rules were changing. The same month that ICE reported that its arrest of noncriminals had doubled under the new administration, a mother of four with no criminal record — someone who in previous years wouldn't have been a priority for enforcement — was deported from Ohio. Sándigo saw the possible future of her charges. She estimates that perhaps a third of the children on her list have already had at least one parent deported. What if there were a sudden wave of children who needed her?

"That could happen anytime," Sándigo's husband, Reymundo Otero, told her one day. "It's for real, you know."

Sándigo did know. "I don't have enough time or resources even for the first hundred kids," Sándigo said. "Even for the first 10!"

It was dark when Sándigo pulled up to a small house where Kelly's mother and seven other parents were waiting under a carport with their children. She was running late, as usual; she'd had to wait at the office for a donor. Kelly's mother told her that a number of parents, who got up early to work before the sun became too hot, had already left.

Sándigo began pulling donated clothes out of her minivan. With Sándigo was one of her wards, 16-year-old Ritibh, who was helping unload groceries. He was born in Washington State, but his parents were deported to India when he was 9. They were caught, he said, at a checkpoint while driving him to Disneyland. Though he had moved to India with them, he dreamed of finishing high school in the United States and going to the Naval Academy, so he contacted Sándigo on Facebook and asked her to take him in. He was sure she'd say no, that her famous helpfulness must be a scam. He had now been living with her for nearly eight months, and they had developed an easy rapport; he likes to help with family-support work, which often keeps them up late into the night. That evening, fueled by *(Continued on Page 63)*



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AS REVELATIONS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT BREAK, WOMEN HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING THE FALLOUT AND HOW TO MOVE FORWARD. HERE, WORKING WOMEN — FROM WRITERS AND ARTISTS TO THOSE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE MILITARY — TAKE ON THIS COMPLICATED CONVERSATION.

WE WERE LEFT OUT
BY JENNA WORTHAM

"Revolution will come in a form we cannot yet imagine," the critical theorists Fred Moten and Stefano Harney wrote in their 2013 essay "The Undercommons," about the need to radically upend hierarchical institutions. I thought of their prophecy in October, when a private document listing allegations of sexual harassment and abuse by dozens of men in publishing and media surfaced online.

The list — a Google spreadsheet initially shared exclusively among women, who could anonymously add to it — was created in the immediate aftermath of reports about sexual assault by Harvey Weinstein. The atmosphere among female journalists was thick with the tension of watching the press expose the moral wrongs of Hollywood while neglecting to interrogate our own. The existence of the list suggested that things were worse than we even imagined, given all that it revealed. It was horrifying to see the names of colleagues and friends — people you had mingled with at parties and accepted drinks from — accused of heinous acts.

A few days after the list appeared, I was in a van with a half dozen other women of color, riding through the desert on our way to a writing retreat. All of us worked in media; most of us had not realized the extent to which harassment polluted our industry. Whisper networks, in which women share secret warnings via word of mouth, require women to tell others whom to avoid and whom to ignore. They are based on trust, and any social hierarchy is rife with the privilege of deciding who gets access to information. Perhaps we were perceived as outsiders, or maybe we weren't seen as vulnerable. We hadn't been invited to the happy hours or chats or email threads where such information is presumably shared. The list was F.T.B.T. — for them, by them — meaning, by white women about their experiences with the white men who made up a majority of the names on it. Despite my working in New York media for 10 years, it was my first "whisper" of any kind, a realization that felt almost as hurtful as reading the acts described on the list itself.

As a young business reporter, no one told me about the New York investor known for luring women out to meals under the guise of work. I found out the hard way. I realized he was a habitual boundary-crosser only after The New York Observer reported on him in 2010. Most recently, after I complained in a media chat room about a man who harassed a friend at a birthday party, everyone chimed in to say that he was a known creep. I was infuriated. That information never made its way to me, and worse, it was taken as a given. Was keeping that secret hidden worth the trauma it caused my friend?

The list's flaws were immediately apparent. It felt too public, volatile and vulnerable to manipulation. But its recklessness was born out of desperation. It detonated the power and labor dynamics that whisper networks reinforce. Information, once privileged to a select few, became decentralized and accessible to all. And the problem of sexual harassment no longer belonged solely to women to filter and share.

Once the list leaked beyond its initial audience and men became aware of it, it was effectively shut down. But who knows what would have happened if it lasted longer? Maybe a better mechanism for warning and reporting harassment could have been finessed; it's clear we still need one. Even now, amid the torrent of reports of sexual misconduct, women of color are conspicuously absent. It's still not safe enough for many of us to name our abusers in public.

But during the initial hours after the list's publication, when it still felt secret, for women only, I moved through the world differently. The energy in the air felt charged, like after the siren goes off in the "Purge" movies. A friend compared the feeling to the final scenes of "V for Vendetta." She liked seeing women as digital vigilantes, knowing that men were scared. I did, too. I wanted every single man put on notice, to know that they, too, were vulnerable because women were talking. Maybe, within that, we glimpsed the possibility of a new world order, like the one Moten and Harney gestured at. The list was not long for this world, but it might have lived long enough to prove its point. ◆

Typography by Jessica Svendsen and Ben Barry

JUST LIKE THE MOVIES
BY RUTH FRANKLIN

"My natural tendency is to observe, not to ask questions," I wrote in my journal during the spring of my senior year of high school. I had just started a six-week internship at a local newspaper, and it wasn't going well. At 16, I knew I wanted to be a writer, and journalism seemed the obvious route. But my natural shyness held me back.

One day at the diner where all the reporters hung out, my supervisor introduced me to a colleague. "This is a famous man," she said with more than a touch of sarcasm. Thirty-two years old and stocky as a bantam rooster, he had shaggy black hair and intense eyes. I recognized his byline — he had just published an article about an elderly eccentric that detoured through his own obsessions, from the bluesmen of the Mississippi Delta to the traces of his childhood.

We talked about ghosts and the poetry of Octavio Paz. He gave me one of his own short stories to read and seemed to care what I thought. Soon I was accompanying him around town in his cluttered hatchback on the hunt for local characters. I thought I had finally found a model to emulate. "Maybe I have reporter potential after all," I wrote.

On those car rides, we talked about writing but also about our personal lives. I was an alienated teenager, feverish to graduate and leave my family behind. He was divorced with young kids and working hard to support them. Sometimes when we were sitting next to each other, he pressed his arm against mine. On a picnic in a city park where more than a few passers-by recognized him, he confessed that he was infatuated with me. All that restrained him, he said, was my age. His sexual energy was palpable and a little bit terrifying. I wasn't attracted to him physically, and I told him so. But I was entranced by his

INA JANG

"THESE SETS OF EYES ARE CUTOUTS FROM A JAPANESE GRAVURE MAGAZINE (EQUIVALENT TO PLAYBOY).
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TRACY MA

"OUR INNER DIALOGUES REVEAL SOMETHING ABOUT OUR COLLECTIVE THINKING: THAT IN OUR PUBLIC LIVES, AND IN THE WORKPLACE ESPECIALLY, WE OFTEN USE THIS TYPE OF LANGUAGE TO EXCUSE, RATHER THAN CONFRONT, NEGATIVE BEHAVIORS."

independent-mindedness, his nostalgic longing for an earlier age, even his affectations. More than that, he seemed to believe in my potential as a writer.

He often recommended books and movies, but one in particular sticks with me: "Manhattan," perhaps the most notorious depiction of one of Woody Allen's favorite paradigms, the pairing of an older man and a much younger woman. The parallels between our situation and this fable of romance between a divorced writer (Isaac) and a high school student (Tracy) couldn't have been more obvious. But I was struck by the movie's falseness. The script requires Tracy to be the ardent one, continually pressing Isaac for a commitment he won't offer. (Indeed, midway through the film he dumps her, to his later regret, for a journalist closer to his age.) Yet Mariel Hemingway portrays Tracy as perfectly blank, her moonlike face virtually without expression, even in the most emotional scenes. The film is only about Isaac: his needs and desires. If Tracy is entertaining questions or doubts beneath the surface, we're not privy to them.

At the time, I would have sworn that what was happening between me and this reporter was consensual. Now, more than 25 years later, I understand more clearly how incompletely the idea of consent conveys the complexity of such a dynamic. Yes, I flirted with him and enjoyed the power of knowing that he desired me. But in the end I needed him more than he needed me, because he offered something I wasn't finding elsewhere. For a brief period, he gave me confidence. As his behavior became more aggressive — putting his hand on my leg, asking to kiss me — I started to pull away. He reacted with anger and petulance, and things between us curdled. A few years later, he depicted me in a story published in a popular anthology as a spoiled, haughty Jewish-American princess who is the subject of crude sexual fantasies.

The stories we tell ourselves aren't just entertainment; books and movies — still more often by men — work to establish archetypes for romantic relationships. They constitute our personal and cultural mythology and are essential to the way we understand our world. A man whose interest is piqued by a 16-year-old girl has a ready-made formula for how that relationship might proceed. The very fact that such a model exists offers tacit permission for him to treat his wants as valid. For the girl who tries to enter the story on her own terms, there are two models: the receptive vessel or the Lolita-like temptress. Ambivalence and fear simply don't enter into it.

I'm now more than 10 years older than this man was when we met. I've worked in journalism for close to two decades. But I spent the early years of my career anxious, questioning, in search of a validation that I couldn't define. That wasn't only his fault — I was primed to respond to him the way I did by things that happened long before he came around. Still, the power imbalance in our relationship led me, however unconsciously, to continue seeking legitimation in a man's eyes. I don't regret those afternoons driving around town, listening to him ask questions, watching him take notes: They're part of my story as a writer. But I wish that he, as the adult in the room, had looked past his emotions to consider what would have been best for me, an impressionable teenager who admired him and craved his instruction and his approval, if not his affections. And I wish that my intellectual formation hadn't had to be so inextricably entwined with a man's assessment of my value. ◆

WHEN THE FOG LIFTS
BY MEGHAN O'ROURKE

When I became sick with a mysterious illness nearly a decade ago, doctors kept telling me nothing was wrong. I lived for years in a fog not only of pain but also of self-doubt, questioning my own perceptions. It is difficult to articulate how distorting this fundamental distrust of your own subjectivity is, how distorting it was to accommodate myself to a hobbled, painful reality. When my illness was finally named by a physician, my world changed: It could be addressed. And just as important, I no longer felt that my grasp on reality was tenuous.

The conversations I've had with my female friends in the weeks since widespread allegations of sexual abuse and harassment have come out — by text messages, over drinks, while minding young children toddling in and out of the kitchen — have circled around a contradiction: We knew, and yet we didn't know; we were sure, and yet we doubted ourselves. For years, we lived in a climate of uncertainty created by the routine institutional denial that harassment was taking place, actions that went unnamed and dismissed, the scores of "open secrets" in plain sight yet not seen. Then, overnight, it seemed, a shift in our accounting took place. We'd been returned to a shared reality.

We think of our perceptions as being uniquely our own — the very stuff that makes us distinctive individuals. But perception is more dependent on a fine social web of recognition than we like to think. And when it came to sexual harassment, we were, in a sense, all guilty of participating in what social psychologists call the bystander effect, in which people are less likely to offer help to someone in distress if there are other people present, especially if the others are passive. In one striking 1968 study, subjects filled out a questionnaire in a room slowly filling with smoke. When alone, 75 percent of subjects reported smelling smoke. But when "two passive confederates" of the experimenters were planted in the room and behaved as if nothing were wrong, only 10 percent of the subjects reported smelling the smoke or left the room. (Shockingly, nine of 10 subjects "kept working on the questionnaire they were given, rubbed their eyes and waved smoke out of their faces," the Socially Psyched website recounts.)

In groups, we watch to see what others do and follow suit. By its nature, sexual harassment depends on a social agreement about where we draw lines and how we interpret injury. It wasn't until the 1980s that "unwelcome sexual advances" and the creation of a "hostile or offensive work environment" came to be considered illegal under the federal protections that derive from Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which legislates against discrimination on the basis of sex, race and religion. "Unwelcome," "hostile": These adjectives are by definition descriptive — dependent on a consensus of shared reality, evaluated legally on a case-by-case basis. And a shared reality is, sadly, just what so many of us know that we don't have, even now. In an encounter between two people, the shadows of subjectivity always determine how the light looks: bright and revealing, or dark and eerie. And when it comes to encounters in the workplace, there are genuine questions of scale, lines in the sand to draw — what is just a clumsy pass? What is actual harassment?

This moment of reckoning has helped women who have been victimized

— even in subtle ways — name what had been happening to them; at the same time, it has made the most culpable bystanders feel less certain — a productive redistribution of uncertainty, possibly. Many people, especially men, are asking themselves if they are complicit in what has been taking place and examining their own past behavior to see whether they have ever made a woman uncomfortable. There are, after all, two kinds of uncertainty: the self-doubt created by withheld truths and the self-doubt created by a genuine need to re-evaluate. It may not be such a bad thing if more men walk through the world feeling that they don't have all the answers. ◆

KNOW YOUR POWER
BY ZOE HELLER

I'm disappointed that the story has remained focused so squarely on the villainous doings of the metropolitan elites. I was never under any illusion that this was the beginning of the end of the patriarchy, but I had hopes that there would be more of a ripple effect, that we would begin hearing about sexual harassment and abuse in the farm industry, in fast food, in retail, in hotel housekeeping. It's delightful that the chickens are coming home to roost for powerful old guys in the entertainment industry, and yet for large sections of the country, I suspect, the toppling of Harvey Weinstein and others has played less as a "Matrix moment" — a sudden unmasking of the country's sexist power structures — than as an old-fashioned morality tale about debauched big-city snoots finally getting their comeuppance.

Instead of moving outward, much of the conversation among women on social media has been taken up with identifying and decrying lesser forms of male misconduct — dirty jokes, unsolicited shoulder massages, compliments on physical appearance. It is inevitable that in the great outpouring of female wrath, minor grievances, as well as major ones, should have emerged. And hostile work environments aren't built on violent sexual assault alone. Nevertheless, we seem to have wound up spending an inordinate amount of time parsing the injurious effects of low-level lechery on relatively advantaged women. Part of the problem with these conversations is that the injuries sustained by a creepy comment or a lewd remark are largely subjective. It's fine to demand that men stop being brutes, but it helps if there is some consensus on what qualifies as brutishness. As it turns out, my unexceptionable office banter is your horrifying insult, and your innocuous flirtation is another's undermining insinuation. (I remember thinking guiltily during the Anita Hill hearings that a joke about a pubic hair on a Coke can didn't sound *that* awful to me.) It seems neither likely nor desirable that we will succeed in banishing all sexual *frisson* from the workplace. And we know that many happy romances and marriages have originated on factory lines and in conference rooms. Given that the burden of making the first move traditionally lies with men, and given that it's not always possible to gauge whether an advance is unwanted until someone makes it, there is good reason to question whether everything that is now being deemed misconduct has come from the same well of dastardly male entitlement.

An argument that has kept cropping up in recent weeks, one that will be familiar to those who have followed the debates about campus rape, is that even in the absence of force or explicit threat, the suggestive comments or sexual advances of a male colleague are implicitly coercive. A woman's ability to register her opprobrium, or to say "No, thank you," is always compromised by her fear of repercussions, or by her youth, or simply by her female impulse to placate. The danger with this a priori assumption of women's diminished agency is that it ends up exaggerating female vulnerability. It casts women as fundamentally fragile beings, whose sexual assent, like that of minors, cannot be trusted to indicate true consent. It presents female passivity as natural. There's no doubt that women, particularly younger ones, have a tendency to go along with things they don't want to — to say yes when they really mean no — but that propitiatory tendency is not some incorrigible feature of the female character, any more than predation is the incorrigible inclination of men. And we do women a disservice by treating it as if it is. This is not about blaming the victim; it's about pointing out to the potential victim that she has more power than she knows.

Several times in recent weeks, I've read and heard people asserting that older women like me, women who came of age before the Anita Hill hearings in 1991, are generally more accepting of sexual harassment and less sympathetic to women who complain about it. (This, it's claimed, is because we grew up with lower expectations of male behavior and feel that the young should endure as stoically as we did.) I would characterize the generational divide differently. I think older women are, by and large, more reluctant to squander women's hard-won right to sexual autonomy by characterizing themselves as helpless and in need of special protection. I think they are more likely to see "power dynamics" between individuals as complicated, fluid and not necessarily reducible to age and status differentials. I think they are also — although this is less a generational difference than a function of age — much better at telling men where to get off. ◆

POLICE DETECTIVE
'NOBODY WANTS TO BE A RAT'

In the 20-plus years I've been on the job, our department has truly changed. When I first came on the job, it was awful. In the '80s and early '90s, the male police force really did not want women there; women were "ruining the L.A.P.D." That sentiment was very strong. And if I had made a formal complaint, I would have been called your typical woman, you can't trust her, she's gonna roll on you, and then nobody wants to work with you, and it's just the kiss of death.

There's definitely a cultural shift that makes the men hired today who are in their 20s quite different. At the patrol level, I think guys and gals get along just fine. The biggest issue we have in terms of sexual harassment is that even though there are procedures for reporting, nobody really wants to do anything. Supervisors, the ombuds office, everyone just wants it to go away. "Well, you know, he didn't mean anything by it; let's just move on." So things fester and then blow up. I've seen it over and over again. If you look at the lawsuits against the L.A.P.D., I think half the complaints are internal, not some outside person who got roughed up by the police. So they've been trying to teach us to report anything we see. The problem is nobody wants to be a rat.

I actually think the higher you rise among the ranks, the more likely you are to encounter harassment, because coveted positions are at play. If you look at our top-cop management, it's still very male, and those guys have been around for a couple of decades. They came on in the '70s or early '80s, so they're still carrying those attitudes. I'll give you an example: There was a captain who got a woman promoted from Detective II to Detective III — a very coveted position. It was discovered through an internal-affairs investigation that she had performed sexual acts on him. That, to me, smells a lot like Hollywood: Hey, if you really want this part, you do certain things to me, and I can make it happen. Weinstein, Kevin Spacey, Roy Moore or a captain at the L.A.P.D. — what do they all have in common? They have the ability to make or break lives. They hold the key to things that other people want, so I think that's the common denominator; the psychology of that man is the same.

AS TOLD TO KATHY DOBIE

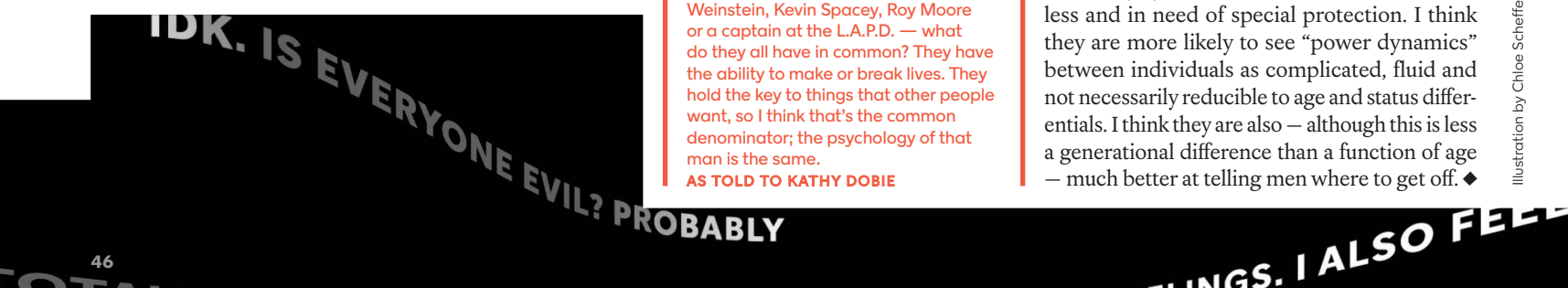


Illustration by Chloe Scheffe

RACHEL PERRY

"THE WORLD HAS TURNED UPSIDE DOWN, AND IT BEGAN WITH ONE TRUE VOICE."

THE CONVERSATION

CAN WORKPLACE CULTURE REALLY BE CHANGED? WE BROUGHT TOGETHER SEVEN WOMEN TO DISCUSS QUESTIONS OF SEX, POWER, AMBITION AND FAIRNESS.

AMANDA HESS is a David Carr fellow at The New York Times, where she writes about internet culture. ANITA HILL is a professor of social policy, law and women's and gender studies at Brandeis University. In 1991, she testified in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee during Clarence Thomas's Supreme Court confirmation hearing. LAURA KIPNIS is a professor at Northwestern University and the author, most recently, of "Unwanted Advances: Sexual Paranoia Comes to Campus." SOLEDAD O'BRIEN anchors and produces the Hearst Television political-magazine program "Matter of Fact With Soledad O'Brien." She has won three Emmys, among other awards. LYNN POVICH is the author of "The Good Girls Revolt," the story of the gender-discrimination complaint that she and other women brought against Newsweek in 1970. She was the editor in chief of Working Woman. DANYEL SMITH is senior editor of culture at ESPN's The Undefeated. She was the editor of Billboard and the editor in chief of the music magazine Vibe. Moderated by EMILY BAZELON, a staff writer for The New York Times Magazine and the Truman Capote fellow at Yale Law School.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

EMILY BAZELON: Sexual harassment has been clearly against the law since the 1980s. The Supreme Court said in 1986 that employers couldn't let one employee create a hostile work environment for another or base advancement on a quid pro quo for sex. And we had what I might call a kind of mini revolution in the early '90s after Anita's testimony about Clarence Thomas before the Senate Judiciary Committee. Women saw that all-white-and-male array of senators, and there was an uprising. We got mad, and we fought back. More women entered politics, and more engaged in politics. I think a lot of people felt as if we were making progress.

And yet here we are, many years later, and we're having another, bigger moment of reckoning. We're hearing new stories every day about men abusing their power at work in some sexual manner. Some of us are feeling radicalized — there's a sense that a lot more needs to change in a fundamental way. Why is this all happening now?

ANITA HILL: After 1991, there were a number of other high-profile Supreme Court decisions on sexual harassment, and many of them were very helpful. But there wasn't a legal consciousness among most people that certain behavior was against the law. Now, some people may know that sexual extortion or abuse in the workplace is illegal, but they may not be convinced that it should be or that they will be punished for such behavior. I would say that in addition to the enormity of the revelations, the media's real engagement in covering this issue today from the front page to the style section to the business section to the sports section is probably why we're having such a great consciousness-raising moment.

Amanda Hess

SOLEDAD O'BRIEN: It's not always about what's legal. Twenty years ago, young women would come to me and say, "This thing is happening at work," and I felt it essential to tell them what the fallout could be. To say: "Let me explain to you what the H.R. department is about. They work for the company. Their goal is to protect the company's financial interests. Here's what will happen: You will become the person who complained. You'll become a pariah. All of your good reviews will become perfectly average reviews, which will then become bad reviews. And then eventually — not immediately — you will be let go for some reason, if you haven't been worn out and already quit." I've seen it many times.

LAURA KIPNIS: Here's a historical and political way of looking at the current moment. There have been, roughly speaking, two divergent tendencies in the struggle for women's rights that come together in the issue of workplace harassment, which is why I think this all seems so significant. If you look at the history of feminism, going back to the 19th century, you've got, on the one hand, the struggle for what I'd call civic rights: the right to employment, the right to vote, to enter politics and public life. On the other side, there's the struggle for women to have autonomy over our own bodies, meaning access to birth control, activism around rape, outlawing marital rape and the fight for abortion rights. What we're seeing now is the incomplete successes in both of these areas converging. We've never entirely attained civic equality. We've never entirely attained autonomy over our bodies. Which is why the right not to be sexually harassed in the workplace is the next important frontier in equality for women.

LYNN POVICH: Many of us in the second wave of feminists thought that if you put the laws on the books, they would be enforced. So there was some legal

This conversation has been edited and condensed.

consciousness at the time, Anita, that you were testifying. But we then realized that you can't legislate attitude; you can't legislate culture. And I think that's why this is such an amazing turning point.

AMANDA HESS: I almost feel like every generation needs to have its moment of public reckoning. I was 6 years old in 1991. I didn't learn about the Clarence Thomas hearings and sexual harassment in high school. Then in college, I definitely had some weird experiences with professors, and boys were terrible, but I didn't have a consciousness about what that might mean for me as a woman in the world. I really felt that when it came to the life of the mind, I was equal to men. When I started in the work force, sexual harassment to me was a dumb video I had to watch. Only once I experienced it did I realize that it was a present phenomenon. I worked in college as a messenger at a law firm, and one of my managers there would make comments about my body and bring me to the office computer to show me porn. I was so surprised and naïve, I guess, that I didn't say anything. I spoke up only after a female manager pulled me aside and asked about him — I guess someone else in the office had complained.

DANYEL SMITH: It's disheartening to hear Amanda talk about having nothing to look back on. I'm having an amazing career. I don't have a lot to complain about. But if I were to start complaining, sexual harassment and gender discrimination would probably be at the top of the list. As a more junior person, I can remember having problems and going to my boss, and whether it was a sympathetic man or woman, the immediate response was always fear. You can see it on their face. You feel like you've just walked into some kind of haunted house. It's basically, "Girl, why did you come in here with this?"

And then as a leader, man, you always try extremely hard not to be that person. You succeed in not panicking. You listen hard, and with empathy and concern. You try not to let worrying possibilities show on your face. You want to be totally present for that person. But in the past, especially as a younger manager, I've been scared for both of us.

Anita Hill

'THERE ARE BIG COSTS FOR BEING ASSERTIVE, FOR ASSERTING YOUR OWN PERSON, YOUR OWN BODY.'

SEX AND DESIRE

BAZELON: Is anyone at this table ready for a rule: No more sex in the workplace?

O'BRIEN: What is sex in the workplace? Is that the guy who hugs you, and you're like: You know what? I hate when that dude hugs me. Is that the person who tries to peer down your blouse? Or is sex in the office literally your boss saying: "Hey, let's get it on! Close the door."

POVICH: We can't ban sex in the workplace. I met my husband at work. I know a lot of people who met their mates at work.

SMITH: If you're spending eight, 10, 12 hours a day with people, you're going on the road with people, you're going on location with people, you're going to lunches with people, you're going on work retreats with people, the only time sometimes you're even at home is to go to sleep. For so many people, your whole social life is caught up in your workplace.

POVICH: I do think there should be rules about banning relationships between a supervisor and an employee who reports to him or her — and many companies have policies about that. And then you have to talk about power. If there is consent, are we saying consent is not enough? How do you define power? In the cases of Roger Ailes and Harvey Weinstein, they had ultimate power. But what if two people work in different departments, but one person is more powerful than another? Say, a doctor and a nurse's aide? It's complicated.

HESS: I think one of the issues is that you can enter into a relationship consensually with someone who has more power than you. But it's a different thing when you want to exit the relationship — and then it puts you in a bind.

KIPNIS: But that's pretty much the reality of life. There are always going be hierarchies in relationships, and there are going to be male-female hierarchies until we someday manage to overcome that situation. I think what's necessary in the meantime is transparency about the power relations, so that the less powerful person is protected if or when things go wrong, as they invariably do when you get together with someone you work with. Been there! In academia, it's actually very common to have couples teaching in the same department, and it's just a matter of course that people don't participate in personnel decisions if they've been romantically involved with the person. I don't see why that can't happen in other kinds of workplaces. I'd rather overdo it on transparency than overregulate our lives and prohibit workplace romances out of some misguided fantasy of universal fairness.

BAZELON: If it's just human that sex is part of the mix in the workplace, what do we do about the reality that some people will benefit as a result, while others get passed over?

HESS: Wait — is being sexy a workplace skill? To me, that's insane. I've never thought of that as something that I should cultivate in order to get ahead.

O'BRIEN: I think that maybe being sexy is not the right way to put it, but I would say being fun, being a get-along kind of person, laughing at a joke, understanding when someone sends a silly flirty message that you're not automatically offended. There was a guy that I worked with, and he sent me a note, "Let's get a room at the Carlyle." And I had just had a baby, and I was so tired, and I said: "God, I would love a room at the Carlyle. I'll tell you what — I will go and sleep by myself for eight hours." If I had said, "I am offended," that would not have worked. Absolutely not. I'd be perceived as not being a team player. Not fun. "You certainly don't want

Photographs by Hannah Whitaker for The New York Times

her on your next project."

BAZELON: When that guy emailed you, did he really mean, Let's go get a room? Like, Let's go have sex?

O'BRIEN: Do I think he actually meant that? No, I do not. I think he was just being an idiot. That was his ridiculous banter, and here's my ridiculous banter back.

BAZELON: You didn't feel threatened?

O'BRIEN: Not at all. But he was not hierarchically above me. If my boss had sent me that exact same note, it would have been uncomfortable and problematic. I would have called three girlfriends and read the note to them over the phone to see how I felt about it and to figure out what to do. But that first guy was a peer, and part of navigating the workplace is to know how to come back with snappy repartee so that he would see that I'm fun, I'm not interested and let's move on.

Danyel Smith

REPORTING AND TRANSPARENCY

BAZELON: Anita, when you came forward to testify in the Senate hearing, there were actually three other women who were prepared to testify that they experienced or could corroborate harassment or unwanted attention from Clarence Thomas. But they were never called as witnesses. Even last year's TV movie about the confirmation hearings collapsed those characters into one woman, reducing the scope of the allegations once more. Your story, a foundational story for us about sexual harassment, has been passed down as a story about one woman, when actually there were these other women who were trying to stand with you. I wonder how you think about that.

HILL: Well, of course I think about it from a selfish point of view — that these were women I didn't know who had experienced or were confided in by someone who had experienced the same kind of behavior with Clarence Thomas that I had and could have added credibility to my testimony. But there was also a bigger concern: Those other three women's voices were being erased. They were being told their voices didn't matter. These were three African-American women, and I do believe that race played a part in the decision not to call them. It also sent the message to anyone else who was out there, who knew, who could have stepped up, that she shouldn't even bother.

What has allowed so many women to come forward recently is hearing other women coming forward. And they have a platform — social media — to do it. And unfortunately, we know that numbers matter. I just hope that we can get to the point where a woman can come forward on her own and one voice is valued.

'I CAN REMEMBER HAVING PROBLEMS AND GOING TO MY BOSS, AND WHETHER IT WAS A SYMPATHETIC MAN OR WOMAN, THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE WAS ALWAYS FEAR.'

BAZELON: I think the current moment has been one of amazing solidarity, where women are coming forward perhaps in part because they're trying to protect one another. I've been looking back on my own younger experiences of not reporting various things that happened to me because I thought: Well, I can handle this. I'll be O.K. That was part of my identity as a feminist — I wanted to think that I could stride on. But now I think about the other women who might have been affected by these men we left in place undisturbed, and I wonder about my own complicity, a word that writers like Rebecca Traister have used.

HILL: And if we're constantly saying, "Oh, I can handle this," how will we really know how much we are injured?

HESS: Minimizing bad behavior is a coping mechanism. It's how you survive. I've heard a lot of women who have come forward say: "I might not make a big deal about this if it's just me. But if I can say something that helps corroborate somebody else's story, then that's valuable."

POVICH: I've been thinking about this because one of the things that worked for us at Newsweek when we filed gender-discrimination charges against the magazine in 1970 was that we were 46 women. We talked to one another, and we organized. I get that actresses in Harvey Weinstein's world, they don't work for him; they're looking for a part. But at Fox News or NBC, there were a lot of women. And I assume if somebody's hitting on me, they're hitting on somebody else. And I'm not sure why early on some woman didn't say to a trusted friend, "Ugh, I just went into his office, and this happened." And why they didn't then start to document a pattern of sexual harassment and start to organize as a group of women to say, "This is unacceptable." It seems that many younger women, maybe until now, haven't had that sense of sisterhood or talking to one another as a group that we did during the women's movement.

HESS: Women still talk to one another. The women I know do, anyway. But it doesn't always result in collective action. One of the things that's happened in recent years is that even though women have gained footing in the workplace, workers in general have become less powerful in relation to employers. Unions have weakened, and corporate profits have risen. For the generation of women who entered the work force during the financial crisis, a job and career can feel incredibly tenuous. I think that can contribute to women feeling powerless.

O'BRIEN: Listen, here's the critical question: Someone sees someone else being harassed. Are they really going to go up against their boss, who likes them just fine? Are they going to put their career on the line? How many times have you been told by H.R. that this conversation is completely confidential, to find it repeated a million times? And then adding to the complication, you don't necessarily know what's going on — maybe she's into it kinda sorta, or maybe she seems to be laughing it off. I just don't know that a bystander is going to really do something that could jeopardize a career. Unless it's her sister, unless it's her best friend, I just don't see that happening.

Photographs by Hannah Whitaker for The New York Times

SMITH: It's all well and good to talk about the different ways that women can help one another and report, but I sit here and think, So now the women's friends are responsible for reporting this guy who's out here molesting people? Something that I think gets missed in these conversations, because people are so uncomfortable talking about the actual pain of women, is what it feels like to be in that moment of something happening to you. How hard it is to tell anybody, let alone tell an official of some kind. Lots of people are talking about the men who have lost their jobs — Oh, we're going to miss this anchor or that comedian. But I'm wondering, Who is talking about the women and what we're missing when they change jobs or careers after being harassed or abused? Who's talking about that awful moment of wondering: Should I go forward? Do I have the kind of job where people are going to listen to me? Am I worthy enough? Am I a good witness? Did I do something wrong? Was my skirt too short?

WHO SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR CHANGE?

POVICH: I think it's become clear over the last couple of months that many men feel privileged that they can just invade your space, invade your body. And I do think this is a moment where people have to become conscious that you simply cannot do that.

BAZELON: Will the current wave of consequences, which does seem unprecedented, be the thing that makes men think twice and desist?

O'BRIEN: I think for some people, for sure. I was having dinner with a business professor, and he was saying that he has completely rethought how he interacts with young women and that now he would never meet with a young woman in his office behind a closed door. So his reaction is, No one will ever be able to say that there was something untoward. I don't think that solves the problem or many of the problems we've been reading about — inappropriate touching or kissing. My argument to him was that there are plenty of ways you can mentor young women and not be alone in your office with them. You can meet with somebody in the cafeteria.

BAZELON: Do you worry about women losing out from boundaries like that?

SMITH: I worry about it all the time. I hate to say it, but I've had so many conversations with women I've managed over the years, before they go on the road. So often, they're going alone — to cover a band, to cover an artist. And I've said something to the effect of, "What we're not going to be doing on the road is we're not going to be putting ourselves in any potentially scary situations." What's stymieing and so disheartening is that when you're interviewing somebody, it's very helpful to make constant eye contact and to look super interested in whatever they're saying. But that can be taken the wrong way.

HESS: It's your job to create an intimate relationship with this person —

SMITH: I know, and I say: "We're not going be out there giving way too much eye contact. We're not going be out there acting like we want to get laid. We're not going be out there hanging out in the studio till 7 in the morning." It's awful, but I've felt like I've had to say it. Women older than me have said similar things to me.

KIPNIS: What about the women who do want to get laid?

SMITH: Those are some of my favorite women. And we've all been 26, and we've all been 19. And older! But here's the thing, if you're representing yourself as a professional, I need you to handle yourself in a certain way, and I need to keep you safe. But it is unfair. Those female reporters and critics can't always do the same kind of reporting that men do — the rock 'n' roll reporters, the hip-hop reporters, the ones who tend to get a lot of the acclaim. People say: "Where are the women in rock journalism? Where are the women in hip-hop journalism? Where are the women in pop-music journalism?" Well, they can't always stay out with the men until dawn. They can't always be alone in the darkest corners of backstage, soaking up the best and juiciest atmosphere.

O'BRIEN: Would you have the same conversation with the men?

SMITH: It's a different conversation. I've had the luck and joy of working with guys I trust. A lot of men respect women at work. It happens, and it's wonderful. But in new work relationships, especially freelance relationships, in certain situations, I have had to say, "I'm going to need you to act right."

KIPNIS: I keep going back to this thing about the body, women's bodies as our own property and having sovereignty over them — I think that's a place to start. I know there are already all sorts of harassment codes on the books, but what about a specifically no-touching rule? I think that would be a huge advance in the direction of women having autonomy over our bodies. Because I think women have tolerated way too much touchy-feely stuff for too long. You know what I mean — the ick factor, the guy who's always got his hands on you. I do think the toleration for that sort of thing is changing. Including tolerating all the "I just meant it to be funny" jokey kind of groping.

BAZELON: So do we want a "no touching at work" rule? That is enticingly clear. Or do we lose too much from no touching?

O'BRIEN: I think that's crazy.

HESS: I do, too.

O'BRIEN: Literally, when I came in, I hugged two people, right? And kissed them on the cheek. And half the people who are colleagues of mine, if we're going work on a project and I'm excited to work with them, I would hug them and say, "Oh, my God, I'm so happy to see you."

KIPNIS: O.K., but then I think we need better training for women, maybe even starting in high school. We need to teach assertiveness. That used to be on the agenda, standing up to people and saying, "That makes me uncomfortable" or "Please don't touch me."

O'BRIEN: In the workplace, you say that, and you could lose your job, especially if you're early in your career. Years ago, when I was probably 28, I was at an awards dinner, and a very famous anchor person, whom I had never met, came over to me. And I was in a strapless dress, and he started massaging my shoulders, and I remember thinking: Ugh, why are you touching me? You're not a friend. I do not know you. And I remember thinking, I am just going to smile, say, "Oh, hi!" and

Lynn Povich

twist my body back to talk to everyone at the table. And I did not drop a stitch. My entire goal was to make sure that no one around this table of high-powered people who could advance my career were going to see me thrown at all or were made uncomfortable. If you embarrass a person who has power, they will take it out on you. I believe that.

HILL: For years, we've been talking about strategies for working around a creepy person. There are three ways you could approach the problem of sexual harassment. You can fix the women. You can fix the guys. Or you can change the culture. And I think that really, at this point, what we should be talking about is fixing the guys and changing the culture.

KIPNIS: Do we have to choose? Can't it be all three?

HILL: Well, I think if we fix the guys and change the culture, we won't need to fix women.

KIPNIS: Good luck.

SMITH: Here's why fixing women doesn't work for me. We have a table here full of women who were raised to be strong, to be bold, to move forward in different school and work situations. We are the assertive women. We are the ones who know how to speak for ourselves and to say, "This is what I would like my raise to be; this is where I want to live." There are probably 8,000 academic degrees at this table. Yet we find ourselves in scary situations. How much asserting can you do if someone with power over you in a given situation is using that to intimidate and abuse? There is no amount of fixing. There is no amount of shifting in your seat that you can do. Dudes need to just chill.

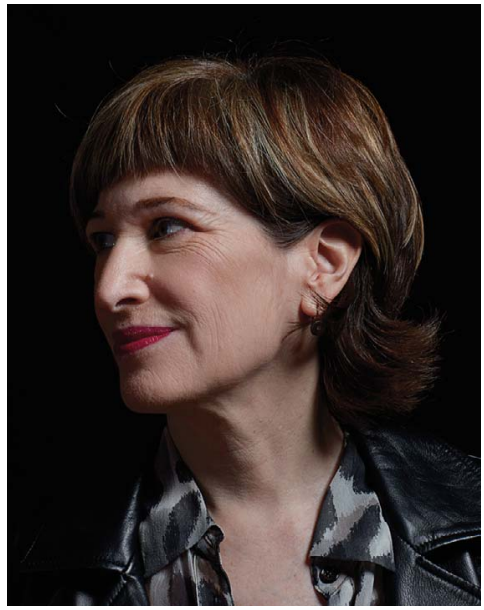
O'BRIEN: The answer is change the culture. Imagine if — back to my scenario when I was 28 years old — someone came over and started massaging my shoulders, and two men at the table who were equal hierarchically said right then and there: "Hey, hey, you can't do that. Do not touch the young women without their permission."

In our office, if someone says or does something that feels inappropriate, we shut it down immediately. We say: "You cannot do that. That is not how this works." The other thing anyone can do is acknowledge and defuse the situation. If someone had done that at the table, I wouldn't have had to worry about whether that dodge offended anyone. I think women worry about that a lot — Boy, I hope everybody else was comfortable with this thing that was perpetrated upon me.

POVICH: I agree that we have to talk about men's role in this — not just the bad men, but all the other men. Many of us are married to, or partnered with, very good men who would never do any of this, but they have a role in a culture that is complicit. The culture of a company or organization comes from the top, so the top people — mostly men — have a responsibility to make their employees feel safe and secure.

KIPNIS: I really want to change the culture, and I really want to change men. I just don't think it's going to happen immediately. So I think we need to teach women, and particularly young women, strategies for dealing with the kinds of situations that are going to arise in the workplace, and in the rest of life too. I know from talking to my female students that they're often at a loss about how to deal with the binds they find themselves in, especially in the context of hookup culture. What surprises me is that they often feel unable to say no to guys and just sort of yield instead, even when they don't really want to. Somehow all the messages about assertiveness from the last few generations of feminism have gotten dissipated, and we're back to Square 1.

HESS: I think that freezing and trying to slip away when something upsetting happens to you is a human response. I think it's also a very human response sometimes for people who are witnessing some sort of harassment, even men. I don't think we can necessarily teach that response away.



Laura Kipnis

HILL: One of the things that I think you are saying, Soledad, is that there are big costs for being assertive, for asserting your own person, your own body. Also, I think we have to understand the dynamic. In many cases, when people resist harassment, it becomes a game for the man, and it escalates. And it only gets worse for people. And we have to think about other consequences of being assertive. Retaliation against people who complain of harassment is against the law, even if they don't prevail in their complaints. But retaliation still happens to a majority of people who file harassment claims.

O'BRIEN: I do think it's important to say that while women need to be aware of the ramifications of speaking up, it's good that so many have stepped forward. Not every unwanted advance can be managed with humor or pushback. Also, I think we can try to create a more respectful workplace by speaking up before things get out of control.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

KIPNIS: The thing that seems different about this moment — and I feel almost perverse saying this — is that it's corporate bosses and their boards that are playing a major role in effecting cultural change by establishing this new zero-tolerance policy. Sure, maybe it's really a public-relations concern about their brand, or insurance companies trying to limit payouts. But it still gives me optimism, despite its coming from the top down, not the bottom up.

HILL: About a month ago, I spoke to a group of businesspeople about this issue, and they seemed genuinely interested. Yes, part of it was probably a fear of losing money. Reputational risks seemed to motivate their interest in solutions as well. But I think part of it was shame that this was going on in their workplaces. The fact that I was even in the room means something.

HESS: Men are scared right now, which is good. But I think one of the problems in the current workplace is that women feel like when they speak up, either they will be ignored and dismissed — maybe literally — or that they're going to ruin a guy's life. I would like for our workplaces to have a space where women can speak openly and honestly about the culture there — the things that make them feel seriously harassed or assaulted, but also just a little creeped out, or knocked off balance, or diminished — that falls outside the legalistic, bureaucratic, totally intimidating experience of reporting to the H.R. office. There's not always a lot of room for that other kind of conversation.

BAZELON: How should minor infractions be punished? If someone does something on the small scale, do we think he should suffer a long-term or permanent consequence? I realize a lot of people think now isn't the

Photographs by Hannah Whitaker for The New York Times

right time to worry about whether men get to come back from being exiled. But when courts of law decide cases, they determine the term of punishment up front. We don't have a clear way to do that in the court of public opinion. And I do worry about lifetime banishment for some people. I also worry about due process.

POVICH: There certainly should be a thoughtful investigation and due process.

O'BRIEN: I think we conflate the many different definitions of sexual harassment — the legal definition, someone's personal interpretation. Some things are legally a crime. Other actions would clearly violate a company's standards: inappropriate language, physically grabbing a woman, pressuring an underling for sex. They are all bad and should be stopped, but I think they deserve different levels of punishment.

HILL: Yes, there are small and large offenses; there are degrees. But I want to put it all in context too. In this room, we are relatively powerful, relatively privileged. And what may be a small thing to us may not be a small thing to a woman who is making minimum wage and working in a place where she has to be nice to harassing co-workers in order to just keep her job. It could be a job where there are 50 other applicants ready to take it, and the woman may have a family to support, so she can't even risk saying anything. If she does say something, and then her bosses decide that the infraction wasn't major and "O.K., let's keep that guy on," then she has to look at that person every day. So I think we have to understand that whatever rules may work for us may not have universal application. Some people are just entirely more vulnerable.

HESS: The behaviors that meet the legal standard for sexual harassment are often really extreme. Way, way lower-level things will drive women out of the workplace that are not even technically illegal. Like, if my boss grabbed my breasts one time, he might not be legally responsible for sexually harassing me. But I would definitely be looking for a new job.

BAZELON: Yes. Sandra Sperino and Suja Thomas, authors of "Unequal: How America's Courts Undermine Discrimination Law," have written about this. They explain that the Supreme Court said — in that landmark 1986 decision — that harassing behavior has to be "severe or pervasive" to count as actionable. Lower courts applying that standard set the bar for meeting it too high. And we're still stuck with that.

HILL: But why does a manager or a C.E.O. or any leader have to wait until something becomes a violation of the law before they act? The law really is just a floor. A company can have its own rules that say: You can't talk about porn or view porn at work, or make jokes about a co-worker's sex life or menstrual cycle, or continue to ask a colleague to date after she's turned you down twice. And if you do, you will get written up; it will go in your file. And if it happens serially, then there are more serious repercussions. You can be fired.

BAZELON: What do we want that we haven't seen yet?

O'BRIEN: I think it's about opening up more opportunities for reporting.

BAZELON: What would you all think about a reporting system that works like an escrow account? The idea is that when you make a complaint, it stays locked away, and no one acts on it, until someone else makes a complaint about the same harasser. Then the information goes to the authorities. Or you could have a system that alerts the people who made the complaints about other complaints, and they decide what to do. Conors Friedersdorf recently wrote in The Atlantic about this idea, which was proposed by Ian Ayres and Cait Unkovic. A variation of it is already being used at some universities for third-party reporting of campus sexual assault. Imagine a system like that was really trustworthy. Would it be helpful?

HILL: Yes, and some organizations establish ombudspersons within the organization. And companies are relying on independent third parties to investigate claims. This is especially important if the subject of the investigation is particularly powerful, for example in the case of Roger Ailes. Third-party investigators who are truly independent can give people within businesses more confidence in the outcomes.

BAZELON: What about changing leadership? Do we think that if there were just as many women as men in positions of power, or more women, that we would solve this problem?

O'BRIEN: TV news is full of women. It's not an overwhelmingly male environment. The problem is a lack of leadership — that many of these harassment incidents are open secrets, that everyone in the company is aware that the culture will tolerate bad behavior.

BAZELON: What about more women top executives?

HESS: I don't think it's a silver bullet. There's some research to suggest that even in female-dominated industries, men tend to rise faster and make more money than women do. Women gaining more power in society does not necessarily mean that this specific behavior is going to lessen. Some men are threatened by women in power, and sexual harassment is one way for them to take those women down a peg. It's a way for men to claim physical and personal control over women, even — maybe especially — as they lose their grip over institutional power across the culture.

SMITH: I don't know that a world with more women in power would be that different. Women are not a monolith — value systems run the gamut. I will say this, though: Sometimes it seems like the more women have, the more confidently we move in this world, the more we gain, the tougher it is going to get for us.

HILL: Well, we've tried it the other way, with men in the positions of power, making all the decisions about hiring and firing and rules of the office. The stories from #metoo and from thousands of letters and emails I've received suggest that harassment is rampant. We also know that cultures that support harassment are likely to support other forms of discrimination. I've never heard of a harasser who is also an advocate for equal pay or equal hiring or equal promotions. So I think we have to move toward having more women in charge of workplaces, and let's just see if it can be different. ◆

'HERE'S WHAT WILL HAPPEN: YOU WILL BECOME THE PERSON WHO COMPLAINED. YOU'LL BECOME A PARIAH. ALL OF YOUR GOOD REVIEWS WILL BECOME PERFECTLY AVERAGE REVIEWS, WHICH WILL THEN BECOME BAD REVIEWS.'

Soledad O'Brien

WERONIKA GĘSICKA
"BY SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER, WOMEN ARE ABLE TO CONFRONT VIOLENCE, CHANGE THE SURROUNDING WORLD AND GIVE COURAGE TO BATTLE THE FEAR TO SAY 'NO.'"

REAWAKENED RAGE
BY VIVIAN GORNICK

What is never properly understood by those who do not experience it is how deep the rage over inequality goes once it is made conscious, how far-reaching it can be and yes, how unforgiving. At the moment, the hated imbalance between women and men, the one that all men, everywhere, have exploited for centuries, is in the dock, and women in the thousands have risen up to bring charges against men of power with the crime of having looked not at them but *through* them for as long as any of them could remember. These women are not yet Madame Defarge knitting at the foot of the scaffold, but half a century of insufficient progress, on the score of sexual predation alone, now fills their heads with blood and leads them to lash out at its ongoing pervasiveness, branding men to the left and to the right with accusations that include acts of real evil as well as those of vulgar insensitivity. As James Baldwin might have put it, an oppressed people does not always wake up a saint; more often it wakes up a murderer.

For many of us, it is dismaying to behold, in a movement meant to correct for social injustice, the development of what can seem like vigilante politics; the dismay, in fact, is being accorded disproportionate attention, as though its existence is more important than what gave rise to it. But if we stop for a moment to think rather than react, we soon come to realize that the courageous demand that begins with a visionary's declaration of rights can, and usually does, descend quickly into the maddened belligerence characteristic of those who cannot stop rehearsing a grievance that feels very old and reaches far into the past. That is the course history has usually taken, and for the moment, we in America are all trapped in its turmoil.

My generation of second-wave feminists discovered how hard it is to build a case for women's rights from the inside out, how few approached with a wholeness of mind and heart the prospect of equality for women. Those of us in the 1970s and '80s who said (and kept on saying) that the subordination of women had now become intolerable were often denounced as witches, bitches and worse: denatured fanatics staring into a vision of the future that would upend the world as we knew it. Our radicalism lay in declaring the risk well worth taking: a calculation society as a whole is never willing to act on; it must be driven to it. But we feminists were persuaded that the American democracy was not only healthy enough but also mature enough to give up the idea that men by nature take their brains seriously and women by nature do not. We were convinced that what today we saw by the hundreds would tomorrow surely be seen by the thousands, and the day after that by the millions. Only people of serious ill will or intellectual deficiency or downright political greed would oppose the obvious. And after all, how many of them could there be?

As the decades wore on, I began to feel on my skin the shock of realizing how slowly — how grudgingly! — American culture had actually moved, over these past hundred years, to include us in the much-vaunted devotion to egalitarianism. However many thousands of women continued to join our ranks, we kept hearing: "Love is the most important thing in a woman's life; that's just nature." "Women can be good but never great (thinkers, artists, politicians); again: nature." "Oh, I get it. You don't want to marry the Great Man, you want to be the Great Man. How very unnatural." "Whatever happened, she was asking for it." I remember thinking: Who says such things to a human being the speaker considers as real as he is to himself? Who tells anyone that the wish to experience oneself to the fullest is unnatural? Who thinks it acceptable that a set of needs described as essential to *anyone's* humanity be considered necessary for some but not for others? Who, indeed?

I soon came to feel — and I still feel — that social and political inequality is one of the worst burdens anyone can be made to shoulder. The sheer *unfairness* of it! The contempt inscribed in it. My own angry disbelief in those years swelled until I found myself copying out quotes from people like the Cromwellian soldier who, on the scaffold, said: I never could believe that some men were born booted and spurred and ready to ride, and others born saddled and ready to be ridden. I, too, was now willing to go to war.

It's not necessarily true that only a social explosion can galvanize cultural change, but inevitably, in the face of the failure to act — the term "sexual harassment" is now almost 50 years old — that's the way it feels when that rage reawakens. And the way it *feels* is now compelling a movement bent on making transparent (once again!) what it's like to live, as a class of people, brutalized or ignored but either way socially invisible.

The silence imposed by that invisibility! For better or worse, only liberationist politics — loud, brash and bullying as it sometimes seems — has ever broken it. The pity of it all is that the silence returns as the inequities once again get swept under the rug, where they fester, and wait for the next moment when the rug will turn into a rock under which these wormlike suppressions have morphed into snakes that come out hissing, should the rock be turned over. ◆

CAPITOL HILL AIDE
'A PURGE IS COMING'

I think women on Capitol Hill right now are just kind of breathing a sigh of relief that people finally can talk about these things and not have to suffer when they come forward. A lot of people are saying, "I wonder who's going to be next," because everyone knows that this is just the beginning. We really feel as if a purge is coming. I don't think that a lot of people necessarily know who, but as soon as a name comes out, then you start to hear people saying, like: "Oh, yeah. I heard that guy was creepy."

They asked me to pitch in and just talk to survivors who call Representative Jackie Speier's office. It's such a gut punch when you hear the name of the member of Congress who harassed them. Al Franken was hard. It hurts the most when it's men who have built their political careers advocating for women and then show such disdain for actual female human beings. I think it also just really shows how important it is to have women elected to office, promoting more women to senior staff and having more women involved in Capitol Hill positions and in the political process. **AS TOLD TO YAMICHE ALCINDOR**

Illustration by Chloe Scheffe. Source images for photo illustration: ClassicStock/Alamy.

HE'S ACCUSED. NOW WHAT?
BY JAZMINE HUGHES & COLLIER MEYERSON

Jazmine Hughes: I casually know some of the men who have been accused of sexual harassment in our circles, and there are a handful I consider friends. My first thought was: What am I supposed to do with these assholes? I believe the women! But how would I show that? Did you see how Gayle King responded to the Charlie Rose accusations? It's the best instance of "what to do when your friend is accused of sexual harassment" that I've seen.

Collier Meyerson: I was actually seized with panic when I heard about a friend accused of sexual misconduct. I never considered what would happen when a close friend, one whose struggles and goodness I know intimately, is questioned. Do I cast out every man who has overstepped a boundary, or only people who I've heard are serial sexual assaulters? I watched that clip of Gayle King, and the thing she said that most resonated with me was "You can hold two ideas in your head at the same time." We can remember and understand that our friendships to the accused are real and also be on the side of survivors of sexual assault. But as we stumble through this, I'm feeling scared to say anything publicly, for fear of reproach. The environment is so incredibly polarized, and women can't even feel out what to do when their loved ones are accused. I feel like I can't even mourn that loss. Do you feel that way?

Hughes: For once, I feel grateful to not be famous — having this burden to comment is so unfair. This secondhand shame is insulting, and unproductive, and still somehow makes this into a problem for women. Personally, though, regarding these friends, I've answered questions when asked, but I'm not "spreading the word."

I've also had long talks with friends who have been named; they're promising but depressing. They admit to rehabilitation, but also to guilt. They've changed, but they had to have something to "change" away from. Everyone's trying to get better — but what does better look like? How do we measure penance?

Meyerson: "How do we measure penance?" is exactly what I've been thinking about. Men repent, or if they're famous, they retreat after their apologies. But it feels as though there are all these proverbial eyeballs looking toward women to make the decision for all men: What now? And that's what I'm so troubled by. I don't know the answer. In my universe, there is this expectation to purge. As my boyfriend said recently: "Humans have always tended toward purging, and it's never worked out."

Hughes: If I could point to anything tangible, it's that I'd want the men to feel shame — not embarrassment, but a deep, abiding sense of wrongdoing that causes them pain and follows them like a stench. But then … there are my friends, who've made the "correct" apologies or sought treatment of their own volition or stopped drinking or left the industry or left town. Which is heartening, but is that because my standards are low? What's enough, both for myself and other people? I have a friend who is cooling her relationships with incendiary acquaintances because she doesn't want her tacit approval to signal to other women that the guy is reasonable. Here's a question: Say you're having a party. Do you invite the Friend?

Meyerson: Thinking about this moment, I realize that this is not the first time any of us have heard stories about friends of ours crossing the line or harassing someone. I had a friend tell me the other day, "I remember when you told me I made this one girl feel uncomfortable because she had to say no twice, and I never forgot that." And then there are the one or two men I've been friends with who have had more serious allegations against them, whom I've since let go. I think the right answer is that each case is different, each relationship is different.

Would I invite "that person" to a party? If I have an investment in the man, I'd go to my community and speak with them about what they're comfortable with.

Hughes: I'm impressed that you've been able to talk to your male friends who might've slipped up in such clear terms. I have trouble doing that. hat do you say?

Meyerson: I've had those moments a few times now: Men asking me if what they did was O.K., but it's all subjective. What doesn't seem like a big deal to me might have been quite a big deal to another woman. All of us have different boundaries. I don't really have some sort of boilerplate response. It's based on an accumulation of feelings I have about the person, about what I perceive their particular transgression to be. But I want to ask you: We've established that ostracizing can be important, if only just in the short term, for the mental health of women. And I really do think that. But is it appropriate for every man? And how long do we cast them out? Forever?

Hughes: It feels animalistic, in a way — at times, I see men and I want to lash out, like a mother protecting her cubs. It comes from a place of deep-seated anger that I've never accessed before. I guess all I can do is ostracize as long as I need to feel safe.

This email exchange has been edited and condensed.

SORRY, NOT SORRY
BY PARUL SEHGAL

When I was a child, I lived near a notorious landfill called Smokey Mountain. It jutted out of the heart of Manila — a ziggurat of decomposing plastic bags, high as a 10-story building. Squatters made their homes on its slopes and perished in the frequent fires. From time to time, I recall the city promising to raze it and put in proper housing but never making good. Smokey Mountain flourished for years.

It was my early object lesson in selective blindness. You can ignore anything if you put your mind to it, apparently — even two million metric tons of smoldering trash. Anywhere you look, there's a Smokey Mountain of a kind, a site of shame or suffering that we refuse to reckon with — even as it bursts into flames.

The recent statements from men accused of sexual harassment are among the stranger documents of shame I have encountered: putative apologies garlanded with self-congratulation, bristling with rage. Some sound like grotesque inversions of award-acceptance speeches, dutifully acknowledging family and friends, casts, crews, networks and agents. Others attempt clumsy deflection. Kevin Spacey, accused of assaulting numerous young men, takes the opportunity to come out of the closet and, horrifyingly, equates his alleged crimes with being gay. Louis C.K. repeatedly mentions how much his victims admired him in his open letter — and invokes his penis so insistently that it feels as if he's covertly indulging his exhibitionism all over again. Jeffrey Tambor responds to charges of sexual harassment and aggression on the set of "Transparent" with further aggression. Many claim that the behavior is in the past and seem irritated to have to answer for it. After all, as Mark Halperin protests, he's mostly cured now.

These statements of the men seem especially shabby when compared with the majestic testimonies of the women who have come forward. In their interviews, essays and op-eds, they relive moments of terror and humiliation and shame, even as they are forced to establish their credibility and, in some cases, account for their silence over the years. Intense introspection marks these statements. The women audit themselves to a fault and reckon painfully with what speaking out might cost them. In a column in The Hollywood Reporter, the screenwriter Jenny Lumet described being sexually assaulted by Russell Simmons — and her fear of going public now: "I have built a life in the past 25 years and a reputation in my industry. I need no one to have this visualization of me. I will, like

PAULA SCHER

"YOU CAN'T HELP MAKING VALUE JUDGMENTS ABOUT THESE MEN AGAINST WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW ABOUT THEM — THEIR POLITICS OR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO CULTURE. MY CHART SETS DOWN SOME ABSURD RULES OF BEHAVIOR AND FORGIVENESS IN BEYOND-ABSURD TIMES."

AMBER VITTORIA

" 'WHAT WAS SHE WEARING?' AND SIMILAR QUESTIONS TEND TO BE THE FOCUS IN THESE SITUATIONS, CREATING THE EXPECTATION THAT HOW A VICTIM PRESENTS HERSELF IS THE CATALYST FOR AN ATTACK."

the others, lose work because of this." She wrestles with guilt — "As a woman of color, I cannot express how wrenching it is to write this about a successful man of color" — and worries about the effect of this story on his children. It's an extraordinary piece of writing. In response, Simmons offered little more than a limp admission of his thoughtlessness before turning to his real task: buoying up his shareholders.

But in this way these statements — even when garbled, terse or self-serving — are revealing. You can glimpse how the men have learned to live with — and avert their eyes from — their own cruelty. You can see how they continue to insulate themselves from fully understanding the suffering they have caused. How much easier it is to cop to "thoughtlessness" or "insensitivity" (another favorite word of the accused) — to hurting someone's feelings, essentially — than to acknowledge the realities women enumerate: panic, revulsion, rage, depression, decades of lost work. There's a profound dissonance between the gravity of the events the women describe and the men's mild interpretations.

Almost all the accused lean on abstract language and passive voice. They are sorry women "felt disrespected," "were hurt," "felt pain." There is a sort of splitting that occurs, too; many men express remorse that "their behavior" has hurt people, as if their behavior were a rogue doppelgänger that needs to be reeled in. A few, like Louis C.K., say they are trying to reconcile their behavior with who they are. These maneuvers effectively remove women from the story. The narrative changes: It becomes less about men grappling with what they've done to someone else and more about men lamenting what they have done to *themselves* — and especially their careers. It takes on an existential hue — "a journey" for Harvey Weinstein, "a reckoning" for Leon Wieseltier. For Mark Halperin, it's a sickness to rise up and defeat. Stories of abuses of power — and their systematic concealment — are spun as redemption narratives. These men are suddenly Odysseus in exile.

Odysseus, of course, finds his way home. Which is what many of the women coming forward fear. "There seems to be a formula for redemption: Apologize, put your head down, remove yourself from the public eye, come back up after enough time has passed, align yourself with the people that you've wronged and then resume your place back in line exactly where you were kicked out," the actress Olivia Munn, one of at least six women who have accused Brett Ratner of sexual misconduct, told The Los Angeles Times. The public censure, the shows being canceled, the outrage, she says, is just pruning; "the disease still remains in the tree."

Smokey Mountain was eventually shut down in 1995. It's still inhabited, but more sparsely. You can take tours now and imagine it in its heyday. A few miles away, a new dump thrives. It's twice the size. ◆

Illustration by Chloe Scheffe

BARTENDER
'THERE'S A WARNING SYSTEM'

I'm 32, and I've been a bartender for 10 years, five in New York City. There's always been a sort of warning system that bartenders have for everything from people who drink too much to sexual predators. Even in a city as big as New York, everyone in the industry knows one another. Bartenders and waiters take care of people — that's our job. So it's important that we take care of one another.

When I was 21, at my first official bartending job, the owner had already been sued for sexual harassment, I heard. One night, I went into his office to take him the money from the register, and he patted my butt on my way out. I immediately put on a stern face and said, "No!" as if he were a dog. From that day forward, he never tried anything like that. My experience in the industry has been that if you assert yourself and make your boundaries clear, they will be respected. It's actually a largely liberal industry, and that sense of community, of fairness, of gender equality, I think it's felt a little more strongly in this industry than others, because more often than not you work as a team, men and women together. I felt that if somebody were to act inappropriately toward me, I could immediately go to a co-worker, a co-owner, and it would shame them. My industry's not like the entertainment industry. There's only so many big-time producers, but there are enough bars and restaurants in the world to employ everyone. I know people are not always as fortunate as I am. I've never been in a position where if I were to quit on the spot, I would go hungry the next day, or worked in a small town where there's nowhere else to go. I don't have to pick from the bottom of the barrel. But there's a lot of bottom of the barrel out there. **AS TOLD TO KATHY DOBIE**

ANSWERS FOR MY DAUGHTER
BY HEIDI JULAVITS

In mid-November, my daughter began to notice the men. She had heard the reports about Harvey and Louis and Kevin and Al, and now she had a question. "Why have no women been accused of sexual misconduct?" she asked.

I was on autopilot and responded from an unthinking place: "These abuses are often a function of a power inequity, and many more men are in positions of power than women."

Was my response an explanation? A justification? A brushoff? Did it imply an essentialist reading of gender? Was it, at a bare minimum, useful? At 13, my daughter will have her first job next summer. Substantive engagement with a soon-to-be underling about the dynamics of workplace power abuse seemed fairly critical.

Around this time, I started to mishear the news. Sound waves entered my inner ear; men became women. I misheard, "[Name of famous female writer that sounds like Roy Moore], Alabama's Republican candidate for the Senate, is alleged to have made sexual advances toward a woman who was 14 years old at the time." I heard, "[Name of famous female writer that sounds like Roy Moore] forcibly kissed her when she was a high school student." In the absence of anything to laugh about, this misheard news made me giddy. Why? Women commit such abuses; it's no joke whatsoever. Maybe my brain wanted to hear fake news to complicate a secret message that I could not help worrying other people might be hearing and believing: Men abuse power, and women do not. Men have overbearing sex drives they cannot control, and women do not.

Such thinking quickly lends itself to other "thinking," like the thinking displayed by James Damore, the writer of the "Google Employee Memo." Among his messages: The reason so few women work in tech is because women are biologically different from men, and we need to accept that women are gregarious (rather than assertive); women prefer aesthetics to ideas; women seek a work-life balance rather than professional status. The sum being: Women will never be as good as men at, for example, coding.

I am not delivering such messages — at least not intentionally. But I recalled what I heard when I was a girl, when my mother and her

OLIVIA LOCHER

"A FORCED APOLOGY IS ANOTHER INSULT; APOLOGIES ARE FOR THOSE WHO GIVE THEM, NOT THEIR VICTIMS."

friends actively fought for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. I understood "equal rights for women" to mean that women, historically, were not allowed to do what men were allowed to do and that women should be allowed to do all those things. I did not find this message controversial.

But combined with the response I gave to my daughter, and the recent habits of my inner ear, I sensed another potential perversion of meaning. Men and women were equal. Men were not hornier than women or slimier than women. I might have been reassuring my daughter that when she assumed a position of power, she would be able to balance the scales; she and her female friends could sexually abuse powerless people, of any gender, with unrepentant (until caught) vigor.

I decided to ask my daughter why she thought men were disproportionately guilty of sexual harassment in the workplace. She wondered if the preponderance of men in the news might be connected to the fact that, she had heard or read somewhere, a majority of all murders were committed by men. Then she paused. She thought about what her "thinking" implied. "To say that is a stereotype," she said. "That women don't murder or rape or harass, and men do. Because really no one should do any of those things."

Right. No one should do any of those things. Somewhere along the way, baked into the acceptable standards of behavior for people in power, is a thing that nobody should do. And yet it became an entitlement. My daughter and I talked about power; was power to blame? Was power an unavoidably corrupting force? But to claim that power always corrupts risked excusing the individual offenders.

We finally settled on one useful point for future thinking and action: For the first time during my lifetime, and also by implication, during hers, victims were proving more powerful than the power that created them. The next step would seem to involve the nonvictims in the redefinition of how power works. Because in the current system, it could be argued that there are three types of people: people in power, victims and nonvictims. Recently, I witnessed a nonvictim learn about the decades of power abuses perpetrated by a friend and colleague. "I just wonder if I've been complicit," the nonvictim worried. To which I wanted to reply: There can be nonvictims only so long as there are victims. If you do not call out your friend's behavior, then yes, you can count yourself complicit.

On Thanksgiving, my family played a game of charades. Many people were involved, ages ranging from 8 to 85. I asked my son, who is 8, to contribute a clue. He gave me "sexual harassment." I asked him if he knew what it was. He said, "It's when you touch somebody, and they don't want you to touch them." Good enough. I put "sexual harassment" in the salad bowl; I felt it had earned its cultural place alongside "Little House on the Prairie" and "Kim Kardashian." Maybe, too, I considered it a bit of an experiment. Who would pull the clue? Would a man's performance of "sexual harassment" be more easily identifiable to the group over a woman's? Maybe it mattered only that the action be legible to all genders, no matter the body performing it.

The person who pulled the clue was a man in his 60s. He approached the other team. He waggled his tongue; he exaggeratedly pretended to grab the bodies of the opposition in all the appropriately inappropriate places. Everyone knew immediately what he was doing. Men and women, girls and boys, all called out his actions, correctly, by name. ◆

SOLDIER
'I FELT OSTRACIZED'

I was a service member in the Army for nearly a decade. It seemed that men pulling women on top of their laps was not uncommon. It happened to me only when I was off duty, but always by my superiors. I lost count of how many times my ass was slapped or I was brushed up against. Stuff like that became so exhausting and conflicting. Conflicting because a lot of the time it was with guys I trusted and worked really well with.

In the winter of 2011, my unit was in Kuwait. One time during a break, I went behind a shipping container to smoke a cigarette, and I was chatting with a sergeant from our company. About a month later, I was talking to an acquaintance who worked with this sergeant, and he just started joking about the time I gave the sergeant a blowjob behind the shipping container. I found out that the sergeant had been spreading rumors about very specific sexual acts that I had supposedly performed on him and others in the company. It was mortifying, and everyone seemed to know.

I decided to make an informal complaint about it, and then I felt ostracized by members of my unit. It felt as if the unit was trying to protect this guy and not me. I was questioned, and some of the queries focused on the fact that I was always seen with men or that I encouraged a certain culture. Basically, I was being accused of asking for it because I told a dirty joke every now and again. I could tell what was happening, so I ultimately filed a formal complaint. That was extremely nerve-racking. It meant I was under an even bigger microscope. There were those who wanted to send me back home or to another base or to another unit altogether. They were just going to leave him there and uproot me. Remove the victim from the situation instead of the person causing the problem. There's a good-old-boy network.

People in power are willing to ignore bad behavior because it's convenient or because outstanding performers in the unit are being protected. These guys are wonderful at their jobs, but some can be monsters behind closed doors. **AS TOLD TO JAIME LOWE**

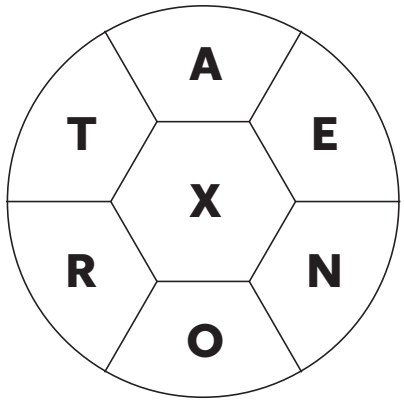
Illustration by Chloe Scheffe

SPELLING BEE

By Frank Longo

How many common words of 5 or more letters can you spell using the letters in the hive? Every answer must use the center letter at least once. Letters may be reused in a word. At least one word will use all 7 letters. Proper names and hyphenated words are not allowed. Score 1 point for each answer, and 3 points for a word that uses all 7 letters.

Rating: 7 = good; 10 = excellent; 13 = genius



Our list of words, worth 15 points, appears with last week's answers.

HEX NUTS

By Patrick Berry

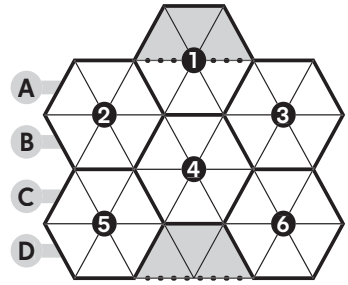
Each nine-letter Row answer reads across its correspondingly lettered row. Each six-letter Hex answer fills its correspondingly numbered hexagon, starting in one of the six spaces and reading clockwise or counterclockwise. As a solving aid, the two shaded half-hexagons will contain the same three-letter sequence (as if the grid is wrapping around vertically).

ROWS

A. Call-in show's medium (2 wds.) B. Term that softens the ugly truth C. Imitated a songbird D. Stray felines (2 wds.)

HEXES

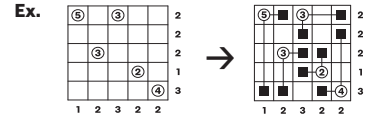
1. Ignition insert (2 wds.) 2. Burning the midnight oil, say (2 wds.) 3. Phrases that may puzzle foreigners 4. Lincoln Center landmark, for short (2 wds.) 5. Freely (2 wds.) 6. Rubbernecked

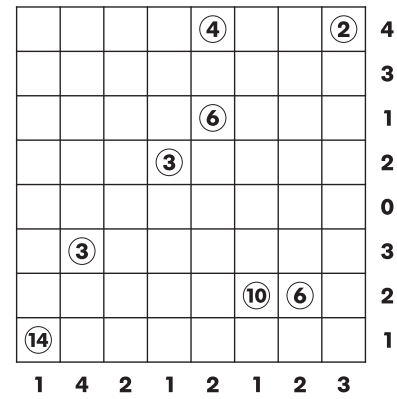


ELBOW ROOM

By Thinh Van Duc Lai

Draw two lines in an "L" shape out of each numbered circle so that the total number of squares reached by the two lines equals the number in the circle. The numbers beside the grid specify how many ends of lines (shown by black squares in the example) appear in their respective rows and columns. Lines never intersect.





TRI-CITIES

By Will Shortz

Select three consecutive letters from the name of each U.S. city below. Then read all nine letters in order to name a fourth, well-known U.S. city. In the example, you can take PEN from ASPEN, SAC from SACRAMENTO and OLA from MINEOLA to make PENSACOLA (Fla.)

Ex. PENSACOLA

ASPEN
SACRAMENTO
MINEOLA

3. _____
MCLEAN
HAVELOCK
SAN DIEGO

6. _____
CHAMPAIGN
WATERLOO
FAYETTEVILLE

9. _____
HAMILTON
WAUKEGAN
MCKEESPORT

12. _____
GLASSBORO
SANTA CRUZ
WORCESTER

1. _____
ROCKFORD
CHESAPEAKE
PATERSON

4. _____
LOMPOC
WATERBURY
AMARILLO

7. _____
LANCASTER
HAWTHORNE
HAGERSTOWN

10. _____
DEKALB
SANTA MARIA
YAZOO CITY

13. _____
LUBBOCK
SARASOTA
BATON ROUGE

2. _____
DALLAS
TRENTON
BROWNSVILLE

5. _____
SPRINGFIELD
VINCENNES
DAYTONA

8. _____
LACKAWANNA
KICKAPOO
CARLISLE

11. _____
HARTFORD
BRENTWOOD
NORTHAMPTON

14. _____
NEW PALTZ
CUMBERLAND
APALACHICOLA

(Continued from Page 39)

sugary coffee, they had rushed through a discount grocery store, piling cart after cart with staples. At the checkout, Ritibh practiced his Spanish with the cashier, listing what they had bought: 50 cucumbers, 20 bags of onions, six 20-packs of chicken legs, 20 gallons of milk, 20 loaves of bread and so on. "And one bag of hot Cheetos for myself," he added.

Ritibh kicked a soccer ball with some of the kids as Sándigo caught up with their parents. She wasn't sure, when I asked her, which of the parents had actually entrusted her with their children's care; she would have to check her files. It didn't really matter, she said. The power-of-attorney forms were about the future, and most days it was all she could do to focus on more pressing needs. Kelly's mother confided that she'd been fired from her job the week before, after reporting her supervisor to the police for physical assault. She didn't know how she was going to take care of the kids.

While she talked, one of her daughters climbed into Sándigo's lap. Kelly snuggled with a stuffed bear that she'd pulled off the donation table. "You're on the floor!" Sándigo said, in English. "On a bear!" But Kelly just looked up at her silently.

Ever since her husband was detained, T. explained, Kelly had had no energy, no desire to eat. Before, she loved school and did her homework without being asked. But after the detention, she lay motionless on the couch. She didn't want to sleep; when she did sleep, she couldn't make herself get up. Within a week, her teacher called T. to ask what was wrong, saying that Kelly was "not the same student." She was always distracted, either staring at her fingernails or chewing on them. "It's like she's not there," the teacher said. When T. tried to make Kelly eat, she would cry and refuse. She had lost five pounds — a lot when you're supposed to be growing and you weigh only 45 pounds to begin with.

T. was sure Kelly was sick. She took her to a pediatrician, but there was nothing physically wrong. "Why have you changed so much?" she begged her child one day as they sat at the round wooden table squeezed between the couch and the kitchen, which she'd painted teal and pink in an effort at cheerfulness. "Did something happen to you? Was it at school? Trust me, tell me."

"I want my dad," Kelly answered. "I need him with me. Why did they take him?"

T. hadn't considered that her husband's absence alone could change her daughter so profoundly. It was hard on everyone, of course; even the younger kids had caught on enough to say, *"Mami,* they're going to take you too!" whenever they saw a police car. T. couldn't visit Javier in detention — "I couldn't go and put myself in the mouth of the wolf!" — but his children, as citizens, went twice with family friends. When T. asked them how it went, Kelly refused to say a word. Ana, who was 5 and the next oldest, said: "Kelly cried, my little sister cried, I cried a little. He's wearing orange pants and a shirt. My *papi* cried, too." When it was time to go, the woman who accompanied them had to drag the girls away.

Luis H. Zayas, a psychologist and the dean of the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work, has examined many citizen children of undocumented parents, whom he refers to as "forgotten citizens," a new generation of American exiles and orphans. The first to arouse his interest in the issue hadn't spoken at school in some 15 months, so great was her fear of revealing her parents' status. He calls what he sees "psychological erosion": clinical levels of depression, separation anxiety and low self-esteem. As Joanna Dreby, a sociologist at the University at Albany, writes, even "the threat of deportability" can be devastating, plunging children into a state of constant dread and hypervigilance.

T. herself was afraid. Driving was a huge risk given that she had no license and that a misdemeanor could get her deported ("If you go out to work, you risk everything," she said), but she began taking Kelly across the county twice a week to see a psychologist. She didn't know what else to do for her daughter. "For her — her world, I don't know, it ended."

By the time Ritibh and Sándigo finished handing out supplies, it was 11 p.m., but Sándigo didn't go to sleep. Late nights and early mornings are her time for writing, for trying to think strategically. For years, she had been pushing the county to provide crisis housing for kids she calls "the orphans of immigration," and a Miami-Dade County commissioner recently agreed to help. Sándigo was now trying to raise money for a dorm-style building, but she worried that it wouldn't be ready quickly enough. To speed things up, she was looking into trailers. If it came to it, she said, there was always her own house and office. "Maybe we will be sleeping like, how do you say, *perros calientes?"* Like hot dogs.

Before Trump was elected, Sándigo dreamed of a political solution for her young charges that went far beyond housing. In April 2016, she took some of them, including T. and her daughters, to Washington to advocate for an Obama order known as Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA), a kind of sister action to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) that would have allowed parents to apply for work permits and temporary protection from deportation in order to care for their kids. Thanks to a lawsuit and a split Supreme Court, DAPA never went into effect, and this June the Trump administration officially rescinded it.

In United States family law, "the best interests of the child" is a widely accepted standard. Judges are required to use it in every state when deciding custody cases, and dozens of states explicitly list the maintenance of family unity or family emotional ties as primary components of "best interests." Immigration law is the exception. Children affected by their parents' immigration cases "have no opportunity for their best interests to be considered," writes Bridgette A. Carr, founding director of the University of Michigan Law School's Human Trafficking Clinic. The closest option, before 1996, was that immigrants living in the United States for at least seven years could petition to cancel their removal on the grounds that it would cause "extreme hardship" for themselves, their children or other qualifying relatives. Acceptable reasons included war in the home country or serious medical needs. Hardships like being separated from your parents or having to leave your country usually didn't count, explains Thronson, of the Immigration Law Clinic, because "that always happens in deportation — that's just your starting point."

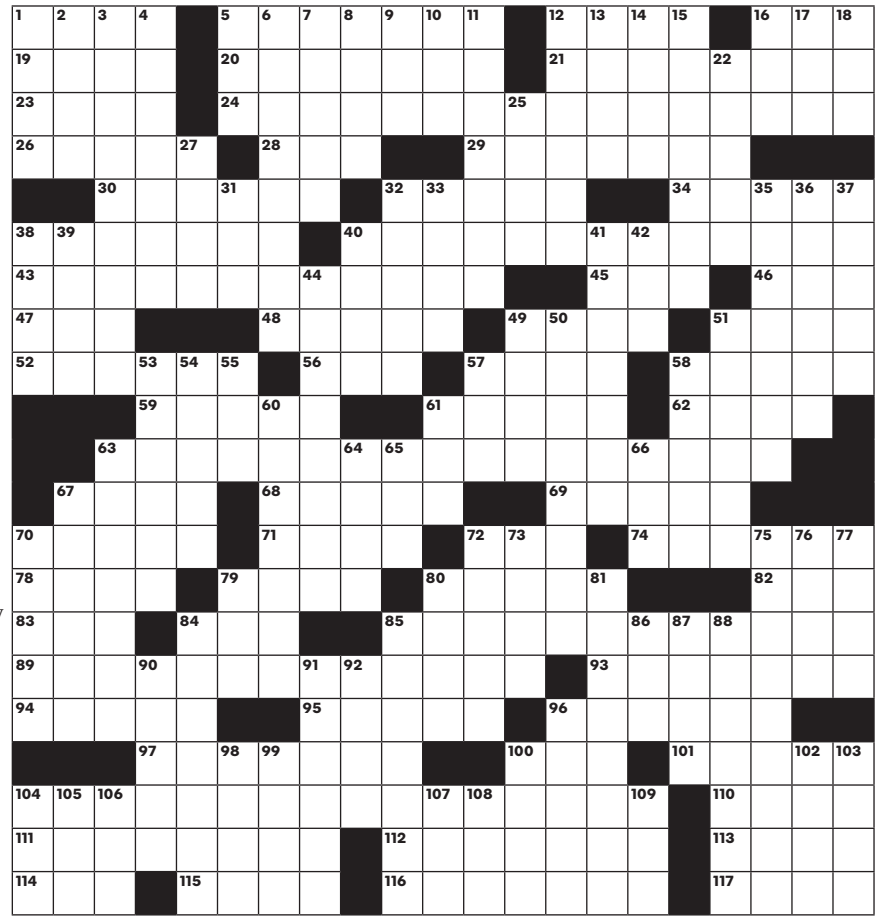
In the immigration overhaul of the mid-1990s, Congress made the standard even harder to meet, changing "extreme hardship" to "exceptional and extremely unusual hardship" and imposing a limit of 4,000 cases a year. Alfonso Oviedo-Reyes, a lawyer who works with Sándigo, says he's lucky if one client qualifies a year. "They should have said a nearly impossible hardship," he said. "No one can withstand it!"

"Generally speaking, under the law," says Donald L. Schlemmer, an attorney specializing in immigration law, "if there's some kind of wrong, there should be some kind of remedy — or at least you should have your day in court." But the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, the same 1996 law that raised the standard for deportation relief, made it much more difficult to use class-action lawsuits to challenge immigration policies. When Sándigo tried filing a lawsuit in federal circuit court in 2007, on which Schlemmer worked, they were told that only the Supreme Court had jurisdiction to hear such cases; when she brought the case to the Supreme Court, the clerk replied with a letter explaining that there was no jurisdiction there either. Oviedo-Reyes says that letter is their chance: proof that citizen children, unconstitutionally, have nowhere to go for redress.

Since Trump's election, Sándigo has been combing through her list of children to see which would be good candidates for a class-action lawsuit — something that might lead to the kind of law that helped the Central American refugees she worked with. She wants the suit to reflect the variety of children's experiences: some with both parents gone, some with one, some simply afraid of losing either. She put Ritibh's name on her list; he was so gregarious and happy to tell his story. ("I have the tunnels under the Congress memorized," he told me.) She also added Valerie, 17, and Matthew, 15, a sister and brother born and raised in Fort Lauderdale whose undocumented parents took them to their *(Continued on Page 65)*

OH, ONE LAST THING

By Andrew J. Ries



12/17/17

ACROSS

1 Neighbor of Sudan
5 Queen in the "Star Wars" movies
12 Basics
16 Things that people like to have ripped?
19 First sentence of a news story
20 Party animal
21 Comedian who was a regular on "The Steve Allen Show"
23 Sources of lean meat
24 Comparatively strong, like some French wine?
26 Grime
28 "Yo!"
29 Went by
30 Fearful
32 1998 De Niro thriller
34 Highway noise barriers
38 One who's in it but doesn't win it
40 Egyptian leader obsessed with his appearance?
43 Certain Lincoln Center soprano?
45 It may pop on a plane
46 Dietary std.
47 China's Chiang __-shek
48 Yes or no follower
49 Light on one's feet
51 Submissive
52 Fleet
56 "Totally awesome!"
57 Bit of food … or feud?
58 Part of a house
59 Peach __
61 __-frutti
62 Buttonhole, e.g.
63 Shooting craps while waiting for one's train?
67 Actress Hatcher
68 All skin and bones
69 "I had a dream, which was not all a dream" poet
70 George Eliot's "__ Marner"
71 Finely decorated
72 Antagonist
74 Much of Mongolia
78 Automaker sold by G.M. in 2017
79 Territory
80 White undercoat
82 Broadbrim, e.g.
83 Inits. for getting around the Loop
84 Protagonist in David Foster Wallace's "Infinite Jest"
85 Comment from a cook who cools the cheese sauce before serving?
89 Woodwind that's O.K. to play?
93 Something that's free of charge
94 Weapon seen on the Kenyan flag
95 Big stinks
96 Done, slangily
97 Units for binge watchers
100 Actor Patel of "Lion"
101 "Don't __ me"
104 Cupid's catchphrase?
110 Part
111 Attention hog's cry
112 Vigilant
113 "The Dukes of Hazzard" spinoff
114 Intimidate
115 One of eight in "The 12 Days of Christmas"
116 Egg-shaped Hasbro toys introduced in 1971
117 Certain soft drinks, informally

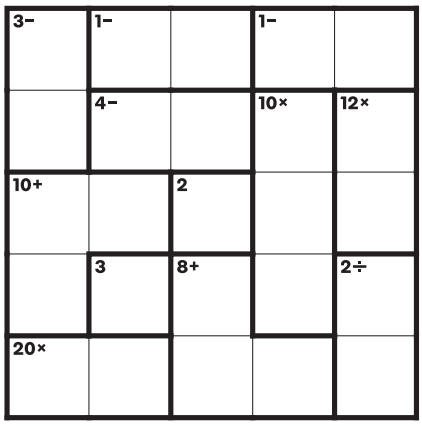
DOWN

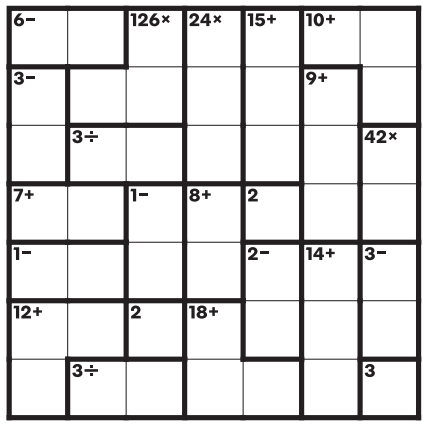
1 Score marking
2 Powerful engine, for short
3 Nighttime Cartoon Network programming block
4 Wipe off the map
5 Start of MGM's motto
6 Quaint "I believe"
7 Like Wrigley Field's walls
8 Brave
9 Landon who lost in a landslide
10 Pastoral locale
11 Big name in 1980s-'90s TV talk
12 State capital that's the setting of "Ironweed"
13 Betty __
14 Mean, lowdown sorts
15 Court conference
16 CNN commentator Navarro
17 The Cougars of the West Coast Conf.
18 Determination in a prenatal exam
22 Holiday meal
25 Came down
27 Long lunch?
31 It's to be expected
32 Leveled
33 Eleven: Fr.
35 Cheesy dish
36 Seminal symbol of mass production
37 Lose
38 Paul who sang "Lonely Boy"
39 King who said, "Nothing will come of nothing"
40 Woman's name that means "truth"
41 Disloyalty
42 Loft filler
44 Director of 1991's "Mississippi Masala"
49 Genesis brother
50 Early Beatle
51 Sam who ran the bar on "Cheers"
53 Unconcerned with right and wrong
54 Parts of supermarkets
55 & 57 Very nearly
58 Topic at the Kinsey Institute
60 32-ounce purchase at 7-Eleven
61 Mining supply
63 Free
64 Chasm
65 It decreases a QB's rating: Abbr.
66 Busy hosp. areas
67 Best of the best
70 Knee-highs, e.g.
72 Doesn't know for a fact, say
73 __ buco
75 Secreted signal
76 El __
77 Cricket rival of Harrow
79 Material once set afire and put in a catapult
80 Grasp, informally
81 Human, typically, diet-wise
84 Announcement upon a grand arrival
85 Entertainment with camels, maybe
86 It sank after W.W. II
87 Go cold turkey
88 Said
90 Goaltender Dominik in the Hockey Hall of Fame
91 Wrinkle-free, say
92 Lincoln's place
96 Wild
98 Old-movie dog
99 __ Valley
100 Give a beating
102 Go forcefully (through)
103 1979 Roman Polanski film
104 Inc. relative
105 Win on "Hollywood Squares"
106 "I shall return," e.g.
107 Des-Moines-to-Dubuque dir.
108 Add years
109 Sentence fragments: Abbr.

Puzzles Online: Today's puzzle and more than 9,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords ($39.95 a year). For the daily puzzle commentary: nytimes.com/wordplay.

KENKEN

Fill the grid with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 5x5 grid will use the digits 1–5. A 7x7 grid will use 1–7.





Answers to puzzles of 12.10.17

FULL-BODY CAST

A	W	A	L	K		S	H	E	L			I	N	N	O	T	I	M	E
T	O	M	E	I		T	A	L	I	B		H	O	T	L	I	N	E	S
O	W	I	E	S		E	V	O	K	E	S	EAR	T	H	A	K	I	T	T
M	E	G	A	S	T	A	R		E	L	W	A	Y			V	I	T	A	E
	D	O	N	C	HEAD	L	E		S	L	A	L	O	M				I	L	E
			N	A	V			J	O	H	N	LEG	U	I	Z	A	M	O		
Z	A	P		M	O	I	R	A		O	N	E		N	O	L	O			
E	T	O	N			C	O	I	N	O	P			B	A	N	G	O	R	
E	L	S	A	L	A	N	CHEST	E	R			P	O	R	K	A	D	O	B	O
	A	T	B	A	T				A	T	T	U	N	E			S	O	I	R
I	N	D		D	E	N	Z	E	L	W	A	SHIN	G	T	O	N		K	G	B
S	T	O	P			B	O	N	S	A	I				V	I	S	I	T	
T	A	C	O	S	T	A	N	D			M	I	C	H	E	L	L	EYE	O	H
		S	C	H	E	M	E			H	E	A	L	E	R		Y	A	D	A
		K	I	E	V		T	E	E		T	E	X	T	S		R	O	T	
	R	Y	A	N	P	H	I	L	LIP	P	E			I	A	N				
U	S	E				S	A	V	I	O	R		O	LIVER	P	L	A	T	T	
R	E	N	A	L			N	O	T	R	E		P	A	S	T	R	I	E	S
B	I	T	P	A	R	T	S		E	T	C	H	E	D		C	U	L	P	A
A	N	T	I	G	O	N	E				S	U	T	R	A		O	T	T	E	R
N	E	O	N	S	I	G	N				T	S	A	R		D	O	S	E	S

KENKEN

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

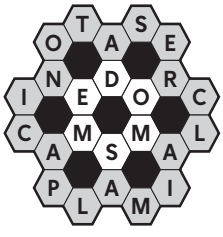
3	2	5	1	4	6	7
5	7	3	4	2	1	6
1	5	4	3	6	7	2
7	1	2	6	5	4	3
4	6	1	7	3	2	5
2	4	6	5	7	3	1
6	3	7	2	1	5	4

ACROSTIC

ANN PATCHETT, TRUTH AND BEAUTY — [I]t is possible to … understand things at certain points, and … to be in utter confusion just a short while later. … [S]ometimes what you knew … goes out with a bang … just like a lightbulb cracking off when you throw the switch.

A. Acronyms
B. Nobelist
C. Newton
D. Pitt
E. "Assassins"
F. Two-Face
G. Co-wrote
H. Hindsight
I. Elite
J. Ticklish
K. Thoughts
L. "The Twist"
M. Red flag
N. Uptown
O. Tuition
P. Homework
Q. Acute
R. Norah Jones
S. Draw a blank
T. Beijing
U. Ebbing
V. Asti
W. Usher
X. Tutu
Y. Youthful

FREEWHEELING



BOXING MATCH

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

Answers to puzzle on Page 62

SPELLING BEE

Exonerate (3 points). Also: Annex, exert, extant, extent, extern, extort, extorter, extra, taxer, texter, xenon, xerox. If you found other legitimate dictionary words in the beehive, feel free to include them in your score.

Sándigo

(Continued from Page 63)

home country, Colombia. Once there, they were threatened by people attempting to extort the family, with its American ties. Their mother contacted Sándigo on Facebook, asking her to take the children in. "She explained that if I don't do anything her kids would be kidnapped or dead," Sándigo says.

Valerie was counting on being reunited with her parents through DAPA. When it failed, she says, "all my hopes went down. I just started to cry. It was bad." Like other children in her situation, she has only one legal avenue: wait until she's not a child anymore, and then, when she has fewer needs but more rights, try to sponsor her parents for green cards. To get her parents back, Valerie says, "I have to wait until I'm 21."

On a Sunday in June, T. took her children to Sándigo's office to sign papers. Some were permission forms; Sándigo was about to take the kids on another advocacy trip to Washington. The other papers were power-of-attorney forms. T. had decided she was ready to sign.

A notary arrived, and T. sat down next to him at Sándigo's desk. *"Tu nombre y appellido?"* he asked her, and she spelled her name. Kelly, in jeans and a glittery T-shirt, leaned on her mother's shoulders, peering at the papers she was signing. Soon, though, she lost interest, and climbed into an armchair on top of her cousin Karina, also 8. "The government is not respecting their rights," Karina's mother said, as the girls snuggled together watching a YouTube video. No one mentioned it, but it was Father's Day.

Kelly was more animated than she had been a few months before. The psychologist had played games with her and explained, as Kelly put it: "I need to get better so I can have more energy. I need to eat food so I can't be dead." But what helped the most, T. thought, was when Javier was released from detention to return to Mexico. From there, he could at least talk to her on the phone every day.

Still, things were hardly back to normal; Kelly had just failed the school year. She looked over at her mother signing the papers. "Each day I get sadder and sadder," she said quietly. "But I don't want to tell my mom because she could get worried about me."

The notary stamped the paper that showed how worried her mother already was. *"Quién falta?"* he asked, looking around. "Who's next?"

Another family stepped forward: a couple and their three American sons, ages 3, 10 and 11. The youngest was wearing a Mickey Mouse hat. They drove from Broward County after learning on a local news segment the day before about Sándigo and her willingness to serve as a guardian. Though they didn't need Sándigo's help financially, they were thrilled to have an emergency plan to offer their sons: Before, "we just told them not to answer the door when they came and knocked," the mother said. "I don't know the truth — how scared they are," the father said. "I imagine they are."

The family took their turn with the notary, then stuck around to eat cake and sing "Happy Birthday" to Matthew, who was turning 15 that day, far from his parents. "It's already my second birthday without them," he said. He misses them the most, he said, when he scores a goal at a soccer game. "He sees friends with their parents, all the social media posts with parents," explained Valerie, in braces and pastel-blue fingernail polish. "Sometimes he asks me, 'Why can't we be with them?' And I'm like, 'I don't know, you're asking the wrong person.'"

Valerie's phone rang; it was their mother, asking how the birthday was going. Valerie estimated it was the 10th call of the day from her. During the school year, the first ring always comes at 6 a.m., a long-distance version of the wake-ups that used to happen in person.

Two days later, nine adults and 36 children gathered at Sándigo's house to pack into three rented vans for the 18-hour drive to Washington. T. tried to find space under a seat for a stroller — she was bringing all four daughters — while Sándigo stood in front of local news cameras, speaking in Spanish. "How can they be American citizens if in their own country they're treated so harshly?" she asked. Kelly wandered into the frame, and Sándigo pointed to her: "Her father was deported," she said. "It's very hard." Kelly noticed the cameras turning to her and darted away. "We hope they'll listen to these American children," T.'s sister told Telemundo.

Finally, space was found for all the diaper bags and suitcases and gallons of frozen milk. The kids lined up for a group photo around an American flag. The plan was to drive through the night, a challenge with so few licensable drivers among the adults. The vans pulled out past a small lineup of news cameras.

A few minutes later, they were back. Sándigo had gotten a call from the only English-language station to respond to her news release: The cameraman was running late. Sándigo agreed to redo the exit scene. "For us, the English news is the most important," she said. Its viewers were the ones whom she most wanted to hear from the children, their fellow citizens.

Kelly and the others dutifully spilled out of the van into the sunshine. Valerie, in her native, teenage English, told the new camera the same things she'd told the others in Spanish: about missing her parents, about how hard it was. She was proud that she'd finally learned to talk about them without crying.

Then the children all climbed back inside for another try at reaching their nation's capital.

The cameraman stood in the empty street for a long time, watching them disappear. ◆

Pete Souza Didn't Miss A Thing

Interview by Dan Amira

You took nearly two million photos of Barack Obama as his chief official White House photographer. Everyone knows the situation-room photo, everyone knows "Hair Like Mine." Can you tell in the moment when a picture is going to go viral? Most of the time you're sort of aware that you've captured a really important moment. The day of the bin Laden raid, I think I shot like a thousand photos. The one of the little kid touching his head, it just happened so fast I didn't realize the significance of the photo until I actually saw it at the end of the day.

What is your favorite photo that isn't famous? It's a picture of the president on vacation in Hawaii. He's got his arm around Malia, and on the right side of the frame is Denis McDonough on the phone, about to hand the phone to the president for a conference call with his national-security team after the underwear-bomber incident. It shows when two worlds of being a dad and being a president collide, and that happens when you least expect it.

Did having such an intimate look at the inner workings of government for eight years affect how you personally consider politics? I can't tell you how proud I am to have seen that there are actually a lot of people trying to do good. I was a photographer in the Reagan administration, and I would say the same thing about them.

You had to travel everywhere that the president traveled, but you weren't the president. Did you ever think: Look, do you really need photos of this trip? I'm exhausted. I took one sick day in eight years, and there were times where I didn't feel good, but I still came in. If you're truly going to document history, you don't want to miss anything.

You took only one sick day in eight years? I had a colonoscopy, and I had to go under anesthesia. I was ready to go in, but the doctors said it would not be a good idea.

Did you ever find the job boring? Oh, it was boring a lot, like watching paint dry, because the situation is so similar: The president's seated in the same chair in the Oval Office, and you've got the same people sitting on that sofa, and even though they'd be talking about something different each time, visually it looks the same.

You've said that your job was to visually document the president for history. Did you also see it as your job at all to make the president look good? I can't say that I was trying to make him look good. It kind of cracks me up that people have asked me about this — was I supposed to wait until he was picking his nose, and then that's the picture that you should have made public?

Did President Obama ever seem as if he was aware of the camera? No. The first time I ever met him, I was working for The Chicago Tribune, and I spent his first day in the Senate with him, and I was pleasantly surprised that it didn't bother him that I was tagging along with him all day. There was almost no awareness of the camera, which is unusual with a politician, and that's why he's a good subject: He just goes about his business, and I went about mine.

So you never thought that he was clenching his jaw a little tighter or staring pensively out the window because he knew you were in the room? No, I just became part of the scenery. I once got in an argument with him about whether I had actually been in a meeting or not. He just always assumed I was there.

You've been using Instagram to juxtapose the Trump and Obama presidencies. Some would describe it as trolling Trump — for example, when Trump used two hands to drink from a bottle of water, you posted a photo of Obama holding up a glass of water with one hand and the caption: "One-handed." Do you think Trump has noticed? I have no idea, and quite frankly, I don't really care one way or the other. ◆

Age: 62

Occupation: Photographer

Hometown: New Bedford, Mass.

Souza was the chief official White House photographer for the Reagan and Obama administrations. His book "Obama: An Intimate Portrait" was published in November.

His Top 5 Places He Traveled With Obama:
1. Oahu, Hawaii
2. Petra, Jordan
3. Pyramids of Giza
4. Christ the Redeemer in Rio
5. Stonehenge

Interview has been condensed and edited.

Photograph by Ariel Zambelich

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