"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

THE WEATHER
Today, less humid, sunshine returning, high 82. **Tonight,** partly cloudy, low 71. **Tomorrow,** some sun, afternoon thunderstorm, more humid, high 84. Weather map, Page B12.

VOL. CLXXV .... No. 60,939 © 2026 The New York Times Company WEDNESDAY, JULY 8, 2026 Prices in Canada may be higher $4.00

City High-Rise Seen Buckling During Project

Officials Seal Off Area Near Grand Central

By ASHLEY SOUTHALL and MIHIR ZAVERI

Twenty-one stories above a Midtown Manhattan street early Tuesday morning, construction workers were busy converting an office building into a residential complex when it began falling apart.

"The beams started bending," said Cliff Johnsen, the business agent for the Local 638 steamfitters union, which had workers on site. Several floors were sagging.

The building seemed to be crumbling fast, he said.

The workers evacuated the building, at 235 East 42nd Street, near Grand Central Terminal and the United Nations, and a supervisor called 911, prompting a hurried emergency response. Fearing a partial collapse, officials evacuated nearby buildings and blocked off several nearby streets to pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

Officials said there were no injuries, but they had seen severe structural damage between the 21st and 26th floors. The building was still standing, but it remained unstable, they said. Dozens of businesses were displaced and tourists were stranded indefinitely after the city established a "frozen zone" spanning several blocks. The cause of the incident is under investigation.

The episode stalled a project that had come to symbolize the city's ambitious effort to repurpose Midtown's empty office buildings to address the city's housing shortage. Developers called the project the largest office-to-residential conversion in city history; it had been set for completion next year.

The dramatic episode on Tuesday, though, clouded the project's future, as inspectors raced to figure out what exactly went wrong, how it could be fixed and the full extent of the problems.

At a news conference in the early afternoon, Mayor Zohran Mamdani said that building inspectors using drones to survey the 37-story building spotted two columns that had buckled, several cracks and sagging floors. The building continued to shift after the authorities arrived, he said.

"The building remains unstable," he said, urging people to avoid the area until the authorities deemed it safe.

MetroLoft, the developer on the apartment conversion, thanked city officials for their quick response and said in a statement that the damage was limited to a small area of the building. "The entire building itself is not at risk of collapse," the company said.

The Fire Department shared photos from the building on social media that showed missing paneling on the building facade and a vertical beam bent like an elbow. Fire officials said there was no risk of a full building collapse because of its steel-frame construction.

The Fire Department said it responded to a call at 8 a.m. on Monday from someone reporting bricks falling off the building.

Continued on Page A17

DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Pieces of a Midtown Manhattan office building began to crack and crumble as work was being done to convert the space to housing.

DEMOCRATS SCRAP FOR SLOT PLATNER HAS YET TO YIELD

FACES CLAIM OF RAPE

Sanders Joins Supporters in Urging Nominee to Get Out of Race

This article is by ***Shane Goldmacher****,* ***Reid J. Epstein*** *and* ***Katie Glueck****.*

The implosion of Graham Platner's campaign for Senate in Maine after an accusation of rape has ripped open divisions inside the Democratic Party as its progressives and moderates battle to pick his successor even before he has said he will step aside.

National Democrats have grown alarmed that a seat seen as crucial to winning control of the Senate could be slipping from the party's grasp. Mr. Platner had survived a series of controversies — about a tattoo with Nazi symbolism, inflammatory old Reddit posts and his relationships with women — but many in the party abandoned him after the rape accusation, including the leaders of the Maine Democratic Party and Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the minority leader.

They have demanded that Mr. Platner step down before a July 13 deadline for him to be replaced on the ballot to find a new Democrat to run against Senator Susan Collins, a longtime Republican fixture in the state. The main super PAC for Democratic Senate candidates said it would redirect $24 million in ad reservations to other states if he remained.

Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, one of Mr. Platner's earliest and most prominent backers, joined the chorus on Tuesday afternoon.

"I have spoken with Graham Platner about the best path forward for Maine," Mr. Sanders said in a statement. "In light of these very serious allegations, I have recommended that he step aside."

Mr. Platner, who has denied the allegation, said on a private call with his campaign staff on Monday evening that he believed he still had leverage to influence which candidate would replace him on the ticket, according to three people familiar with the conversation. On the call, he did not announce plans to withdraw but implied such a decision would be coming, the people said.

Mr. Platner's campaign had stopped running ads on Meta's platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, as of Tuesday, according to the company's ad disclosure database. He had been running multiple ads as recently as Monday evening.

Top Democrats believe that it is only a matter of time before Mr. Platner formally quits — and gives the party a fresh start in its bid to oust Ms. Collins, who has proved a durable foe.

The drama comes almost exactly two years after the Democratic Party was roiled by the exit of Joseph R. Biden Jr., then the president, from his re-election race and the speedy anointment of Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee. That

Continued on Page A15

NEWS ANALYSIS

Europe's Test: Filling U.S.-Size Hole at NATO

By STEVEN ERLANGER and LARA JAKES

ANKARA, Turkey — European leaders arrive for this year's NATO summit meeting in Ankara, Turkey, with the alliance under threat.

They want to keep President Trump and the United States deeply engaged in NATO, but they have come to accept that the alliance is changing — and will have to rely far less on Washington for the conventional defense of Europe.

The Trump administration has made it clear that it is withdrawing troops and capabilities from Europe to shore up American military power in the Middle East and the Indo-Pacific, where China has become a rival to the United States.

The European governments want to ensure that the transition toward what many call NATO 3.0 is done as smoothly as possible. They want to feel confident that the gaps the Americans leave can be filled, even if imperfectly, to diminish their vulnerability to a more aggressive, militarized Russia.

The dangers of the current moment have been underscored by China's test of a long-range ballistic missile on Monday, the first such launch in nearly two years, and another huge Russian missile and drone attack on Kyiv, Ukraine's capital.

NATO leaders are expected to endorse continued support for Ukraine, with the non-American members pledging $80 billion this year and next. President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine will attend, to press his urgent desire for more air defenses against the Russian onslaught.

Mark Rutte, the secretary general of NATO, is trying to walk a narrow line, prodding European member states to pay more for security while making sure Mr. Trump does not abandon the alliance in the process.

"We will breathe life into the concept of NATO 3.0: A stronger Europe in a stronger NATO," he said last month.

But for several years at least,

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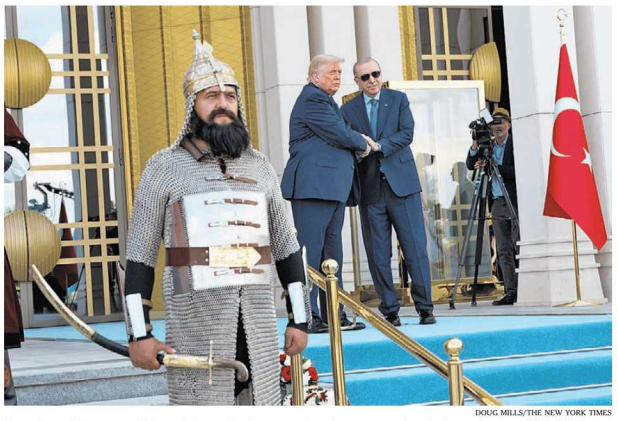

DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Presidents Trump and Recep Tayyip Erdogan and an honor guard in Ankara, Turkey, NATO's host.

Olympics Lifts Russian Ban, With Limits

By EPHRAT LIVNI

The International Olympic Committee on Tuesday lifted its suspension of Russia related to its invasion of Ukraine, clearing the way for Russia to send a team to the 2028 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles.

The Olympic Committee said its decision applied "provisionally," subject to Russian conduct in the future, and that it had not yet decided whether it would allow the Russian flag or anthem at the games.

Still, it was a significant step for bringing Russian athletes, who have struggled with their country's pariah status on the world stage, back into the international fold after several years.

Debate over lifting the suspension centered on the Russian Olympic Committee's claims that parts of Ukraine were under its jurisdiction.

In a statement, the I.O.C. executive board said that after "thorough analysis" by legal experts, it accepted that the Russian committee no longer considered regional sports organizations in Ukrainian territory as its own, and would abstain from doing so in the future.

When the suspension was announced in 2023, Russia questioned why the international committee had not taken similar actions after Russia seized Crimea from Ukraine in 2014, according to the international organization's president at the time, Thomas Bach.

"This argument was a little bit, 'Why did you not sanction us already, earlier?'" Mr. Bach said, ar-

Continued on Page A5

Trump Tries to Rewrite History at Smithsonian

By MAGGIE HABERMAN and JONATHAN SWAN

Coming from the leader of almost any other major museum, the comments made around the celebration of America's 250th anniversary by Lonnie G. Bunch III, the head of the Smithsonian Institution, would have seemed almost self-evident truths.

The Smithsonian's mission, Mr. Bunch told CNN last week, is to

Effort to Impose Views on National Record

"give you questions and answers that will make you understand the complexity of who we are as a nation" using "the best nonpartisan scholarship we have." On NBC's "Meet the Press," he said the institution was like the glue that holds the nation together. "Red states, blue states — whatever your politics, you come to the Smithsonian," he said.

But after more than a year of intense pressure from President Trump and his allies over what they term "improper ideology" in the Smithsonian's presentation of American history and culture, Mr. Bunch's comments amounted to a public glimpse into a far less diplo-

Continued on Page A12

Loss for U.S. Soccer, but Leap by Soccer in U.S.

By DAVID WALDSTEIN

As the United States players hung their heads after a 4-1 loss to Belgium in Seattle on Monday night, a nation momentarily captivated by soccer mourned the sudden end of a promising journey.

But buried within the disappointment of the sobering defeat was evidence that this World Cup had accelerated soccer's decades-long climb into the national consciousness.

Devotion to Cultivating Youth and Pro Talent

With established professional leagues for both men and women, and youth participation continuing to soar, the men's national team is far from the sole metric for the health of the sport in the United States. Despite the end of the U.S.'s World Cup run, soccer's stakeholders are eagerly anticipating a boost for the sport's presence and potential in a nation where it has long battled other sports for attention.

Continued on Page A14

REALITY CHECK An American dream fizzled at the World Cup in an all-too-familiar way. PAGE B6

INTERNATIONAL A4-9

Le Pen to Run Again in France
Marine Le Pen's conviction was confirmed, but a ban on her eligibility for elected office was shortened. PAGE A7

Farage Prompts By-Election
The leader of Britain's Reform U.K. Party has been questioned about undisclosed gifts and donations. PAGE A5

NATIONAL A10-17

Antismoking Efforts Falter
The C.D.C.'s tobacco control office has been shuttered for more than a year. And calls to 1-800-QUIT-NOW lines have plummeted. PAGE A13

Politics and Climate Change
Bill Frist, a former Senate majority leader, has emerged as an advocate for environmental health. PAGE A16

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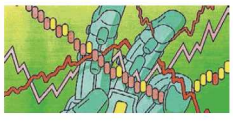
An Insider's View of Tennis
Sandra Zaniewska, who coaches Marta Kostyuk of Ukraine, applies a writerly touch to her newsletter. PAGE B8



BUSINESS B1-5

A.I.'s Cryptic Economic Effect
Some data suggests artificial intelligence is causing job losses. Others, however, show the opposite. PAGE B1

Businesses Brace for Fallout
A Supreme Court ruling that gives the president more power over U.S. agencies has industries concerned. PAGE B1

ARTS C1-6

Britain's Lost Music Venues
A new museum exhibition in London charts the cyclical forces destroying nightlife spots, as clubs battle building developers, complaining neighbors and shifting social habits. PAGE C1

An Onstage Promotion
After his sparkling debut as Basilio in "Don Quixote," Jake Roxander was elevated to principal dancer at the American Ballet Theater. He discusses his reaction to the news. PAGE C1

OPINION A18-19

Michelle Goldberg PAGE A18

FOOD D1-8

They're Always in Season
In just the past decade, berries have been transformed from a fragile, local treat to a worldwide refrigerator staple and marketing juggernaut. PAGE D8

Inside The Times

The New York Times

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The Newspaper and Beyond

TODAY'S PAPER

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Opinion A18-19
Weather B12
Classified Ads B4

VIDEO

Our Middle East correspondent Abdi Latif Dahir attended the first day of funeral ceremonies for Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the former supreme leader of Iran who was killed by U.S. and Israeli airstrikes in February. Mr. Dahir explained what he saw at *nytimes.com/video*.

ROUNDUP

A new iteration of "Little House on the Prairie" begins streaming on Netflix this Thursday. Check out six other shows and specials airing or streaming this week at *nytimes.com/tv*.

QUIZ

This week's edition of Literary Quotable Quotes highlights observations about American life from a wide range of sources that include novels, essays and poetry by popular writers. Try your hand at *nytimes.com/books*.

Quote of the Day

"Where we were then was the night, and where we are now is the day, and it's going to continue to grow."

ALAN ROTHENBERG, *the head of the United States Soccer Federation when the United States first hosted the World Cup in 1994, on soccer's decades-long climb into the national consciousness. Page A1.*

The Story Behind the Story

How We Learned About Trump's Call With FIFA

Two reporters discuss the president's ask to FIFA to review the suspension of a top U.S. player.

By MEGAN DiTROLIO

On Sunday, The New York Times broke exclusive details about President Trump's personal call to the president of FIFA, Gianni Infantino, and request that he review the suspension of a striker for the U.S. men's soccer team who had been given a red card and deemed ineligible for Monday's game against Belgium. FIFA eventually reversed the suspension — and the player, Folarin Balogun, was cleared to compete.

Tyler Pager, who covers the White House, and Tariq Panja, who reports on sports, teamed up to chase down details of a conversation between the president of the United States and the president of the international soccer federation. I asked the reporters to break down their article ahead of the U.S. team's 4-1 loss to Belgium on Monday; these are edited excerpts from the exchange.

You guys reported that President Trump had called Gianni Infantino, FIFA's president, and asked him to review the suspension. How did you hear the news of the reversal of the red card punishment, and what were your next steps?

TYLER PAGER: I was on a plane to Istanbul when the news broke that Balogun was reinstated. I was traveling to Turkey ahead of the NATO summit, which Trump is attending this week. But as soon as I saw the news, I started texting sources from the plane. (I am grateful for Turkish Airlines Wi-Fi!)

We know that Trump and Infantino have a close relationship and have talked frequently over the last year, so I figured Trump may have been involved. I sent a bunch of messages that went unread, but after one source confirmed that Trump and Infantino had spoken by phone, I knew we had a story. But one source wasn't enough, so I reached out to Tariq, and we worked together to firm up the reporting and write the story, which published before I landed in Istanbul.

TARIQ PANJA: Having covered the curious Infantino-Trump relations over the years, it seemed highly likely that the two men would have spoken in some way about the issue. The news came at an awkward time for me as I was scouring Mexico City to find a media bus to the Azteca Stadium for what was going to be one of the biggest games in Mexican history, a World Cup knockout match between Mexico and England.

Once there, we were stuck in a line for almost 90 minutes and my phone battery was close to dying, which meant I was umbilically connected with a kind reporter from The Times of London who let me share his power bank. Not the easiest place to do this type of work. But we managed to connect with contacts over messages and a few phone calls to get details for what will go down as one of the most extraordinary events in the World Cup's 96-year history.

TIERNEY L. CROSS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

President Trump in the Oval Office last summer holding a World Cup trophy.

This was the first time in over 60 years that FIFA allowed a player to appear in a World Cup game when that player would have otherwise been suspended. Walk us through FIFA red card rules — and why this moment was so extraordinary.

PAGER: It is unusual for the U.S. president to try to reverse an outcome in an international sporting competition. I can't recall any incident like this happening before.

PANJA: The rules on red cards are quite clear, and those who follow the sport are aware of them. A red card means an automatic suspension for the next game. Only in the most extreme cases, like a mistaken identity, is a ban supposed to be lifted. This was not one of those cases, even though to many football officials, coaches, fans and even politicians, the red card was a harsh one. But FIFA had already been called out for appearing to favor a star when it lifted a two-game World Cup ban that Cristiano Ronaldo was supposed to serve for a red card he received before the tournament.

The White House confirmed that Trump and Infantino had spoken and that "the correct and proper outcome was achieved" after what the White House described as an independent review. It declined to provide additional details of the conversation, but people familiar with the call clued you in. What happened next?

PAGER: We did not publish the story until we had multiple sources confirming the details. When I reached out to the White House for comment, they initially referred me to the president's post on Truth Social, in which he celebrated the decision but made no mention of his communication with Infantino.

PANJA: We cross-reference what they are saying with other sources and confirm those details with what may already exist in the public domain.

Tyler, you report on Trump and the White House. Tariq, your beat is all things sports and how they collide with geopolitics. What was it like joining forces?

PANJA: Tyler is a force of nature. It was great to see him go full throttle on this.

PAGER: Tariq is a FIFA expert, and it was a treat to team up with him. After a source told me that Trump and Infantino spoke, I shared my reporting with my colleagues on the White House beat to see if any of them had heard similarly. Zolan Kanno-Youngs recommended I contact Tariq. His depth of knowledge and sourcing on the FIFA beat helped bring it all together.

Read the article at nytimes.com/politics.

Top Trending Headlines Online

Opinion | JD Vance Is Worried The Times Opinion columnist Carlos Lozada wrote about Vice President JD Vance's new book, "Communion," in which Mr. Vance describes his conversion to Catholicism and concerns with the secularization of the West. With readers in the comments section, Mr. Lozada exchanged ideas about the Christian principles (or lack thereof) in the Trump administration. "Vance's fears are not just for the MAGA base, or for the nation, or for the West; they are deeply personal, too," Mr. Lozada wrote.

What It Was Like Inside Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce's Wedding By Monday morning, a picture was beginning to emerge of Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce's wedding at Madison Square Garden in New York last Friday. Though few details have been confirmed by the couple, The Times's Madison Malone Kircher and Gabriella Gershenson reported that the bride and groom wore Dior, Adam Sandler officiated and Stevie Nicks performed before a crowd of celebrity guests.

U.K. Live Updates: Farage Resigns and Says He Will Run Again in Special Election Nigel Farage, leader of the populist right-wing party Reform U.K., said on Tuesday that he would resign his seat in Parliament and pursue it again in a special election. He announced his decision after recent revelations of a 5-million-pound gift to Mr. Farage from a cryptocurrency billionaire as well as benefits provided by a political ally who served time in jail for fraud. Reform U.K. leads British opinion polls. The Times used live coverage to report the developments.

See How a Series of U.S. Mistakes Led to Belgium's Third Goal Using custom software and photographs from the game, Times journalists created a 3-D model of the American blunders that led to Belgium's third goal in the teams' World Cup matchup on Monday. The broken play punctuated Belgium's 4-1 elimination of the United States.

A Headline From History

END OF THE ASSASSINS

July 8, 1865. "The conspirators have gone to their long home," The Times reported after four of the people involved in the plot to kill President Abraham Lincoln — Mary Surratt, George A. Atzerodt, David E. Herold and Lewis Payne — were hanged the previous day in Washington. After a seven-week trial, a military tribunal found them and four others guilty of conspiring to assassinate the president with John Wilkes Booth, who had been killed by federal authorities in Virginia nearly two weeks after he shot Lincoln at Ford's Theater on April 14. Three of the conspirators — Samuel Arnold, Dr. Samuel A. Mudd and Michael O'Laughlen — were sentenced to life in prison, and another, Edman "Ned" Spangler, was given six years. Friends of Mrs. Surratt pleaded for her life, but to no avail. Her son John fled the United States, was extradited back and stood trial for his role in the assassination plot in 1867, but jurors were unable to reach a verdict.

THE NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY
620 Eighth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10018-1405

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Mail Subscription Rates*	1 Yr.	6 Mos.
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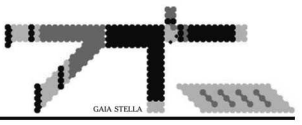

GAIA STELLA

Facts of Interest

Canada has not had much of a submarine fleet. It bought its current complement of just four submarines secondhand from Britain in 1998, but only one is currently operational.

Canada Selects Joint Bid For Building Submarines A9

Driscoll's, a $7 billion California company, ships four billion containers of perishable fruit across 60 countries each year. It is the second-highest-earning brand in American supermarkets, behind only Coca-Cola.

No Off-Season for Berries Around Here D8

Unlike the N.B.A., the W.N.B.A. does not have an offsite replay center that allows for objective officiating decisions by a third party.

One Thing Seems to Unite W.N.B.A.: Discord Over the Officiating B9

In Britain, an average of one independent music club, known as a grass-roots venue, closed every two weeks in 2024, according to research from the Music Venue Trust, a nonprofit.

When Music Venues Go Silent C1

It is not uncommon for licensed master plumbers in New York City to earn salaries over six figures.

How Did New York City Pay One Plumber Nearly Half a Million Dollars? A17

More than 139 million metric tons of bananas are grown worldwide each year, making them the most-produced, most-consumed fresh fruit globally.

No Escaping This Fresh Fruit Flavor D2

Japan is the United States' biggest source of foreign investment.

Vow to Bring Investment May Falter B1

The Mini Crossword

7/8/2026

BY IAN LIVENGOOD
EDITED BY JOEL FAGLIANO

ACROSS

1 Hairstyle for Jimi Hendrix
5 Snow-clearing vehicle
6 Headwear for a monarch
7 Car part that can be "popped"
8 Iconic film character with a fedora hat, familiarly

DOWN

1 Chef's garment
2 Biblical phenomenon caused by 40 days of rain
3 Obstreperous
4 "Mind your ___ beeswax!"
6 Invisible life force, in Chinese philosophy

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

T	O	E		
I	N	N	E	R
P	E	A	C	E
S	A	C	H	S
		T	O	Y

Reader Corner

Callout: What is your holy grail?

Believing is a weekly newsletter about how people live religion and spirituality today. In recent editions, The Times's Lauren Jackson has written about a Catholic abuse settlement and the limits of an apology, the conservatives trying to revive "Western Civilizationism" and the fans who felt the Knicks' championship run as a religious experience. Now Ms. Jackson is asking readers to share what is sacred to them.

What is your holy grail? Is it a book, song, restaurant dish, influencer, podcast, poem, scripture, celebrity, writer, city block, painting or video? Is it a place you can't stop going to? You can name one example, or share a list.

To submit your story, find a form to fill out at nytimes.com/readers. We may use the contact details that you provide to verify your identity and answers to the questionnaire, as well as to contact you for further information.

In Our Inbox

Excerpts From New York Times Newsletters

ADRIANA LOUREIRO FERNANDEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Back-to-back earthquakes in Venezuela last month destroyed more than 400 buildings.

In 2010, the United States provided 7,000 troops and more than $3 billion in aid to Haiti after a devastating earthquake left over 200,000 dead. That's not what has happened in Venezuela, which was shaken by two quakes last month that caused at least 2,900 deaths. For The Morning, Sam Sifton asked Simon Romero, who wrote about the U.S. response to the temblors in both nations, to discuss the discrepancy. Here is an edited excerpt.

What explains the difference between the U.S. responses to these two natural disasters?

At first glance, there are major differences between the two tragedies. Venezuela, despite its severe economic crash a decade ago, is still not as poor as Haiti. The death toll in Venezuela also appears to be lower — though that could change as more bodies are recovered. Venezuela also has oil — something Haiti does not have.

But the U.S. approach to foreign aid has also changed immensely under the Trump administration. Aid to many poor countries, some in humanitarian crises, has been slashed. U.S.A.I.D. has been gutted.

Still, the Haiti relief effort led many people to conclude that bigger isn't always better. Giant though it was — and it did save lives immediately after the 2010 earthquake — it did not ultimately place Haiti on a stronger footing.

Can you give us a sense of what may lie ahead for Venezuela?

The recovery and rebuilding efforts in Venezuela will take years. It will be extremely challenging. There are the issues of funding, but there's also the issue of whether Venezuela's government is up to the task. Venezuela still has authoritarian rule, and those in power do not face the same scrutiny from public institutions, the news media or nongovernmental organizations that public officials in democratic systems do.

Subscribe to The Morning at nytimes.com/themorning.

Here to Help

The Best Relationship Tips We've Heard in 2026 (So Far)

We cover relationships for The Times, so we're always on the lookout for tips to keep your connection strong and healthy (and ours, too). Here is the best advice we've collected from experts so far this year.

CATHERINE PEARSON AND JANCEE DUNN

NADA HAYEK

Invent your own 'love language.' The "5 Love Languages" concept proposes that the ways people express their love for each other fall into five categories: gifts, acts of service, compliments, quality time and physical touch. But some experts say that a love language can be anything that you use to express affection.

Nicole McNichols, the author of "You Could Be Having Better Sex," said that her love language is "goofing around." And research shows that playfulness builds intimacy. Being attuned to your special love languages and those of your partner can strengthen your bond, experts say.

Don't stop at 'How are you?' When we ask our partner, "How are you?" the answer is often an automatic response such as "fine," said Leslie John, the author of "Revealing." Instead, Dr. John recommended swapping "How are you?" for "How are you feeling?" Dropping in that one word can make the conversation richer, she said.

Craft a solid 'heads-up sentence.' If you have to raise a difficult topic with your partner, don't blindside them, advised Jefferson Fisher, the author of "The Next Conversation." Instead, prepare your mate with what Mr. Fisher calls a "heads-up sentence." Start by saying, in a neutral way, that you've been concerned about something. Then give a preview of the topic.

Keep the preview brief and specific, Mr. Fisher said, such as: "We need to talk about our credit card bills."

Try a 'turnoff audit.' A powerful way to address low libido or desire discrepancies in a relationship is to spend some time thinking about the stuff that turns you off, said David F. Khalili, a licensed marriage and family therapist in San Francisco.

People often try to address low libido by adding a new element, like a different sexual technique. Instead, he often urges his clients to start by identifying one or two things that tend to take them out of the mood — and work on eliminating them.

For more relationship advice, visit nytimes.com/well.

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Doris Mataboge, center, wearing an elaborate hat, cheered as her horse won on Saturday at Durban July in Durban, South Africa. The day at the track is the most lucrative horse racing event in Africa.

A Day at the Races Showcases Newfound Black Affluence

By JOHN ELIGON

DURBAN, South Africa — Plates of oysters, prawns and sushi sat on Ashwin Reynolds's table. A singer performed soothing R&B, bartenders poured sparkling wine, and the guests in this suite at a horse racing track wore fitted suits and fancy floral headpieces.

As a child who used to record horse racing bets for his grandfather, Mr. Reynolds, who is 52 and owns a construction company, never could have imagined enjoying such opulence at a racetrack in Durban. Until South Africa's apartheid system was dismantled in the early 1990s, people of color like him were barred from such elite spaces.

But there he was on Saturday, alongside a racially diverse crowd at Durban July, the most lucrative horse racing event in Africa. In 2021, he became the first person of color to own the horse that won the main race.

This year is the 130th running of the Durban July horse races, in this sprawling city on South Africa's south coast. The daylong event has become about much more than racing. The music, fashion, food and ostentatious displays of wealth make it possible to briefly forget the economic and social hardships that continue to define life for many South Africans.

Over a dozen V.I.P. tents, known as marquees, stretch across the grassy infield of the 2,800-meter, pear-shaped track. The marquees charge hundreds of dollars to book a table offering sleek banquettes, bottle service and buffets. Some marquees become hubs for networking, gathering people from particular industries and professions like fashion, music and politics. Up-and-coming artists may rub elbows with established producers; entrepreneurs seeking government contracts may try to butter up politicians.

Each year, attendees are encouraged to dress to a theme. This year's was "country allure."

Many Black attendees see Durban July as a celebration of their place in high society in a country where, for hundreds of years, they were robbed of resources and prevented from building wealth.

This is no longer "just a white man's event," said Teddy Geldart, a South African television producer, sporting a white feathery top as he lounged on a sofa in a marquee where the American R&B singer Bryson Tiller was the headline act.

"It's now ours," Mr. Geldart, 40, added. "That's a great feeling, that we can enjoy luxury in our own country."

During apartheid, nonwhite spectators were allowed to attend Durban July, but they were confined to a small section of the grandstand known as the silver ring, said Anita Akal, 83, who was in her 55th year photographing the event. White guests sat in the gold ring, near the finish line.

'It's an event that everybody leaves everything behind for this day — the racial tension, the bickering, the fights that we have.'

VISHAL RAMLAKAN, who was attending Durban July, a daylong horse racing event in South Africa, for the third time.

But spectators at that time could still move around and mingle across racial lines, an uncommon display for the apartheid era, said David Thiselton, a South African horse racing journalist who has been attending since 1990.

Today, the grandstands mostly attract those interested in horse racing, who buy an $18 ticket and don't necessarily wear the same elaborate outfits as those who come to party. Many in the grandstand crowd are South Africans of Indian descent, a community in which horse racing is wildly popular. Behind the grandstands, inside the ring where the horses parade before races, most people are white; they still own most of the horses. The V.I.P. hospitality areas in the infield tend to be mostly Black.

"It's an event that everybody leaves everything behind for this day — the racial tension, the bickering, the fights that we have," said Vishal Ramlakan, a 50-year-old from Durban who works in trucking and was attending for the third time.

Muzi Yeni, 39, said he was pleased that more Black people were attending Durban July than in previous years, but he wished that more of them were interested in the racing. Mr. Yeni, a jockey for 22 years, is one of a handful of Black jockeys at Durban July. Diversification of the ranks of jockeys has been slow, he said, in part because most trainers are white and may not always give Black jockeys a chance.

Three Black jockeys have won Durban July's main race, and Mr. Yeni said he hoped to add his name to that list to show other Black riders that they could do it, too. (Mr. Yeni finished seventh in Saturday's race.)

One Black spectator who came for the racing was Doris Mataboge, 55, attending for the fifth time. She grew up in a rural area and developed a love for horses from seeing them in the fields. Ms. Mataboge, who teaches nursing, said she bet about $1.85 and, for the first time, won, getting just under $10 after the horse she backed was victorious.

Before the races started, the crowd focused its attention on a group of models.

One of them, Karabo Bapela, 18, said the event is helping her gain confidence.

"We're not that good yet," she said.

And she does not take the opportunity for granted.

"It's very freeing to be able to do this," she said, "knowing that our grandmothers, back in the day, couldn't go out in public or hang out with people of a different color."

Guests at The Ascots marquee, one of more than a dozen V.I.P. tents at Durban July, left. The event, at Greyville Racecourse, is also a fashion extravaganza, with models posing for photographs, right.

Dogged by Financial Scandals, Farage Sets Off By-Election

By STEPHEN CASTLE

LONDON — For weeks, Nigel Farage, the leader of the populist right-wing Reform U.K. party, has been on the defensive after a series of damaging revelations about his financial affairs, including undisclosed gifts from a cryptocurrency billionaire and from a political ally once convicted of fraud in the United States.

On Tuesday he tried to reclaim the narrative, unexpectedly announcing he would resign from Parliament and run for re-election for his seat in Clacton, eastern England. He appears to be calculating that a win with voters there will quiet his critics, give him a very visible victory and allow him to position himself as the victim of a campaign orchestrated by the political establishment.

"I have decided that the people of Clacton should be the judges of my actions," Mr. Farage said in a statement broadcast on his party's YouTube channel. "This will be a 'people versus the establishment' by-election," he added, referring to a special parliamentary election.

The success of Mr. Farage, an architect of Brexit whose anti-immigration party has led in opinion polls for over a year, was instrumental in destabilizing Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who announced his resignation last month.

But Mr. Farage's growing profile and the possibility that he could become prime minister at the next general election has attracted scrutiny of his financial affairs.

In May, The Guardian revealed that he had received an undisclosed gift of 5 million pounds (about $6.7 million) from a cryptocurrency billionaire, Christopher Harborne, a Briton who lives in Thailand.

Mr. Farage argues that the gift was unconditional, that it was made before he won a seat in Parliament and that there was no requirement to declare it. However, Daniel Greenberg, Parliament's standards commissioner, has opened an investigation into whether the money should have been made public under rules that require new lawmakers to declare some financial benefits received in the 12 months before their election.

Over the weekend, The Sunday Times of London reported that Mr. Farage had separately failed to declare benefits provided by a political ally, George Cottrell, who served eight months in prison in the United States on the fraud conviction.

DAN KITWOOD/GETTY IMAGES

Nigel Farage, leader of Reform U.K., said on Tuesday that he would resign from his Parliament seat and immediately run again.

According to the newspaper, Mr. Cottrell's support included providing social media staff who worked for Mr. Farage in the year before he was elected, as well as the use of a property rented by Mr. Cottrell near Buckingham Palace.

Mr. Farage insisted he followed all of the rules and has accused journalists of hounding his family and "despicable behavior."

He also suggested on Tuesday that the Sunday Times article had now prompted a second investigation, saying, "Despite the fact that many of the things that were written in the article were inaccurate or irrelevant, yet another standards investigation is underway."

If Mr. Greenberg finds that the gift from Mr. Harborne should have been declared, Mr. Farage might, under parliamentary rules, have been suspended from Parliament and forced to fight for re-election in Clacton.

But his announcement on Tuesday effectively pre-empts that scenario. It does not, however, block the investigation, which could be suspended pending the special election in Clacton and then resumed if Mr. Farage wins. That raises the possibility that the Reform U.K. leader could be forced into a second contest in Clacton later in the year.

In comments to reporters on Tuesday, Mr. Starmer described Mr. Farage's move as "a desperate stunt," from a politician "up to his neck in sleaze." Mr. Starmer's likely successor, Andy Burnham, called it a "gimmick designed to distract from serious allegations about Farage's funders."

Despite Reform's success in May in local elections, the party has also experienced some reverses. Last month, it lost a crucial special parliamentary election in Makerfield, in northwest England, which was won decisively by Mr. Burnham.

This year it also lost a special election in nearby Gorton and Denton to an insurgent Green Party. And last year, it endured a similar fate in Caerphilly in Wales, in a special election to the Welsh Parliament, which was won by the center-left nationalist Plaid Cymru party.

In national polls, Reform's support has fallen from about 30 percent last year to about 25 percent now, with Labour and the Conservatives at around 20 percent each.

Reform has recently faced competition on its right flank from a far-right party called Restore Britain, which was founded by a former ally of Mr. Farage.

Mr. Farage, a highly effective campaigner and a longtime disrupter of British politics, will be confident of winning the Clacton seat again, having achieved a majority of 8,405 votes in the 2024 general election. Polling suggests he remains popular in the area, which voted for Brexit by a large majority in 2016.

But on Tuesday, Kemi Badenoch, the Conservative Party leader, said she would not run a candidate in what she called a "fake" special election. Her party would, however, contest any vote that followed the inquiry by Mr. Greenberg, she said. The centrist Liberal Democrats and Restore Britain gave similar indications.

And Mr. Farage's tactic seems unlikely to end the scrutiny of his finances ahead of the next general election, which must take place by 2029.

Ukraine Says The Suspect In a Bombing Is Found Dead

By CARLOTTA GALL and STANISLAV KOZLIUK

KYIV, Ukraine — A woman suspected of a bomb attack on a businessman and his family in Monaco last week has been found dead, the Ukrainian authorities said on Tuesday.

The Ukrainian prosecutor general's office said in a statement that the body of the woman, Anastasiia Berezovska, a Ukrainian citizen, had been discovered with gunshot wounds to her head. The prosecutor general added that an investigation had been opened into the circumstances of her death.

The law enforcement authorities in Monaco had been searching for Ms. Berezovska, 39, in connection with the bomb attack and on suspicion of attempting to kill the Ukrainian businessman and his family.

An intelligence officer and a former law enforcement official have been detained on suspicion of committing murder, the prosecutor's office said.

An international search had been underway for Ms. Berezovska. She was suspected of attempting to kill the businessman, a woman and a child, after they walked home on June 29 from dinner at a seaside restaurant, Morgan Raymond, Monaco's deputy prosecutor, said last week.

Ms. Berezovska was accused of attempted murder, placing an explosive device on a public road with criminal intent and criminal conspiracy, according to an Interpol notice. Mr. Raymond said that she had surveilled the victims' residence for days before the attack, often disguised as a man, and then fled to Germany via France and Italy.

Five people were injured in the explosion, Mr. Raymond said, some seriously. The German authorities said in a statement that the attacks had targeted Ukrainian citizens.

Ukrainian investigators established that Ms. Berezovska had communicated with her family and two men after returning to Ukraine on July 1, the Ukrainian prosecutor's office said.

Investigators were aware that both men had repeatedly transferred money to Ms. Berezovska through cryptocurrency and bank accounts, the prosecutor's office said, and as a result the men had been under investigation as possible accomplices in the Monaco attack.

An investigation was carried out at the home of the law enforcement officer. An interview with the intelligence officer led the authorities to carry out a reconstruction of the crime scene, which helped them find Ms. Berezovska's body, the prosecutor's office said.

All information was being shared with the investigative authorities of Monaco, the prosecutor's office said.

Two people suspected of helping Ms. Berezovska were briefly detained in Monaco but were released because no evidence that they were involved was discovered, Mr. Raymond said.

Anastasiia Berezovska was a suspect in connection with a Monaco attack.

Harry Loses Privacy Suit Vs. Daily Mail Publisher

By MEGAN SPECIA

LONDON — A judge in Britain on Tuesday ruled against Prince Harry and other celebrities in a lawsuit that accused the publisher of The Daily Mail of targeting them with unlawful information gathering. The decision was a stinging blow for Harry, who until Tuesday had mostly emerged victorious in his yearslong legal battles against the British tabloids.

In a written statement that summarized the ruling, Judge Matthew Nicklin said that "suspicion, even where understandable, was not enough," and that Harry and the other high-profile claimants had failed to prove "that the information complained of had been obtained unlawfully."

The claimants had accused Associated Newspapers, the publisher of The Daily Mail, of phone hacking and intruding into their private lives from 1993 to 2011. The group, which also owns several other newspapers that are not implicated in the case, had denied wrongdoing.

In a statement on Tuesday, Associated Newspapers said, "The reputations of our decent and hard-working journalists were terribly impugned, and today they have been exonerated."

Harry lives in California with his wife and their children but was on a trip to Britain this week that has been overshadowed by drama and confusion over his family's travel plans. On Tuesday, he attended a discussion in London about the Invictus Games, the Paralympic-style competition for wounded veterans that he founded. He did not comment on the ruling.

What was the case about?

The lawsuit was the sole unresolved case among several that Harry has brought in recent years against British tabloids.

Harry and the other claimants had accused Associated Newspapers of carrying out or commissioning unlawful activities to reveal private information about their lives for articles published in The Daily Mail and its sister newspaper, The Mail on Sunday.

The other claimants included Elton John and his husband, David Furnish; the actresses Liz Hurley and Sadie Frost; a former British government minister; and a racial justice campaigner. They accused private investigators of listening into phone calls, intercepting voice mail messages and tricking people into handing over information to obtain phone numbers, medical records and bills.

The trial began in January at London's High Court. In court, Harry became visibly emotional as he described his confrontation with Associated Newspapers, saying, "They continue to come after me, they have made my wife's life an absolute misery."

What did the ruling say?

Judge Nicklin said the court had rejected the attempt to prove that the information used in the articles entered as evidence must have been obtained unlawfully.

The judge said he had declined to rule on whether unlawful information gathering by Associated Newspapers had become "widespread and habitual." Instead, he ruled on the merits of each claim on an article-by-article basis.

He said he accepted the accounts of the Associated Newspaper journalists "who gave lawful explanations for the sourcing of the disputed articles and incidents."

ISABEL INFANTES/REUTERS

A judge on Tuesday ruled against Prince Harry, saying he failed to prove unlawful news gathering.

In a summary of the more than 400-page decision, the judge added that "the Court rejected the argument that, simply because information was private, and because Associated could not positively explain how it had been sourced, the relevant article must have been unlawfully sourced."

How much did the case cost?

It was an extremely expensive case, with total legal costs for the two-and-a-half month trial estimated around 40 million pounds, or $53.5 million, according to figures provided to the court by both sides and cited by the British news media.

The total costs of the case will be determined in a hearing this month, and the judge could decide that the claimants are responsible for paying all of the expenses. Associated Newspapers said in its statement on Tuesday that the publisher would "look to resolve outstanding issues, including the recovery of the costs we have incurred while defending ourselves against this egregious litigation."

What happened in Prince Harry's other cases?

This case was just one of several pursued by Harry since 2020, when he and his wife stepped down from their royal roles and left Britain, later moving to Montecito, Calif.

Many cases have centered on accusations of media intrusion, which Harry said was a key reason behind their decision to move. Harry told Oprah Winfrey in 2021 that he feared "history repeating itself," referring to the death of his mother, Princess Diana, in a car crash while she was being chased by paparazzi in Paris in 1997.

He won damages in a case against the Mirror Group in 2023, with a judge ruling that his phone had been hacked. During that case, Harry became the first senior royal to testify in court since 1891.

In January 2025, Rupert Murdoch's News Group Newspapers agreed to pay a "substantial" amount of damages to Harry to settle a long-running lawsuit, which related to articles in The Sun and the long-closed News of the World. News Group apologized for "serious intrusion" into Harry's personal life from 1996 to 2011 and admitted for the first time to unlawful activities by private investigators working for The Sun.

International Olympic Committee Lifts Its Ban on Russia, With Conditions

From Page A1

guing that the committee had never accepted the Crimean annexation but did not "have issues" with the nationality of athletes participating in the Olympic Games in Brazil in 2016.

Mikhail V. Degtyarev, Russia's sports minister, welcomed the ruling, saying it "means that we're at the negotiating table," and he pledged to continue pursuing talks with the I.O.C. "to restore the rights of all Russian athletes."

Nataliya Vasilyeva and Tariq Panja contributed reporting.

The I.O.C. said that all Russian athletes returning to international competition will have to meet relevant antidoping requirements, overseen by the international authorities, given the lack of confidence in Russian oversight.

The decision to lift Russia's suspension came after an I.O.C. meeting in Milan earlier this year, where members signaled a willingness to welcome Russia back into competition, even as its war against Ukraine has continued.

The suspension had served as a rebuke of the 2022 Russian invasion, but a small number of Russian athletes unaffiliated with the military, were allowed to compete as "neutrals" at the 2024 summer and 2026 winter games.

Even before the invasion, Russia faced restrictions because of a state-sanctioned doping program that was discovered in 2014 and that Russian officials admitted to in 2016.

The country was allowed to participate in the 2016 Summer Games, but many of its athletes were barred. The I.O.C. then banned Russia from the 2018 Winter Games but agreed to allow Russian athletes with no known doping history to compete as "neutral."

In 2019, the World Anti-Doping Agency banned Russia from international competition — including the Olympic Games — for four years, a punishment that was reduced to two years after arbitration.

Kirsty Coventry, the I.O.C. president and a former Olympic swimmer for Zimbabwe, said at a news conference on Tuesday that the decision to allow Russia back into the Olympics was based on a principle of neutrality in sports that has long undergirded the international competition.

"We want all athletes to have the possibility to participate in the Olympics and not be held responsible for the actions of their governments," she said.

The decision "does not signal" that the committee is validating war, she added. "On the contrary."

In its statement, the international committee said it "continues to stand in solidarity with the Olympic community of Ukraine."

But Ms. Coventry also noted that some limits on Russia's participation in the Olympic Games will remain.

There will be no Olympic events held in the country, Russian officials will not be invited to events, and protocols regarding the Russian flag, anthem, colors and other identifiers at the games have yet to be determined.

The committee's decision did not come as a surprise. After an international committee meeting early this year, Ms. Coventry signaled that the Russian suspension could end.

At the time, she said the committee's job included "keeping sport a neutral ground."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EMILE DUCKE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Clockwise from top: crowds gathering around the coffin of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Tehran on Monday; mourners walking under a large sign down Azadi Street; and municipal workers cleaning Azadi Square after the funeral procession ended and crowds dispersed. Life had resumed its ordinary rhythm with disarming speed.

TEHRAN DISPATCH

What Our Reporter Saw: A Human Tide Bound by Grief

By ABDI LATIF DAHIR

They arrived from every direction, flowing toward the heart of Tehran in streams that gradually turned into rivers and then something larger — a human current of mourners with enough collective force that individual will seemed to dissolve into movement itself.

I joined them on Monday morning as millions gathered to bid farewell to the late supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who was killed at the onset of the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran in late February.

After two days of public mourning ceremonies in the Iranian capital, this was the final day to pay respects before his body was transported onward. Next it went to Qom, Iran's center of religious learning; then it would go to neighboring Iraq, which, like Iran, has a majority Shiite Muslim population. Finally, his body will be taken to his hometown, Mashhad, for burial on Thursday.

As the procession moved through Tehran for the last time, it converged at the city's symbolic core, Azadi Square.

There, a tower rises like an arch between eras, its white ribs carrying echoes of kings, revolutions, triumphs and grief. Commissioned by Iran's last monarch, Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, and previously known as Memorial of the Shah, it was renamed *Azadi*, or "freedom," after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

That layered history helps explain why the procession came here.

The New York Times was granted access to the ceremonies by the Iranian government, which determined the events we could attend, and assigned us a translator and guide to accompany us everywhere.

Around Azadi Square, the crowd was a cross section of Iranian life. Parents lifted children onto their shoulders or pushed them in strollers. Young women chanted and filmed continuously, sweeping their phones in slow arcs across banners and moving crowds. Older men carried portraits of the slain ayatollah. Groups of women walked together beneath a giant Iranian flag, chanting "Death to Israel" and "Down with Trump." At least one sign, vowing revenge in Hebrew, was visible among the crowds.

And then there were the sounds, many layered until they seemed to merge into something indivisible.

The mournful music and elegies never stopped. The verses from the Quran blasted from huge loudspeakers. Every few minutes, chants would erupt somewhere, first as a distant rumble indistinguishable from the general noise, then passing from one section to another like a wave.

We pushed through it all, sometimes wondering whether the sheer density of people had become untenable. Looking ahead revealed only more bodies dissolving into heat and haze. At times, there was no visible beginning and no visible end, only the sensation of moving through a landscape made almost entirely of people.

After three hours, we finally broke into the square.

We asked a man operating a water truck if we could climb onto it. He agreed immediately. From that height, the scale of the gathering became clearer, though no less overwhelming.

Soon after, we saw it: A mobile stage truck moving slowly through the square in a wide circuit. As the crowd recognized it, their energy shifted. Voices rose into chants. People threw whatever they had — turbans, scarves, pieces of clothing — toward the platform, hoping they would reach the coffin and be blessed. Some succeeded, their items caught and returned by the men on top. Others fell short.

It was the closest many had come in days to the presence of the body itself.

The man on the water truck began to cry. A flag-bearer beside me waved his flag more vigorously. Others nearby fell silent, as if trying to hold the moment in place.

For many around me, this felt like the end of an era, a farewell to a man revered by supporters, but whose rule had also left behind deep divisions and suffering for others. As I stood there, it felt almost unreal, chaotic, overwhelming and faintly absurd that I was witnessing it at all.

On Monday evening, I returned to Azadi Square. The crowds had dispersed. Cleaners moved across the pavement. Life had resumed its ordinary rhythm with disarming speed.

When I expressed my surprise, someone remarked, almost casually, in Persian, "It is as if no king came or no king left."

Just like that, history had moved on.

Ayatollah Is Mourned At a Center For Clerics

By YEGANEH TORBATI

The body of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was taken to Qom, the center of Shiite religious education in Iran, for an official prayer and street procession on Tuesday, the latest in a series of elaborate events to mourn the country's slain supreme leader.

The stop in Qom follows three days of public mourning in Tehran, the capital, where huge crowds gathered to view Ayatollah Khamenei's casket, many erupting in tears or calling for vengeance for his killing in February at the outset of the war against the United States and Israel. After Qom, his body will be taken to holy cities in Iraq before being buried on Thursday in his hometown, Mashhad.

A funeral in Qom, at Jamkaran Mosque, a site considered sacred by many Shiites, was led by Ayatollah Abdullah Javadi Amoli, a conservative senior cleric and one of a handful of figures still alive from the generation that led Iran's 1979 revolution. State news media showed images of large crowds that had come out in Qom to bid farewell to Ayatollah Khamenei.

Qom has played a significant role in Iran's history and politics over the last century. It was home to some of the most strident opposition to Iran's monarchy, particularly in the 1960s and '70s. Clerics educated there under the leadership of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Ayatollah Khamenei's predecessor, emerged victorious during the revolution and the power struggle that followed.

In addition to being Iran's most powerful political leader and commander of its armed forces, Ayatollah Khamenei claimed legitimacy as a high-ranking cleric whose pronouncements carried weight among the Shiite faithful. His authority stemmed from the concept of velayat-e faqih, or guardianship of the Islamic jurist, which grants ultimate political power to a Shiite cleric.

On the eve of becoming Iran's supreme leader in 1989, Ayatollah Khamenei was only a mid-ranking cleric. But he was then elevated to an ayatollah, making him eligible for the position.

Ayatollah Khamenei exerted a heavy hand over clerical finances, management and education, making Qom more dependent on the Iranian state. He also formalized and supervised a special clerical court that critics have called unconstitutional and secretive, and that has been used to punish those who challenge the state on religious grounds.

One of the most significant religious dissenters during Ayatollah Khamenei's tenure was Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, who was once in line to become supreme leader before he criticized the treatment and execution of prisoners in the 1980s. He held the highest ranking possible in the Shiite clerical hierarchy.

During the 1990s, Ayatollah Khamenei placed Ayatollah Montazeri under house arrest for several years. Ayatollah Montazeri argued that Iran's clerical leadership had turned its back on the revolution's ideals and supported anti-government demonstrators in 2009, issuing edicts in favor of reform and human rights.

When Ayatollah Montazeri died in 2009, hundreds of thousands of supporters turned out for his funeral in Qom, turning it into an opposition protest.

Leily Nikounazar contributed reporting.

U.S. Strikes Back at Iran After Attacks on Tankers

By ERIC SCHMITT

WASHINGTON — The United States carried out airstrikes against several targets in Iran on Tuesday, hours after revoking a waiver allowing the sale of Iranian oil around the world, in a dual response to what the Pentagon said were Iranian attacks on three commercial ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz.

The military's Central Command said on social media that U.S. forces "have begun launching a series of powerful strikes against Iran to impose heavy costs for targeting and attacking commercial shipping crewed by innocent civilians in an international waterway."

The attacks on the commercial ships, including a Saudi oil tanker and a Qatari liquefied natural gas carrier in waters off the coast of Oman, threatened to disrupt the resumption of energy supplies from the region and derail the preliminary accord between Washington and Tehran to reopen the strategic waterway.

"Iran's demonstrated aggression was unwarranted, dangerous, and a clear violation of the cease-fire," Central Command said in a statement on social media.

Tehran has not claimed responsibility for the ship attacks, and there was no immediate public comment from the authorities in Iran, where a dayslong program of funeral ceremonies is underway for Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the supreme leader who was killed on the first day of the war. Negotiations between Iran and the United States have been paused until after the funeral.

Although the United States and Iran have agreed to restore access to the strait — with President Trump declaring the waterway open to unrestricted navigation — the preliminary accord does not stipulate exactly how that should happen, and assigns to Iran the task of allowing the long-blocked traffic to get through. Iran has insisted that commercial ships sail near its shore, in a channel under Iran's control, but many vessels are using American help to take a route near the Omani coast.

David E. Sanger, Tyler Pager and Shirin Hakim contributed reporting.

REUTERS

The Strait of Hormuz last week. Attacks on ships off the Omani coast Tuesday prompted retaliation.

Without the waiver, which was issued by the U.S. Treasury, Iran can no longer sell its oil on the open market for dollars — at least not openly. The exemption was supposed to last for 60 days, the length of the cease-fire that Mr. Trump has celebrated, prematurely, as a peace agreement.

The United States long relied heavily on sanctions in an effort to limit Iran's nuclear development. The waiver was part of a strategy to boost the accord's chances of success by giving Iran a taste of the riches it could bring in from resumed oil sales around the globe. The theory was that those inside Iran seeking a peace deal would gain leverage over the military leadership that has opposed any agreement that might limit the country's nuclear options.

Earlier on Tuesday, after the ships were attacked but before the American response, Mr. Trump seemed to downplay the conflict with Iran as he met with NATO leaders in Ankara, Turkey.

"The war with Iran — or whatever you call it, it's not even a war," Mr. Trump said. "It's a military operation. It's a denuclearization, that's really what it is."

Iranian state media reported early Wednesday that sounds of explosions were heard in Bandar Abbas, Qeshm and Sirik, all in Hormozgan Province along Iran's southern coast near the Strait of Hormuz. The province is central to Iran's military and commercial presence around the strait, a key global shipping route.

Iran's state broadcaster said the locations hit appeared to be the same ones targeted in earlier attacks during the conflict. The Hormozgan governor's office said there had been no reports of civilian injuries so far.

The attacks on the three ships and the American military response on Tuesday threatened to tilt the region back into a spasm of violence that last surged nearly two weeks ago. The back-and-forth also lay bare the challenges to restoring prewar levels of traffic through the strait, a crucial conduit for oil and gas shipping.

The U.S. military conducted strikes on Iran on June 26 in retaliation for an Iranian attack in the Strait of Hormuz a day earlier, hours after Mr. Trump called the Iranian action a "foolish violation" of the fragile cease-fire between the two countries.

U.S. Central Command said in a statement at that time that it had struck Iranian missile and drone storage locations and coastal radar sites as a "powerful response" to the Iranian attack. The American strikes concluded after about 90 minutes, and included attacks by American fighter jets against four Iranian sites along the Strait of Hormuz and on Qeshm Island, a U.S. official said.

Mr. Trump said earlier in a post on social media that Iran had launched at least four one-way-attack drones on June 25, one of which hit the upper deck of a "large and very expensive Cargo Carrying Ship," adding that the United States had knocked down three other drones. He added that the ship, though damaged, was able to continue on its way.

Iran's strike on the vessel, the Ever Lovely, a container ship that was passing near the Omani side of the strait, appeared to be the first known Iranian attack on a commercial vessel since the signing of a preliminary peace agreement between Tehran and Washington.

Venezuelans Lash Out at Their Government as Rescue Hopes Fade

By JULIE TURKEWITZ

LA GUAIRA, Venezuela — As post-quake efforts in Venezuela start shifting from rescue to recovery, a crack has opened in Venezuelan society, and people are speaking out against their repressive government with a force and openness that has not been seen in years.

Across La Guaira, the northern state hardest hit by the twin quakes, grieving citizens have shouted down police officers and National Guard members, accusing them of standing by as civilians and international aid workers dig for the living, and now, the dead.

In interviews, Venezuelans are openly criticizing the country's ruling party and its leader, Delcy Rodríguez, something that would have been unthinkable a year ago.

They are also turning their anger toward the Trump administration, which has spent the last few months facilitating economic deals between American companies and Venezuela, and has stood by the government's management of the disaster.

Inside Venezuela, fears of imprisonment, torture and forced exile, once powerful incentives for silence, are being pushed aside as feelings of frustration and impotence grow.

"Why would I be afraid?" said José Silva, 47, who on Friday was resting on a sidewalk not far from a giant public housing complex now turned to rubble. Some 700 families had lived inside.

Mr. Silva's clothes were drenched with sweat; it was evening, only part way through his tenth day pulling survivors and bodies from under slabs of concrete. He lashed out at the government: the police were rescuing only their own, he said, and the government had sent only "second rate" tools.

"Why would I be afraid," to speak out, he said, "if I was born to die?"

This anger runs parallel to growing political tension over the leadership of Ms. Rodríguez. When U.S. forces captured her predecessor, Nicolás Maduro, in January and greenlit her ascension from vice president to president, the Trump administration characterized Ms. Rodríguez as a force of stability.

Before the quake, President Trump said that she was doing a "very good job" running the country.

But criticism of her government's response to the disaster, particularly in the critical first 72 hours when victims are most likely to be rescued alive, and the growing fury in the streets, has raised questions about whether she can cement that stability.

The public outrage could also complicate the Trump administration's strategy of supporting Ms. Rodríguez so the United States can channel Venezuela's resources.

Mr. Trump's envoy to Venezuela, John Barrett, has supported Ms. Rodríguez, saying in a television interview after the quakes that Washington had "a great deal of confidence" in the Venezuelan authorities.

But in recent days a chorus of hard-line Congressional Republicans have doubled down on criticism of her management, calling for political change.

Adriana Loureiro Fernandez contributed reporting.

ADRIANA LOUREIRO FERNANDEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

MARIAN CARRASQUERO/REUTERS

ADRIANA LOUREIRO FERNANDEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Above, searching for relatives in La Guaira, Venezuela, last week. Near left, civilians recovering bodies from a public housing complex. President Delcy Rodríguez, far left at center, has repeatedly defended her government's response to the earthquakes.

"They're failing at their job right now," Rep. Carlos Gimenez, a Republican from Florida, said in an interview with CNN, calling Ms. Rodríguez an "interim dictator."

Venezuelans have gathered outside the U.S. embassy, pleading with Mr. Barrett to do more to help victims. One man, yelling into news media microphones outside the embassy, harangued Mr. Barrett for sitting with government officials the United States had once deemed criminals and terrorists, while victims suffered "just two blocks away."

"The grievance is indeed directed at John Barrett," he shouted, "why has he not sat with Venezuelan civil society — the honest ones, the ones who haven't stolen anything?"

Maria Corina Machado, the country's popular opposition leader, has been trying to get back into the country, but she does not have a passport, or permission from Ms. Rodríguez or the United States to enter Venezuela.

At a press briefing on Thursday, Ms. Rodríguez defended her government's response to the disaster, saying she had immediately dispatched 4,000 government workers to respond to the quakes, a number that had grown to 19,000.

"What happened in Venezuela on June 24 was a natural tragedy of a scale we never imagined," she said.

In response to accusations of a poor state response, Ms. Rodríguez asserted repeatedly that "media laboratories" were inventing a narrative of chaos.

As evidence of the government's mobilization, official social media accounts have heavily publicized a handful of state-supported rescues, including one in which dozens of well-equipped emergency workers from Chile rescued a man who had survived a week in the rubble. Ms. Rodríguez visited the man at the hospital.

But these videos contrast sharply with the reality in La Guaira, where civilians in sneakers and T-shirts are doing the vast amount of the rescue and recovery work, using shovels and pickaxes and their bare hands to pull friends, neighbors, children, spouses, siblings and parents from the rubble. Some lack even masks to protect themselves from the dust and stench of decomposing bodies.

Ms. Rodríguez was widely criticized in Venezuela as out of touch after she was photographed wearing a luxury ski jacket, a logo of the Italian brand Moncler on her arm, to visit quake victims.

"It's a lie that the government is helping," Mr. Silva said.

Soon after he spoke, darkness fell. Not far way, a group of men had just discovered five bodies in a hole they had dug in the side of the mountain of broken concrete.

The men wrapped the bodies in sheets and then laid them gently on the ground. Survivors looking for relatives crowded around, pulling back the sheets to try and identify the deceased. One was the body of a little girl. The others were unrecognizable.

Thousands of people are now homeless, and the death toll, officially over 3,500, is likely to be far greater. In the coming weeks, the government will be under intense pressure to address an increasingly complex humanitarian crisis.

Outside of another collapsed public housing building, Kimberling León, 39, a resident of the complex, described the government response in the hours and days after the quakes hit.

She was searching for her sons, ages 9 and 13, who she believed were trapped in the rubble.

"The police came by, normal, filming, they didn't help us," she said, her voice flat, like a person still in shock.

"We said to them: 'Help us, help us,' they didn't come to our aid. We started digging with our hands, but the smoke was too much, the flames rose high, the gas tanks had exploded."

The second or third day, a shovel and pickax arrived, she said.

"We started digging, digging, digging. We called for machines to help, but they just passed us by, headed to the private buildings" where people could pay, she said.

Silence has been one of the most valuable commodities in La Guaira, as rescuers try to make out the taps and calls of any living that might still be buried in the rubble.

Often, rescuers shoot a fist in the air and call for quiet, instructing drivers to cut motors and even people to stop walking.

On a recent day, profanities rained down on the interior ministry workers who rolled past a silent zone with sirens blaring. Civilians banged on the car in anger.

While the quakes have opened space for people to vent years of pent-up fury, this public outcry could also spur a crackdown, leading to questions about how the United States would respond to any repression.

The last major social outburst was in 2024, after the ruling party stole a presidential election.

Venezuelan officials halted protests in a matter of days by sending the military into the streets, killing protesters and locking up civilians accused of minor expressions of dissent.

Last week, a volunteer rescuer named Wilmer Cruz who been filmed speaking out about the government response disappeared, according to human rights groups.

When activists publicly accused the government of retaliating against Mr. Cruz, the authorities released him from prison.

Oscar Murillo, who leads Provea, a human rights group, said the arrest highlighted for him that the quakes have not changed the "authoritarian model" in Venezuela.

French Court Lifts Ban, And Le Pen Joins Race

By MARK LANDLER and SÉGOLÈNE LE STRADIC

PARIS — Marine Le Pen, the French far-right leader, announced on Tuesday that she will run for president of France, hours after a court upheld an embezzlement conviction against her but lifted a ban on her seeking public office.

The decision, on a day of rapid-fire legal and political developments, is a stunning turnaround in Ms. Le Pen's fortunes. For more than a year, her candidacy had been viewed as close to a lost cause, after her initial conviction on corruption charges came with a crippling five-year ban on seeking public office.

Her protégé, Jordan Bardella, was primed to step into her place as the candidate of the far-right party, the National Rally, if she had been ruled ineligible. Instead, Ms. Le Pen said, she will make her fourth bid for the presidency in 2027, having crept closer to victory in each of her campaigns.

Now, she is the front-runner in the race, outpolling most of her rivals in many recent surveys.

"This evening, I am a candidate in the presidential election," Ms. Le Pen said in an interview with the French broadcaster, TF1. She added of the court's ruling, "I was happy that we gave back the French their freedom to vote and that the court gave me back my eligibility."

Though the court upheld the conviction, it shortened a ban on Ms. Le Pen running for office, which reopened the door to a potential campaign. The decision means that she may have to wear an electronic bracelet that limits her movements — something she had previously said would make a candidacy impossible.

On Tuesday, Ms. Le Pen said she planned to appeal the decision to France's highest court, the Court of Cassation. That appeal, she said, would seek to suspend the requirement for her to wear an electronic monitor, allowing her to campaign freely. But the prospect of another appeal would keep a legal shadow over her.

Ms. Le Pen had previously lashed out against the charges, saying they were part of a political witch hunt and would deprive millions of French people of their votes in the next election. She finished second to Mr. Macron in 2022, winning over 41 percent of the vote.

AURELIEN MORISSARD/ASSOCIATED PRESS

"I am a candidate in the presidential election," Marine Le Pen announced Tuesday evening in Paris.

What was Ms. Le Pen convicted of?

Ms. Le Pen was found guilty of embezzling funds from the European Parliament between 2009 and 2016. It was part of a scheme in which the National Rally channeled several million euros — intended to subsidize the salaries of aides to the party's European Parliament members — to pay for other party activities. She denied the charges and was not accused of enriching herself personally, but of misusing public funds.

The appeals court largely upheld a decision made by a lower court in March 2025, though it reduced the amount that the defendants were convicted of embezzling, to roughly $3.2 million from $5 million.

The National Rally is not the only French party accused of embezzling such funds. The Democratic Movement, a centrist party, was also convicted of doing so, although its leader was cleared.

What was her initial punishment?

Ms. Le Pen, a member of the French Parliament, was sentenced last year to four years in prison and fined 100,000 euros, or $114,000. The court suspended two years of her sentence and ruled that the other two could be served under a form of house arrest.

She was also barred from running for any political office for five years, a period that began immediately after her conviction in March 2025.

How was her punishment changed on appeal?

The appeals court reduced her custodial term to three years, two of them suspended, leaving the effective sentence at one year under a form of house arrest, wearing an electronic bracelet, though the details have yet to be clarified.

It also reduced her electoral ban to 45 months, 30 of them suspended — meaning that she is already now allowed to run again for office, the court said.

What happens now?

Ms. Le Pen, 57, officially launched her presidential bid — with a splashy new website — saying she would campaign alongside Mr. Bardella.

"I think we're offering the French people a duo, a President of the Republic and a Prime Minister," she said. "And I think that duo is a winning one. It's a winning ticket, so to speak."

Mr. Bardella, 30, a member of the European Parliament, is considered more favorable to business and less antagonistic to other European leaders. He has raised his own profile in Europe in the last year, traveling to Britain and Poland to meet with fellow far-right leaders and reaching out to Chancellor Friedrich Merz of Germany. He has cited as a model Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni of Italy, who leads a post-fascist party but has governed with a more moderate style.

What does it mean for French politics?

If Ms. Le Pen had surrendered her presidential dreams, it would have been the end of an era, not just for France's most durable far-right leader, but also for a name synonymous with European far-right politics. She took over the National Rally in 2011, inheriting the leadership from her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, who founded it in 1972 as the National Front, on a mixture of racism, nativism and antisemitism.

Ms. Le Pen pulled the party away from its most toxic roots, expelling her father and renaming it. She describes herself as a populist — "neither left nor right" — who champions economic nationalism and defending France's welfare state. She abandoned a push for France to follow Britain out of the European Union. But the party continues to be anti-immigrant and deeply hostile to the E.U.

Now, she finds herself potentially closer to the pinnacle of French politics than at any point in her career.

NATO Allies Show Trump They Are Trying to Increase Defense Spending

By LARA JAKES

A year ago, President Trump told fellow NATO allies to more than double their defense spending as the United States looked to draw down American military forces in Europe.

On Tuesday, at a NATO summit in Ankara, Turkey, top officials at the military alliance sought to show that countries are paying up.

"We're already making remarkable progress," Mark Rutte, the NATO secretary general, said at the start of a defense industry forum on Tuesday, ahead of the alliance's annual leaders' meeting on Wednesday. "Here we are now, one year later in Ankara, already delivering results."

The stakes are high for Mr. Rutte and the alliance. Mr. Trump demanded that the allies increase military spending to 5 percent of their gross national product by 2035. Meeting that target will determine how quickly Europe can credibly deter adversaries without the level of military support that the United States has provided since NATO was created 77 years ago.

Some countries are making significant progress, shelling out large amounts of money to bolster their militaries with new weapons and additional troops, and increasing NATO's spending on countries' armed forces by $90 billion in a single year. Five countries are already projected to meet the 5 percent G.D.P. benchmark this year, according to NATO data released on Tuesday.

Others, like Albania and Slovenia, are struggling.

Still others, like Britain and France, are trying but face serious budgetary problems.

And a few have padded their budgets with projects that stretch the definition of military investments — even if they technically might pass muster under NATO spending guidelines approved last year.

Those guidelines direct allies to spend 3.5 percent of G.D.P. on direct military priorities like troops and weapons. The allies can also spend an additional 1.5 percent on defense-related projects like improving transportation routes that would carry military materiel to a battleground or bases, bolstering civilian infrastructure from cyber attacks, refurbishing parking garages to create bomb shelters and building hospitals that, in part, care for veterans.

That's where some countries are pushing the boundaries.

Take, for example, the Czech Republic's plans to upgrade train tracks that take tourists to a 14th-century castle.

The rail improvements to the town of Karlstejn were part of a $1.1 billion transportation package that the Czech government cast as defense-related expenses to meet the spending targets.

While some routes in the package could, potentially, be used by armed forces, when it comes to the tracks to Karlstejn, "it's impossible to find any military dimension of that at all," said Mojmir Hampl, the head of the independent but state-funded Czech Fiscal Council, which audits the Czech government.

The United States is projected to spend just under 3.2 percent of G.D.P. on core defense priorities this year, according to the new NATO figures.

NATO officials said that nearly all allies agreed it was past time to spend more on defense, which was underfunded for years, and especially as Russia has brought war to the alliance's border with Ukraine.

Countries that do not appear to be making an effort to increase defense spending could face further U.S. military cuts. Several senior U.S. officials, including one publicly at Tuesday's NATO summit, suggested that financial support to allies to buy American weapons would be used as leverage to make sure lagging countries step up. The two others spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive political matters. One of the officials said potential U.S. loans through the Foreign Military Financing program could be at risk.

The consequences of defying Mr. Trump and delaying long-needed defense investments are intertwined. The mercurial president is already pulling out weapons and threatening to withdraw American forces from Europe, where Mr. Rutte has said militaries are unable to defend themselves from potential aggressions without the United States.

FABIAN BIMMER/REUTERS

Chancellor Friedrich Merz of Germany, center, on a tank at a base in Munster, Germany, in April.

"Let's be honest — the money is not the biggest issue from a NATO perspective, although politically it's become that because of Trump," said Paul Savereux, who worked on the alliance's internal auditing process for more than 20 years before retiring in 2023. "The reality is, we want NATO to have the forces it needs to be able to do whatever it wants to do."

Germany is expanding its forces and spending billions of dollars on weapons and new equipment. The three Baltic nations — Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania — are buying so many drones, air defenses and ammunition rounds that each country is projected to reach the target of 5 percent G.D.P. this year, as are Poland and Greece. Denmark and Norway are not far behind.

They are part of what is being called "the 3.5 club" — countries that are making strides to meet the direct military spending requirement.

"We are really hoping that all the allies will do the same," Hanno Pevkur, Estonia's defense minister, said at NATO headquarters in June. "It is necessary for the alliance."

Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez of Spain has defiantly said he does not need to spend 5 percent G.D.P. to fund his military priorities and has not increased defense investments beyond 2 percent G.D.P. in the year since Mr. Trump demanded the change. Spain currently has the lowest military spending of any NATO nation, statistics show.

Some of Europe's largest economies have had problems.

Britain's defense secretary resigned in June, frustrated with what he said was the government's sluggish efforts to build up its military. The country, which has struggled to recruit and retain troops, is projected to spend 2.7 percent of G.D.P. on priority defense needs by next year and through 2029. It remains unclear how soon Britain might reach 3.5 percent.

The Czech Republic is one of three allies that officials in June said had failed to spend 2 percent of G.D.P. last year on direct military needs — a benchmark set in 2014 that was so low that Mr. Trump complained after he came into office in 2017 that the United States was shouldering more than its share of the NATO burden.

Repeated requests for comment from the Czech government were unsuccessful. Prime Minister Andrej Babis told The Financial Times in the spring that his country was likely to fall short again in 2026, and suggested that his status of being a "Trumpist" might spare him any fallout from the American president.

The U.S. ambassador to NATO, Matthew Whitaker, noted last week that some allies "either are not spending enough right now or don't have a credible path" to reach the investment pledge.

"President Trump fully expects that all allies will step up immediately and get on the path to 5 percent, and do it with urgency," Mr. Whitaker said at a media briefing.

Albania and Slovenia also failed to meet the 2 percent mark in 2025.

One issue is that Albanian citizens broadly oppose increasing military spending. "The average citizen is mostly thinking about social benefits, hospitals, schools," said Blerina Abrazhda, the country's deputy defense minister, adding, "Sometimes they think, 'Why do we have to prepare for a war that might never happen?'"

Its government is pumping more money into producing ammunition, drones and military uniforms, and is seeking contracts to build Italian ships and buy American helicopters. Last week, Albania approved new budget legislation to increase core defense spending to 2.2 percent of G.D.P.

In Slovenia, officials sought to upgrade roads and rail lines from the Port of Koper on its Adriatic Sea coast to Hungary, a critical supply route. "For Slovenia, this was basic military use," said Borut Sajovic, who until early June was Slovenia's defense minister.

Mr. Rutte criticized Slovenian officials in a letter in May for "including projects that do not fall under the agreed definition for core defense expenditure" in its estimates for reaching the 3.5 percent requirement. The letter was first reported by the Slovenian news website 24ur.com.

In a small country like Slovenia, spending 5 percent of G.D.P. on defense "is really big money," Mr. Sajovic said in an interview. "But we understand that we must do more, and we will — we want to be, and we are, a credible partner in NATO. But we need a little more time."

Mr. Trump has signaled he is unsympathetic, noting in a social media post last week that the United States still spends more money on defense than any other NATO ally.

"Ridiculous!" Mr. Trump wrote.

Trump Hints At Restoring Jet Access To Turkey

By TYLER PAGER and DAVID E. SANGER

ANKARA, Turkey — President Trump is expected to tell President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey that he is prepared to restore the country to a program that would allow it to purchase F-35 stealth fighter jets, a move that would reverse a ban Mr. Trump himself imposed seven years ago on national security grounds.

But the shift by Mr. Trump, who headed to a NATO summit in Ankara this week and has said he was preparing to bring a gift that would make Mr. Erdogan "very happy," could face opposition in Congress, which could seek to block it.

Four senior administration officials described the coming change in policy, after weeks of behind-the-scenes work by national security officials to break the stalemate. Though officials differed some on the details of how Mr. Trump would seek to work around congressional and legal restrictions on his action, they said they expected Mr. Trump to at least signal his intent to get the fighter jets into Turkey's hands — though it is uncertain when.

It is unclear exactly what Mr. Trump will say, and officials cautioned that he could change his mind. He is unpredictable even to his own staff. But administration officials suggested there could be an exchange of letters on the subject between the two leaders to get the process underway. When asked for comment, a White House spokeswoman pointed to the president's past comments.

In 2019, during Mr. Trump's first term, Turkey was thrown out of the F-35 program because it bought advanced S-400 antiaircraft systems from Russia. At the time, Washington's fear was that Turkey could train the S-400s on the newly provided F-35s, and that Russia would learn how to deal with the fighter jet's stealth and other missile-avoidance capabilities.

But Mr. Erdogan ranks among the strongmen leaders Mr. Trump most admires, and Vice President JD Vance recently indicated that Mr. Trump had ordered administration officials to find a way to get the Turkish leader the jets he has made clear he desires.

They must overcome a law passed by Congress in 2020 that blocks the sale of F-35s unless the administration concludes that Turkey no longer possesses the Russian systems.

It appears that in order to accomplish that goal, Turkey's S-400s — many of which are still in their shipping containers — may be handed over to a third party, according to one administration official who has been deeply involved in the talks.

A second official said the mechanism had not been worked out yet. Four years ago, there was talk of transferring the missiles to Ukraine, where they could have been used to counter Russian attacks, but that effort fell apart. It seems unlikely that Mr. Trump or Mr. Erdogan would be willing to sell the powerful Russian systems to Ukraine today. There has been talk of making the systems inoperable, perhaps by removing key parts.

Turkey has been lobbying furiously for readmission to the F-35 program for years, but until now has been unwilling to give up the air defense systems it bought from Russia — even while sitting in the NATO alliance, and hosting an American base where tactical nuclear weapons are stored for potential use in a NATO conflict with Moscow.

In 2019, the White House was clear about its reasons for kicking Turkey out of the program, at a cost to the United States of roughly half a billion dollars.

DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

President Trump and the first lady watched an F-35 demonstration off Virginia's coast in October. Turkey has for years lobbied for readmission to the fighter jet program.

"The F-35 cannot coexist with a Russian intelligence collection platform that will be used to learn about its advanced capabilities," a White House statement said at the time. "Turkey has been a long-standing and trusted partner and NATO ally for over 65 years, but accepting the S-400 undermines the commitments all NATO allies made to each other to move away from Russian systems."

But Mr. Trump was never comfortable with the decision, and often blamed his immediate predecessor, President Barack Obama, for the conditions that required it. Ever since retaking office, Mr. Trump has mused, publicly and privately, about reversing it.

Last month, sitting in the Oval Office with Mark Rutte, the secretary general of NATO, Mr. Trump was asked about the F-35s and said he would bring Mr. Erdogan a gift that would make him "very happy." Mr. Vance said the issue had been referred to Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and added: "Pete and the entire team are reviewing this right now, because there are certain things that we have to certify have happened" if the administration was "to comply with American law. The president has asked us to do that."

Mr. Trump later said, "We will work it out."

It turns out that working it out is not easy. In June 2025, Ambassador Thomas J. Barrack Jr. predicted that the standoff with Turkey on the F-35s would be resolved by the end of that year and indicated that Congress would support the decision. But that resolution did not come, and Mr. Trump is now facing the possibility that this Congress — or the next one — may not go along. Some Republicans, including Senator Jim Risch of Idaho, who leads the Foreign Relations Committee, have been sharp skeptics.

Among the longtime critics of selling the F-35s is Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel. "Turkey is a great country, but it's governed by a man who calls openly for the annihilation of Israel," he said in an interview on "Fox & Friends" on Monday. "He occupies half of Cyprus, a NATO country," he added, referring incorrectly to Cyprus, which is not in NATO. "He's threatening Greece, another NATO country, and he talks openly about conquering Jerusalem."

The first Trump administration was so concerned that Russia could use the Turkish program to collect intelligence on the F-35 stealth systems that it imposed sanctions on Turkey's defense procurement agency. Those sanctions remain in place.

F-35s paid for by Turkey but never delivered are stored in the United States, according to a report by the Congressional Research Service.

Mr. Trump was expected to arrive in Ankara on Tuesday at a delicate moment for the trans-Atlantic alliance.

He has, for years, complained that European allies do not contribute enough military spending to the alliance. While he seemed briefly mollified at last year's summit when all NATO members except for Spain pledged to spend 3.5 percent of their gross domestic product on defense, and another 1.5 percent for related infrastructure, his sense of accomplishment was short-lived. He has begun demanding faster increases and has grown particularly incensed in recent months over what he perceives as a lack of support from the alliance during the U.S. war with Iran.

During his meeting with Mr. Rutte, the president said he was attending this year's summit only because Mr. Erdogan was hosting it and asked him to attend.

Mr. Trump has also splintered the alliance over his posture toward President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia amid the war with Ukraine. Mr. Trump has adopted some of Mr. Putin's talking points about the conflict and infamously sparred with President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine in the Oval Office last year. Mr. Trump is expected to hold a bilateral meeting with Mr. Zelensky on Wednesday.

Mr. Trump had planned to meet Mr. Erdogan just after he arrived from Washington on Tuesday. He was then expected to attend a dinner with other NATO leaders. On Wednesday, he will attend a working session and then hold a news conference before leaving Turkey.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Europe Faces Challenge in Filling a U.S.-Size Hole at NATO

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senior European officials say, the reality will be a gradually stronger Europe in a weaker NATO. There will be fewer American troops, fewer high-tech American capabilities and doubts that Mr. Trump would come to NATO's aid in all circumstances, undermining deterrence.

Radoslaw Sikorski, Poland's foreign minister and a former defense minister, outlined the transformation of NATO after it was founded in the aftermath of World War II.

"NATO 1.0 was a clear defense against Soviet aggression and expansionism, and NATO 2.0 was a post-Cold War search for purpose," he said in an interview, with the alliance looking outside North America and Europe and after Sept. 11, 2001, especially, to fight terrorism in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

Russia was seen as a possible ally and certainly less of a threat, and some European NATO members effectively disarmed, he said.

But with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, China's rising ambitions and Washington's desire to shift resources to Asia and away from Europe, Mr. Sikorski said, "NATO 3.0 will mean that Europe will take more of the burden for conventional defense and the U.S. will be more of a cavalry-over-the-hill kind of ally."

Time may be short to prepare. German and many NATO officials say a battle-hardened Russia would be ready for a war against NATO by 2029, so the pressure is on Europe to become more "war ready," as the Germans say, and on the United States not to create unnecessary vulnerabilities in the meantime.

In Ankara, Mr. Trump and his officials are expected to keep the pressure on other NATO members to pay more for defense, and to stick to a commitment made last year to increase spending to 5 percent of gross national product by 2035. Matthew Whitaker, the U.S. ambassador to NATO, signaled to allies last week that there may be benefits for those who pay up and difficulties for those who lag behind the others.

For a time, the Europeans hoped that American threats to reduce its contributions to NATO would fade, as they did in Mr. Trump's first term. They now accept that the Americans are serious and that they must step up in their own interests.

"It's very clear that the U.S. role is changing," said Claudia Major, an expert on trans-Atlantic security at the German Marshall Fund, a research group. She added that "the main hope is to do damage control and to get predictability."

Europeans know they must do more, she said. The change "can be shaped but not avoided."

The key questions, though, are how quickly will Washington withdraw support and how quickly can Europe act.

In 2022, at the Madrid summit of NATO leaders, the alliance began to demand for the first time since the Soviet Union collapsed that its members obtain specific quantities and kinds of equipment and personnel, and be able to move them to specific places in case of a war.

These requirements were drawn up by NATO's supreme allied commander in Europe at the time, Gen. Christopher G. Cavoli, an American, and his staff. But they must be redrawn after Washington announced some troop reductions and the withdrawal of critical equipment, like air refueling and fighter planes.

Mr. Trump has been dismissive of NATO generally, calling it "a paper tiger" and saying allies were not there for him when he wanted their help in the war with Iran.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has been even more biting than Mr. Trump about NATO and has announced a further review of the United States' troop presence in Europe over the next six months.

Mr. Rutte was devoting Tuesday, the first day of the summit, to a trans-Atlantic defense industry forum, to emphasize growing ties. On Wednesday, there will be a morning session, followed by news conferences.

Much happy talk is expected in Ankara about European military spending and defense procurement. Beneath the surface, though, are serious anxieties.

DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

DANIEL MIHAILESCU/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

President Trump and Turkey's leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, second from right, on Tuesday in Ankara, Turkey, site of NATO's summit. A NATO military exercise near Constanta, Romania, in May, left.

European armies do not have enough troops, U.S. and NATO officials agree. For example, the British Army is at its smallest since Waterloo in 1815, with fewer than 70,000 full-time, trained personnel.

European budgets are also stretched. It is unclear when any large country other than Germany and Poland will be able in the next few years to reach NATO's spending goal of 3.5 percent of national income on core military needs and another 1.5 percent on related military spending, like improving rail transportation and emergency services in case of war.

Even at last year's summit, when these spending targets were agreed upon, allies refused Mr. Rutte's request to reach those levels by 2029, insisting on 2035, suggesting that major increases would come only toward the end of that period.

Building up the so-called European pillar in NATO will inevitably take time, and it is not just a question of money, but of developing, buying and integrating sophisticated weaponry that the Americans will no longer provide. Most crucially, these "strategic enablers" include long-range, ground-based missiles; air defenses; satellites; and intelligence coordination.

It is also vital, Mr. Rutte argues, that Washington provide the main nuclear deterrent for the alliance, the so-called "nuclear umbrella," to counter threats from Russia or any other country.

Even as the alliance evolves into NATO 3.0, "you still need U.S. leadership, high-end U.S. capabilities, nuclear deterrence and enough American conventional power on the ground to show that the U.S. has skin in the game," said Matthew Kroenig, a former Pentagon official now at the Atlantic Council, a research group. "There is a connection between troops on the ground and nuclear credibility."

If few American soldiers are in Europe to fight and die, questions about the willingness of an American president to go nuclear become more acute.

There is also the fundamental question of command and control.

NATO has been built to be led by an American supreme commander, with simultaneous control over American troops in Europe. The continent has competent generals, but no clear European command, since each ultimately reports to its own country's political masters, said Camille Grand, a former senior NATO official and director of the main defense industry trade body in Europe. Although European officials are normally either deputies to Americans or have an American deputy, overall command should remain with Washington, he argued.

"If there is only one American soldier left in Europe, it has to be" the American supreme commander, Mr. Grand said.

The Pentagon seems to accept that, with talk of a German or French supreme commander having faded.

If the United States withdraws or pulls back, "how do these countries work together on defense?" asked Max Bergmann of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a research group. "It is a really important political question, one that Europeans are currently reckoning with, because what we see in Europe is not a lot of European defense cooperation."

And if there is a crisis, with Russian troops massing on a NATO border and the Americans missing, how does Europe organize a united response?

"NATO will evolve and reform, and it's healthy to be more honest about it," Mr. Grand said. "But will it be a clear transition or a sudden pulling the plug on important capabilities? It must be something we do together. "

Canada Selects Joint Bid For Building Submarines

By IAN AUSTEN

OTTAWA — Canada said on Monday that it had chosen two European NATO allies to build a new fleet of submarines for its navy, a major step in Prime Minister Mark Carney's campaign to reduce Canadian military and economic dependence on the United States.

After considering a South Korean bidder that actively and publicly campaigned for the contract, Canada instead selected a German-Norwegian joint venture to build up to a dozen diesel-electric submarines.

"It was a difficult, close decision between two highly qualified suppliers," Mr. Carney said at a Royal Canadian Navy base in Halifax, Nova Scotia. "In the end, this decision was about choosing the absolute best platform and partnership to meet Canada's combined strategic, security, and economic interests. These are among the most advanced submarines ever built."

The deal, which would greatly expand Canada's submarine fleet, reflects Mr. Carney's effort to step up Canada's defense spending and its military presence in its far north, which became more of a priority after President Trump began musing about making Canada the 51st state and seizing neighboring Greenland. The prime minister has also vowed to reduce military reliance on American companies, which he says receive about 70 percent of Canada's arms budget.

Mr. Carney said the project would be the most costly military purchase in Canada's history, but he declined to estimate that amount until final negotiations with the contractor are complete.

Who will build the submarines?

The winning proposal is led by ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems, headquartered in Kiel, Germany, in cooperation with the Norwegian and German governments, to build the Type 212CD submarines for Canada.

No submarines of that type are in service yet, but ThyssenKrupp has contracted to build several for the navies of Germany and Norway, and it has built other submarine models for Turkey, Singapore and Israel.

The other competitor for the contract, Hanwha Ocean, has built submarines for South Korea and Indonesia.

Diesel-electric submarines run diesel engines while surfaced to charge their electric batteries, which power the boat when it is underwater. The only military submarines made in the United States are nuclear-powered, not diesel-electric.

The ThyssenKrupp submarine will also use fuel cells, which do not require surfacing, to recharge its batteries.

In 2021, Australia abandoned a deal for French-built diesel-electric submarines, and instead agreed to buy nuclear-powered vessels from a joint American-British venture. Canada decided against following Australia's example, for cost and logistical reasons.

Why did the bid win?

Mr. Carney made the announcement immediately before flying off to a NATO leaders' summit in Turkey.

Philippe Lagassé, who studies Canada's military procurement at Carleton University in Ottawa, said that Canada's ties with Germany and Norway through the military alliance is not supposed to be a factor in the submarine selection, but added: "We'd be naïve not to think that they don't play some part in it."

With Mr. Trump frequently calling into question the U.S. commitment to NATO, leaders of other alliance nations have stressed the need to reinforce their own ties.

Assessments by the Canadian government and the Royal Canadian Navy found that both the ThyssenKrupp and Hanwha submarines were roughly suitable, with each having advantages and shortcomings relative to its competitor.

Hanwha launched a multimedia advertising campaign of the kind normally associated with a new car model or soft drink. Hockey viewers last season were unable to escape a Hanwha television commercial narrated in the distinctive voice of a former, longtime anchor of the CBC's nightly newscast.

Mr. Carney said he had spoken with President Lee Jae Myung over the weekend about the decision.

"I understand the disappointment, particularly given the strength of the bid," Mr. Carney said. "These are tough decisions."

If the final negotiations with ThyssenKrupp unexpectedly fail, Mr. Carney said that Canada will then move on to the South Korean submarines.

ThyssenKrupp apparently persuaded Canada that it can deliver its submarine in timely fashion. When asked in May how soon Canada needs the submarines, Rear Admiral David Patchell, Canada's commander of Maritime Forces Pacific, said "I need them yesterday."

Mr. Carney said on Monday that Germany and Norway had agreed to have submarines allocated to their navies shifted to Canada to speed up delivery.

Canada has not had much of a submarine fleet. It bought its current complement of just four submarines secondhand from Britain in 1998, but only one is currently operational.

More than submarines

Under Mr. Carney, Canada has increased its focus on wringing benefits for its industries out of major arms deals with other countries. It even returned the two companies' submarine bids with the thought of boosting their promises of benefits for Canada.

At one point, Mélanie Joly, Canada's industry minister, suggested that Germany could help its chances of securing the contract by persuading Volkswagen to open an assembly plant in Canada. And she put similar pressure on South Korea.

Volkswagen, which is considering closing more factories in Germany and large-scale layoffs, balked.

Hanwha has a tentative deal with the Canadian auto parts makers' trade group to make land-based military vehicles in Canada.

Both ThyssenKrupp and Hanwha made dizzying arrays of nonbinding promises about multimillion-dollar investments and job creation.

Mr. Carney had no details about ThyssenKrupp's promises, but said that the program would create 100,000 jobs in Canada.

Bound for the north

The submarine contract fit with two parts of Mr. Carney's agenda: to sharply raise Canada's military budget and to assert its presence in the Arctic, an arena of growing competition among Russia, the United States and China.

He has already met his commitment to raise Canada's military spending to the old NATO target for member nations of at least 2 percent of gross domestic product, and he has committed to NATO's new 5 percent target by 2035.

The submarines are expected to be used largely to patrol Canada's sparsely populated Arctic.

But Professor Lagassé said that many naval experts argue that only nuclear submarines are suitable for Arctic missions because they can remain submerged indefinitely, rather than having to resurface to charge their batteries.

Acquiring a nuclear fleet has its appeal, he added, but, "as the Australians are experiencing, the complexity of doing that is just astronomical."

CHRIS HELGREN/REUTERS

Canadian naval officers touring a South Korean submarine in Esquimalt, British Columbia, in May.

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The New York Times

Previous Presidents Draw Contemplation From Trump

DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

A new painting of President Trump in the cabinet room of the White House.

A leader ties himself to achievements and seeks distance from failures.

By AISHVARYA KAVI

WASHINGTON — President Trump has always stood ready to tear down his immediate predecessors, lobbing deeply personal insults and offering unfavorable interpretations of former presidents Joseph R. Biden Jr. and Barack Obama.

But in recent months, he has been reaching further back into American history, either attaching himself to the achievements of past presidents or insisting he would never replicate their failures.

Mr. Trump is "a one-man Sousa Band of trying to put down other presidents or attach himself to the greatness of George Washington or Theodore Roosevelt or Andrew Jackson," said Douglas Brinkley, a presidential historian at Rice University.

The New York Times compiled some of Mr. Trump's comments on 10 past presidents, offering a glimpse into how he sees himself in the context of history.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

16TH PRESIDENT

Abraham Lincoln

'The people that make the biggest impact, they're the ones that they go after.'
— at an April 25 news conference at the White House

After a gunman tried to break into the White House Correspondents' Association dinner in an apparent attempt to assassinate Mr. Trump, a reporter asked the president why this kept happening to him. It was the third time someone tried to kill him.

Mr. Trump named Lincoln, who unified the North and South after the Civil War and was then shot and killed by Confederate sympathizer, to suggest he was in good company.

"I hate to say I'm honored by that," he added, "but I've done a lot."

HOOVER LIBRARY

31ST PRESIDENT

Herbert Hoover

'That was always the one I didn't want to be.'
— at a June 17 news conference announcing the framework of a deal with Iran

The war with Iran inflated energy costs for Americans, jeopardizing Mr. Trump's promise to address the affordability crisis.

When announcing the framework for a deal with Iran, Mr. Trump suggested he had pushed toward a resolution "rather than possibly going into a depression, rather than having your favorite president be Herbert Hoover."

Mr. Trump accused him of causing the Great Depression, but historians generally don't agree — Hoover was less than eight months into his presidency in October of 1929 when the stock market crashed. But he became increasingly unpopular for failing to address the economic turmoil head on and was voted out in favor of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

By his own admission, Mr. Trump was concerned about his economic legacy. Presidencies are often shaped by how voters feel about the economy, and Americans have consistently named the economy as their top concern as the country nears midterm elections.

TOPICAL PRESS AGENCY/GETTY IMAGES

26TH PRESIDENT

Theodore Roosevelt

'He had our American flag planted on every part of the world.'
— on July 1 at the opening of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library

Mr. Trump had much praise for Roosevelt. But rather than dwell on his progressive domestic achievements that built out the federal government, Mr. Trump seems to see his own obsession with how America is perceived internationally as an extension of Roosevelt's leadership, which coincided with the rise of the United States as a global power.

The magnitude of Roosevelt's domestic accomplishments may have led to his likeness being carved into Mount Rushmore, but Mr. Trump's approach to American power, which has included proposing to annexing Canada, Mexico, Greenland and even Venezuela, diverges.

Mr. Trump appeared to be reaching into "a grab bag of history" and missing the nuances, said Tim Naftali, a presidential historian at Columbia University. Roosevelt didn't plant the flag around the globe, Mr. Naftali said, though he did force negotiations for the United States to take the land of the Panama Canal Zone. (The Canal Zone ceased being U.S. territory in 1979 and Mr. Trump has often said he wants it back.)

HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

5TH PRESIDENT

James Monroe

'They call it the "Donroe."'
— in a Jan. 8 interview with the Fox News host Sean Hannity

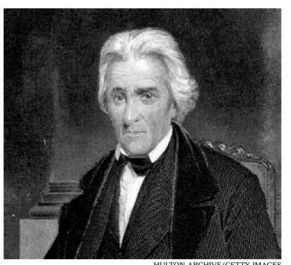
Days after the U.S. military successfully dropped into Venezuela and extracted its president, Nicolás Maduro, Mr. Trump hinted that he might lead the United States to intervene in other international arenas.

Mr. Trump was asked whether he was calling that strategy the "Donroe Doctrine," after James Monroe's 1823 unilateral declaration of American power and interest in the Western Hemisphere that was eventually used to justify U.S. intervention in Latin America. But he shied from the title that some supporters had tossed around.

"I didn't call it that," he said, "but they're calling it this."

Mr. Trump, who has called the declaration Monroe's "claim to fame," then launched a war on Iran, wading into the possibility that his legacy would be shaped by the foreign conflicts that he campaigned against. But the war also re-established the United States as an interventionist military power.

"He wants his legacy to be that he was a key power," Mr. Brinkley said.



HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

7TH PRESIDENT

Andrew Jackson

'Andrew Jackson was treated horribly.'
— on Jan. 6, before Republican members of the House

Five years to the day his supporters attacked the U.S. Capitol, Mr. Trump seemed to see in Jackson a fellow sufferer.

Mr. Trump was impeached a second time for inciting that mob with a speech refusing to concede the election he had just lost to Joseph R. Biden Jr. Over the years he has made it clear he begrudges his treatment by Congress.

He begrudges Jackson's treatment, too. Still, "he never got impeached twice," Mr. Trump said. In fact, Jackson was never impeached, only censured by Congress over a dispute over control of federal finances.

"I got impeached twice over nothing."

ASSOCIATED PRESS

39TH PRESIDENT

Jimmy Carter

'What a mess.'
— on March 9 at a Republican conference

The pitfall of Carter's presidency was the Iran hostage crisis, the 444-day standoff over 52 Americans taken captive by militants from the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

Several weeks into what Mr. Trump had told Americans would be a short conflict with Iran, Carter's biggest political blunder was evidently on his mind.

"Look at what happened with the helicopters and the hostages," Mr. Trump said. "It cost them the election."

JOSE R. LOPEZ/THE NEW YORK TIMES

40TH PRESIDENT

Ronald Reagan

'I thought he was great, great style and everything.'
— in an interview in Beijing with Mr. Hannity, broadcast on May 14

"But he was not good on trade," Mr. Trump quickly added.

Mr. Trump has previously compared his own political movement to that of Reagan, the popular Republican president whose policies are still held up as an example by modern conservatives.

Mr. Trump sees himself as an icon of the American right, as Reagan has become. But he doesn't appear to share an interest in Reagan's traditional conservatism and has turned the Republican Party toward his own right-wing populism.

Still, Mr. Trump seems happy to lean on Reagan's popularity, once sharing on social media a fake quote in which Reagan praised a young Mr. Trump.

BETTMANN

37TH PRESIDENT

Richard Nixon

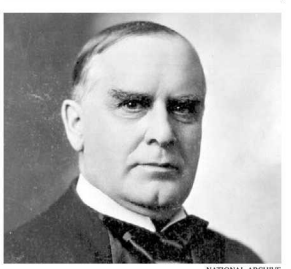
'I wouldn't have preferred Nixon.'
— at a June 17 news conference announcing the framework of a deal with Iran

In the same breath that he said he did not want to make economic missteps akin to Herbert Hoover's, Mr. Trump added that he would not want to be the president behind Watergate, perhaps the most consequential political corruption scandal to embroil a sitting U.S. president.

Mr. Trump knows the scandal well, saying he learned from it not to repeat the firings of Nixon's Saturday Night Massacre, or to tape incriminating conversations.

But perhaps the biggest lesson was not to give up office. Though Nixon resigned while facing almost certain impeachment and removal, Mr. Trump seems to have seen it as a decision to accept defeat.

"He left. I don't leave," Trump once said of Nixon. "Big difference. I don't leave."



NATIONAL ARCHIVE

25TH PRESIDENT

William McKinley

'He was the tariff king.'
— on July 1 at the opening of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library

At the event honoring Theodore Roosevelt, Mr. Trump digressed on a president about whom he had often spoke positively.

McKinley was a proponent of economic policies that today might be seen as Trumpian. He also notched some victories that Trump seems to have designed for his own legacy, including installing protectionist tariffs. They did not, as Mr. Trump suggested, make the country "tremendous amounts of money," something Mr. Trump also vowed his tariffs would do.

Still, tariffs are part of McKinley's legacy — something Mr. Trump hasn't been able to replicate. It was one of several big efforts of Mr. Trump's second term that didn't stick.

"The Supreme Court said, 'You went too far,'" Mr. Naftali said.

GILBERT STUART; NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

1ST PRESIDENT

George Washington

'The city named in honor of Gen. George Washington.'
— on June 24 at the exposition on the National Mall in honor of America's 250th birthday

To a brand-obsessed businessman like Mr. Trump, George Washington's greatest legacy is perhaps all that is named after him.

In his second term, Mr. Trump has become preoccupied with renovation and building projects at the White House and across the capital, dotted with buildings and monuments named for celebrated American presidents.

Mr. Trump, a real estate developer known for naming his projects after himself, has launched an effort to leave his imprint on many of those American icons and even construct new ones.

"His building program in the second term is clearly a sign of his focus on legacy," Mr. Naftali said.

"He wants his own Washington."

The 47th President

White House Shifts Mission of Gun Policy, Gutting Funds for Prevention

By SHERYL GAY STOLBERG

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration has gutted federal gun violence prevention efforts since returning to office, slashing funding for programs and research and even suppressing taxpayer-funded reports aimed at reducing gun injuries and deaths.

The cutbacks, which cover agencies throughout the federal government, represent a shift in philosophy about how to address gun violence, away from a public-health-oriented approach focused on prevention, to a law-and-order approach focused on beefing up police departments and seizing illegal weapons while also systematically rolling back firearms regulations. The move away from prevention and regulation aimed at saving lives is playing out in other areas of public health too, including illegal drugs and smoking.

The administration's approach to gun violence also reflects President Trump's long political alliance with gun rights groups and his determination to undo the policies of his predecessor, former President Joseph R. Biden Jr. Soon after taking office, Mr. Trump shuttered Mr. Biden's White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention, ordered a review of Mr. Biden's firearms policies and issued an executive order titled, "Protecting Second Amendment Rights."

The Justice Department's civil rights division also took the highly unusual step last week of suing Virginia and California to overturn those states' restrictions on gun ownership. The suit was the division's "first ever affirmative litigation in favor of expanding gun rights," said Joseph Blocher, an expert on Second Amendment law at Duke University.

Still, the cuts are perplexing to people involved in prevention work because Mr. Trump is no stranger to gun violence. He has survived three assassination attempts, and his close ally Charlie Kirk was gunned down while giving a speech last year. Mr. Kirk's accused assassin faces a court hearing in Utah this week. The man accused of trying to kill Mr. Trump at a press gala in April appeared in federal court in Washington last week.

"It is a grand irony," said Amy Solomon, who oversaw a violence prevention program at the Justice Department when she served as assistant attorney general in the Biden administration. That program, the Community Based Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative, has since lost $150 million in funding, which was steered to law enforcement, she said.

"The groups and organizations who work on this are very strong and very resilient, but so many of them have had to cut services, have had to lay off staff; some of them have closed their doors altogether," Ms. Solomon said. "And what's replacing it is a very heavy-handed, law-enforcement-centric focus that frankly isn't even focusing on the violence."

Representatives for the White House and the departments of Justice, Homeland Security and Health and Human Services said the administration's policies have made Americans safer while eliminating wasteful spending.

"The Trump administration remains totally committed to being responsible stewards of American taxpayer dollars, and that includes no longer funding programs that were wasteful, misdirected and counterproductive," said Abigail Jackson, a White House spokeswoman.

Ms. Jackson and her colleagues at other agencies also credited the president with a marked decline in violent crime in 2025. They cited an analysis of 40 cities by the nonprofit Council on Criminal Justice, which found a steep drop in the murder rate and that violent crime overall fell to below its rate in 2019, before the pandemic.

But violent crime was also declining under Mr. Biden. Fatimah Loren Dreier is the executive director of the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention, which supports hospital-based violence prevention programs and laid off 20 percent of its staff after the Justice Department funding was cut. She cited recent research showing that the programs, based in trauma centers, can successfully prevent victims of violent injuries, including gunshot wounds, from being injured again.

The programs focus on "retaliatory violence," she said, which is concentrated in cities with high crime rates. Grounded in the idea that simply stitching up a patient's wounds will not prevent future violence, they employ doctors, social service workers and "trusted messengers" to follow and counsel patients at risk of being injured again.

"For some cities, there have been historic declines — cities like Baltimore, Chicago," she said, adding, "It's pretty remarkable, the impact of these investments."

At the Department of Homeland Security, the Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships, aimed at preventing terrorist attacks and "targeted violence," lost $18.5 million last year. Bill Braniff, the counterterrorism expert who founded it, left government for academic work.

The center awarded its last grants in September 2024, according to its website. In announcing the grant terminations, the Trump administration called it a "cash cow for radical activists" and spotlighted a handful of groups, including some focused on violence against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

The program also funded groups at Auburn University in Alabama, the Nevada university system, a Minnesota sheriff's office, an educational nonprofit in western Kentucky, the Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh and Louisiana's largest historically Black college. Those programs were largely designed to help local officials identify and combat threats.

Mr. Braniff, who is an expert on global jihadist ideology, said the center was based in part on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's violence prevention work. He had concluded that the post-9/11 approach of "killing and capturing folks" was not enough, he said, and too focused on the Muslim community. He hoped to broaden the center's reach.

"One of the virtues of the public-health-informed approach," he said, "is that it allows us to think about shared risk and protective factors for violence, and start to think about interventions that weren't indexed on ideology."

After The New York Times inquired about Mr. Trump's policies, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives issued a news release saying its "shift in priorities" has resulted in nearly 50,000 firearms "seized from criminals" since January 2025.

But a majority of gun-related deaths in the United States, roughly 60 percent, are suicides, and experts say beefing up policing may not prevent them. Roughly 44,000 Americans, an average of 120 a day, died from gun-related injuries, including accidents and suicides, each day in 2024, the most recent year for which figures are available.

Over the past four decades, public health experts have coalesced around the idea that gun violence, like infectious disease, can be tracked, studied and prevented. But federally funded gun violence prevention ran into trouble in 1996, when Republicans in Congress effectively put an end to C.D.C.-funded research.

The research resumed with bipartisan support in 2021. But beyond fulfilling grant obligations that date to the Biden administration, the Trump administration has not funded new research. In 2024, the Biden administration announced $12.9 million in new funding for gun violence prevention research, but none of those grants have been awarded.

Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., whose father and uncle were assassinated, has said he does not view gun violence as a public health problem. "I would say it's an epidemic," Mr. Kennedy said at a House hearing in April. "I think it's a law enforcement issue and not public health."

Mr. Kennedy has presided over layoffs that have gutted the C.D.C.'s Division of Violence Prevention. But last week, a day after The Times sought comment for this article, the administration posted two notices alerting researchers to C.D.C. plans for future violence prevention studies, though they do not mention guns.

Sarah DeGue, who spent 17 years in the division, focused primarily on sexual and intimate partner violence, was among those who were laid off. She now works as a consultant, she said, and donates her time to communities in need.

Although hobbled, the division still tracks and reports gun injuries and deaths, she said.

"It's great that the data is still there," Dr. DeGue said. "But what they're missing is being able to do anything about the data. They don't have the capacity anymore. They don't have the staff to do any research, to develop any strategies or to help states and communities actually implement what works."

Apart from declining to fund new research, the administration has also suppressed previous studies and reports.

After Congress passed a bipartisan gun safety bill in 2022 that contained funding to help states enact so-called red flag laws, the Department of Health and Human Services commissioned a report on the statutes. The laws authorize courts to issue "extreme risk protection orders," or ERPOs, allowing law enforcement to temporarily remove firearms from people deemed dangerous by a judge. Mr. Trump briefly embraced red flag laws, which the gun lobby fiercely opposes, during his first administration.

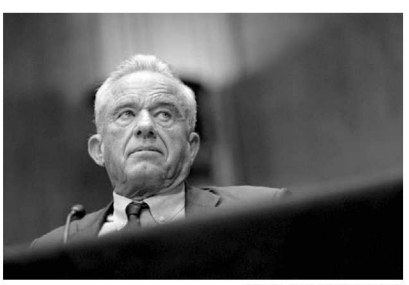
The report, financed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, explored the scientific evidence behind the laws, and offered a guide to help state mental health authorities enforce them. It was posted on the agency's website at the tail end of the Biden administration but vanished after Mr. Trump took office.

The administration also took down an advisory issued by the surgeon general declaring firearm violence a public health crisis. While that made headlines, the removal of the "ERPO report," as its authors call it, attracted no notice.

The document has survived on a website hosted by the nonprofit Ad Council, though it is difficult to find. The report's lead author, Jeffrey W. Swanson, an expert in mental health and gun violence at Duke University whose research shows that red flag laws save lives, said he had no idea it survived online, and that he was given no explanation for its removal.

A spokeswoman for Mr. Kennedy, Emily Hilliard, did not respond directly to questions about what happened to the reports, but said officials "continue to comply" with the president's executive order on protecting Second Amendment rights, "while supporting firearm injury prevention."

HAIYUN JIANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



TIERNEY L. CROSS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

JESSICA HILL/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Clockwise from above: Senator Christopher S. Murphy of Connecticut speaking on gun violence in 2025; Fatimah Loren Dreier, executive director of the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention; Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. testifying in April.

Bans on Guns Used by Mass Shooters Will Define Supreme Court's Next Term

By MIKE McINTIRE

We all may know what makes a gun dangerous, but what makes it both dangerous and unusual?

Largely lost amid the Supreme Court's decisions on birthright citizenship, asylum and campaign finance was its announcement last Tuesday that it would take up that enigmatic question, which is at the heart of the country's struggle to balance the rights of gun owners against the specter of mass shootings.

The court's decision could be a watershed moment. The conservative majority may double down on a string of rulings that greatly expanded Second Amendment protections, or the justices could reconsider legal tests they created to weigh the constitutionality of firearms — like the "dangerous and unusual" question — that have confounded lower courts.

The stakes are clear from the opening pages of briefs by the parties in two cases that the court said it will hear in the fall. Lawyers for Cook County, Ill., whose ban on assault weapons is being challenged by pro-gun groups, listed 25 mass shootings to show that AR-15-type rifles are unquestionably dangerous.

"Assault rifles are the weapon of choice for criminals and terrorists set on quickly massacring innocents," they wrote, "but are rarely put to lawful public use."

But are they unusual? Gun rights plaintiffs in the other case, seeking to overturn a similar ban in Connecticut, argued that the AR-15 is so popular it has been called America's rifle: "If the Second Amendment does not protect it," the plaintiffs wrote, "then it is unclear what that amendment does protect."

The court's ruling is likely to come down by next summer — 20 years after it agreed to take up District of Columbia v. Heller. Its landmark opinion in that case, issued a year later, declared that the Constitution safeguards an individual right to keep arms at home for self-defense. In 2022, in New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen, the court went further, extending the right to also include carrying firearms in public.

The two new cases present the Supreme Court with its clearest opportunity yet to explain what kinds of guns are covered by those earlier rulings. And because the weapons involved are AR-15-type rifles, which engender strong emotions on both sides of the American gun debate, the fallout could be profound.

"This will, without question, be the most important case since Heller and Bruen," said Luis Valdes, a national spokesman for the group Gun Owners of America.

The two earlier rulings created formulas for lower courts to determine if laws restricting possession and use of certain types of guns pass constitutional muster, but judges have repeatedly expressed confusion over them. A patchwork of rulings has sometimes upheld bans on semiautomatic rifles and large-capacity magazines, but other times not.

Courts must first decide if a weapon is both dangerous and unusual. Since any gun is dangerous, the emphasis has been on finding if it meets the Heller ruling's metric of being in "common use." If not, the firearm is deemed unusual and falls outside Second Amendment protections.

But if the gun is found to be in common use, it is presumed to be protected. Any modern restrictions on it must then pass the "history and tradition" test, created in the Bruen case, to determine if there is a record of analogous laws in the past.

Lower courts have had questions: How many of a certain kind of gun does it take to be considered common? What is the best way to measure common use? Is this really the right tool for striking a balance between protecting Second Amendment rights and curbing gun violence?

Federal appeals judges in Illinois, hearing a challenge to the state's assault weapons ban in 2023, complained of a circularity to the test's logic. Fully automatic machine guns, for example, are not protected by the Second Amendment only because early federal laws prevented them from coming into common use. But had those laws not been enacted, the guns would likely have become popular and therefore enjoy protection, they said.

"Constitutionality kind of winks on and off depending on how popular a weapon is at any given time," Judge Diane Wood said during the hearing. "And that's an unusual position to take."

The appellate court rejected the test and upheld the state ban, declaring that "even the most important personal freedoms have their limits."

The need to pass the common-use test has created a demand for surveys and polls that try to discern how popular different firearms and accessories are, sometimes leading to disputes over their validity.

A professor who prepared a frequently cited study purporting to show that AR-15-type rifles are commonly used for self-defense had previously unreported financial ties to the gun lobby, The New York Times reported in 2024. Other firearms researchers questioned the integrity and accuracy of the study, which was criticized by a federal judge for having "methodological errors and inherent biases."

Undeterred, pro-gun plaintiffs in the new Supreme Court cases introduced the study as evidence.

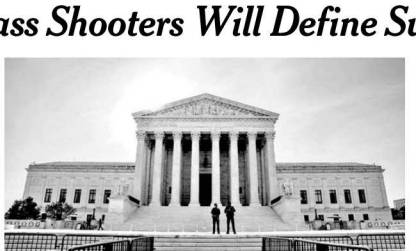
Beyond measuring usage, some legal scholars say the Supreme Court should revisit the foundational basis for the common-use test. The term first appeared in a narrow 1939 opinion that declared sawed-off shotguns were not protected by the Second Amendment because they would not be useful to a citizens' militia. Writing for the majority in Heller, Justice Antonin Scalia seized upon that earlier reference, but offered few details about how or why it should be applied more broadly today.

"The question of common use, based on a random line from that earlier ruling, has no meaningful connection to the history or text or values of the Second Amendment," said Joseph Blocher, a founder of the Center for Firearms Law at Duke University.

Still, there is little to indicate that the Supreme Court's conservative majority would be inclined to declare that semiautomatic rifles fall outside constitutional protections. Four justices — Samuel A. Alito Jr., Neil M. Gorsuch, Brett M. Kavanaugh and Clarence Thomas — have a solid record of supporting gun rights. Justice Amy Coney Barrett and Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. have done so less frequently.

Justice Kavanaugh has already signaled his thinking. When the justices turned away a case last year challenging Maryland's assault weapons ban, his statement made clear that did not mean that the court agreed with the ban.

"Given that millions of Americans own AR-15s and that a significant majority of the States allow possession of those rifles, petitioners have a strong argument that AR-15s are in 'common use' by law-abiding citizens and therefore are protected by the Second Amendment," Justice Kavanaugh wrote.



ALLISON ROBBERT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The conservative-held Supreme Court agreed to hear cases this fall challenging laws in two Democratic-led states banning AR-15 rifles. The court's ruling will likely come down by next summer.

The 47th President

Imposing Own Views, Trump Looks to Rewrite History at Smithsonian

From Page A1

matic, behind-the-scenes battle for control of the institution.

The inside story of the fight for control of the Smithsonian underscores how Mr. Trump has tried, with varying degrees of success, to impose his own view of American history, erase "wokeness," influence which artists are worthy of exhibits and oust top leaders of the institution.

Mr. Bunch spent much of the past year seeking to fend off or mitigate escalating demands from the administration to address what a White House report, issued on Saturday amid the July 4 festivities, characterized as a drive that "has moved the museum's mission away from straightforward historical education and scholarship toward an extreme political activism that seeks to transform our country."

The blistering report focused on the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. It followed a March 2025 executive order from Mr. Trump, titled "Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History."

Mr. Bunch, the first Black secretary of the Smithsonian, has largely avoided engaging publicly with Mr. Trump's criticisms. Without

CAROLINE GUTMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

'Red states, blue states — whatever your politics, you come to the Smithsonian.'

LONNIE G. BUNCH III, above, the head of the Smithsonian Institution.

mentioning the president, he told CNN on Friday: "It scares me when people aren't brave enough to face their history. And in some ways you have to face it anyway."

Vince Haley, the director of the White House's domestic policy council, said that "the least we owe our founding fathers is an honest and inspiring account of who they were, what they did and what they built." The Smithsonian declined to comment.

This account of the backstage battle is drawn from reporting for the book "Regime Change: Inside the Imperial Presidency of Donald Trump," and is based on documents and interviews with a wide range of people with knowledge of the events, most of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The struggle dates to Mr. Trump's first term, when he and Mr. Bunch, a historian and museum curator who had overseen the National Museum of African American History and Culture and had taken over at the Smithsonian in 2019, quickly developed a difficult relationship.

Mr. Bunch described in his 2019 memoir the moment he took the new president on a tour of the African American history museum in early 2017. Mr. Trump appeared uninterested in the history of slavery in the United States, Mr. Bunch wrote. As they passed an exhibit on the Dutch role in the slave trade, Mr. Trump's only comment was, "You know, they love me in the Netherlands."

"I was so disappointed in his response to one of the greatest crimes against humanity in history," Mr. Bunch wrote.

When Mr. Trump won the 2024 election, Mr. Bunch's allies knew his criticism of the president could come back to haunt him. But at first glance, Mr. Trump seemed limited in what he could do.

Created by Congress in 1846, the Smithsonian is governed by a Board of Regents, made up of 17 members: The chief justice of the United States serves as chancellor and presiding officer, along with three senators, three members of the House and nine citizen members, plus the vice president. The board structure was designed to insulate the Smithsonian from partisan politics.

But a warning sign came just four days after Mr. Trump's inauguration last year with the appointment of a new regent — a Trump ally, Representative Carlos Giménez of Florida. Mr. Giménez soon made his presence felt, at the traditional dinner in April that the regents held before the next day's full board meeting.

Seated two chairs to Mr. Bunch's left at the dinner in the National Postal Museum on April 6 last year, Mr. Giménez listened as the regents, one by one, expressed support for Mr. Bunch. But when it was Mr. Giménez's turn to speak, his principal message was: I don't know you, and so I cannot support you. No one rose to defend Mr. Bunch, a painful point that he would make to some board members afterward.

At the board meeting the next morning, Mr. Giménez posed a seemingly benign question: Was there a process for reviewing exhibits?

The answer was complicated. Potential exhibitions had traditionally been assessed through a committee system, with major decisions finalized by Mr. Bunch and the regents. In recent years, the Smithsonian had developed additional reviews taking into account visitor preferences.

But the institutional sprawl of the Smithsonian — 21 museums, the National Zoo and 14 research and education centers — meant there was no flowchart or standard process.

As Mr. Giménez pressed for details of what filters exhibitions and acquisitions went through, it was apparent that the White House and its allies had found an opening.

Within weeks, Mr. Trump declared on social media that he was firing the director of the National Portrait Gallery, Kim Sajet, calling her "highly partisan" and a "strong supporter of DEI." It soon became clear that Mr. Trump was unhappy about a photograph of himself in the Portrait Gallery. It was awful, he would say to others. He objected strongly to the text on the wall noting his two impeachments.

On June 2 of last year, Mr. Bunch and the regents, including Vice President JD Vance, hastily gathered for an emergency videoconference meeting. Mr. Trump repeatedly phoned Mr. Bunch during the proceedings, forcing him to step away time and again as Mr. Vance and Mr. Giménez echoed the president's demand for Ms. Sajet's ouster.

Mr. Bunch eventually stopped taking Mr. Trump's calls during the meeting, but nothing was resolved and the matter was postponed to a regular board meeting seven days later.

There, at the Museum of American History, the tables were arranged in a U shape and at the closed end of the U configuration, Mr. Bunch sat with Mr. Vance and Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr., present in his role as the Smithsonian's chancellor. The other regents sat along the sides, with Mr. Giménez at one end.

Mr. Vance advised the group that it needed to follow the president's orders about firing Ms. Sajet, adding that it could not refuse him. "He signs the checks," the vice president added pointedly.

"This should be an institution for everyone," Mr. Vance said. "I am not demanding we hire someone with right-wing political views. I am merely asking that we not make the face of this institution a left-wing crazy person."

Before the meeting, several regents had agreed to pass a resolution stipulating that the president had no standing to make personnel decisions. They wanted to make sure their resolution was put to a vote before Mr. Vance and Mr. Giménez could put forward their resolution calling for the dismissal of Ms. Sajet, who was still showing up for work.

Mr. Vance indicated again that if Ms. Sajet was not dismissed, the White House would explore the option of defunding the Smithsonian. The White House did not have the authority to do that, some regents shot back. John Fahey, the former head of Time Life Inc. and National Geographic, and Senator Gary Peters, Democrat of Michigan, were especially emphatic.

When Mr. Vance argued that the Smithsonian was politicizing the nation's history, Mr. Peters retorted: You're coming here threatening to cut off funding to the Smithsonian if we don't paint the picture you want. That's politicizing it. Mr. Vance disagreed.

The vice president at one point left the room briefly, leaving Ben Moss, his policy director, in his seat. Mr. Moss pulled up an image on an iPad of the Statue of Liberty depicted as a Black transgender woman holding aloft a lamp filled with flowers. It was a painting by Amy Sherald, a renowned Black artist who had painted Michelle Obama's official portrait for the Smithsonian. It was set to be included in an exhibition of her work at the National Portrait Gallery in September.

"This image," Mr. Moss declared, "is also a problem." He held up the digital image of the painting, "Trans Forming Liberty." "This," he said, "is not what Americans want to see. "

A stunned silence descended. Chief Justice Roberts steered the meeting to passage of the resolution affirming the board's authority over personnel, defusing the crisis over Ms. Sajet for the moment. But four days later, Mr. Trump got what he wanted anyway. Ms. Sajet resigned, explaining in a note to staff that it was "the best way to serve the institution." On July 23, Ms. Sherald abruptly canceled her exhibition; she said the Smithsonian had privately tried to open the painting up to public debate over trans rights.

A few weeks later, the White House sent a letter to the Smithsonian, outlining a top-to-bottom assessment of everything from wall texts on exhibitions to websites and social media content. Current and future exhibitions would be reviewed with particular focus on the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

The Smithsonian Executive Committee scheduled an emergency meeting for the next day. Chief Justice Roberts, Mr. Bunch, the three-person executive committee, senior staff and lawyers were all in attendance.

Mr. Bunch proposed issuing a public letter, making plain that any review was the responsibility of the institution alone. But executive committee members promptly voiced concern that this would pit them all directly against the president and would almost certainly become a political fight with Mr. Trump, one that could damage the Smithsonian.

It became clear that the chief justice, who appeared mindful of taking a long-term approach to protecting the Smithsonian's interests, shared those concerns. His colleagues thought such a letter in this case would set the chief justice himself against the president, and not on points of law, but on cultural interpretations of how a country should see itself. Mr. Bunch's proposal was put aside.

Mr. Bunch would tell allies he felt disrespected by Mr. Vance and Mr. Giménez. He was also quietly pressed by supporters either to quit or be more outspoken in opposition to the White House. In the end, he chose a less confrontational approach intended to sidestep the immediate tensions while protecting the institution far beyond Mr. Trump's tenure in office.

But the White House has been biding its time, too. The board has been missing two members since their terms expired in March. The administration, according to a person with knowledge of the discussions, has been hoping to sway who will be chosen as replacements.

The exhibit that Mr. Bunch went on to curate for the 250th anniversary, titled "American Aspirations," highlighted American ideals such as liberty, fairness, democracy, hope, defending freedom and progress. The pieces included Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech," Thomas Jefferson's writing desk and the astronaut Sally Ride's flight gear.

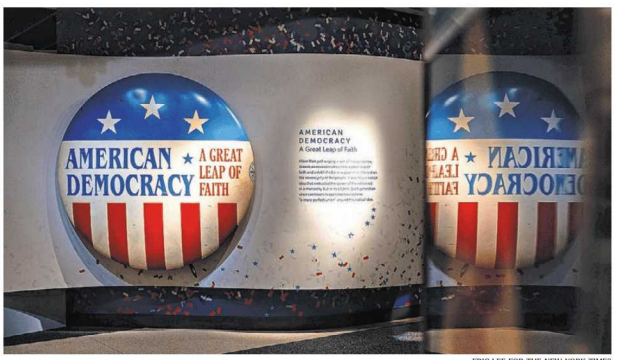
The exhibit includes explicit references to the nation's history of slavery and inequality: a hymnal used by Harriet Tubman; a reminder that the Statue of Liberty was originally a gift to celebrate America's end to the brutal practice, with broken chains hidden beneath her robes; and a Plymouth Rock fragment accompanied by words from Malcolm X.

"I love the Smithsonian, and I love thinking creatively about, how do you protect the Smithsonian?" Mr. Bunch said in an interview with The New York Times in May.

"When you're Black in America, you've got to figure out how to get through, right? You've got to figure out how to build allies, when to stand firm, when to bang the table," he said. "So in some ways, all of that prepared me for this moment."

LAWREN SIMMONS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

An exhibit at the National Museum of American History. President Trump and his allies have criticized what they call "improper ideology" in the Smithsonian's presentation of American history and culture. The museum's leaders have spent much of the past year fending off demands.



ERIC LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Robin Pogrebin contributed reporting.

White House Targets Another Smithsonian Director for 'Radical Activist Ideology'

By ZACHARY SMALL

In a scathing report by the White House that accuses the Smithsonian of downplaying the role of the country's founders while pursuing "extreme political activism," the historian Anthea M. Hartig is mentioned nearly 230 times.

It says she spreads "radical activist ideology."

It cites her recent comments to students about seeing history as a "prime tool of social justice."

And it claims that the Smithsonian museum she leads has worked to "undermine faith in American institutions and the longstanding shared ideals of the American people."

Ms. Hartig, who has been the director of the National Museum of American History since 2019, has commissioned exhibitions that go beyond highlighting the accomplishments of presidents. They document the lived experiences of ordinary people, sometimes focusing on race, sexuality and colonialism.

Her work seems to have infuriated the White House, whose Domestic Policy Council released the report on Saturday, the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding. But many historians support her goal of telling a more nuanced story of the United States.

"At a time when American history and the historical profession are under attack," said Erika Lee, a historian at Harvard University, "she has remained committed to preserving and sharing the fullest record of the American story — one that is full of nuance and contradictions."

Born the same year that the National Museum of American History opened, in 1964, Ms. Hartig trained in California as a historian interested in the contributions of immigrants and Latino communities. She has degrees from the Los Angeles and Riverside campuses of the University of California, and in 2001 published her dissertation on the role of citrus growers in the development of Southern California. Then she spent most of her career working for nonprofits dedicated to preserving and teaching the history of the West Coast.

Scholars said her interest in social history made her an effective public historian because she was able to communicate with the Smithsonian's diverse audiences.

"She really goes to bat for curators who are looking to tell stories that have not been platformed in our nation's museums," said Matthew J. Garcia, a historian at Dartmouth College who met Ms. Hartig when they were doctoral students. "By doing that, she has been wrongfully accused of being ideological."

During President Trump's second term, the White House has been critical of the Smithsonian, including the organization's leader, Secretary Lonnie G. Bunch III. When the administration previously singled out the director of a Smithsonian museum — the president called Kim Sajet, the National Portrait Gallery's director, a "strong supporter of DEI" — she resigned.

A White House spokesman did not respond to questions about whether Ms. Hartig should remain in her position. Ms. Hartig did not respond to requests for comment.

Anthea M. Hartig is the director of the National Museum of American History.

Many historians have come to her defense, however, arguing that the White House was using its own ideological lens to accuse the Smithsonian of being unpatriotic while presenting things out of context for shock value.

"Reports of this ilk reveal less about the museums they target than about the anxieties of their authors," the Organization of American Historians, where Ms. Hartig previously served as president, wrote in a statement.

The White House's report criticized Ms. Hartig for several exhibitions at the museum. They included the 2020 exhibition "Girlhood (It's Complicated)," which had pages from a transgender child's diary; the 2023 exhibition "Entertainment Nation," which described Alexander Hamilton as "flawed," in part because he owned slaves; and an initiative that had museum staff traveling to places including Mexico City to study the work of immigrant rights activists.

One video of Ms. Hartig speaking to students at U.C.L.A.'s Luskin Center for History and Policy was repeatedly cited as evidence of bias.

The report quoted her as telling the students that history was a "prime tool of social justice," while omitting a later part of her speech where she describes historians as "seekers of truth" as well as "embracers of nuance, ambassadors of empathy and defenders of inalienable rights."

The historian David Myers, who invited Ms. Hartig to speak to the U.C.L.A. students, said the White House had an outdated view of the profession. Public historians "want to open new interpretations of the past and not just present existing ones," he explained. "History is a tool of civic engagement."

When the museum opened, President Lyndon B. Johnson described it as a place to "illuminate our heritage so that others could see a little better our legacy." It was quickly swept into the history of its own era during the civil rights movement, and it eventually created a division that collected materials to elevate the role that underrepresented groups played in American history.

John Gray, the museum's previous director, said the institution had maintained its approach under Ms. Hartig.

"The purpose of the National Museum of American History is to provide us with a common reference to our history and the parts of our history that bring us together, and it does that beautifully," he said. "Attacking an individual in the name of politics, or in the name of history, is not a viable way to understand America."

The 47th President

Under Trump, Effective Campaign to Curb Tobacco Use Has Been Gutted

By CHRISTINA JEWETT

WASHINGTON — The ads were jarring: a man with a hole in his throat where his larynx, or voice box, had once been. A woman whose teeth and jaw had been removed after oral cancer. Another woman speaking in a robotic voice, which was altered when her larynx was removed: "I wish I'd never seen a cigarette in my entire life." A black screen followed, saying she died two days later.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 14-year ad campaign, called Tips From Former Smokers, was highly memorable and, research shows, highly effective in motivating people to quit. Last year, though, as tobacco companies gave millions to political organizations related to the Trump administration, the campaign went dark.

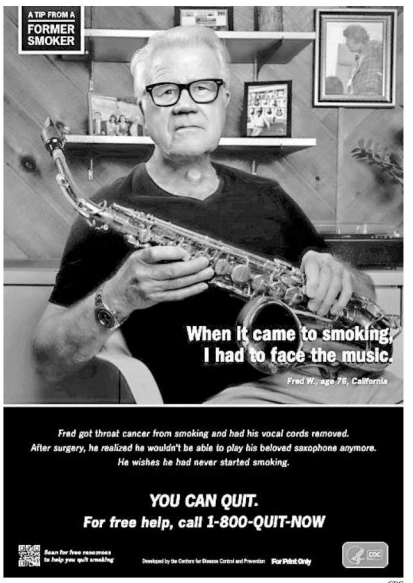
There is no definitive evidence linking the donations to the lapse of the ad campaign. But the decision to terminate it was one of several steps the administration has taken to unravel federal government antismoking initiatives that had long had bipartisan support during a time when the administration has delivered significant policy wins to tobacco companies.

The C.D.C.'s Office on Smoking and Health, which managed the campaign and worked with states on smoking cessation measures, has been shut down for more than a year, after its staff was laid off as part of the administration's government downsizing efforts. While hundreds of other federal health employees were eventually rehired, the smoking office staff members have not been.

Even after Congress restored the office's funding late last summer, its employees have remained on paid leave as litigation challenging the firings plays out.

In recent weeks, under pressure from Congress, the C.D.C. has given states diminished funding to air ads from the campaign's archive, but the federal government will not produce new ads or negotiate contracts for them to air nationwide. The ads had prompted millions of smokers to dial state quit lines for help on how to stop smoking. In interviews, people who ran quit lines in several states said that since the ads went off the air, calls have plummeted, along with enrollment in programs that offered counseling and nicotine gum and patches.

The abandonment of an effort that was widely regarded as a public health triumph has puzzled antismoking activists who point out that Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s platform was based on ending chronic diseases, which are a well-known consequence of smoking.



The C.D.C. campaign featured the stories of former heavy smokers, many recounting debilitating cancers, lung disease and strokes.

"We find it very ironic in an administration that wants to make America healthy again that we're cutting all of these resources related to smoking and vaping," said Nancy Brown, the chief executive of the American Heart Association.

Helping adults stop smoking is one of the most evidence-backed ways to improve the public's health. Smoking rates in the United States have fallen significantly, to less than 10 percent of adults, compared with 42 percent of adults in the early 1960s. Still, smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the country, causing about 490,000 premature deaths each year.

A national survey of adults who smoked from 2012 through 2018 found that the Tips from Former Smokers campaign was associated with more than 16 million people attempting to quit smoking and one million succeeding. During those years alone, the campaign was associated with saving an estimated $7.3 billion in health care costs.

"It's crazy that they have cut this funding if they really want to save lives and save money," said Sally Herndon, who ran North Carolina's tobacco control program until her retirement last year.

Emily Hilliard, a spokeswoman for the Department of Health and Human Services, said in a statement that the C.D.C. "remains committed to tobacco prevention and control and continues to support this priority through outreach, education and surveillance."

The cuts have come as tobacco companies have aggressively lobbied the administration for policy changes that would likely increase their market share of vaping and other nicotine products.

The New York Times recently reported that Reynolds American, which makes Newport and Camel cigarettes, saw a coveted new federal policy take shape that would allow an entire new class of flavored e-cigarettes onto the market. The initiative was announced just days after a $5 million donation and lunch with President Trump at his golf course in Florida. Executives from Altria, which makes Marlboro cigarettes, were also present.

The new policy was crafted over the objections of Dr. Marty Makary, then the F.D.A. commissioner, who cited it as the reason for his resignation in May. It stunned some public health experts, who say the F.D.A. set aside one of its central authorities: to approve or reject individual products based on their merits.

"It's very clear this guidance is a gift to the tobacco industry on a silver platter with a side of public health malpractice," said Brian King, a former leader of the F.D.A.'s tobacco division and executive vice president for U.S. programs of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

Opponents of the policy say flavored vapes will introduce young people who have never smoked to nicotine products.

But Ms. Hilliard, the health department spokeswoman, said the F.D.A. was focused on protecting youth and a "science-based review process for tobacco products."

She added: "Cigarette smoking remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States. And the agency supports the development of products that may provide less harmful alternatives for adults who smoke."

The federal cuts to antismoking programs and what some view as lenient new policies represent a reversal of decades of setbacks for tobacco companies under both Democratic and Republican administrations.

The C.D.C.'s shuttered Office on Smoking and Health employed experts on effective tobacco interventions who worked with state health officials to advance antismoking policies such as bans on indoor smoking, higher tobacco taxes and education for parents about e-cigarettes.

The office sent most of its $240 million budget to states each year, but shortly after laying off the staff, in April 2025, the C.D.C. notified states that their annual funding for tobacco control would not be coming.

Many state tobacco control offices cut their own staff as a result, including in New York, Texas and North Carolina. Late last year, Congress reinstated some funding to states that had relied on the C.D.C. office for expertise.

"We know that we really save lives and save money with tobacco prevention and control," said Ms. Herndon, who until recently led North Carolina's tobacco control efforts. "But without the training and technical assistance and support from the Office on Smoking and Health, a lot of the newer staff coming along are struggling to know what to do."

The Tips From Former Smokers campaign went off the air around September of last year, though some larger states such as New York and California continued to run some antismoking ads.

Since then, calls to 1-800-QUIT-NOW lines — which traditionally experience a 30 percent spike in the weeks after an ad campaign — have fallen off significantly.

National data on the quit line call volume was not compiled for the last year after the federal employee in charge was let go, said Thomas Ylioja, the president of the North American Quitline Consortium.

But at Quit for Life, an organization that operates quit lines in 19 states, Guam and Washington, D.C., calls fell by 25 percent in the first half of 2026 compared with the first half of 2025 when the ads were on the air, according to Nick Fradkin, the group's director of public health strategy.

Officials in other states said calls had fallen off too — by about 45 percent in Texas, 25 percent in California and 18 percent in New York. In Virginia enrollment in the quit line counseling services fell by half from October 2025 through February 2026, said Logan Anderson, a spokesman for the Virginia Department of Health.

In recent weeks, the C.D.C. offered $40 million, down from the usual $65 million, for states to air archived antismoking ads. It is unclear whether new ads will be created.

In North Carolina, at least, "we don't have the media machine that produced those fabulous ads," Ms. Herndon said.

Yale Law School Fights to Stop Settlement With Trump Over Admissions Demands

By ALAN BLINDER and MICHAEL S. SCHMIDT

The dean of Yale Law School and some members of its faculty are trying to stop a settlement between the university and the Trump administration, warning that an agreement could jeopardize Yale's independence, according to two people familiar with the deliberations.

The dean, Cristina M. Rodríguez, and a group of law school faculty members have quietly lobbied top Yale leaders in recent days, arguing that the Trump administration cannot be trusted and that settling would threaten the rule of law and the university's reputation. They have even explored whether the law school could be excluded from any settlement with the federal government.

So far, Yale's leaders have continued to move forward with negotiations with the administration, according to one of the people. Yale's leaders have privately conditioned that they may need to strike a deal to ensure the university continues to receive federal funding, the person said.

Dean and faculty fear the department will lose its independence.

The Justice Department has been conducting an inquiry into Yale's admissions practices for undergraduate programs, its medical school and the law school, expanding the Trump administration's efforts to remake American higher education.

The Justice Department has already accused Yale of illegal discrimination in medical school admissions. But the investigation into the law school has not been completed. Some at the school are recoiling over the prospect of settling before the government has accused Yale of wrongdoing — and before Yale has had a chance to contest any findings.

The people familiar with the deliberations spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe internal discussions. Through a spokesperson, Ms. Rodríguez, who became dean this year, declined to comment.

The dean's concerns mirror those of others at Yale, where students and alumni have been openly pressuring the university's president, Maurie McInnis, not to sign an agreement with the Trump administration. Many of those people fear that a settlement would damage the university's reputation.

Citing longstanding practice, a spokeswoman for Yale, Karen Peart, said the university would not discuss any ongoing legal matters.

"That said, we stand firm in the university's commitment to students' free expression, academic freedom, and Yale's ability to determine who is admitted in accordance with the law," she wrote in an email. "We take inspiration from our current students and our thousands of alumni. Their wide range of perspectives, talents, aspirations and experiences have deepened our community, and their achievements have confirmed the strength of Yale's admissions."

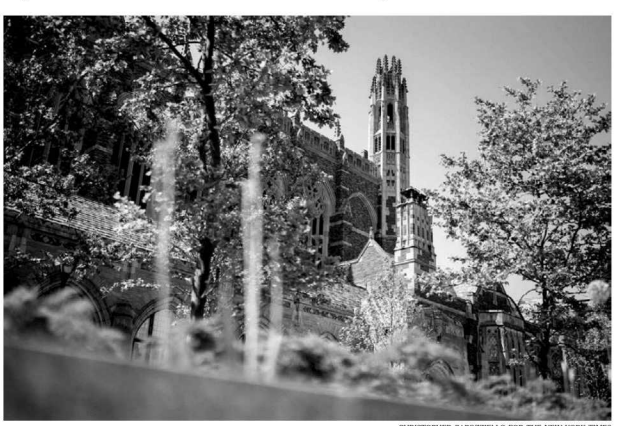
Asked about campus opposition to a potential settlement, Ms. Peart said, "We are committed to supporting the members of our community in their beliefs and values."

The White House referred a request for comment to the Justice Department, which did not immediately respond.

The Trump administration has used pressure tactics, from funding cuts to legal threats, to secure settlements with six elite universities and thrust others into chaos, a pattern that many in academia regard as a dangerous precedent for political interference, especially at private institutions.

Some inside the law school believe an effort to reduce or eliminate funding would warrant a court challenge much like the one that Harvard brought last year to restore grant money.

Although students, alumni and professors have often disagreed openly with administrators over how to respond to President Trump, it is rare for debate among university leaders to come into public view.



CHRISTOPHER CAPOZZIELLO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

In lobbying Yale administrators, leaders of Yale Law School argued that the Trump administration could not be trusted and that settling would threaten the rule of law and the university's reputation.

But word of Ms. Rodríguez's opposition has spread through Yale in recent days, according to the two people. Ms. Rodríguez was also examining whether it was possible for the law school, long known for its independence within Yale, not to be included in an agreement with the government.

It is not clear whether Yale or the government would agree to such an arrangement.

The government has not publicly accused Yale of wrongdoing in undergraduate or law school admissions. In May, it said Yale's medical school had discriminated against white and Asian applicants and illegally favored Black and Hispanic students. In a letter announcing its findings about the medical school, the Justice Department told a lawyer for Yale that it wanted to reach "a voluntary resolution agreement with the university to ensure that admissions practices are brought into legal compliance."

The New York Times reported in June that the Justice Department's inquiry went beyond the medical school and that the university was considering a broader settlement. In the wake of the article, Ms. Rodríguez, who worked with the Justice Department during the Obama and Biden administrations, moved to register her concerns. It is unclear, though, whether her views are shaping Yale's dealings with the federal government.

Robert C. Post, the law dean at Yale between 2009 and 2017, said in an interview that university leaders confronting thorny legal issues did not usually engage with the law school's experts. But he said he wished they would.

"If they're going to change our admission practices by way of a legal agreement, I would have hoped they would consult with us, and I would hope they would take our advice about what's legally required and not and when we should fight legally and not," said Dr. Post, who remains on Yale's faculty. "But so far, to my knowledge, that hasn't happened to law school faculty."

Legal experts besides Ms. Rodríguez have also expressed skepticism.

A memo opposing a potential settlement — prepared by Serena Mayeri and Amanda Shanor, who earned law degrees from Yale and now teach constitutional law at the University of Pennsylvania — has been circulating on campus. Addressed to Dr. McInnis and Yale's general counsel, the nine-page document argued that other schools' settlements had not proven all that favorable and included troubling requirements.

For example, Dr. Mayeri and Dr. Shanor said that agreements had bound "schools to vague, shifting and contradictory definitions of prohibited conduct that go far beyond and may violate established law." And, nodding to provisions requiring regular certifications from university officials about their schools' compliance with settlement terms, they cautioned that "creation of possible personal civil and criminal liability for university leaders functionally ensures ongoing federal oversight and control."

Dr. Mayeri and Dr. Shanor acknowledged that Yale was facing "an unenviably difficult situation." But, they added, "the existential nature of the threat is a reason not to consent to deals that amount, at best, to conditional reprieves of uncertain duration and value."

Dr. Post offered a similar warning, saying that the Trump administration "tends to take advantage of whatever contracts it enters into."

Some with ties to the law school are also harboring significant concerns about Yale's decision to use the law firm McGuireWoods for the talks with the government. The firm represented the University of Virginia in negotiations last year that led to an agreement with no financial penalties but included policy concessions.

James E. Ryan, the Yale alumnus who resigned from the Virginia presidency under Justice Department pressure last year, wrote in a November letter that he had developed misgivings about the approach McGuireWoods adopted for the extensive federal inquiry into Virginia.

Referring to McGuireWoods lawyers, Mr. Ryan wrote that he did "not know if they were exercising their independent judgment or receiving directions from a board member and/or the attorney general's office." Jason Miyares, a Republican allied with Mr. Trump, was Virginia's attorney general at the time.

Neither the firm nor Mr. Miyares responded to requests for comment.

Some students at Yale, like many of their counterparts on other Ivy League campuses, have also aired objections to a potential settlement with the Trump administration.

"Our rights, our classmates, our lectures, our speech and our independence are not, and never have been, valid bargaining chips," Michelle Jimenez, the vice president of the Yale College Council for the coming academic year, said in a video released over the weekend.

And on Monday, the alumni group Stand Up for Yale sent a letter to Dr. McInnis, asserting that a settlement would signal "that Yale doesn't stand by the work of its attorneys, the judgment of its admissions officers or the brilliance of its students, and that it's eager to betray its values for a dangerous illusion of security."

More than 2,700 people had signed.

Michael C. Bender and Mark Arsenault contributed reporting.

WHITE HOUSE MEMO

Trump Turns Apolitical Showcase Into a Political One

By LUKE BROADWATER

WASHINGTON — For nearly a month, President Trump had stayed away from the World Cup, not attending games and instead preoccupying himself with Washington construction projects and a war with Iran.

But as the biggest sporting event in the world enthralled Americans of all political stripes in cities stretching from coast to coast, the allure proved too much to resist.

The president's now famous — or infamous, depending on your view — call to the president of FIFA before the soccer organization overturned the suspension of an American star produced endless debate about political influence. It also generated locker room bulletin board material for Belgium, which handed the United States a humiliating 4-1 defeat on Monday night.

Belgium's team celebrated the victory by performing Mr. Trump's signature dance and posting a two-word message online: "Overturn this."

The unusual melding of politics and sports underscored a truism of the Trump era: The president has yet to find an area of American, or even global, life where he is unwilling to assert himself. There are seemingly no previously apolitical events that can escape his pull.

It is perhaps unsurprising that Mr. Trump, who loves both sports and the limelight, inserted himself in a situation where previous American presidents might have shown restraint. He has long attempted to capitalize politically on sports controversies. During his first term, he frequently criticized N.F.L. players who knelt during the national anthem to protest racial injustice. He has openly boasted that he uses the issue of transgender athletes as a surefire political winner for Republicans around election time.

And he has found in certain segments of the world of sports a base of support that has at times eluded him in other circles. After Mr. Trump was ostracized from social media platforms and by many in the business community after the Capitol riot of Jan. 6, 2021, he received a hero's welcome at a U.F.C. event. In his second term, when Mr. Trump failed to win a Nobel Peace Prize, Gianni Infantino, the president of FIFA, awarded the American president a newly created "FIFA Peace Prize."

"I'm a person that loves sports and was a good athlete," Mr. Trump said on Monday. "And I understand sports really well. Really well."

The president has also shown little regard for the appearance of improper influence that might have kept his predecessors at bay. So when he saw what he called a "very unfair" penalty against the American player Folarin Balogun in the team's match against Bosnia and Herzegovina last week, he reached out to Mr. Infantino and made a remarkable request that FIFA review the suspension.

Mr. Infantino has insisted that the later reinstatement of Mr. Balogun was a result of "the legal process involving FIFA's independent judicial bodies." But it was the first time since 1962, when the rules were less clear, that FIFA had overturned an in-tournament World Cup game suspension.

The incident was a reminder of how far Mr. Trump has departed from the practice of one of the predecessors he admires, President Calvin Coolidge, who famously quipped, "Perhaps one of the most important accomplishments of my administration has been minding my own business."

Mr. Trump instead has inserted himself into nearly every aspect of American life, no matter how big or small. He has sought to pressure colleges and universities on how to run their institutions. He has targeted law firms, and taken ownership shares in American companies. He has taken control of important cultural and artistic organizations. And he has put himself at the center of America's 250th anniversary celebration

He has also concerned himself with matters as small as the composition of drinking straws and the water pressure in toilets.

But it was his involvement in soccer that sparked global backlash.

The Union of European Football Associations, the governing body of soccer in Europe, said that FIFA's decision to overturn Mr. Balogun's suspension "crossed a red line." The Bosnian soccer association accused Mr. Trump of "government interference." All of which could make for an awkward situation with Mr. Trump set to hand out the trophy to the eventual winner.

And Iran's soccer federation, with its country still at war with the United States after Mr. Trump launched thousands of airstrikes, took a special joy in the American defeat at the hands — or feet — of Belgium.

"Now the whole world is dancing to celebrate politics' humiliating defeat by football," a spokesman said.

Tariq Panja contributed reporting.

As U.S. Soccer Stumbles, Soccer in the U.S. Surges

From Page A1

"I hope we can continue to inspire the country with great victories in the future," Don Garber, the long-serving commissioner of Major League Soccer, said in an interview in his office in Manhattan last week. "But the growth of the sport is not dependent on that. The success of the World Cup in general has been driving the sport forward in ways that are almost as important as the success of the U.S. team."

As it did in 1994, the last time the men's World Cup was held in the United States, the tournament is sure to lift interest, not only because of the U.S.'s star players — bolstered by Christian Pulisic and several other starters in top European leagues — but because of the dazzling goals, exciting comebacks and fun-loving, flag-waving fans from around the world who poured into stadiums and downtowns across the country.

A focus on elevating the men's national team to the next tier.

The U.S. team even found itself in the middle of a genuine international soccer scandal, after President Trump pushed FIFA for a review of a red card issued to the American forward Folarin Balogun that disqualified him from the Belgium match. FIFA lifted the one-game suspension, infuriating the soccer associations of Belgium and several other nations while churning up interest in, and headlines about, the U.S. squad.

With its expanded 48-team field, this World Cup has already broken records for viewership in the United States and overall attendance. Monday's game averaged 30 million viewers on Fox, the most-watched English-language World Cup telecast in U.S. history, with 12 million more watching in Spanish on Telemundo. About 4.6 million spectators attended the first 72 matches across 16 host cities, surpassing the attendance record of 3.5 million set at the 1994 World Cup, which included 52 games.

Thirty two years later, soccer fans and officials again hope to leverage the tournament to take American soccer to the next stage, where its men's league and national team can compete among the best in the world, as the women's league and national team already do.

Part of that challenge will be to elevate Major League Soccer, which since its inception in 1996, has worked to muscle into an established sports landscape.

M.L.S. attendance has grown steadily, with the average per game at almost 22,000 people last year (compared with about 70,000 in the National Football League, 29,000 in Major League Baseball and 18,000 in the National Basketball Association). But many soccer fans in the United States still prefer to follow other leagues around the world and have easy access to top competitions like England's Premier League and the Champions League, which are now ubiquitous on American networks and streaming services.

Some point to the 45 M.L.S. players on World Cup rosters, including eight on the U.S. team, as a sign of growth. For others, that is not good enough.

"We are not in a spot where we should look at the U.S. national team's success and for one second think this is because of Major League Soccer," said Eric Wynalda, the former national team star who was the first American to play in Germany's Bundesliga.

He pointed to several factors that he felt were suppressing the quality of play in the league, including modest payrolls and its habit of signing aging stars near retirement, like David Beckham and Lionel Messi. Mr. Wynalda was 23 when he took a significant pay cut to join M.L.S., where he played from 1996 to 2001, but he said he was frustrated that the league was still not in tune with the rest of the world.

"In every other country, the league itself takes responsibility for producing players that are going to help the national team," Mr. Wynalda said. "Our league looks at itself as a separate entity that is location-based entertainment. That is not something that will help us be a better soccer nation."

Mr. Garber said the league, which is set to switch to a fall-to-spring season in 2027 to be in line with other leagues, is considering other changes, including promotion and relegation (the system where the worst teams are demoted to lower divisions), to better compete with other leagues.

"Unless M.L.S. continues its momentum and continues its growth, we will not fully capture the opportunity here in this massive, soccer friendly market," Mr. Garber said.

FIFA, the overlord of international soccer, has long eyed North America as fertile ground to expand and reap the profits. Before the United States was awarded the '94 World Cup, FIFA insisted it create a new professional men's league. But when that World Cup ended, M.L.S. was still two years away from its debut, losing some hard-earned momentum.

According to Alan Rothenberg, the head of the United States Soccer Federation at the time, the wait was strategic, for several reasons.

"We wanted to lower expectations," he said. "Coming directly off a World Cup where you had 90,000 people packed into stadiums, it wouldn't look good to then have games in half-filled stadiums."

More than three decades later, the league is firmly established alongside a growing women's league, the National Women's Soccer League, and has a broadcast deal with Apple TV to show all of its games.

"Where we were then was the night, and where we are now is the day, and it's going to continue to grow," Mr. Rothenberg said. "I believe that 20 years from now, soccer is going to be challenging American football as the No. 1 sport in the United States, surpassing baseball, basketball and hockey."

As millions of American families know, the sport is thriving at the youth level. In 2025, there were 16.8 million outdoor soccer players ages 6 and up, according to Alex Kerman, the senior director of research operations and business development for the Sports and Fitness Industry Association, a nonprofit trade association that has tracked participation in 100 sports for 39 years.

Its most recent numbers from June show that roughly 25.5 million Americans, or 8.2 percent of the population, play indoor or outdoor soccer. Mr. Kerman added that soccer is the third-largest team sport in the country for participation across all age groups and genders, behind basketball and baseball. And from 2024 to 2025, it grew by 15.8 percent, the fastest of any team sport.

"For a sport already that large, it's pretty incredible," he said.

He added that participation was boosted by the arrival of Mr. Messi, one of the greatest players in history, to Inter Miami of M.L.S. in 2023, plus the 2024 Copa América and last year's Club World Cup in the U.S. The World Cup is expected to be another multiplier.

"I would be shocked if we don't see a significant increase," Mr. Kerman said.

The players on the national team have felt it. Giovanni Reyna, a midfielder whose father was a member of the 1994 U.S. team, recently marveled that some of the marquee sports chat shows, which normally stick to American football, basketball, and baseball, spent significant time discussing the World Cup.

"It's really, really cool to see the country rally around this sport," he said during the team's run, "which seems like the strongest they ever have."

M.L.S. knows that the challenge is the same as it was the last time, to convert that buzz into a league with better players and even more passionate fans.

"If the goal in '94 was to start a league, the goal in 2027 and beyond is to have one of the top leagues in the world," Mr. Garber said. "Our attitude is, 'Thanks world, we'll take it from here.'"

On Monday night, some of the dejected fans outside the stadium in Seattle saw a silver lining.

Bennett Haselton of Bay View, Wash., said that the success of the World Cup as a spectacle could only advance the cause of soccer as a major sport in the United States.

"It gains a little bit every year," said Mr. Haselton, 47.

Charles Suey, 64, who was visiting from Los Angeles, said that he expected the World Cup to cement the sport's growing place in American culture. Children who experienced the World Cup, he added, "will now think, 'That could be me.'"

"All it takes is a ball," he said. "You don't even need a hoop."

Tim Arango contributed reporting.

MANU FERNANDEZ/ASSOCIATED PRESS

JULIO AGUILAR/GETTY IMAGES

Folarin Balogun, above, during the Americans' 4-1 defeat by Belgium on Monday in the World Cup. Youth soccer is thriving in the United States. "It's really, really cool to see the country rally around this sport," the U.S. player Giovanni Reyna said.

Glee and Snark in Europe After U.S. Loss

By JEANNA SMIALEK and KOBA RYCKEWAERT

BRUSSELS — "Overturn this."

That is what Belgium's national soccer team posted on social media after crushing the United States 4-1 in the World Cup on Monday — a snarky reference to the reinstatement of a banned American player before the game. The reversal on the player's eligibility followed a phone call from President Trump to Gianni Infantino, head of FIFA, soccer's governing body.

Many Europeans had reacted in outrage at what they saw as an egregious intervention in the tournament. So when Belgium defeated the United States to advance to a quarterfinal against Spain, the reaction in Europe was triumphant, and often biting.

"Belgium got the last laugh," Brussels Playbook, a Politico morning newsletter, said.

"Sporting justice was served while you slept," declared Europe Express, The Financial Times's Belgium-based morning offering.

"Allô, Donald?" read the banner headline across the website of Le Soir, a French-language daily in Belgium. The Belgian team had the final word, the accompanying article noted.

The game came against a fraught geopolitical backdrop, as world leaders head to Ankara, Turkey, for a closely watched NATO summit. European leaders have been trying to remain on Mr. Trump's good side as they push for American help in supporting Ukraine against Russia and in trying to broker an end to that war.

Still, Belgian officials were mordant after their team's victory.

Bart De Wever, the Belgian prime minister, has a cat with a very active Instagram account. On Tuesday, it posted: "I slept so well! You too?" The cat was hugging a Mr. Trump plushie. Taylor Swift's "Karma" played in the background of the post.

Theo Francken, Belgium's defense minister, in Ankara for the NATO summit, posted, "Our Defense is better than yours," backed by ABBA's "The Winner Takes It All."

Belgium, which is home to the headquarters of the European Union and NATO and thus host to a large international community, was not alone in relishing the victory.

Soccer "still has antibodies against injustice," read the first line of a story about the Belgium-United States game in El País, a Spanish newspaper.

Even one of the pro-Iran accounts that make anti-Trump videos using A.I.-generated Lego toys weighed in, posting a video with the lyrics, "FIFA bent the rules. Still got sent home fools."

The reinstated American player, Folarin Balogun, who was the top scorer in the World Cup for the U.S. team, had been given a red card in the previous game, against Bosnia. That decision would normally suspend him for the subsequent game, but he was allowed to play after Mr. Trump called Mr. Infantino and asked the FIFA chief for a review. Mr. Trump said on Monday that he had not told FIFA what to do, and Mr. Infantino said that there was nothing unusual about the call.

After FIFA announced on Sunday that it was lifting the one-game suspension against the player, Belgian officials and various soccer bodies questioned the basis for the move and pointed out the unusual aspects of the process.

The Royal Belgian Football Association said in a statement on Monday that it had "not received any grounds for this decision," noting that it contested the eligibility of the player and left "all further actions open."

Many online accounts joked that Belgium would need to watch out for tariffs in the wake of the victory, referring to Mr. Trump's tendency to turn to his favorite trade tool when displeased. Both online spectators and international media noted that the dance that Belgium's players performed after scoring their fourth goal resembled one that Mr. Trump has done in the past, something akin to a happy bob.

This year has repeatedly tested the trans-Atlantic alliance: Mr. Trump started 2026 by reiterating threats to take over Greenland, an autonomous territory of Denmark, a NATO member. Recently, he threatened a 100 percent tariff on European countries over digital policies.

The soccer episode "obviously plays into a certain stereotype about Donald Trump," Jacob Funk Kirkegaard, an analyst at the Belgian think tank Bruegel, said on Monday. It would be seen, he added, as "another example of a rogue, unconstrained America."

Carlos Barragán contributed reporting from Madrid.

RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Belgium fans in Seattle. Controversy surrounded the game because the president asked FIFA to review a player's suspension.

'Sporting justice' after a banned American player was reinstated.

2026 Election

Abandoned by Allies, Platner Faces Pressure to End Senate Campaign

By LISA LERER and KATIE GLUECK

A month after he captured the Democratic Senate nomination in Maine with a fiery populist message, Graham Platner was facing mounting pressure to leave the race after a woman accused him of rape.

The calls for his withdrawal came in rapid-fire succession, from liberal activists who had championed his bid online, crucial early endorsers and the highest-ranking figures in his party.

By Tuesday morning, it was clear the party had turned against him. Officials from the Democratic Senate campaign arm and an aligned super PAC — the most powerful engines of the party's infrastructure — urged him to withdraw, and top party leaders in Maine called on him to abandon his bid.

"With so much at stake, the best path forward is for Graham Platner to step aside as the Democratic nominee and address these serious allegations outside this Senate race," said Senator Elizabeth Warren, who had campaigned with Mr. Platner.

Her withdrawal of support was a major blow to Mr. Platner, underscoring how even the left wing of the party was pulling away from him.

In a private call with his campaign staff on Monday, Mr. Platner did not announce plans to withdraw but implied such a decision would be coming, according to three people familiar with the conversation. He said that he believed he still had leverage to influence which candidate would replace him on the ticket and wanted to ensure that the movement his campaign had built would continue, the people said.

Control of the Senate could very well rest on Maine, which offers Democrats one of their best chances of winning a Republican-held seat this fall. Senator Susan Collins, the Republican incumbent, is seeking re-election in a state that former Vice President Kamala Harris won by seven percentage points in 2024.

But she is also a seasoned incumbent who has dashed Democrats' dreams for three decades. With Republicans holding 53 seats, Democrats must defend all the seats they hold and flip four more to win control in November.

In Maine, the Democratic Party faces a hard deadline to figure out how to deal with the chaos created by Monday's allegation: Mr. Platner has until July 13 to withdraw from the race. If he does, the state Democratic Party has until July 27 to replace him on the ticket, according to Maine state law.

It's unclear how much leverage Mr. Platner, who has battled a series of controversies throughout his nearly yearlong campaign, may have. The leaders of the Maine Democratic Party — not national officials — are taking the lead on structuring the process for selecting a new nominee, should Mr. Platner withdraw, according to a person familiar with the discussions.

Already, Democratic activists, officials and potential candidates have begun lobbying for replacements. Several candidates are being mentioned, including Shenna Bellows, Maine's secretary of state; Troy Jackson, a former president of the Maine Senate; Nirav Shah, a former director of Maine's public health agency; and Jordan Wood, who lost a bid for a House district.

There's no official process for selecting a new nominee, but top Maine Democratic officials have begun discussing plans. Those could include hosting a pop-up convention or holding a statewide caucus to redo the party's primary election, according to two people who have talked with the officials and spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal party conversations.

Mr. Platner built a movement-like campaign in the state, rallying Democratic voters around a populist economic message. But even before the rape allegation, which was reported by Politico and which Mr. Platner denies, there were signs that controversies had hurt his candidacy.

A recent New York Times/Portland Press Herald/Siena poll found Mr. Platner locked in a neck-and-neck race with Ms. Collins. His support lagged behind the percentage of likely voters who said they would like to see Democrats control the Senate next year, a signal to some in his party that a candidate with less political baggage could be in a meaningfully stronger position.

An oysterman who has never held elected office, Mr. Platner has been dogged by controversies since he announced his bid last August, including allegations about his past treatment of women, revelations of a tattoo he had that resembled a Nazi symbol and a trove of offensive online posts he made over more than a decade.

In June, The New York Times published accounts from three women who were in romantic relationships with Mr. Platner for years. They said he could be demeaning to women and, in at least one case, even physically threatening.

One of those women, Jenny Racicot, went further in interviews with CNN and Politico on Monday, accusing him of sexual assault. She decided to go public with more detailed allegations, she told Politico, after a different woman who spoke with The Times was dismissed by some because of her conservative politics.

Concerns about Mr. Platner's interactions with women reached the highest levels of his campaign months before the women came forward in The Times with their accounts.

Last August, Mr. Platner's wife, Amy Gertner, told a senior campaign aide that he had been exchanging sexual messages with other women. Mr. Platner's exchanges with women were confirmed to The Times by current and former campaign officials.

But the latest charge from Ms. Racicot appeared to be too much for many Democrats, including some who had previously been among the strongest voices dismissing concerns about his background and character.

Several hosts of "Pod Save America," a popular liberal podcast, who testified to Mr. Platner's "decent" character through a series of his controversies, called for him to step down.

Others sounded vindicated.

"Graham Platner's behavior is disqualifying (AS WE HAVE SAID THIS WHOLE DAMN TIME) and he should end his campaign," Emily's List, a Democratic group that backs female candidates who support abortion rights, said in a post on social media.

Behind the scenes, Mr. Platner was struggling to win support from rich donors. Some worried about what damaging information might next emerge, according to people familiar with private conversations.

In interviews and private meetings, Mr. Platner insisted there would be no more damaging revelations to come.

Democrats Scrap for Slot Platner Hasn't Given Up

From Page A1

process — and Democrats' ultimate loss in 2024 — has left deep scar tissue for many in the party.

Many on the left — including, it appears, Mr. Platner himself — want any replacement to come from the progressive wing of the party after he won the primary over Gov. Janet Mills, a moderate two-term Democrat, who withdrew over a month before the election.

"To the Democratic establishment: This is not your opening," said Joseph Geevarghese, the executive director of Our Revolution, a group that emerged from Mr. Sanders's 2016 presidential campaign. Referring to Senate Democrats' campaign arm, he added, "Mainers did not vote by an overwhelming margin against Janet Mills and the D.S.C.C.'s handpicked pick just to be handed another status-quo candidate anyway."

On the flip side, many in the party establishment believe those on the left should show some humility after Mr. Platner's collapse.

A range of Democratic groups and activists engaged in the politics of I-told-you-so.

"When women raise the alarm, listen," said a social media post from Emily's List, a group that works to elect Democratic women and that had backed Ms. Mills. "Graham Platner's behavior is disqualifying (AS WE HAVE SAID THIS WHOLE DAMN TIME), and he should end his campaign."

On Tuesday morning, more Democrats who are ideological allies of Mr. Platner called for him to step aside, including Mayor Zohran Mamdani of New York.

"I believe that it's time for him to drop out of the race," Mr. Mamdani said when asked at a news conference. "I think the focus of today should be to respond to the gravity of what so many of us have read, and I think the only appropriate response is for the campaign to come to an end."

Mr. Mamdani and Mr. Platner share several advisers, including Morris Katz and Rebecca Katz of the Fight Agency.

The progressive group MoveOn also dropped its endorsement.

As the situation in Maine threatened to spiral out of control, Mr. Schumer and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee are set to host major donors this week for a fund-raising retreat at the Broadmoor in Colorado Springs. Donors are asked to contribute $44,300 to attend, according to a copy of the invitation.

The event was billed as a "special weekend to discuss the D.S.C.C.'s strategy and campaigns for taking back the Democratic Senate majority," but now talk is likely to be consumed by the developments in Maine.

The calls for Mr. Platner's exit came from every corner of the party by Tuesday.

Representative Hakeem Jeffries, Democrat of New York and the minority leader, said as part of a wide-ranging interview with The New York Times that "Graham Platner should end his senatorial campaign immediately." He added, "And as many of his prior supporters have suggested, deal with these very serious allegations outside of being a candidate."

Mr. Platner can be replaced as the Democratic nominee if he withdraws voluntarily by July 13. The state Democratic Party would then have until July 27 to pick his replacement, under state law. But the law does not dictate how the state party itself needs to pick Mr. Platner's replacement.

What that would look like remains unclear. The options under discussion include a convention or a statewide caucus in late July.

"We ask for your patience as this work continues," Devon Murphy-Anderson, the state party's executive director, wrote in a message to committee members on Tuesday, adding: "Whatever process is ultimately adopted must reflect our Democratic values. It should be open, inclusive, transparent, and fair."

A range of candidates are being discussed, with some early attention on those who ran and lost the primary for governor this year. Those Democrats include Troy Jackson, a former president of the Maine Senate; Nirav Shah, a former director of Maine's public health agency; and Shenna Bellows, Maine's secretary of state. But some Democrats were concerned about elevating someone who just lost.

Supporters of Mr. Jackson, who had backed Mr. Platner in the primary, created a Draft Troy website, and he filed paperwork with the Federal Election Commission for a Senate exploratory committee. Mr. Shah put out a statement that said he had received "hundreds of encouraging messages," adding that anyone who ran for the nomination should commit to a televised debate and "multiple town halls across every corner of the state."

Valli Geiger, a state representative, is also being discussed. Ms. Geiger, an early Platner backer, wrote an opinion essay last fall titled "Graham Platner deserves grace."

Another possible candidate is Dan Kleban, a co-founder of the Maine Beer Company, a brewery outside Portland. He briefly ran for Senate last year before dropping out and endorsing Ms. Mills. But like Mr. Platner, he has never held elected office or been through the rigors of a campaign.

Yet another possibility is Jordan Wood, who also previously ran for Senate and dropped out. Mr. Wood ran instead in the primary for Representative Jared Golden's House seat and lost.

Mr. Golden, a moderate Democrat and veteran who holds the most pro-Trump House seat of any Democrat in Congress, is retiring and previously said he was ready to step away from elected office. In recent days, Mr. Golden has fielded calls gauging his interest in a run for Senate, according to two people familiar with those conversations who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe private discussions.

Mr. Golden has not commented since the latest allegations against Mr. Platner emerged.

More unconventional picks were being bandied about, as well. One Democratic firm in recent days included the actor Patrick Dempsey in a poll (he was viewed favorably by 52 percent of voters in the survey). Others floated the popular liberal historian Heather Cox Richardson, who is based in Maine.

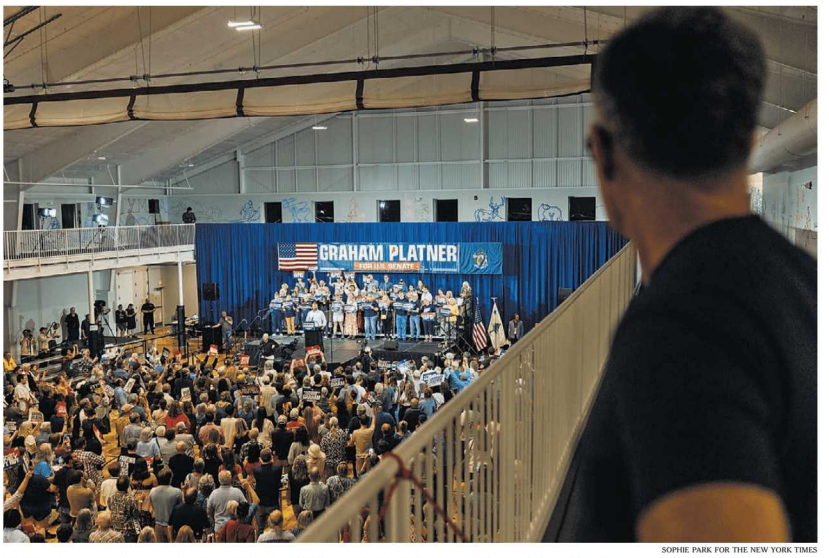
Some Democrats erupted after the news emerged that Mr. Platner wanted a replacement who was aligned with him politically. One person familiar with the Platner campaign's internal discussions said on Monday that Mr. Platner would seek a guarantee he would be replaced by someone in agreement with "the values and vision and policy agenda" that he had pressed.

Others argued that under the circumstances, Mr. Platner's support would be damaging.

Joe Baldacci, a state senator who ran and lost in the primary for Mr. Golden's House seat this year, said the idea that Mr. Platner would bless a replacement would be the equivalent of "tying a lead weight" to the person.

"After you have put the Democratic Party in a shambles and undermined all Democratic candidates running for office in Maine then you should have no say in who will be your successor," Mr. Baldacci wrote on social media. He added, "Any connections to Platner will doom that person's campaign from the very beginning."

Lisa Lerer, Annie Karni and Sally Goldenberg contributed reporting.



SOPHIE PARK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

On Tuesday, more Democratic allies of Graham Platner called for him to end his run for Senate after a woman accused him of rape.

McConnell Remains in Hospital in Latest Health Setback

By CATIE EDMONDSON

Senator Mitch McConnell, Republican of Kentucky and the former majority leader, was hospitalized on June 14. Since then, his office has provided few updates about his condition.

The scant official statements have led to speculation around Washington and efforts to piece together information on what happened. Here's what we know about the situation.

What has Mr. McConnell's office said?

The most recent statement from Mr. McConnell's office, on Thursday, said that the senator "appreciates the outpouring of support he's receiving while he continues his recovery in the hospital" and that he "continues to improve, and is working closely with his staff on Kentucky and Senate matters while the Senate is out of session."

Aides to Mr. McConnell, 84, have not disclosed what prompted his hospitalization or what treatment he is receiving. Asked for updates on Monday, a spokesman referred to Thursday's statement.

Shortly after Mr. McConnell was hospitalized, his spokesman released the short statement: "Senator McConnell was admitted to the hospital this morning. He is receiving excellent care."

What else do we know?

Emergency responders the morning the Kentucky Republican was hospitalized reported performing CPR on an unconscious individual undergoing cardiac arrest at the senator's Washington address, according to recordings of dispatcher calls that were widely reported by news outlets last week and obtained by The New York Times. The recordings do not name Mr. McConnell as the individual.

Mr. McConnell's office has declined to comment on the recordings, even after they were reported on by multiple news outlets.

The day after Mr. McConnell was hospitalized, the Senate's two top Republicans, Senators John Thune of South Dakota, the majority leader, and John Barrasso of Wyoming, the whip, both told reporters that they had spoken to the senator.

Mr. McConnell is "clearly dialed into what's going on," Mr. Thune said then. "He's following the stuff we're doing this week up here. Very much so."

On Tuesday, both men again said they had spoken with Mr. McConnell. Mr. Thune issued a statement that said they had a "lengthy and substantive conversation" by phone on Monday, and Mr. Barasso said he and Mr. McConnel talked on Tuesday about "the Graham Platner scandal and the recent Supreme Court ruling on coordinated spending limits."

Scott Jennings, a former adviser to Mr. McConnell and a CNN analyst, posted on social media that he and the senator spoke on Tuesday for "just shy of 20 minutes."

What about Mr. McConnell's health more generally?

The hospitalization is the latest in a series of health issues for Mr. McConnell in recent years. He was hospitalized in February for a week after experiencing flulike symptoms. He suffered a concussion in a serious fall in 2023 and was hospitalized and then transferred to an inpatient physical rehabilitation center.

Even before those hospitalizations, Mr. McConnell, who had polio as a child, had long walked with an uneven gait. He had in recent months used a wheelchair to travel from his office building to the Capitol, although days before his hospitalization he was able to walk on his own.

Senators are away from Washington on a scheduled holiday recess until July 13. Mr. McConnell's absence prompted the Senate Appropriations Committee to postpone a planned hearing late last month meant to advance four spending bills. Republicans need his vote to overcome unanimous Democratic opposition on legislation.

Mr. McConnell is not seeking re-election and is set to retire from the Senate at the end of his term in early January. Representative Andy Barr of Kentucky won the Republican primary in May to succeed him.

How common are these incidents on Capitol Hill?

Mr. McConnell's situation is one of the latest incidents to underscore how little members of Congress often disclose about their health issues. Representative Thomas H. Kean Jr., a Republican who represents a swing district in New Jersey, disappeared for 117 days and missed more than 100 votes in the House, before offering his constituents an explanation: that he was hospitalized to treat depression.

Kay Granger, a Texas Republican who once led the powerful Appropriations Committee, had missed months of House votes and was found to be living in an independent living facility months before she was set to retire. After that discovery, unearthed by a conservative news outlet in Texas, her son told The Dallas Morning News that she had been experiencing "dementia issues."

Dianne Feinstein, then a Democratic senator representing California, did not disclose several complications related to her hospitalization for shingles in 2023, including a case of encephalitis. Her office at the time confirmed the condition only after The New York Times reported it, and released a statement from Ms. Feinstein that she continued to "work and get results for California."

AL DRAGO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Senator Mitch McConnell, 84, had in recent months used a wheelchair to travel from his office building to the Capitol.

2026 Election

Groundswell for Democratic Socialists Rooted in Crushing Cost of Living

By EMMA GOLDBERG

On many Tuesday evenings, Richard Custodio can be found jogging over the Manhattan Bridge, along with fellow members of a Democratic Socialists of America run club. These outings are peppered with debates, some probing and some existential.

Many feel a persistent sense of economic angst. Rent is crushing, and Mr. Custodio wonders where he could find the money to get his girlfriend a ring. He and his D.S.A. run-club friends — some of them white-collar workers with six-figure salaries, others with blue-collar jobs — discuss what they have in common with working-class Americans. Some ask, "Am I a class traitor?"

Mr. Custodio, a 28-year-old investment researcher, has a ready reply. "If you're someone who has to work for a living, and you're not living off a trust fund, you are part of the working class," he says.

Mr. Custodio is part of a swell of young people active in D.S.A.'s New York City chapter who helped push two democratic socialists, Claire Valdez and Dariaiza Avila Chevalier, to victories in House primaries last month. Their wins have caused some soul-searching among establishment Democrats, eager to find out why so many New York voters have embraced democratic socialism.

Certainly a rethinking of the Democratic Party's support for Israel played a role, as did a desire for fresh fighters in Washington.

But in interviews, many D.S.A. members, leaders and strategists argue that the driving force in the primary results and in the group's expanding influence is a sense, especially among young people, that the economy isn't working for many people. This economic frustration — and the spotlight given to it by Mayor Zohran Mamdani — is prompting many to join the D.S.A., with the national organization announcing that it had surpassed 120,000 members on Saturday.

"A once good operative once said, 'It's the economy stupid,'" said Morris Katz, a progressive strategist who closely advises Mr. Mamdani, citing the octogenarian James Carville. "Look at Dari and Claire's slogans. Claire's slogan was 'Workers deserve it all,' and Dari's was 'Babies not bombs.' Those are two campaigns fundamentally speaking to a political class that has neglected workers."

In New York's 13th District, Ms. Avila Chevalier, 32, performed best in several younger precincts including or next to Columbia University — including one home to its medical school and its on-campus housing, and another directly adjacent to Columbia. Her opponent, Representative Adriano Espaillat, did best in older and majority-Hispanic areas, with his best precinct including the Fort Washington Senior Center.

In New York's Seventh District, covering parts of Brooklyn and Queens, Ms. Valdez won college-educated and higher-income areas handily. Her worst-performing precinct, excluding those with large Hasidic populations, has the oldest voters in the district.

Young people explaining their support for Ms. Valdez and Ms. Chevalier cite layoffs in white-collar industries, the threat of job displacement from artificial intelligence, rising costs of living, and a sense that the federal government is spending money on wars that could be spent on services.

Nationally, the job market for educated young people is dire. The unemployment rate for college graduates between 22 and 27 has been up significantly in the last three years; more than 40 percent of college graduates who are employed held jobs that didn't require their degrees.

And even New Yorkers who have low six-figure salaries say they have realized that neither their college degrees nor their high income seem to guarantee a sense of long-term stability.

"People are feeling this economic precarity," Mr. Custodio said. "When everything sucks, everything feels really on edge, you're more open to things changing."

At the national level, progressive strategists say they are trying to make the case that economic grievance is what's driving recent D.S.A. election wins, more so than any other policy issue.

Lindsay Owens, who runs a progressive think tank in Washington, said that after the New York primaries she went through a whirlwind week of meetings — with congressional aides, national operatives and democratic socialists in New York. She listened to influential Democrats argue over whether there was a single overpowering issue that drove voters toward the D.S.A.

NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Democratic Socialists of America's chapter in New York City has tapped into anxiety over the economy, especially among young people, who have helped galvanize the growing movement.

"The lesson that many Democrats will take away from these elections is get with the populist program or get out," Ms. Owens said. "The economic populist moment is here."

Plenty of establishment Democratic leaders are alarmed by how widely the democratic socialist message is resonating, with some saying that the desire for economic change is understandable but that the group's policies and candidates won't have broad enough appeal in swing states.

"They believe the capitalist system is rigged for those at the top," said Jay Jacobs, chairman of New York's Democratic Party.

"What D.S.A. is doing is filling a vacuum in a time where people are feeling very much distressed over their economic condition," he added. "The challenge we have is to compete in the arena of ideas with them."

As for signs of rapprochement, Mr. Jacobs signaled concern. He said he had reached out to the three House primary winners in New York City and spoken to two, but Ms. Avila Chevalier had not returned his calls: "I placed three calls, and that's it."

As young people grow more economically disillusioned, D.S.A. members have become younger and more white collar. In a 2013 national survey of its members, the organization found that the median age of its members was 68 years old. By 2021, that figure had dropped to 33. In 2013, 3 percent of D.S.A. members surveyed said they were white-collar workers; by 2021, that had grown to 13 percent.

Membership has also grown as democratic socialists win primaries. The New York City chapter grew by more than 7,200 people in the year after Mr. Mamdani's primary win, and by more than 870 members in the week after Ms. Valdez and Ms. Avila Chevalier won. The group's members have been buoyed by its victories, including New York's new tax on pieds-à-terre and New York City's rent freeze on one- and two-year leases for rent-stabilized apartments).

"The No. 1 thing that brings people to the D.S.A. is that they want to not feel powerless, which is how most members respond to the economic reality," said Gustavo Gordillo, a co-leader of the group's New York City chapter. "They're motivated by economic struggle."

The New York City chapter has been encouraging people to channel their sense of financial unease into political organizing. Mr. Gordillo noted that the group's orientation sessions for new members include a conversation themed, "What is the working class?" There, new members are taught that anyone who works for a living can be working class.

"A lot of tech workers are working class," Mr. Gordillo said. "We're trying to build a broad movement — we think of most D.S.A. members as being working class."

Mr. Gordillo, who until recently worked as an electrician, described his own political coming-of-age. He moved to New York City just over a decade ago to work in an art gallery. Rent in New York was eye-popping, and he often heard friends fret over how they would ever save enough to start families.

After Donald J. Trump won the presidential election in 2016, Mr. Gordillo went to a D.S.A. workshop on socialism, where organizers taught him about the conflict between "the working class and the billionaire class." Mr. Gordillo took the message to heart and has spent the last decade expanding the group's membership and influence.

At D.S.A.-run soccer games and orientation sessions, and at victory parties for Ms. Valdez and Ms. Avila Chevalier, many young people describe joining the organization because they believe big economic changes, like rent freezes and affordable child care, are the only answer to an economy that makes it difficult for even the well-off to keep pace.

"A lot of my friends who are actors or work in hospitality or nightlife, they're drawn to the social safety net that D.S.A. is looking to achieve," said Jessie Cialdella, 28, a D.S.A. member who works in digital commerce.

Leslie Bentley, 35, a D.S.A. member who lives in Bushwick and voted for Ms. Valdez, grew up in rural Kentucky, where most people she knew voted Republican. As a teenager, she remembered being frustrated by the idea that voting Republican meant her neighbors were "voting against their own interests."

She said she understood that those people were challenging liberal conventions and establishment candidates because of their economic frustrations, a sense that the ultrawealthy were leaving working people behind. Now, she feels that she and her neighbors in Bushwick are channeling this same feeling into votes for the far left.

"This isn't a Republican issue or a Democratic issue," Ms. Bentley said. "It's about being able to afford where we live."

She and fellow D.S.A. members, she added, are drawn to candidates who seem to understand firsthand that college degrees and comfortable upbringings don't insulate people from instability. She pointed to Mr. Mamdani's story as an example: He is a Bowdoin graduate raised on the Upper West Side, who knows that the luxuries of New York should be accessible to anyone.

"Zohran grew up in the economic prosperity of the 1990s," she said. "I always joked we needed a mayor who had fond memories of going to the Toys 'R' Us in Times Square and to Mars 2112."

Former G.O.P. Politician Is Now a Climate Advocate

Stressing Link Between Health and Planet, Frist Is Now Regretting Some Past Votes

By CARA BUCKLEY

Bill Frist, the former Republican Senate majority leader, racked up a slew of notable medical successes during his years as one of the country's top heart and lung surgeons.

He founded one of the country's busiest transplant centers. One of his patients held the Guinness World Record for being the longest surviving single lung transplant recipient. And, in 1991, Mr. Frist performed lifesaving thoracic surgery on Gen. David Petraeus, then a lieutenant-colonel, when, during a training exercise, the military leader was accidentally shot in the chest.

But now, Mr. Frist, 74, advocates for the health of the biggest, most famous patient of all: the Earth.

In earnest writings, folksy videos recorded on his front porch in Tennessee, podcasts, speeches and congressional testimony, Mr. Frist has been highlighting the inseparability of planetary and human health.

"A healthier planet means healthier people," Mr. Frist said. "The science shows it. Our experience shows it. Nobody can really argue against that."

This environmental advocacy puts Mr. Frist at odds with much of his own party and even his younger self. At his retirement from the Senate in 2007, the League of Conservation Voters gave Mr. Frist a lifetime rating of 7 percent for his legislative environmental record, which included voting for oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. "Things like the Arctic, I definitely would not have voted that way today," Mr. Frist said.

It seems Mr. Frist is making up for lost time. In June, he published a minute-long video detailing how ecosystem collapse and wildlife habitat loss imperils children's brain development and immune response, by reducing their exposure to beneficial microbes. On Substack, where he has around 31,000 followers, he's written about the ways air pollution speeds up cognitive decline. In 2023, he presented data to the Senate Budget Committee showing how rising temperatures lead to escalating health care costs. He is also writing a book about how climate and nature shapes human health.

He said he's aiming to "depolarize" the climate conversation.

Mr. Frist spoke recently by Zoom from his office in Nashville, surrounded by photos and mementos. A map of Tennessee, rendered in green thread on reclaimed barn wood, to symbolize conservation, hung behind him. On his right wrist, he wore a wooden beaded bracelet from the Loisaba Wildlife Conservancy, north of Nairobi. Mr. Frist has visited Africa about 20 times, mostly for medical trips: In the Senate, he was crucial to the passage of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, which funneled billions of dollars into the prevention and treatment of H.I.V. and AIDS abroad.

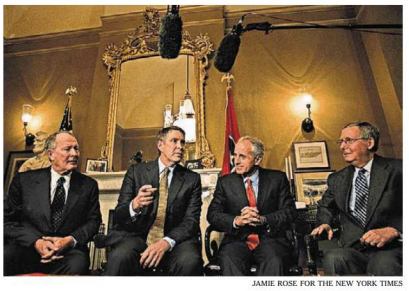
But one photo was especially important, he said. It was a portrait of his wife, Tracy Roberts Frist, and their Border collie, Bonnie, sitting on a woodsy ridge. The couple married in 2015 — it was his second marriage — and live on a working farm outside of Nashville, along with eight sheep, nine horses, three herding dogs, geese, goats, chickens and two donkeys.

They also have a 995-acre farm in Virginia that includes an arboretum and federally protected wetlands, where they raise grass-fed cows, and regularly host environmentalists, scientists and 4-H students. In 2024, they donated $1 million to fund an initiative for planetary and human health at The Nature Conservancy, the nonprofit where Mr. Frist chairs the global board of directors.

Mr. Frist said his wife helped him connect with the wild, natural world. She did her graduate studies in animal and human behavior, and oversees riparian and wetland restoration along with regenerative agriculture at their farms. "She is born of nature, is part of it, it is written into her soul," Mr. Frist said.

Mr. Frist grew up on five acres in Tennessee, which he said laid the groundwork for his environmental awareness, as did his career as a cardiothoracic surgeon. Cyclosporine, a drug that revolutionized organ transplants, is derived from soil fungus and acts as an immunosuppressant, stopping the body from rejecting organs; the FDA approved it just as Mr. Frist was finishing his surgical residency. "It hit me, the power of nature and biodiversity," he said.

KIRSTEN LUCE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



JAMIE ROSE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Former Senator Bill Frist, above left, at his farm in New Castle, Va. Left, Republicans in 2006, from left, Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, Mr. Frist, Senator-elect Bob Corker of Tennessee and Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky.

Mr. Frist's pivot to environmental advocacy unfolded after he left the Senate, as the issue was becoming increasingly polarized. He had been put off by the strand of environmentalism that he said used shame as a lever.

But after studying the science of climate change, he saw connections between human well-being and planetary health.

"Our national leadership too often, and I was probably a part of that at the time, has failed to connect those dots with what the urgency of today requires," he said.

This makes Mr. Frist among a vanishingly few number of Republicans championing the environment and encouraging ways to slow global warming. President Trump has called climate change "a hoax," and has been promoting fossil fuels, the burning of which is dangerously heating the planet. A recent poll found that just 6 percent of Republicans are worried about it, a record low.

"There's a very small group of us known right-of-center climate advocates, the so-called eco right, who see this really dire forecast," said Alex Flint, the executive director of Alliance for Market Solutions, a conservative group that support carbon taxes. "It's lonely."

Yet Mr. Flint and Mr. Frist share the view that their party will come around, eventually.

"In the long run, there is going to be a political response forced by the reality of the changing climate," Mr. Flint said. "It is inevitable."

In his writings, appearances and videos, Mr. Frist talks about the toll that pollution and extreme weather take on people's health. About operating on lungs darkened by tobacco smoke and airborne particulates, and how pollution contributes to every coronary artery surgery he's done. He comes across as straightforward and plain-spoken, like an old-fashioned kindly doctor.

According to his office, he has more than 130,000 followers across his social media platforms, and got more than 2.5 million impressions on LinkedIn last year.

His target audience, he said, is the center right. "People who are reasonable, rational, appreciate science, educated not necessarily in college degrees, but educated in the sense of listening to other people, treating them with dignity, always assuming the other person might be right," he said.

He also said he's received minimal pushback. Last May, he was interviewed onstage by former Vice President Al Gore, a fellow Tennessean, as part of Mr. Gore's climate initiative. "It's wonderful to have Bill Frist out there saying these things," Mr. Gore said.

Mr. Frist said the key to his message, and uniting people, is highlighting what they value most.

"It's the health, hope and the healing of themselves, their loved ones and their kids," he said, "Not 10 years from now, or 20 years, not 30 years from now, but today."

How Did New York City Pay One Plumber Nearly Half a Million Dollars?

By MIHIR ZAVERI

Jakub Markowski made more money than the mayor of New York City last year. He made more than the police commissioner, the fire commissioner, and the people running the city's schools and jails. In fact, he made more money than nearly every member of New York's roughly 350,000-person municipal work force.

He works as a plumber supervisor for the city's public housing agency and was paid for almost 2,560 hours of overtime in the 2025 fiscal year — more than any other city employee — bringing his annual earnings to $465,000. What's more, permits filed with the city show that Mr. Markowski was running two private plumbing businesses at the same time.

That extraordinary workload is now under scrutiny.

The city's Department of Buildings is investigating Mr. Markowski's work practices, a spokesman confirmed, including whether the arrangement violated rules designed to ensure that plumbing work, which can involve dangerous gas pipes, is done safely.

The questions about his conduct come as the housing agency, the New York City Housing Authority, faces enormous financial and infrastructural woes. Almost 300,000 people live in more than 240 public housing developments across the city, according to agency data. Many of those buildings are in poor condition. The system needs tens of billions of dollars in repairs and upgrades, according to the latest city estimate.

The constant care required to keep buildings running is one reason Mr. Markowski, a licensed master plumber, and other skilled workers at the agency regularly end up working huge amounts of overtime. And it is not uncommon for licensed master plumbers in New York to earn salaries over six figures. But the sheer volume of hours and pay that Mr. Markowski accrued that year at his city job — an average of about seven extra hours per day if he worked for 365 days straight — is unusual.

Mr. Markowski did not respond to several requests for comment. Reached by phone on Monday evening, he said he was busy working and hung up.

Buildings Department records show that between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, the same period Mr. Markowski logged his overtime, his businesses — Super Plumbers Corp. NYC and Dynamic Blue Water Mechanical — worked on more than 70 projects in affluent neighborhoods like Brooklyn Heights and Manhattan's Upper East Side.

In 2019, Mr. Markowski obtained a waiver from the city allowing him to do both public and private work, according to Barbara Brancaccio, a spokeswoman for the housing authority. The city grants a few hundred such waivers every year. The year after receiving the waiver, Mr. Markowski was paid for more than 1,840 hours of overtime.

In 2024, though, Mr. Markowski was promoted to a supervisory position on a fire safety team. While he was required to request a similar waiver in that role, he did not do so, Ms. Brancaccio said.

The Plumbing Foundation City of New York, a nonprofit trade group, filed a complaint with the Buildings Department last year, raising concerns about Mr. Markowski's "questionable work arrangements," according to a June 2025 email sent to the department.

"Enabling one individual to run a private plumbing business while serving as a city plumbing supervisor and accruing more overtime than any other city employee is beyond wasteful, and it raises serious concerns about the integrity, safety and oversight of NYCHA's building operations," the group's executive director, April McIver, said in a statement.

Ms. Brancaccio of the housing authority said that the Plumbing Foundation did not represent the agency's interests and that all public employees must follow conflicts of interest law.

> *Logging thousands of overtime hours while running businesses.*

Overtime abuse and other ethical issues have roiled the housing authority. In 2024, federal prosecutors brought bribery and extortion charges against dozens of its employees. Two years before that, the agency fired at least 18 people after an investigation into overtime fraud.

In addition to his fire safety job, Mr. Markowski has a "secondary role" as a backup plumber supervisor, handling emergency responses on nights and weekends, according to Ms. Brancaccio. Asked for an accounting of the work Mr. Markowski did to earn his overtime pay, the authority said it would provide that information in response to a New York Times request made under state freedom of information laws. That request has not yet been fulfilled.

Asked whether NYCHA was investigating Mr. Markowski's work arrangement or overtime, the agency referred questions to the city's Department of Investigation.

"This is an ongoing matter at D.O.I., and we decline further comment," said Diane Struzzi, a department spokeswoman.

The city has also investigated safety scandals in the plumbing industry, including a fatal gas explosion at an East Village building in 2015 that killed two people and injured more than a dozen. The authorities in that case criminally charged a licensed master plumber who had let an unlicensed plumber use his license to perform gas-line work; the unlicensed plumber was convicted of manslaughter.

Mr. Markowski's two businesses share an address in Maspeth, in central Queens. During a recent visit, a small sign in the building's window displayed Mr. Markowski's name and the name of Super Plumbers.

Inside, "Dynamic Blue Water Mechanical" was splashed across one wall in bright blue letters. A woman at a front desk said Mr. Markowski was not there, but said she would call her "other boss," Robert Tarnawa.

Mr. Tarnawa, who filed a certificate of incorporation with the state for Dynamic Blue in 2022, did not respond to several requests for comment.

The relationship between Mr. Markowski and Mr. Tarnawa, who is not a licensed master plumber, is unclear. Three general contractors who worked on projects that list Mr. Markowski as master plumber said in interviews that they had vague, if any, memories of Mr. Markowski, but that they did remember Mr. Tarnawa.

The Buildings Department said that Mr. Markowski's relationship with Mr. Tarnawa was one focus of its investigation.

Fears of a partial collapse of a high-rise prompted the authorities to evacuate nearby buildings and block off streets to traffic.

Office Building Crumbles Amid Conversion Project

From Page A1

John Esposito, the chief of department, said inspectors later discovered that the building's steel support beams on the 21st floor had begun to bend and deflect from the weight of the upper floors.

Later on Tuesday, the Buildings Department said contractors would begin installing emergency support beams in the evening to stabilize the structure and allow investigators and engineers to go inside and shore up the building.

Ahmed Tigani, the commissioner of the Department of Buildings, said earlier that contractors were bringing emergency beams and columns called struts to take the weight off the compromised beams and prevent additional damage. Construction safety inspectors and engineers were continuing to monitor the building's movements from several angles on the street, he added.

The building, constructed in 1960, is one of two that previously made up the headquarters of Pfizer, the world's largest pharmaceutical company by revenue, before the company moved west to the other side of Manhattan in the Hudson Yards neighborhood.

In 2024, construction began to convert the offices into an apartment building with more than 1,600 units, a rooftop pool, retail shops and other amenities spanning 100,000 square feet.

Tuesday was not the first time inspectors had been called to the site over falling objects. Last July, the Buildings Department fined the developer $5,000 after a piece of window glass fell from the eighth floor onto a sidewalk shed. Officials fined the company $10,000 in August, after a metal pane fell from the 33rd floor onto the sidewalk below. Both times, inspectors issued temporary stop work orders.

Then in December, the developer was fined another $10,000 for failing to file a timely injury report after a worker fell six feet from a ladder while dismantling a crane. A city inspector said that the ladder was not fully open and on a level surface, which contributed to the fall.

Investigators did not find evidence to substantiate other complaints of unsafe work conditions. One such complaint stated that a large item had fallen and broken through five floors, narrowly missing a worker.

All the complaints were listed as resolved in the agency's online database.

Up until Tuesday, the building had 13 active violations from 2025, mostly for failing to file elevator inspection and testing reports, with penalties totaling $39,000.

A 311 complaint filed against the project on Tuesday accused the developers of conducting excavation that was beyond or contrary to construction plans that had been approved, according to the agency's online portal. Specifics of the complaint were not yet available, but the Buildings Department said it was investigating.

Mr. Johnsen, the union official, said the incident was highly unusual, and he claimed that the builders had not used enough steel to support the weight of the additional floors. His claim could not be verified.

"That's not something you see," he said, noting the union's role in building Hudson Yards, the World Trade Center, Yankee Stadium, Madison Square Garden and Barclays Center.

Abi Aghayere, a professor of structural engineering at Drexel University, likened office-to- residential renovations to "structural gymnastics." During those intermediate stages, a lot of work would be happening in the building that could give rise to potential problems.

For example, beams that support columns that bear vertical loads might be moved. Those types of problems could emerge because of a faulty design or because of an error by the construction workers.

"There's going to be a lot of cutting of holes and slabs and all that to make room for all the HVAC and the plumbing for each individual residential unit," he said.

He said photos of the buckling seemed to show that at least one affected column was old, and potentially corroded or rotted.

He said investigators should "strip" the building — look under any superficial exterior surface, like paint, to see what's actually going on in the "skeleton." That would help determine both how to stabilize the building temporarily and whether it was viable to continue with the project at all.

"No one knows what stage the structure is in right now," he said.

Jamison Morse, principal at PVEDI Engineering, said what happens next would be determined by what inspectors discover.

"Where did the error lie? Were there bad assumptions? Bad information given to the engineer? Or were the contractors doing something that the engineer didn't recommend and were they cowboying it?" he said.

He said it was likely that the developers would try to fix the problem and move on. But he said it was also possible that the solution would be so expensive that it would derail the project entirely.

"The entire structural engineering community is watching this one pretty closely," he said.

Evacuations from the frozen zone disrupted operations for at least one foreign consulate, a cable news station and several hotels.

Kevin Reardon, the executive chef at the Westin New York Grand Central, fielded calls from his staff members as he stood along Third Avenue with a group of Westin hotel employees who had been evacuated.

"I don't think you're coming in today," he told one caller.

The workers and their guests had been made to leave their belongings behind, he said, complicating guests' stays and workers' commutes home. "People have cars inside so they can't get home," he said.

On East 43rd Street, Christy Walls huddled over a pizza with her two children and college roommate, backpacks stacked on the Manhattan ground. They were supposed to check in for a stay at the Hampton Inn Manhattan Grand Central, but the hotel was evacuated and blocked off by street barricades.

"We're standing on the street with security and police," her friend, Emily Oehler, argued on the phone with Hilton. "I don't want you to cancel it because I need a room."

Ms. Walls, here for a two-night stay from West Virginia to see "The Outsiders" on Broadway, said they were trying to get their reservation switched to another Hampton Inn. One hotel had already turned them down.

"We just need a place to stay," Ms. Walls said.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Officials said they had seen structural damage in an office building being converted into a residential complex on East 42nd Street.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Reporting was contributed by Caitlyn Freeman, Chelsia Rose Marcius, Hurubie Meko, Ryley Ober and Wesley Parnell. Alain Delaquérière contributed research.

Triple-Digit Heat Wave Claims Up to 29 in New Jersey

By TRACEY TULLY and JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN

The death toll in New Jersey from a days-long heat wave that gripped much of the East Coast during the Fourth of July weekend may be as high as 29, the state's Department of Health said on Monday.

Those who died ranged in age from their mid-30s to their 80s, with most located in New Jersey's densely populated central and northern regions, where temperatures exceeded 100 degrees for days and remained exceptionally warm even after the sun set, state officials said.

"This was not your normal heat wave," said Dalya Ewais, a health department spokeswoman.

Pathologists must still confirm that hyperthermia — heat stroke and heat exhaustion are severe forms — caused each of the deaths linked to the extreme heat. But Ms. Ewais said that state officials decided to release the number of likely heat-related fatalities as a reminder of the risks posed by extended exposure to high temperatures, among the leading causes of weather-related deaths.

State officials said that the people who had died were found in homes, cars and outdoors.

With the heat came wind, then rain. Wind gusts reached 71 miles per hour on Friday evening, just shy of hurricane strength, downing tree limbs and power lines. Then, on Monday morning, intense rainstorms pelted parts of South Jersey. In Monmouth County, flash flooding submerged cars and the roof of a BJ's Wholesale Club partially collapsed. Shoppers and security cameras recorded video as the ceiling began to cascade downward, but no injuries were reported.

About 76,000 homes and businesses across Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania remained without power on Tuesday afternoon, according to poweroutage.us, which tracks data from utility companies.

The number of potentially health-related fatalities linked to the scorching weather in New Jersey comes close to the grim toll recorded during Hurricane Sandy and Hurricane Ida, two of the deadliest natural disasters in New Jersey's recent history.

The state's climatologist, John Krasting, of Rutgers University, said a high-pressure system had created a dome-like effect that trapped heat and air pollution and also stalled Monday's storm from moving offshore more quickly. On land, more than four inches of rain fell rapidly in parts of New Jersey, swamping cars as roads turned to rivers along the Jersey Shore.

Dr. Krasting attributed the event to climate change and a two-year drought in New Jersey, which had left the soil unprepared to rapidly absorb rain, contributed to the intensity of the week's weather.

New Jersey's governor, Mikie Sherrill, held a weather-related news conference on Saturday where residents were reminded about how to find cooling centers and other-heat related information.

Officials in New York City have so far confirmed that three people died from heat-related illnesses, all while in their homes. The victims, whom the medical examiner's office did not identify, had cardiovascular disease while two had diabetes. The officials did not indicate how many other deaths were suspected of being heat-related as hospitals treated an unusual number of patients with those conditions.

On Friday, when temperatures hit triple digits in parts of New York for the second day in a row, emergency rooms across the city logged 146 visits for heat-related illness — the highest single-day amount in recent years

The day before was the hottest day in the city in more than a decade. Emergency rooms logged 100 heat-related visits that day.

It was much the same story in New Jersey where 99 people received hospital care for heat-related emergencies on Thursday, according to the state's health department dashboard. The next day, 132 people sought treatment.

Throughout the heat wave, nighttime temperatures had remained unusually high, giving residents almost no break from the oppressive heat until temperatures began to fall on Sunday.

Maria Cramer contributed reporting.

Corrections

FRONT PAGE

An article on Saturday about the use of artificial intelligence tools for election help misspelled the surname of a psychotherapist in Los Angeles who used ChatGPT to help him choose candidates. He is Jeremiah Hein, not Hain.

ARTS

An article on Monday about the politicized portrayal of the American Revolution rendered incorrectly several parts of an Irving Kristol essay from 1973 about the American Revolution. He chided left-leaning scholars for downplaying it as "a French Revolution that never quite came off," not "a French Revolution that didn't quite come off." He wrote "The American Revolution was successful in that those who led it were able, in later years, to look back in tranquillity at what they had wrought and to say that it was good," not "The American Revolution was successful in that those who led it were able to look back in tranquillity and what they had wrought and to say that is was good." And he wrote that unlike the leaders of more self-devouring revolutions, they "died in bed," not "they died in their beds."

An article on Thursday about the inspiration behind the composition and score of "Basura," a new musical premiering in Atlanta, contained an incorrect statement by Emily Estefan. If it moves to Broadway, "Basura," which is running in Atlanta, would not be the first time a mother and daughter have written a Broadway show together. "Ipi Tombi," a musical by Bertha Egnos and Gail Lakier, was a mother-daughter production in 1977.

Errors are corrected during the press run whenever possible, so some errors noted here may not have appeared in all editions.

Contact the Newsroom

To contact the newsroom regarding correction requests, please email corrections@nytimes.com.

The Times Book Review, every Sunday

Opinion

The New York Times

COLUMNIST | MICHELLE GOLDBERG

Lessons From the Platner Disaster

HOPEFULLY, BY THE time you read this, Graham Platner will have dropped out of the Senate race in Maine. If he hasn't, he needs to, immediately.

His campaign, which started with such excitement and inspired so many people in Maine, has become a shameful catastrophe. What's left — besides finding a Democrat to run in his place — is figuring out what, if anything, can be learned from this debacle.

As you probably know by now, Politico published a story on Monday about a woman, Jenny Racicot, who says that Platner raped her. According to Racicot, they'd been romantically involved, on and off, for more than two years when he showed up at her house drunk and uninvited one night in 2021, let himself in and forced himself on her.

She confided her ordeal to a man she dated after Platner, as well as to her therapist, and showed Politico text messages she sent in 2023 warning an acquaintance away from him. Her account is completely believable and completely devastating.

Platner denies Racicot's accusations but seems to realize that his campaign may no longer be viable. In a video posted on social media, he said, "Regardless of the inaccuracy of the reporting, but mindful of the political reality it will inflict, we are taking the time to reflect on the best path forward."

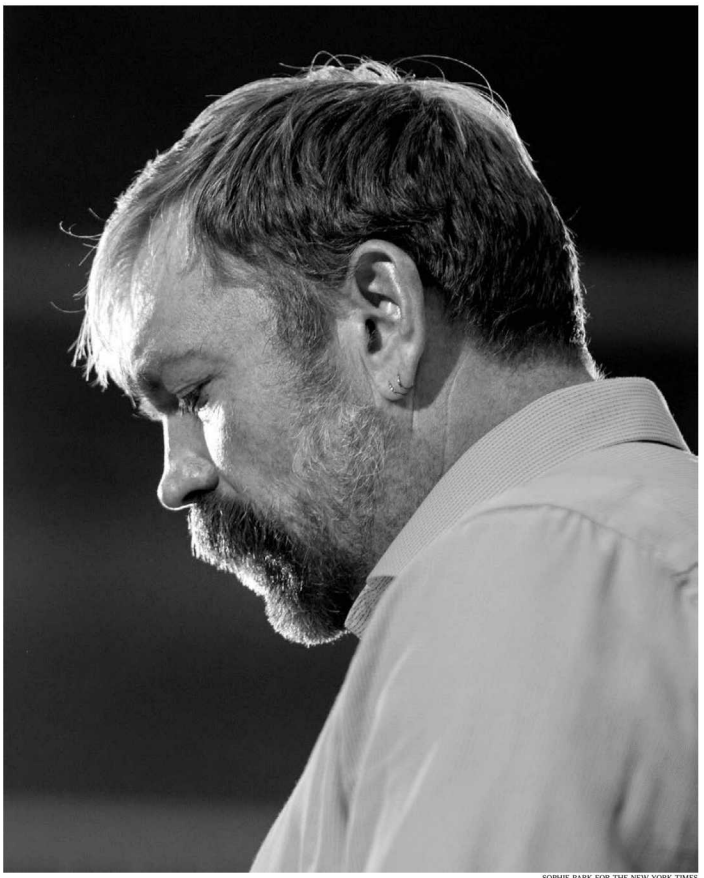
But that time needs to wrap up. According to Maine law, Platner has to drop out by next Monday for Democrats to replace him on the November ballot. The sooner this mess ends, the better.

The Platner campaign represented an electoral insurgency against the Democratic Party; now, there are going to be furious recriminations against those who launched it. There is plenty of blame to go around.

Most at fault, of course, is Platner himself. He allegedly victimized Racicot, and then his campaign victimized her again, putting her into a situation where she felt she had to go public. He betrayed his supporters by plunging into a campaign while knowing he had a closet full of skeletons and drawing people who believed in him into a doomed enterprise.

Maine Democrats were willing to overlook Platner's Totenkopf tattoo, his terrible Reddit posts and his sexting with other women while he was married because they felt so invigorated by him and the movement he was creating. They went out on a limb for him, and he had every reason to know it was going to be sawed off.

Also liable for this disaster are the progressive operatives who recruited Platner and were so infatuated with his identity — a gruff, handsome oysterman with social democratic politics — that they failed to do their due diligence. The Wall Street Journal reported last month that Platner's top strategist, Dan Moraff, didn't want to spring for a thorough background check, which can take weeks and cost around $20,000. "Moraff asked for an expedited, cheaper review to be done within days," The Journal said.



SOPHIE PARK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Upstart candidates must be vetted.

Moraff, who travels the country trying to recruit left-wing, working-class candidates, reportedly learned about some of Platner's troubling Reddit posts but decided to charge forward anyway. "Part of our thesis here is that people do not want their candidates grown in vats," he told The Journal.

He's correct about the appetite for unconventional candidates, but that is no excuse for such willful sloppiness. Before blithely assuming that voters would forgive a candidate's flaws, he had a responsibility to try to find out what those flaws were.

This fiasco might seem to vindicate the establishment that Platner railed against, but Chuck Schumer, the Senate minority leader, who wanted to stop Platner, is also partly culpable here. Schumer badly misread the Democratic electorate and tried to clear the field for his preferred candidate, Maine's 78-year-old governor, Janet Mills, leaving a vacuum that Platner filled.

As NOTUS reported last week, Dan Kleban, a co-founder of Maine Beer Company, had been preparing to launch a populist, anti-Wall Street Senate bid last summer, but the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee tried to dissuade him. "He and his campaign were left with the impression that if he ran, Democrats in Washington would make it difficult because they were holding their support for Maine Gov. Janet Mills," NOTUS wrote. Kleban ended up delaying the start of his campaign, not getting in until Platner had already caught fire.

While I'm assigning blame, I shouldn't leave out myself. Last October, when stories about Platner's tattoo and Reddit posts first broke, I went to Maine to write about him. I tried to convey what I saw: a campaign that was electrifying angry Maine voters. But I deeply regret that, impressed by Platner's political charisma, I wrote that he was "nothing like the edgelord caricature I encountered online." If anything, he seems to be significantly worse.

One person who tried to alert Democrats was Platner's former political director, Genevieve McDonald. She quit when the first Platner scandals emerged and has been increasingly outspoken against him. Progressive operatives made her seem like a vindictive person eager to curry favor with Maine's political establishment. In retrospect, she looks much more like someone who took a profound professional risk to do the right thing. I can't be the only one who regrets not taking her more seriously.

If there's a lesson here, it might be about the importance of listening hard to the people telling you what you don't want to hear. Many Democrats, disgusted by their party's failure to contain Donald Trump, want representatives as furious as they are, and they no longer trust their leaders to tell them who is electable. That opens space up for outsider candidates who wouldn't have had a chance a few years ago. It also makes it easier for unfit characters to escape proper vetting.

Platner offered many on the left something they're desperate for: working-class aesthetics married to uncompromising lefty politics. Many progressives want to believe that with a sufficiently populist message and style, they can win over voters alienated from the Democratic Party, obviating the need for ideological concessions. Platner seemed to embody this possibility, and that made a lot of people look past a lot of red flags until it was almost too late.

COLUMNIST | THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

Trump Is Fleecing Everyone

When the sun came shining,
and I was strolling
And the wheat fields waving,
and the dust clouds rolling
As the fog was lifting
a voice was chanting:
This land was made for you and me.

— Woody Guthrie, "This Land Is Your Land"

OUR COUNTRY IS built on written documents — the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, to name the most important. So to celebrate America's 250th birthday, my wife, Ann, hosted a special event at Planet Word, the immersive language museum she founded in Washington to promote literacy. The singer-composer Nolan Williams Jr. led a singalong featuring classic American songs, including, of course, Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land."

Despite 100-degree heat, a remarkably diverse crowd of 300 people packed the museum's main hall, and young and old sang together with gusto. There was so much joy and camaraderie in the room — and so many leaving attendees saying to one another how much they wished the entire country could reflect that same harmony every day. So many people asked afterward, "Why aren't we singing these songs together on the National Mall?"

Which leads — I am sorry to say — to a quite different variation on "This Land Is Your Land" heard on the National Mall later that evening. In my mind, it was the Trump variation, with lyrics that went, "This land is my land, this land is my land / From California to the New York island / From my cryptocurrency to the Qatari 747 / This land belongs to me and mine."

One thing about President Trump: He is consistent. He never surprises you on the upside. He has never been remotely interested in being the president of all the people, only his base. He never tries to win by addition, only by division — only by us versus them.

As my newsroom colleague Shawn McCreesh reported from the mall: "Mr. Trump used the nation's birthday to scaremonger about Democrats four months before the midterms (he talked a lot again about 'communism') and demand that Congress pass an act that would make it harder to vote." Shawn continued, "What was meant to be the centerpiece of the nation's 250th anniversary celebration was in some ways just another Trump rally."

This very same Fourth of July, two other newsroom colleagues of mine, Eric Lipton and David Yaffe-Bellany, reported that nearly "1 million people who bought President Trump's memecoin have lost money through the end of June, according to a report by the cryptocurrency analytics firm Nansen. Their losses total $3.81 billion." My colleagues pointed out that the calculation came after Trump signed a financial disclosure revealing that the same crypto bet dealt him a $636 million payout. In all, his business ventures brought him at least $2.2 billion in 2025.

This is a big story, and my gut tells me that Trump also smells that this could be a big story: of how badly he fleeced his own supporters!

Since the start of Trump's second term, it's been widely reported that he has been exploiting the presidency for financial gain, but the story needed a real number and real victims. Now it has both — $2.2 billion in total gains for Trump and at least $3.81 billion in losses for his investors. That's a bumper sticker. Trump famously boasted that he could shoot someone in the middle of Fifth Avenue and his supporters would still be with him. Will they also stick with him when he fleeces them?

And, have no doubt, he was targeting them, as The Times also reported: "Three days before his inauguration, Mr. Trump unveiled a second Trump-branded investment — the $Trump memecoin, a type of novelty currency with little practical value. 'It's time to celebrate everything we stand for: WINNING!' Mr. Trump wrote on social media. 'Join my very special Trump community. GET YOUR $TRUMP NOW!' But that turned out to be bad advice."

Trump is surely terrified that the Democrats will win the House or the Senate or both and launch investigations into how much he has used his office, and exploited his own supporters, for grotesque personal gain.

FINN GOMEZ/GETTY IMAGES

The president is surely terrified of his supporters learning that he ripped them off.

Therefore, to my mind, the right themes for Democrats going into the midterms are two: If they win, they will expose how much Trump has been ripping off his own supporters; and if they win they will make bringing the country together a priority.

I believe the quest for national unity is the most underestimated political force in the country today. It is not an accident that CNN reported last month that "nearly half of Americans say they don't consider themselves a part of either major political party, the highest level of partisan independence measured by CNN polling in more than a decade."

I am sure that is true because I heard the best political analyst I know make the same point. His name is Barack Obama. Which brings me to a third variation of "This Land Is Your Land." It was Obama's speech at the opening ceremony of his presidential center in Chicago, which I attended. My favorite passage from Obama was this:

> As algorithms keep feeding us a steady stream of distraction and outrage, as only the loudest, most extreme voices get attention, fanning our prejudices, appealing to our basest, most tribal instincts, it's tempting to give in to cynicism and even despair, to stop trying. We start thinking that appeals to democracy and civic participation are corny and old-fashioned and boring and naïve, that the very idea of working on behalf of the common good is a sucker's bet, and that in order for us to win, somebody else has got to lose.
>
> I get it. I am not immune to anger or doubt, but I do know this: When we lose faith in each other, when we stop believing that voting matters, that citizenship matters, that our collective voices matter, that how we treat each other no longer matters, and we give away our power to decide our own futures, we open the door to the most ruthless, or the most careless, or the most fearful among us, who see some groups and some people as more equal than others, and see government as nothing more than a way to divvy up the spoils and punish enemies and keep those who are different in their place.

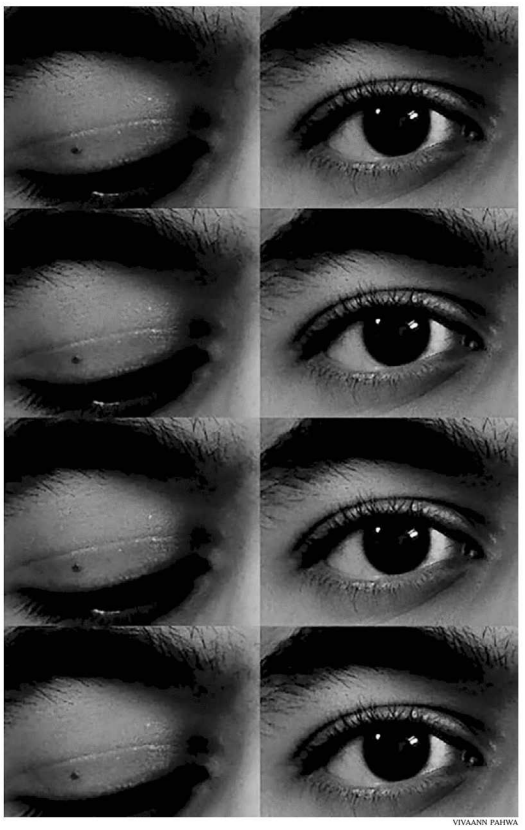
The fact is, though, Obama continued, "I do not believe that is the story of America that prevails in the end. . . . I remain convinced that the overwhelming majority of Americans . . . aren't looking for perpetual anger and division. They are looking for fairness and common sense and mutual respect, that deep in our gut we want to find a way to turn toward each other again, not further away."

So, Democrats, you have your assignment. It's to not let Trump bait you into blind rage and extreme ideas. He feeds off that. Just focus on how much he has been fleecing all of us while tearing us apart. And how much Democrats intend to pull the whole country together.

'Cause this land was made for you and me.

Sometimes It's Worth Staying Up Late

Ryan McCormick
A family doctor who writes about health and medicine in his newsletter Examined.



VIVAANN PAHWA

SLEEP is an incredible physical process. There is an early night surge of growth hormone to restore muscle and a slow drop in blood pressure that gives hearts and blood vessels a break. The recently discovered glymphatic system in the brain works like a washing machine while we sleep, flushing out potentially harmful metabolic debris.

Perhaps that is why good sleep, or the lack thereof, is one of the most evergreen concerns I hear about as a primary care doctor. My patients track sleep hours and sleep scores, upgrade mattresses or turn to white noise machines and a shelf full of supplements. The stress is real: Orthosomnia is an emerging clinical concept in which anxiety about sleep metrics can degrade sleep quality.

We could all benefit from chilling out about sleep. Many of us think we should be sleeping at least eight hours a night, but the evidence for that is shakier than we might assume.

A consistent finding in sleep epidemiology studies is that there is not a magic number below which health suddenly falls off a cliff. Rather, studies that show an association between sleep duration and mortality often find that the lowest risk clusters around seven hours. Risk rises both with not enough sleep and with too much sleep. In fact, a meta-analysis of sleep studies published in the journal Scientific Reports found that the adults with the highest mortality rates were those who slept nine to 11 hours a night. Notably, while risk rose with short sleep, the study did not find much difference in all-cause mortality between six and seven hours a night. While the data is inconsistent and there are some exceptions, several other studies have reached similar conclusions.

Does that mean that getting nine hours of sleep is dangerous? No. The reason that sleeping for a long time is linked to higher mortality is that, on average, people who are sick sleep more. So do many people who are struggling with depression and its mixed influences upon sleep. Once we account for reverse causation, the risk of too much sleep almost disappears.

But that cuts the other way as well: The data show that getting less sleep is strongly correlated with living in poverty, working a job that requires night shifts, psychiatric conditions and chronic pain and illness. At least one study found that when researchers adjust aggressively for such variables, associations weakened substantially.

Sleep quality and the regularity of the routine may matter more than duration. A consistent, good-quality 6.5 hours a night, in which you go to bed around the same time every evening, probably carries less risk than a fragmented, anxious eight-hour routine or a pattern in which sleep varies wildly night to night.

Dr. Michael Perlis, director of behavioral sleep medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, acknowledges that the standard medical recommendation of getting seven to nine hours works for many people but "nowhere near all." That's because it "doesn't take into account sex, age, typical duration of the individual's wake period, amount of mental and physical expenditure per day, health and basal sleep need," he told me.

Modern wellness culture tells a story of people increasingly missing their sleep numbers, but the data on whether we are in fact sleeping less than we did 50 years ago is mixed. Studies vary based on how sleep is measured. One survey showed a mild decrease in average self-reported sleep time, dropping by 13 minutes over 27 years. Others find an increase or no change at all.

The evidence for needing eight hours of sleep is shakier than you think.

Some historians believe that before widespread electric lighting allowed us to be up all hours, humans most likely spent more time in bed. But those hours may have been less rigidly consolidated, with greater seasonal variation and more segmented patterns — perhaps an hour or so in the middle of the night to pray, read, talk or do quiet tasks.

In fact, the Hadza people of Tanzania, a group of nomadic hunter-gatherers, sleep an average of 6.25 hours per night. Although in bed for up to nine hours, the Hadza are routinely awake for two or more hours during that window.

All of this is not to undermine sleep as a powerful and healthy habit. Sleep improves performance on tasks, makes driving safer and buoys our mental health. Adequate sleep leads to a stronger immune system, better metabolic and cardiovascular health and more reliable physical energy throughout the day.

One of the most concerning findings about not getting enough sleep comes from the Whitehall II study, which found that persistent short sleep duration (defined as less than six hours) at ages 50, 60 and 70 was associated with a 30 percent increased dementia risk compared with normal sleep duration (defined as seven hours). However, it remains unclear whether abnormal sleep is a causal risk factor or an early symptom of cognitive decline. The evolving consensus points toward a vicious cycle in which inadequate sleep contributes to dementia, which in turn makes sleep worse.

Nonetheless, I usually find myself going to bed later than I intend. Squeezing in a full day of doctoring, parenting, exercising, cooking and sitting down for a family dinner feels worth it to me. These wedged-in activities reduce my sleep quota, but have also been proved to help sustain a healthy body and sound mind.

Hippocrates himself wrote: "Both sleep and insomnolency, when immoderate, are bad." It turns out this warning about too little and too much sleep holds up surprisingly well in the modern scientific literature over 2,000 years later.

As a family physician, I must balance biological, psychological and social considerations when I care for patients. Here's what I tell them: Aim for seven hours, accept that some people need more or less to feel rested, be compassionate with yourself about sleep failures, and realize that there are times when it's worth it to shoehorn a bit more conscious life into a day.

LETTERS

Trump and the U.S. Loss in the World Cup

TO THE EDITOR:

Belgium's 4-1 victory over the United States in the World Cup on Monday did more than advance a team; it spared us from an unnecessary political spectacle.

As a former U.S. Army officer who worked closely with NATO forces, I know how central Belgium is to our national security; it hosts the alliance's political and military headquarters. Many Americans may not realize how much we rely on our Belgian allies.

Yes, the red card issued to the U.S. striker Folarin Balogun in the match against Bosnia and Herzegovina last week was a close call, but close calls are part of sport and part of life. My college football coach, Earl Banks, taught us that as many calls will go against you as for you — and it's how you respond that matters more.

What should have ended on the field, though, instead became an off-field foul. President Trump's phone call to FIFA's president, Gianni Infantino, requesting a review of the referee's decision was wholly inappropriate. The referee, Raphael Claus, followed proper procedure after instruction from the video assistant referee crew. The process worked as designed.

That a president of a nation would attempt to intervene in a routine officiating decision suggests either a misunderstanding of rules — of games and of life — or a belief that those rules do not apply to him.

To my Belgian friends: Bedankt. Danke. Merci beaucoup. Your national team's performance spared us from weeks of needless controversy and allowed the World Cup to proceed on the merits of the game.

ROLAND NICHOLSON JR.
WASHINGTON

TO THE EDITOR:

President Trump did not cause the United States men's soccer team to lose decisively in the World Cup on Monday. American miscues and a superior Belgian team did that.

What Mr. Trump did do was divide Americans, as he so often does, by turning what had been a celebration of U.S. soccer into yet another spectacle about himself. In doing so, he soured what had been a joyous event.

JOHN DUFFY, GRANGER, IND.

Right-Wing Victories?

TO THE EDITOR:

Re "Court Delivered Enduring Wins for Right Wing" (news analysis, front page, July 3):

Critics of the recent Supreme Court opinion that vastly increased the power of the president to dismiss members of federal agencies such as the Federal Trade Commission have been correct to warn of the baleful effect of that ruling. But they are wrong to treat that opinion as simply a right-wing victory.

Democrats will win their share of presidential races in the future and may well use or misuse the newly expanded presidential power over such agencies. The result, as Justice Sonia Sotomayor put it in her dissenting opinion, "is a president who emerges with far greater power than ever before."

The core problem with the ruling is thus not that the right wing is newly triumphant but that unchecked executive power threatens the independence of those agencies.

That is true of the Trump administration. It would be just as true and just as disturbing if the newly emboldened left of the Democratic Party achieves power someday and fires competent and even admirable public servants simply because they were appointed by a Republican president.

FLOYD ABRAMS, NEW YORK

The writer is a lawyer and the author of "The Soul of the First Amendment."

No Phones. How Novel.

TO THE EDITOR:

I read "The Touch Grass Challenge, Week 3: Host a '90s-Style Hangout" (Here to Help, June 21) with a smile on my face and a bit of disbelief.

My friends and I always get together for coffee, lunch or a hike, and going without active phones is never an issue. We might have them in our purses, but they're on vibrate and just not taken out.

We chat about anything and everything: latest books read, whom we've seen, lectures we've been to, recent trips and the inescapable health updates.

It never occurred to me that this is a '90s thing. Maybe all of us being in our 70s is what makes the difference. Being fully present just seems normal — no Week 3 challenge needed!

MARY GRAHAM
GRAND JUNCTION, COLO.

The Times welcomes letters from readers. Letters must include the writer's name, address and telephone number. Those selected may be edited, and shortened to fit allotted space. Email: letters@nytimes.com

COLUMNIST | **BRET STEPHENS**

The Far Left Is on the Rise. We've Seen This Movie Before.

I GREW UP in a conservative movement that thought it had gotten the better of its worst ideological impulses.

True, there were the usual Father Coughlin throwbacks, people like Pat Buchanan, who were against free trade, sympathetic to Vladimir Putin, down on the Jews and inveterately hostile to immigration, legal or otherwise. There were outright bigots and conspiracy theorists and militia types and their assorted followers, avid or furtive. And there was an outsize share of moralizing hypocrites, inevitable among people too fond of speaking in the name of religion and character.

But that wasn't the conservatism of the Bushes or John McCain or Mitt Romney, pragmatic men who, whether you agreed with them or not, operated on the center-right side of the liberal-democratic tradition. They were the conscience of the Republican Party, maintaining its decency by occasionally calling out the bad guys on their own side.

That was until the moment the G.O.P. chose to delete its conscience by becoming the party of Donald Trump. A similar moment may soon be upon Democrats if they aren't careful.

Barring a political miracle, the party will next year have a new member of Congress, Darializa Avila Chevalier, who, the day after the worst massacre of Jews since the Holocaust, celebrated the event in Times Square. Another probable future representative, Claire Valdez, vowed on July 4 to "fight for liberation from Palestine to Puerto Rico."

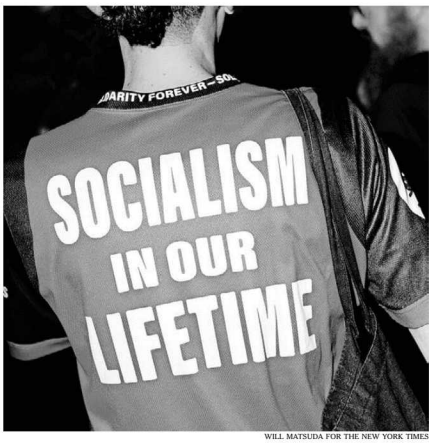
A would-be U.S. senator, the Michigan Democrat Abdul El-Sayed, offered an alternative take on Michelle Obama's famous line about going high when your opponent goes low: "When they go low, we don't go high," he said. "We take them to the mud and choke them out." (El-Sayed is a doctor.) In Wisconsin, a democratic socialist, Francesca Hong, is the polling favorite in the race for the Democratic nominee for governor; in 2021 she said that "police exist to uphold white supremacy" and should be abolished; more recently, she has said her "perfect world would be a world without prisons."

Against this tide, the position of many mainstream Democrats is to dodge the ideological fight with the left while warning that, outside of deep-blue districts like those in New York City, democratic socialism is an electoral loser that only provides Trump with political ammunition. In Michigan, Haley Stevens, El-Sayed's opponent in the Democratic primary, is campaigning on the argument that "no one wants Abdul to win more than the Republicans" — that is, that Republicans see him as the more beatable opponent come November.

I remember the same case being made by mainstream conservatives against Trump when he was running in 2016: A vote for him in the Republican primary, so the argument went, was tantamount to a vote for Hillary Clinton in the general election. Then he won.

What mainstream Republicans like me missed then is what I fear mainstream Democrats miss now: that ideas older voters know have long been discredited ("America first" among conservatives; socialism among progressives) can seem fresh and appealing to younger voters; that even middle-of-the-road voters still often prefer the most extreme or uncouth candidate on their side to the most moderate candidate on the other; and that policy positions ultimately count for less than sheer charisma, the aura of being a "fighter," even if you accomplish little of substance.

All this is especially true when the more ideologically extreme candidates are energetic, unstuffy, authentic, and able to stir up an audience. Zohran Mamdani, the New York mayor, is emblematic of the type; so was Graham Platner, the Maine Democrat, at least until allegations about his past behavior finally caught up with him.



WILL MATSUDA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Democratic leaders shouldn't dodge a fight with their radical wing.

What all this means for mainstream Democrats is that they resemble a national army under attack from an insurgency: They offer order and predictability when they need to be shocking and surprising; they seek to win by delivering incremental victories while their guerrilla opponents promise political transcendence. Unless something changes, those dynamics tend to set the army up for disaster.

What could change the dynamics? It would help if a Democratic leader stood up to make the case that democratic socialists are neither liberals nor progressives, at least in any honest sense of those words. They are atavists, blasts from a discredited and discarded past.

Socialism as a political program was born in the 19th century and died in the 20th (including in Sweden). Democracy requires a clearly defined citizenry, an idea that becomes meaningless if a country pursues a lax or open-border policy of the kind advocated by democratic socialists. The brainstorms of the far left, like the billionaire surtax on the ballot in California, have failed repeatedly wherever they've been tried (including in France).

And "justice for Palestine" surely can't mean taking sides with the killers and rapists of Hamas while insisting that the only nation-state on earth with no right to exist is the Jewish one. The word for that is antisemitism, the politics of the double standard toward Jews, which is yet another terrible idea from a terrible past.

Is there a rising Democrat who will give this speech — the one that says that Democrats stand for freedom and fairness, not radicalism and self-righteousness; the one that never disdains tradition even if it seeks to improve it; the one that knows that utopianism is no substitute for pragmatism, and that purity is not superior to compromise?

That Democrat needs to stand up now, before his party gets swept away by the flood it vainly believes will soon recede.

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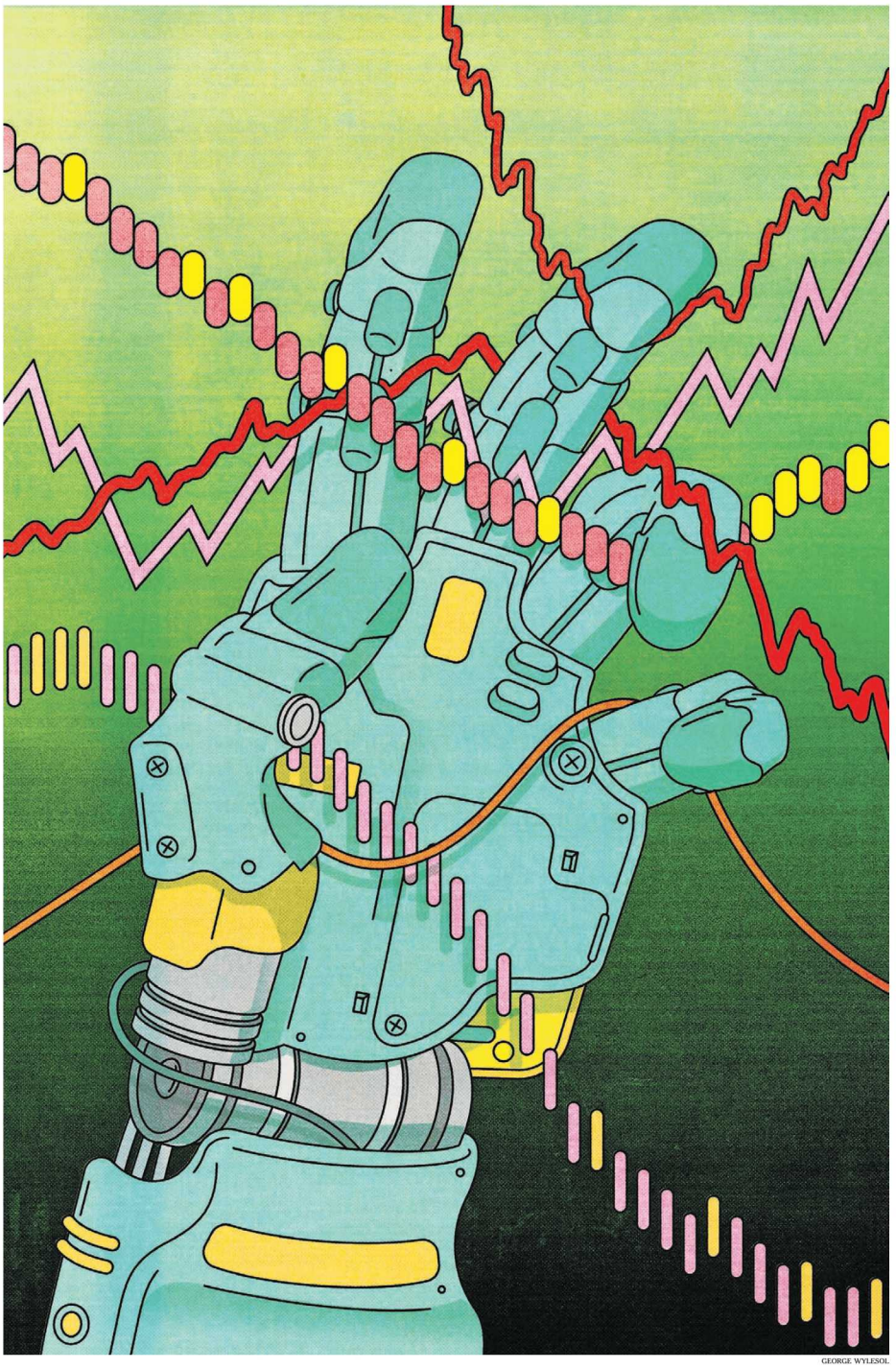
LAURENCE GRAFF SIGNATURE

4 TECHNOLOGY
Samsung Electronics said its latest quarterly operating profit was nearly 20 times as high as last year's.

5 AUTOMOTIVE
Country-club-style racetracks are springing up to cater to enthusiasts and wealthy novices eager to hit the gas.

12 SPORTS
Gotham F.C., a title-winning women's soccer team, plans to leave New Jersey and play its home games in Queens.



GEORGE WYLESOL

A.I.'s Cryptic Effect on Economy

Is artificial intelligence already causing job losses? Or, as some reports say, are companies adding workers? Nobody knows, which is dangerous for policymaking.

By BEN CASSELMAN

Pretty much everyone agrees that artificial intelligence has the potential to reshape the economy in the coming decades. But no one is sure what effect the technology is having right now.

According to some measures, A.I. is contributing to high unemployment rates among new graduates and might already have destroyed tens of thousands of jobs. Other sources suggest companies might actually be adding workers as a result of the technology.

A.I. might be contributing to the U.S. inflation problem, or be part of the solution to it. It might be responsible for a recent pickup in productivity growth, or might be playing virtually no role — or the productivity boom itself might be a mirage.

Researchers can't even agree on basic questions like how many companies are using A.I. or which workers are most vulnerable to the disruptions it could cause.

The conflicting signals partly reflect the challenge of detecting economic shifts in real time. Government statistics are inherently backward looking, and they are better at measuring broad trends than developments in specific sectors or regions. New technologies that might lead to the emergence of new products, jobs or entire industries can be particularly difficult to measure.

What makes A.I. different is the speed of its spread through the economy. It has taken less than four years for generative A.I. to go from a novelty useful mostly for writing limericks to a powerful tool adopted by the world's largest corporations. Economists have become convinced that the technology will have profound implications for workers and the economy, even as they disagree about what those implications will be. By the time the data is clear, they warn, it could be too late for policymakers to figure out how to respond.

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4

Businesses Are Bracing For Fallout Of Ruling

By DAVID McCABE and STEVE LOHR

WASHINGTON — Companies are bracing for the fallout of a decision by the Supreme Court last week that allows the president to fire members of federal regulatory boards for any reason, stripping those regulators of their independence from the White House.

The decision has implications for more than a dozen agencies that oversee power companies, railways, investment banks, labor disputes and the biggest technology companies. Now, corporate executives and lawyers are grappling with the potential for these agencies — which set the rules and enforce them — to become even more political.

The decision "enables a lot more mischief," said Douglas Melamed, a former general counsel at the chip maker Intel and a former senior official at the Justice Department. "The president is totally free to micromanage things and really squeeze these agencies."

CONTINUED ON PAGE B3

Ship Attacks Threaten Flow Of Oil in Strait

By Jenny Gross, Eric Schmitt and Qasim Nauman

The fragile recovery of oil and gas shipments through the Strait of Hormuz was put in jeopardy on Tuesday after three ships were attacked, a burst of violence that drew retaliation against Iran from Washington.

The United States revoked a sanctions waiver that allowed Iran to sell oil for 60 days starting in late June. The lifting of sanctions on Iran, which had faced heavy financial punishment for decades, had represented a shift that could have helped the country rebuild its economy if made permanent.

A U.S. official said that Iran's actions in the strait were "wholly unacceptable" to the United States. Oil prices, which were already higher, jumped further after the U.S. move.

One of the ships that was attacked, a Qatari liquefied natural gas carrier called Al Rekayyat, was in waters off the Omani coast, according to the International Maritime Organization, a United Nations agency.

CONTINUED ON PAGE B4

Vow to Bring Investment May Falter

By LYDIA DePILLIS and ANA SWANSON

Over the course of 2025, President Trump made bold claims about the amount of investment pouring into the United States from foreign countries. With his administration putting steep tariffs on imports, he argued, foreign companies would be forced to locate their factories in America for access to the U.S. market.

Mr. Trump claimed investment numbers that increased from $17 trillion last September, to $18 trillion in December, to $21 trillion. That would amount to two-thirds of U.S. gross domestic product, and is far more than the White House ever enumerated on its website tracking the commitments.

Nevertheless, some of that investment was promised by U.S. trading partners who were looking for ways to appease the president in the face of stiff tariffs. Mr. Trump extracted about $5 trillion in commitments, over the course of up to 10 years, from the European Union, Asia and the Persian

CONTINUED ON PAGE B3

The Digest

ENTERTAINMENT

'Law & Order: SVU' Star To Host Emmy Awards

When it comes to hosting the Emmy Awards, the network broadcasting the event usually turns to a late-night host, a sitcom actor or a comedian.

But NBC is going in a different direction this year, tapping one of its most popular dramatic actresses instead. NBC announced on Tuesday morning that the "Law & Order: SVU" star Mariska Hargitay, right, will host the 78th Emmy Awards in September.

It's the first time in years that a network has pivoted away from a comedian. Some recent selections include the stand-up comedian Nate Bargatze, the "Schitt's Creek" stars Eugene and Dan Levy and the late-night host Jimmy Kimmel.

The last time NBC broadcast the event, in 2022, the network selected the "Saturday Night Live" mainstay Kenan Thompson.

"Few performers have left the kind of mark on television that Mariska has," Jen Neal, NBC's executive vice president of live events, said in a statement. "For 27 seasons, she has brought strength, compassion and humanity to one of the most beloved characters on TV."

KOBE WAGSTAFF FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Ms. Hargitay said it was her "great honor" to "celebrate this extraordinary community of storytellers."

Ms. Hargitay has portrayed Capt. Olivia Benson on "Law & Order: SVU" since 1999, and is one of the best-paid actors in all of television.

Nominations for the Emmy Awards will be announced on Wednesday. NBC will air the Emmys on Monday, Sept. 14, and the event will also stream on Peacock.

The Television Academy, which administers the Emmys, could use a ratings bump this year because the rights to the award show will soon be up for grabs.

Last year, the Emmys commanded an audience of 7.4 million viewers on CBS, an 8 percent increase from 2024. *JOHN KOBLIN*

M. & A.

Getty Images Pulls Out Of Deal With Shutterstock

Getty Images notified Shutterstock on Tuesday that it is scrapping plans to combine the companies in a $3.7 billion deal because it didn't want to comply with a key condition laid out by Britain's antitrust regulator.

In a filing, Getty said that it "delivered a written notice to Shutterstock terminating the Merger Agreement," which was announced last year as part of a plan to create a visual content giant.

Britain's Competition and Markets Authority had approved the deal following an investigation, but only on condition that Shutterstock's editorial business be sold to an approved buyer.

The regulator was concerned that the combined company would result in a substantial lessening of competition resulting in reduced choice and higher prices for U.K. media outlets.

Getty's board had voted unanimously last week against proceeding with the deal if it required selling Shutterstock's editorial business.

Both companies license content including photos, illustrations, music and videos to major British media companies, advertisers, publishers and designers, as well as small and medium businesses in the creative industry, according to the CMA. *ASSOCIATED PRESS*

S&P 500 INDEX
−0.4%
7,503.85

DOW JONES INDUSTRIALS
−0.2%
52,925.15

NASDAQ COMPOSITE INDEX
−1.2%
25,818.69

10-YEAR TREASURY YIELD
4.54%
+0.076 points

CRUDE OIL (U.S.)
$70.44
+$1.89

GOLD (N.Y.)
$4,157.40
−$10.10

Stocks & Bonds

A.I. Sector Continues Fall, Weighing on Rest of Wall Street

By The Associated Press

The roller-coaster ride for A.I. stocks snapped back down on Tuesday and dragged Wall Street lower.

The S&P 500 fell 0.4 percent even though the majority of stocks within the index rose. The drops for stocks in the artificial-intelligence industry dragged the Nasdaq composite down 1.2 percent, while the Dow Jones industrial average dropped 130 points, or 0.2 percent, from its record.

The weakness began in Asia, where Samsung Electronics tumbled 6.9 percent in Seoul. The tech giant gave a preliminary look at its performance for the second quarter, and the numbers were strong. Samsung Electronics said it expects to report its operating profit surged roughly 1,800 percent from a year earlier.

Analysts called the numbers surprisingly good, but they still weren't enough for investors after Samsung Electronics' stock had come into the day having more than doubled in the year so far.

On Wall Street, A.I. stocks have been under similar pressure in recent weeks on worries that their prices shot too high and that A.I. may not produce enough productivity and profits to make all the investments in chips and data centers worth it.

Drops of 6.5 percent for Advanced Micro Devices, 9.7 percent for Intel and 4.7 percent for Micron Technology were the heaviest weights on the market.

SpaceX, which owns the xAI business, fell 6.8 percent in its first trading day after getting included in the Nasdaq 100 index.

Outside of tech, Vertex Pharmaceuticals slipped 1.4 percent after saying it agreed to buy Crinetics Pharmaceuticals for $85 per share in cash. Crinetics, which develops therapeutics for endocrine diseases, soared 98.7 percent.

Rivian Automotive dropped 18.1 percent after the electric vehicle company said it was selling 75 million shares of its stock, a move that dilutes the ownership stakes of earlier shareholders.

All told, the S&P 500 fell 33.58 points to 7,503.85. The Dow Jones industrial average dipped 130.76 to 52,925.15, and the Nasdaq composite sank 302.47 to 25,818.69.

Stocks also felt pressure from a rise in oil prices after the British military said three tankers were struck by projectiles in the Strait of Hormuz. The United States later revoked a license that had authorized the sale of Iranian oil as part an interim deal to end the fighting between the U.S. and Iran.

That hurt hopes that the Strait of Hormuz may fully reopen to oil tankers carrying crude to customers worldwide from the Persian Gulf.

Brent crude, the international standard, rose 3 percent to settle at $74.16 per barrel.

Higher oil prices put upward pressure on inflation, and Treasury yields climbed in the bond market. The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 4.54 percent from 4.48 percent late Monday and from just 3.97 percent before the war with Iran began.

High yields worldwide have been rattling investors since the war sent oil prices bursting above $100 per barrel in March.

The worry is that high inflation may force the Federal Reserve and other central banks to increase interest rates.

Higher rates can keep a lid on inflation, but they also slow the economy and hurt prices for all kinds of investments.

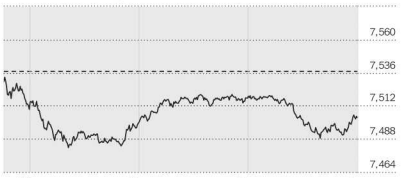
In stock markets abroad, South Korea's Kospi tumbled 4.9 percent because Samsung Electronics by itself makes up more than a quarter of the index.

Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 2.1 percent, and Germany's DAX lost 1.4 percent for two of the world's bigger moves.

The S&P 500 Index

Position of the S&P 500 index at 1-minute intervals on Tuesday

-- Previous Close: 7,537.43



Source: FactSet THE NEW YORK TIMES

6.8%
Decline of SpaceX shares on its first trading day on the Nasdaq.

NEWSLETTER: DEALBOOK

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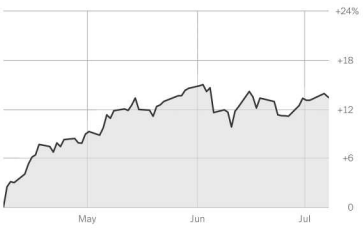
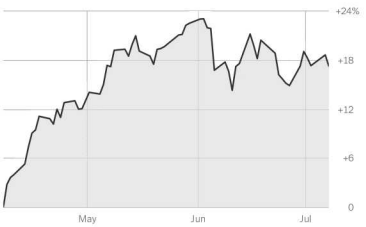
What Happened in Stock Markets Yesterday

POWERED BY FACTSET

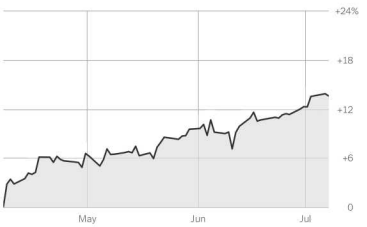
S&P 500 7,503.85 ↓ −0.4%
3 month performance: **+13.4%**



Nasdaq Composite Index 25,818.69 ↓ −1.2%
3 month performance: **+17.3%**



Dow Jones Industrials 52,925.15 ↓ −0.2%
3 month performance: **+13.6%**



Best performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. Cognizant Tech. (CTSH)	$43.94	+6.2%
2. Occidental Petroleum (OXY)	$51.68	+5.9
3. Cboe Global Markets (CBOE)	$258.64	+5.5
4. Gilead Sciences (GILD)	$136.36	+5.2
5. Devon Energy (DVN)	$42.41	+5.1
6. Dow Inc. (DOW)	$28.64	+4.8
7. APA Corp. (APA)	$34.00	+4.7
8. ConocoPhillips (COP)	$108.44	+4.7
9. GoDaddy (GDDY)	$89.32	+4.3
10. Gartner (IT)	$140.80	+4.2

Worst performers

S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE
1. Intel (INTC)	$110.39	−9.7%
2. Teradyne (TER)	$343.11	−9.6
3. Generac Holdings (GNRC)	$235.80	−8.5
4. Western Digital (WDC)	$532.10	−7.9
5. Marvell Technology (MRVL)	$230.70	−7.4
6. SANDISK (SNDK)	$1,617.70	−7.3
7. KLA Corp. (KLAC)	$216.47	−7.2
8. Lam Research (LRCX)	$326.13	−6.9
9. AMD (AMD)	$516.11	−6.5
10. GE Vernova (GEV)	$1,077.08	−6.5

Most active

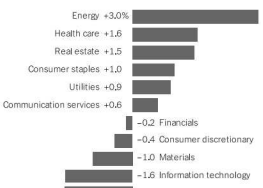
S&P 500 COMPANIES	CLOSE	CHANGE	VOLUME IN MIL.
1. Intel (INTC)	$110.39	−9.7%	138
2. NVIDIA (NVDA)	$196.93	+0.7	123
3. AT&T Inc. (T)	$21.09	+2.5	66
4. Palantir Technologies (PLTR)	$134.37	+1.4	52
5. Micron Technology (MU)	$938.38	−4.7	52
6. Pfizer Inc. (PFE)	$24.07	+1.5	44
7. Ford Motor (F)	$13.56	−2.0	43
8. Oracle (ORCL)	$141.60	−1.5	43
9. Apple (AAPL)	$310.66	−0.6	42
10. Amazon.com (AMZN)	$245.98	+0.7	40

Regional and emerging markets

	TOTAL RETURN 1 YR	5 YRS	TOTAL ASSETS IN BIL.
1. Vanguard Emerging Markets Stock Index Fund Institutional Plus Shares (VEMRX)	+30.6%	+5.4%	162.8
2. American Funds New World Fund Class R-6 (RNWGX)	+36.3	+7.1	90.9
3. Strategic Advisers Fidelity Emerging Markets Fund (FGOMX)	+60.4	+8.6	42.0
4. DFA Emerging Markets Core Equity 2 Portfolio Institutional Class (DFCEX)	+46.5	+9.2	39.6
5. Fidelity Series Emerging Markets Opportunities Fund (FEMSX)	+62.5	+8.3	33.9
6. GQG Partners Emerging Markets Equity Fund Investor Shares (GQGPX)	+14.6	+3.4	22.0
7. Strategic Advisers Emerging Markets Fund (FSAMX)	+59.8	+8.2	17.0
8. Fidelity Emerging Markets Index Fund (FPADX)	+54.6	+7.5	15.6
9. DFA Emerging Markets Value Portfolio Institutional Class (DFEVX)	+45.9	+11.1	14.7
10. Nomura Emerging Markets Fund Class R6 (DEMZX)	+239.7	+25.5	14.5

Source: Morningstar

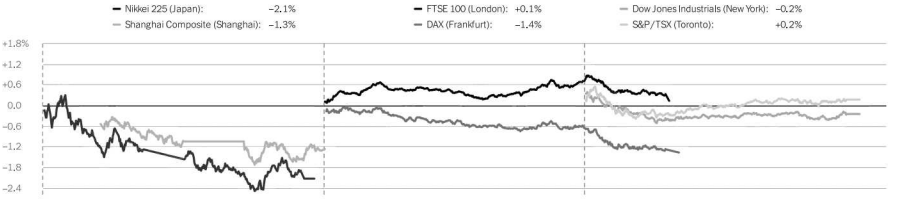
Sector performance
S&P 500 SECTORS



How stock markets fared yesterday in Asia ...
Nikkei 225 (Japan): −2.1%
Shanghai Composite (Shanghai): −1.3%

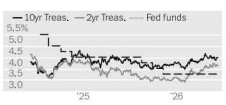
... in Europe
FTSE 100 (London): +0.1%
DAX (Frankfurt): −1.4%

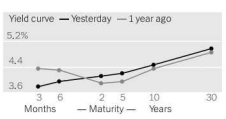
... and North America
Dow Jones Industrials (New York): −0.2%
S&P/TSX (Toronto): +0.2%



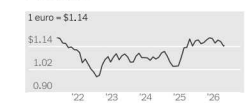
What Is Happening in Other Markets and the Economy

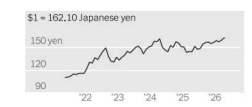
Bonds



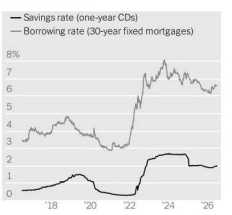


Currencies

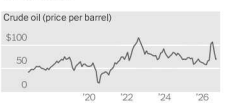


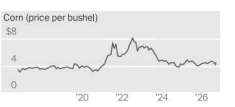


Consumer rates

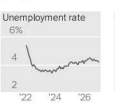


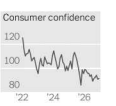
Commodities

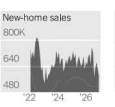


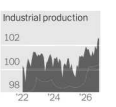


Economy









POLICY | MEDIA

Trump Promised a Foreign Investment Boom. It May Not Happen.

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

Gulf. If that money materialized, it would constitute an overwhelming influx of capital, nearly double the average rate of investment America received from 2015 through 2024.

Investment deals can take years to close, meaning that definitive evidence will take time to show up. For now, the early data contains notes of both promise and concern. Factors other than federal policy probably contributed to an apparent surge in new foreign investment last year, while a broader measure suggests that, on the whole, foreign investors are treading cautiously.

"This year, some things are positive, but it's a mixed picture," said Gregory Auclair, a statistician with the Peterson Institute for International Economics. "It just means that you're going to need a lot in future years to catch up with the amounts that are promised, if they are credible at all."

New foreign direct investment in the United States rebounded significantly, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The figure increased to $232 billion last year from $155 billion in 2024, reversing a three-year downward trend. The data includes foreign acquisitions of U.S. companies, as well as money foreign firms spend to establish new companies and expand existing ones. The ramp-up is also reflected in project announcements collected by FDI Intelligence, a subsidiary of The Financial Times.

But the federal statistics agency publishes another measure that takes a more holistic view of investment, incorporating foreign money that is withdrawn from the country as well. When divestments, intracompany lending and other financial flows are included, the trajectory changes: Net investment into the United States decreased slightly last year and sat below the average for the previous decade.

In recent years, international capital has increasingly arrived in the form of earnings from U.S. affiliates that are reinvested locally, rather than from new businesses either purchased or built from the ground up.

"Companies that are sophisticated and familiar with the U.S. market continue to double down on their investments here, but new equity is just not coming into the U.S. in the proportion that it once was," said Jonathan Samford, the president of the Global Business Alliance, which supports foreign investors. "The car continues down the highway in forward motion, but it's not accelerating."

Trump's Tariff Stick

The Trump administration has used a heavy hand to push foreigners to invest in the United States, lowering tariffs on the European Union, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and other trading partners in exchange for huge investment promises. Foreign governments and companies have pledged to invest in U.S. chip plants, nuclear projects, ports, mines and factories.

Some commitments, for example from the European Union, appear to contain repackaged announcements that companies had already intended to make. But the biggest such promise — a $550 billion investment pledge from Japan, America's biggest source of foreign investment — has been moving forward.

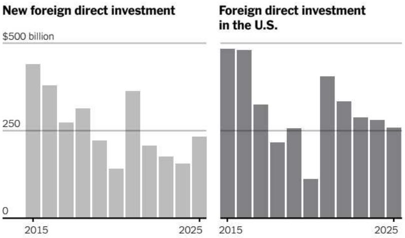
The two governments announced a first set of investments they pegged at $36 billion in February, including plans in Ohio for the largest natural-gas-generation facility in history, as well as a deepwater crude-oil export facility in the Gulf of Mexico. In March, they announced more investments in the tens of billions of dollars, including nuclear plants.

They have been preparing to announce a third round of investments that contain more power and infrastructure projects.

The Japanese investments have a novel structure negotiated by Howard Lutnick, the commerce secretary and a former Wall Street financier. Japan provides the capital and shares in the

Two Measures of Foreign Investment Tell Different Stories

The value of foreign acquisitions and expansions rose in 2025. A broader measure, which includes divestments and other financial flows, dropped.



Note: The new foreign direct investment measure includes only first-year expenditures.
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis.
LYDIA DEPILLIS/THE NEW YORK TIMES

cash flow from the projects. But while a foreign government or company owns the asset in traditional foreign direct investment, under this model the U.S. government owns it. Any private companies involved are paid a fee.

The United States is working on a similar model with South Korea and has presented the Korean government with a list of potential projects, though they have not been funded yet.

Kurt Tong, a former diplomat in Japan who is now a managing partner at the Asia Group, a consultancy, said he expected Japanese investment to rise significantly as a result of the deal. He added, though, that the $550 billion total was still probably "aspirational," given that Japan's entire investment stock in the United States was $754 billion in 2024.

The biggest challenge now for the deal is not the availability of capital from Japan, Mr. Tong said, but finding suitable U.S. projects.

"The bazooka is loaded with cash. Now they've got to find projects to shoot that cash at," he said. "That's the next difficult part of this whole exercise — is finding projects which are big enough and are bankable and feasible and at least somewhat strategic."

Reva Goujon, a director at the Rhodium Group, a research firm, said uncertainty about forthcoming tariffs on semiconductors and other products, as well as over the U.S. trade deal with Canada and Mexico, was holding some investments back.

Foreign governments have felt less pressure to abide by deals made under the threat of tariffs that the Supreme Court overturned in February. For some companies, tariffs have raised the cost of imported inputs, like the steel, aluminum or machinery needed to build new factories.

But Ms. Goujon said Japan, which has been dealing with a stagnant economy, recognized the need to seek higher returns abroad and strengthen ties with the United States given security challenges from China.

"Is there political will by Japan and by many of these companies to invest in strategic projects in the U.S.?" she asked, rhetorically. "Absolutely."

Bigger Levers

Much of what pushes foreign investment up or down has little to do with government policy. Rather, it's driven by macroeconomic factors that propel capital across borders, or technological developments that attract investors.

For example, the uptick in new foreign investment in 2025 was partly driven by lower interest rates that unfroze mergers and acquisitions, driving some of the foreign purchases of companies in America. The year also saw mounting investment in data centers for artificial intelligence, reaching nearly $500 billion worldwide, according to Gartner. The United Nations found that global foreign investment flows rose 6 percent in 2025, mostly across a small number of megaprojects in developed nations.

"This pickup — and many of the sectors are similar — is a global phenomenon," said Adnan Mazarei, a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics. "It's not entirely obvious that this is a result of tariffs or not, because the Europeans are not doing this, but there is huge investment happening in, for example, A.I. and data centers all over the world."

But political decisions can swamp those larger forces, and Mr. Trump's attack on Iran may be one of them. The resulting war has had two effects: One, it raised energy prices, which fueled inflation and drove up interest rates. And two, it made countries that had been large sources of outbound investment rethink their overseas projects. That's particularly true of nations in the Persian Gulf, which now have a lot of damaged energy and defense infrastructure to rebuild.

"The war is now slowing down the plan of outward investment," said James Zhan, who heads the board of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies.

The war isn't the only thing weighing on foreign investment. Removing Biden-era subsidies for clean energy development cut short a boom in battery manufacturing and renewable energy deployment, much of which was financed from overseas. That's particularly true of Chinese companies, according to an analysis by the Rhodium Group.

The broader loss of confidence in the United States' sticking to any policy commitments has damaged its reputation as a safe home for global capital. A survey by the consulting firm Kearney found that America substantially dropped in the eyes of foreign investors last year, with Canada and Japan gaining favor.

"I think there are some really fundamental doubts about the long-term trustworthiness of the U.S. both as an economic partner and a military ally," said Thilo Hanemann, a partner at the Rhodium Group. He added, "There's been a huge change of mind over the past two years on that."

Perhaps a larger obstacle to the future of foreign investment comes in the form of skepticism of its benefits to local communities throughout the country. Although foreign companies employ millions of Americans, U.S. officials sometimes see them as unfair competition, or a security threat. That's why Representative Ro Khanna of California and Senator Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin, both Democrats, introduced a bill last month that would set up a board to evaluate the desirability of inbound investments, potentially adding uncertainty to deal-making processes.

Sam Moses, a site selection attorney with Parker Poe, said he had seen rising resistance to large industrial development. That's especially true, he said, in states that have seen huge flows of foreign direct investment, like South Carolina, where he's based. A blitz of data centers, which have voracious demand for water and electricity, has also soured public opinion about many kinds of megaprojects.

"They're concerned about traffic and infrastructure and how the company's location will impact all of that," Mr. Moses said. "There's a lot of balancing going on in states that have historically been targets."

Businesses Brace for Fallout of Ruling Giving Trump Power Over U.S. Agencies

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

The ruling adds to the unpredictability of doing business in the United States, where regulation has heavily depended on which party is in power. Republicans tended to loosen the rules, while Democrats tended to add restrictions.

Under the Biden administration, for example, regulators limited drilling on public lands, banned noncompete agreements and sued Adobe and Live Nation, arguing that the companies broke antitrust and consumer protection laws. After President Trump took office a second time, his appointees quickly reversed or abandoned those decisions and settled those lawsuits.

These policy swings tended to be moderated by the federal agencies, which have long held bipartisan leadership. And federal law forbade the president to fire the regulators without cause.

Now more volatile policy-making could lie ahead as a result of the court decision, former corporate executives, former regulators and legal experts warned. Many companies plan for expansions and investments years in advance, and regulatory uncertainty often stifles growth.

"Stability is the most important thing," said Samuel J. Palmisano, a former chief executive of IBM and now a board member of a venture fund, America's Frontier Fund. The decision "will slow down innovation."

The independent agencies affected by the court's decision include the Federal Trade Commission, which works to protect consumers from practices like deceptive advertising or those harmful to competition; the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which oversees interstate power lines, natural gas operations and regional power grid operators; the Surface Transportation Board, which regulates railroad rates; and the National Labor Relations Board, which resolves disputes between employees and employers.

Commissioners leading the agencies — traditionally a mix of Republicans and Democrats — are appointed by the president. In 1935, the Supreme Court ruled that the president could not fire the regulators over political or policy differences.

That held until last year, when Mr. Trump dismissed Democratic commissioners at agencies including the Federal Trade Commission, the National Labor Relations Board and the Surface Transportation Board.

Rebecca Kelly Slaughter, a fired F.T.C. member, took her case to the Supreme Court, saying she had been wrongfully terminated. The court ruled against her last week.

A spokesman for the F.T.C., Joe Simonson, said the agency offered

ALLISON ROBBERT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A ruling by the Supreme Court affects federal agencies that regulate areas including tech companies, investment banks, labor disputes and railroads.

"clarity for the business community that was under assault by the previous administration's left-wing ideologues." He added, "There is nothing novel about President Trump's position as the rightful leader of the executive branch, which the court affirmed."

Some regulatory experts and corporate advisers said it was unclear how much — if at all — the ruling might shift the agencies' political agendas. Even when independent, most regulators adhered to the White House's policies, they said.

"The notion that Slaughter is a big deal because it gives the president more composed power over the policy agenda is exaggerated," said Joseph Grundfest, who was a commissioner at the Securities and Exchange Commission in the 1980s and is now a law and business professor at Stanford.

But the agencies have traditionally ignored politics when taking legal action, he said. The White House could now assert greater control over decisions like whether to sue a company over insider trading.

Companies are trying to plan ahead, said Matthew L. Schwartz, the chairman of the law firm Boies Schiller Flexner.

"They're doing what smart people and smart companies do, which is solicit input from a lot of knowledgeable people about what might be coming around the corner so they can try and do some contingency planning," said Mr. Schwartz, who has represented companies including the fantasy sports app DraftKings and the insurer AIG.

The president's new ability to remove decision makers at federal agencies could lead to big changes in crucial sectors of the economy.

Two freight rail companies, Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern, last year proposed a merger that would create the nation's first single network connecting the East and West coasts, a deal that requires approval by the Surface Transportation Board. Last year, Mr. Trump fired Robert E. Primus, a board member who had voted against a big rail merger in 2023.

With Mr. Primus's removal, Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern may have a better chance of getting the board to approve their merger, some rail analysts have said. A spokeswoman for the board declined to comment.

Some consumer advocacy groups are concerned about the potential impact of a partisan Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on energy prices.

"FERC has really been through Republican and Democratic administrations and really worked hard to be nonpartisan," said Tyson Slocum, the director of the energy program at Public Citizen, a consumer advocacy group. "What the Supreme Court has done is toss that aside."

The ruling also has implications for companies with business before the N.L.R.B., which includes adjudicating labor practice cases and recognizing new unions.

If the agency loses — or even appears to lose — its political independence, or seems beholden to the president, unions and companies will be less trusting of its rulings, labor experts said. State labor agencies may try to step in to fill the void, which could create a patchwork of conflicting rules.

Companies have already scrambled over the past year and a half to curry favor with the Trump administration. Mr. Trump's new power to fire regulators who don't align with him may accelerate that, corporate experts said.

David McCabe reported from Washington and Steve Lohr from New York. Reporting was contributed by Ivan Penn from Los Angeles, Jordyn Holman from Chicago, and Peter Eavis, Lauren Hirsch and Rebecca Davis O'Brien from New York.

Is 'The View' a News Show? ABC Says That Was Already Settled. In 2002.

By BENJAMIN MULLIN and JIM RUTENBERG

ABC on Monday urged federal regulators to stick with a decision their predecessors made two decades ago that called "The View," the network's popular talk show, a news program.

The Federal Communications Commission has been investigating whether the show violated rules that require broadcasters to give equal time to political candidates from both parties. At the center of the debate is whether "The View" qualifies as a "bona fide news program," which would exempt it from those rules.

In a filing to the agency on Monday, the network said that matter was already settled, citing a 2002 decision from the F.C.C. qualifying it for the exemption.

"Nothing about 'The View' that the law cares about has changed since the commission last answered that question more than two decades ago," the network said in its petition. "The program remains regularly scheduled, remains under ABC's control, and remains driven by the same lodestar — newsworthiness — that has long led it to interview the day's most consequential figures."

A representative for the F.C.C. did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

"The View" has interviewed several prominent politicians since Brendan Carr, the head of the F.C.C., announced his investigation in February, including Vice President JD Vance, the former Republican congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Senator Cory Booker, Democrat of New Jersey.

The F.C.C.'s focus on "The View" plays on longstanding grudges held by the president against the show and some of its hosts, and thrusts a talk show started by the ABC journalist Barbara Walters as a breezy kaffeeklatsch into a molten national debate over free-speech rights and the Trump administration's war against traditional media. Mr. Carr's investigation has led to tens of thousands of comments from the public on the

GABRIELA PASSOS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brendan Carr, the chairman of the F.C.C., announced his investigation of ABC's "The View" in February.

F.C.C. website.

The current administration has waged a multifront war against the media, threatening litigation, revoking press credentials and issuing bare-knuckled public remarks from the White House briefing room. The F.C.C. is also undergoing a wider review of whether ABC should be allowed to continue to own some of the country's most important local television stations.

At issue for "The View" are longstanding rules from the early era of electronic broadcasting that require television and radio stations — licensed by the F.C.C. — to grant equal time to candidates for the same office.

News programming was exempted from those rules, and over the years talk shows, including "The View," came to fall under the same carve out.

Mr. Carr announced earlier this year that he was going to be far more restrictive in granting such exemptions, and is now effectively trying to pull back the 2002 determination about "The View." The agency in March compelled ABC to file for a new determination, and the network conveyed that its latest filing had been made under duress.

In its filing, ABC said it believed that the matter should go before the full commission for a vote, rather than remain with the F.C.C.'s media bureau, though Mr. Carr exerts a great deal of control over the entire agency.

The ABC filing is co-signed by Paul D. Clement, one of the nation's leading conservative Supreme Court litigators, indicating ABC would challenge a loss of its exception.

One of the leading conservative groups siding against ABC, the Center for American Rights, has argued that "The View" should not count as a bona fide news program because its hosts are not professional journalists.

It also argued in a June submission that the program had a "deep and consistent lack of balance" that suggested the airtime was being used to forward a political agenda, "rather than as an exercise in good-faith newscasting."

ABC News has denied as much but, in its filing, it also said it was not government's role to decide what did and didn't constitute political bias.

Newspaper Notice

Department of Justice, Antitrust Division

Take notice that the United States has filed a proposed Final Judgment in a civil antitrust case in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, *United States et al. v. Live Nation Entertainment, Inc.*, Civil Action No. 1:24-cv-3973. On August 30, 2024, the United States filed an Amended Complaint (the "Complaint) alleging that Live Nation Entertainment, Inc. and Ticketmaster L.L.C. ("Defendants") violated Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1–2, as well as several State laws by engaging in anticompetitive conduct in certain ticketing, promotions, and amphitheater markets. The proposed Final Judgment filed on June 12, 2026 requires Defendants to: (1) develop technology to allow Major Concert Venues utilizing Ticketmaster's back-end software to sell and distribute primary tickets through third-party marketplaces; (2) loosen exclusivity provisions in their existing primary ticketing contracts and abide by new restrictions on exclusive contracting for future ticketing contracts; (3) allow promoters and artists to use alternative sellers of tickets at Defendants' amphitheaters; (4) cap ticket service fees at Defendants' amphitheaters; (5) divest control over certain amphitheaters; (6) allow artists who choose to work with other promoters to perform at Defendants' amphitheaters; (7) waive exclusive and preferred booking rights at Major Concert Venues; (8) refrain from engaging in conditioning, retaliation, or content-steering that impairs competition; (9) maintain firewalls that limit disclosure of information between Ticketmaster and Live Nation; (10) terminate their ticketing agreement with the Oak View Group and refrain from entering into similar agreements in the future; (11) share certain data with artists; and (12) notify the United States of certain future acquisitions. It also requires Defendants to submit to oversight by a monitor who will have the power to monitor Defendants' compliance with the Stipulation and Order and proposed Final Judgment. A Competitive Impact Statement filed by the United States on June 29, 2026, describes the Complaint, the proposed Final Judgment, the industry, and the remedies available to private litigants who may have been injured by the alleged violations.

Copies of the Complaint, proposed Final Judgment, and Competitive Impact Statement are available for inspection on the Antitrust Division's website at <http://www.justice.gov/atr> and at the Office of the Clerk of the United States District Court named above.

Interested persons may address comments in English to David Teslicko, Acting Chief, Financial Services, Fintech, and Banking Section, Antitrust Division, Department of Justice, 450 Fifth Street NW, Suite 4000, Washington, DC 20530 (email address: LiveNationPublicComment@usdoj.gov) within 60 days of the first publication date of this notice. Such comments, including the name of the submitter, and responses thereto will be posted on the Antitrust Division's website, filed with the Court, and, under certain circumstances, published in the *Federal Register*.

A.I. Is Reshaping the Economy, but Good Luck Measuring How

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

"The stakes are super high," said Nathan Goldschlag, director of research at the Economic Innovation Group, a think tank. "Getting the policy right is going to depend on getting the measurement right. You can't get the policy right if you don't know what's happening."

Mr. Goldschlag on Thursday published a report documenting the challenge of A.I. measurement and proposing steps to improve it. He and other experts argue that the government and the private sector should be devoting more resources to the problem.

They are getting at least a hearing in Washington. In June, a bipartisan group of senators introduced a bill that would expand data collection and require the federal government to produce an annual report on A.I.'s effect on the labor force.

"The government's got to make some big decisions about A.I. and about the economy, and if you're doing that in a vacuum, you're going to make mistakes," said Senator Mark Kelly, an Arizona Democrat and one of the bill's sponsors. "This affects millions of Americans' lives and millions of businesses. And you can't do this smartly without reliable data."

Mixed Signals

Policymakers aren't flying completely blind. Since 2023, the Census Bureau has asked companies about their A.I. use in a biweekly survey. It has also included questions about the technology in an annual business survey, although only intermittently.

Researchers have developed several measures of "A.I. exposure," many of which use a government database of job descriptions to assess which occupations will be most affected. Economists can use those measures to figure out whether the most exposed occupations are adding jobs more slowly, for example, or experiencing different rates of wage growth.

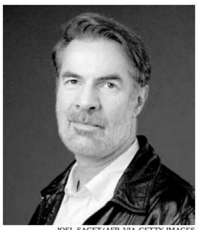
The trouble is that the sources often tell confusing or contradictory stories. Surveys reach wildly different estimates of companies' A.I. use based on how questions are asked. A.I. exposure measures tell different stories about which jobs will be most affected. In one study, economists at Northwestern University and American University found that when they used different exposure measures, those could influence not just the scale of A.I.'s effect on jobs but the direction. A.I. was hurting employment according to some measures, and helping according to others.

"It's like going to the doctor and getting three different diagnoses for the same condition," said Michelle Yin, a Northwestern University economist who was one of the study's authors.

Part of the problem is that the best-known measures of the economy were developed for an era before personal computers and the internet, let alone A.I. The monthly jobs report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, for example, provides breakdowns of job growth in manufacturing, retail and construction, but not in technology, which has adopted A.I. tools most aggressively. Instead, tech is spread across several categories, including information, a broad sector that also includes newspapers and film studios.

The jobs report provides even less information on occupations that might be vulnerable to displacement, such as software developers, accountants and customer service agents. The most recent breakdown of detailed occupations is from May 2025, an eternity ago in the fast-evolving world of A.I.

Still, economists say that for all its shortcomings, government data will be crucial for understanding A.I.'s effect over time.



JOEL SAGET/AFP, VIA GETTY IMAGES — NOAM GALAI/GETTY IMAGES FOR STACKER

Erik Brynjolfsson, left, is the director of the Stanford University Digital Economy Lab, which found entry-level job losses. Ara Kharazian, Ramp's lead economist, said, "It's difficult to measure A.I.'s impact on a business."

Researchers at the Yale Budget Lab, for example, have begun publishing a monthly analysis based on government data that tracks "occupational churn," how quickly the types of jobs that make up a given industry are changing. The measure is designed to be something of an early warning system for A.I.'s effects. As companies begin adopting the technology, the researchers theorize, they are likely to begin hiring for different roles even if their total number of employees doesn't change right away.

"It's easy to pick up case studies in retrospect," said Martha Gimbel, executive director of the lab. "What makes this time different is we are actually trying to measure this and figure this out in real time."

But those efforts could be hampered by a federal statistical system that has been plagued by falling response rates to government surveys. Shrinking budgets have made it hard for statistical agencies to fill the gaps. Erika McEntarfer, who led the Bureau of Labor Statistics until President Trump fired her last year, said an additional $10 million a year in funding would allow the agency to expand the sample size of its monthly labor market survey so that it could do a better job of capturing economic shifts.

"The data we're currently using to understand A.I.'s impact on the labor market is in jeopardy because of funding shortfalls," she said. "It would take only some very modest investments to shore them up."

Private Data

Many economists aren't waiting for the government to catch up. Several research teams have released A.I. measures based on private-sector data that is more detailed and more timely, albeit less comprehensive, than what is available from the government.

The Stanford University Digital Economy Lab last month released a dashboard of A.I. indicators based partly on data from ADP, the payroll processor. That data shows that entry-level jobs have declined sharply in the most A.I.-exposed sectors since ChatGPT debuted in 2022. Erik Brynjolfsson, the lab's director, called the trend a canary in the coal mine for A.I.-driven job losses.

"I think it's comparable to the Industrial Revolution in terms of how it's going to affect the labor market," Mr. Brynjolfsson said. "I wish the federal government was investing more in it. But meanwhile, there's some great private data sources that we're pulling together, and that's what I think is helping to fill that gap."

But the private data is just as muddy as the government statistics. Research published last week by Ramp, an expense management company, and Revelio Labs, a labor market data firm, found that the companies using A.I. most intensely were adding jobs more quickly than those that had been slower to adopt the tools.

Ramp has access to data on which A.I. tools its customers are buying and how much they are spending on them. That allows it to distinguish heavy users from more cautious adopters — a crucial distinction, because it takes time and investment for companies to figure out how to use the tools effectively, said Ara Kharazian, lead economist at Ramp.

"It's difficult to measure A.I.'s impact on a business, because it requires sustained adoption," he said. "It's clear in our work that a simple chat subscription does not drive productivity for a firm."

Such data isn't necessarily representative of the entire economy, however. ADP's clients tend to be relatively large and well established. Ramp's clients tend to be tech savvy. But if A.I. is going to have the effects that its biggest boosters promise, it will need to be adopted by companies of all shapes and sizes.

Work in Progress

Researchers generally agree on one thing: A.I.'s effect on the broad economy has been limited so far.

That isn't necessarily surprising. Mr. Brynjolfsson and other economists have found that technological innovations often follow a J-shaped pattern, in which companies initially become less productive as they experiment with new tools, then experience rapid gains once they figure out how to take advantage of them.

The confusing economic evidence suggests that many companies are still on the downward part of the J.

"The signals are mixed because, probably, the underlying economics are mixed, because we're still in a period of experimentation," said Mr. Goldschlag, the Economic Innovation Group economist. "The tools themselves are still becoming useful."

If white-collar jobs really do begin disappearing en masse, as some in Silicon Valley predict, it won't take long for the losses to show up in the government's data. But even then, it may not be obvious that A.I. is to blame.

The U.S. economy has undergone a series of shocks in recent years that have nothing to do with A.I.: the Covid-19 pandemic and its ripple effects, including the return-to-office battles that persist to the present day; inflation and the high interest rates that the Federal Reserve has adopted to fight it; and drastic swings in government policy on immigration, trade and other areas. If a company has cut jobs since 2022, it isn't easy to tell whether that is the result of A.I., high interest rates or both.

Over time, it should become easier for researchers to separate the effects of A.I. from other forces. But they still won't be able to resolve the question that policymakers and everyday citizens want most to answer: What comes next?

"What the data can almost never tell us is where we're going to be in five to 10 years," said Ms. McEntarfer, the former commissioner of labor statistics. "People are looking to data to answer that question, and it's just too difficult."

As Samsung's Quarterly Profits Soar, Shares Sink

By DAISUKE WAKABAYASHI and JASON KARAIAN

SEOUL — Samsung Electronics said its latest quarterly operating profit was nearly 20 times as high as last year's, spurred by a seemingly insatiable demand for memory chips used in data centers for artificial intelligence.

The preliminary results for April through June, announced by the South Korean tech giant on Tuesday, underscore how the staggering investments that companies are making to build computing infrastructure for A.I. continue to propel earnings for memory chip makers to record levels.

Samsung said it generated an operating profit of 89.4 trillion South Korean won, or roughly $58 billion, in the second quarter. That was well above the 4.7 trillion won it earned in the same quarter last year, and more than it earned in 2024 and 2025 combined. The company's revenue also more than doubled in the quarter, to about $112 billion.

Despite the robust results, Samsung's shares fell 7 percent in Seoul after the announcement, a sign of how lofty investors' expectations have become. Still, Samsung's stock has more than doubled this year, driven by A.I. mania.

The KOSPI, South Korea's benchmark stock index, set a series of records recently, outpacing major markets around the world. It has more than doubled over the past year, and analysts at Goldman Sachs estimate that nearly 90 percent of those gains have been generated by Samsung and SK Hynix, another memory chip maker. Both Samsung and SK Hynix reached trillion-dollar market valuations this year. "The equity market has never been more concentrated," the analysts wrote.

The mania has drawn in lots of individual investors, generating increasingly gut-wrenching volatility in recent months. Although the Goldman strategists warned of a "bumpy path given inherent memory-sector volatility," they forecast a 20 percent gain for the KOSPI in the second half of the year, buoyed by "exceptionally strong" earnings growth.

The KOSPI fell 5 percent on Tuesday, dragged down by Samsung.

High-bandwidth memory chips are a critical component in feeding data necessary for training A.I. systems and running large language models, but the surge in data center spending has exhausted much of the world's supply for these semiconductors. This has allowed Samsung, SK Hynix and other memory makers to raise prices and maintain wide profit margins.

On Monday, SK Hynix began a U.S. share sale worth a potential $28 billion, which would make it the second-largest new share issue on record, after SpaceX's blockbuster $86 billion public offering last month.

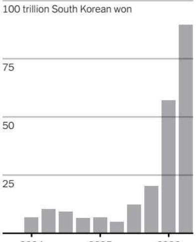
Sanjeev Rana, head of Korea research at CLSA, an Asian-based investment group, said he expected the supply of high-bandwidth memory chips to remain tight through 2028, when new semiconductor factories currently under construction come online and increase production.

High-performance memory chips are essential for reducing the energy costs of running data centers and improving their capabilities.

South Korea produces around 60 percent of the world's memory chips. Yet many worry that the gains will flow primarily to a handful of companies, such as Samsung, with little spillover to the broader economy.

Samsung headed off a strike this year by agreeing to pay employees in its semiconductor division, including assembly-line operators, a bonus of up to $400,000 next year if certain profit targets are met.

Samsung's Quarterly Operating Profit



Source: Samsung Electronics.
THE NEW YORK TIMES

AHN YOUNG-JOON/ASSOCIATED PRESS

The A.I. boom has propelled Samsung's earnings. The tech giant reportedly made more profit last quarter than it did in the last two years combined.

3 Ships Are Attacked in Strait, Threatening Energy Flows

FROM FIRST BUSINESS PAGE

Qatar's foreign ministry blamed Iran and condemned the strike, calling it an "unacceptable attack on the security & safety of international maritime navigation."

Saudi Arabia, in a statement by its foreign affairs ministry, also strongly criticized Iran. It called the attacks, including one on a Saudi oil tanker, "an assault on the security and safety of international navigation."

Tehran has not claimed responsibility for the attacks. There was no comment from Iran, where a dayslong program of funeral ceremonies was underway for Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the supreme leader who was killed on the first day of the war. Negotiations between Iran and the United States have been paused until after the funeral.

The escalation of tension in the region threatened to interrupt what has been the start of a resumption of energy supplies from the region.

"The incident marks the most significant security event affecting commercial shipping in the strait since the U.S.-Iran ceasefire, reinforcing concerns over regional stability, maritime trade and the reliability of global L.N.G. exports," Kpler, a maritime data company, said in a statement.

The Joint Maritime Information Center, a multinational organization that assesses threats on shipping routes, said on Tuesday that the risk of sending ships through the strait was "severe," up from "substantial" on Monday, with further "hostile action considered likely under current conditions."

The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, a monitoring center led by Britain's Royal Navy, said in a notice that a ship off the coast of Oman had caught fire after being struck by an unidentified projectile. The agency said that a second tanker was struck by an unidentified projectile and sustained "structural damage." A third vessel suffered minor damage after being struck by a drone, the agency said.

No casualties or environmental effects were reported in any of the three attacks, according to the British agency.

Iran has said ships can pass through the strait in its waters, but not on the opposite side near Oman. The middle of the strait, which ships used before the Iran war, is considered dangerous because of the risk of mines laid by Iran's military.

Ami Daniel, the chief executive of Windward, a maritime data company, said Iran wanted to deter ships from using the Omani channel to travel through the strait and lay the groundwork to charge for passage.

> ***Further hostile action was considered likely on the high-risk route.***

President Trump was in Turkey for a NATO summit where discussions about the war were expected. He has criticized the alliance's members for not supporting the United States in the war against Iran.

The strait, normally the conduit for a fifth of the world's oil, was effectively blockaded by Tehran after the United States and Israel attacked Iran in late February. The U.S. Navy also imposed its own blockade of Iranian ports. Economies around the world were hit by the energy supply crunch and rise in prices that followed.

The price of Brent crude oil, the global benchmark, rose nearly 3 percent when prices settled on Tuesday, to $74.16 a barrel, but then promptly jumped higher, to about $76, after the U.S. sanctions waiver was revoked. As energy exports from the Persian Gulf have recovered, however tentatively, the price of oil has fallen back to near prewar levels. The price of Brent had spiked as high as $118 a barrel during the worst of the fighting.

The effects of the energy shock linger, especially in products derived from oil. The average price of a gallon of gasoline in the United States was $3.79 on Tuesday, according to the AAA motor club, about 27 percent higher than before the war.

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The Following Vehicles Will Be
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11 ME WDDGF8BB9BR155497
25 ACUR 5J8YE1H06SL011697
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22 CHEV 1GCGTDEN5N1155551
26 HYUN KM8HA3AB0TU344437
20 ME 4JGFB4KBXLA214935
24 MITS JA4ARUAU3RU013246
25 HOND 1HGCY1F24SA079353
08 NISS 1N4BL24E48C182920
16 TOYO 2T1BURHE0GC655728
18 NISS 5N1AT2MV4JC837861
The Following Vehicles Will Be
Sold As Salvage
18 HYUN 5NPE34AFXJH625436
08 AUDI WA1BY74L08D052967
03 CHEV 1GAHG39U531231652
CASH ONLY
Inspection ½ HOUR PRIOR TO SALE
CITY MARSHAL ILEANA RIVERA
BADGE # 4 (718) 238-7770

MARSHAL EXECUTION SALE
PUBLIC AUCTION
Re: Parking Violations Vs. Various
Judgment Debtors I Will Sell
At Public Auction For
City Marshal Matthew Regan
By Courtney Morris, Auctioneer
On Thursday, July 9, 2026 At 10:00AM
At 5 J's Towing 62-02 Beach Channel Dr
Arverne, New York 11692.
All R/T/I in & to the Following Vehicles:
18 BMW WBA4J3C51JBG96008
04 TOYOT JTEEP21A540009010
10 LINCO 2LNBL8CV7AX752928
17 LA-RO SALCR2BG0HH638554
11 AUDI WAUJFAFH0BN017079
10 CHEVR 2CNALDEW2A6366739
11 CHEVR 2CNFLNECXB6327075
10 DODGE 2B3CA3CV1AH228056
11 HYUND 5NPEB4AC9BH205614
10 NISSA 3N1BC1CP6AL465078
02 NISSA 5N1ED28Y52C562831
09 FORD 1FMFK16549EB03060
04 GMC 1GJHG39UX41170381
11 MAZDA JM1DE1HZXB0104624
11 ACURA 2HNYD2H62BH539207
08 ACURA 2HNYD28608H557021
09 FORD 1FBSS31L89DA74354
08 HONDA 1HGCP26408A082981
06 TOYOT JTEEP21A060165667
13 INFINI 5N1AL0MM7DC335006
11 NISSA 1N4AA5AP9BC800099
02 TOYOT 5TDBT48A82S127194
09 HONDA 5J6RE48399L046334
Following Vehicles Sold With Liens
20 HONDA 2HGFC2F68LH546667
23 TOYOT 3TYRX5GN8PT074313
24 HONDA 2HGFE2F50RH585084
16 BMW WBA5B3C53GG256849
20 MEBE 55SWF8EB7LU324892
15 KIA KNAFK4A6XF5277097
20 FORD 1FMSK8DH2LGB00075
17 NISSA 5N1DR2MN0HC680741
19 TOYOT 4T1B11HK5KU248673
16 BMW WBA3N9C59GK249323
18 INFINI 5N1DL0MM9JC512986
23 FORD 1FM5K8LC4PGB02600
20 JEEP 1C4RJFBG5LC255795
10 MAZDA JM1BL1SF3A1269158
18 FORD 1FM5K7F8XJGC13855
16 LEXUS 2T2ZZMCA6GC028972
11 NISSA JN8AZ1MW4BW185401
19 HONDA 5J6RW2H5XKL034315
15 CHEVR 1GNKRGKDXFJ241520
14 NISSA 5N1AR2MM2EC665387
17 HONDA 1HGCR2F38HA211860
19 JEEP 1C4RJFJGXKC613859
14 FORD 1FTNE1EW6EDA92144
Following Vehicles Sold As Salvage
02 OLDS 1GHDT13S422324436
06 ACURA 2HNYD18956H540460
CASH ONLY Inspect ½Hr. Prior to Sale
City Marshal Matthew G. Regan
Badge#5 Phone (929) 251 7497

MARSHAL'S EXECUTION SALE
RE NYC Parking Violations bureau
vs. Various Judgement Debtors.
Arthur Vigar, Auct'r #767619 Sells
For City Marshal Howard J. Schain
Or any other City Marshal.
Friday, July 10, 2026, at 9:30am
Breen Bro's Towing, 1908 Shore
Prkwy., Brooklyn, NY 11214.
22 HONDA (lien) 1HGCV2F32NA002900
22 KIA (lien) KNDJ23AU8N7178304
21 NISSAN (lien) 3N1CP5DVXML558123
21 TOYO (lien) 5TDJSKFC1MS024516
19 HYUND (lien) KM8K3CA51KU247336
19 GMC (lien) 3GKALTEV3KL394380
18 BMW (lien) WBA4J3C54JBG96360
18 CHEVY (lien) 1G1JF5SB0J4135237
19 HONDA (lien) 2HGFC2F81KH503837
17 HYUND (lien) 5NPD84LF4HH054398
15 ME/BE (lien) WDDSJ4GB0FN218557
16 FORD (lien) 1FMZK1CG2GKA25606
10 LINCOLN 2LNBL8CV0AX629407
15 INFIN (salv) JN1CV6EK2FM870154
10 ACURA (lien) 19UUA9F58AA007927
15 BMW WBA5A7C56FD625181
25 ZHILO HZ2TBCNF5S1013816
05 ACURA 2HNYD18255H551539
09 TOYO 4T1BE46K59U823910
24 JIANY HT5TBEAU4R1500162
11 HYUND (lien) 5NPEB4AC0BH302314
19 JEEP (lien) 1C4RJFLG7KC553925
07 KIA KNDJD736875707832
18 HRLY DAV 1HD1KRC16JB613932
05 TOYO 5TDZA23C75S294913
09 VOLKS 3VWTZ71K59M250496
12 CHEVY 1G1ZA5E0XCF165638
07 HONDA (salv) 1HGFA16567L137695
11 HYUN (salv) 5NPDH4AEXBH036800
00 TOYO (salv) 4T1BF22KXYU112483
05 HONDA (salv) 2HGES16515H573583
02 HONDA 1HGCG32242A020162
05 HONDA 5FNRL38615B070222
12 DODGE 2C4RDGCG4CR141547
14 NISS 1N4AA5AP4EC430913
11 ACURA (lien) 2HNYD2H43BH504562
13 NISS(sal/lien) 5N1AR2MM3DC666577
11 CHEVY 2G1WC5EM4B1174017
11BMW (lien) 5YMGY0C53BLK26850
16 ME/BE 55SWF4KB9GU124129
05 TOYO 2TIKR32E95C420930
16 JEEP (salv) 1C4NJPFA8GD576403
12 KIA 5XYKW4A22CG229082
07 HONDA 1HGCM66527A097666
06 HONDA 5FNRL38756B099166
12 SUBARU 4S4BRBKC1C3269978
06 HONDA 5FNRL38696B063911
15 GMC 2GKALMEK6F6357894
02 BMW WBABS33472PG88107
12 CHEVY 1G1PF5SC8C7235557
08 CHEVY 1GCFG15X881216363
Right, Title, & Interest In & To
Inspect ½ Hour Prior to Sale.
For Cash Only. Howard J. Schain,
City Marshal Badge #83
Tel: (718)330-0242

MARSHAL'S EXECUTION SALE
Re: NYC Parking Violations Bureau
Vs. Various Judgment Debtors,
Gerre Bettis, Auct'r
Sells For City Marshal Diane Pollard
On Friday, 07/10/26 At 12:00PM
(Viewing At 11:30AM) At Legacy
Towing, 131-01 39th Ave., Flushing,
NY 11354
20 FORD (rs/lin) 1FTEW1EP6LKF41157
23 DODG (lien) 1C4SDHCT2PC567434
23 SUBA (lien) JF2GTHMC7PH296494
19 BMW (lien) WBAJE7C56KWW37798
16 TOYO (lien) 4T1BF1FK6GU209425
20 TOYO (lien) 5YFEPRAE4LP037188
18 CHRY (lien) 2C4RC1BG4JR142244
16 HYUN (lien) 5NPDH4AE1GH684744
07 ME /B WDBRF92H37F862499
09 CHEV 2CNDL13F596207918
15 NISS 5N1AR2MMXFC701165
14 MAZD (lien) JM1DE1KZ8E0179139
03 CHEV 1GCGG29U231153246
15 FORD 1FADP3K21FL353275
13 VOLK 3VW2K7AJXDM240708
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24 FORD (lien) 1FTBR2Y86RKA67577
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04 TOYO JTLKT324340155492
02 HOND JHLRD78422C064203
18 CHEV (lien) 2GNAXHEV5J6269842
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11 NISS 3N1AB6AP4BL703669
14 ME/B (lien) 4JGDF7CE4EA349546
06 LINC 1LNHM81W36Y600686
14 AUDI WAULFAFR4EA017499
06 CHEV 1GAHG35U261252341
09 AUDI WAUDK78T59A039383
13 DODG (salv) 1C3CDZCB7DN605732
00 TOYO 1NXBR12E4YZ309113
20 SUBA (lien) 4S4WMAFD2L3474089
21 HOND 5J6RW2H86MA016550
02 LEXU JT8BD69S920162540
19 NISS (lien) 5N1AT2MV4KC785147
18 LEXU JTJBARBZ0J2175549
11 FORD NM0KS9BN3BT060885
04 BMW 5UXFA13534LU44657
18 BMW (lien) WBA8B9G50JNU98429
06 ACUR 19UUA66296A037997
25 VOLK (lien) 3VW7X7BU3SM066025
13 NISS (sal) 1N4AL3AP3DC164815
16 CHEV 1GNSKHKC6GR458115
15 NISS 3N8CM0JT4FK719073
13 NISS 5N1AR2MM3DC632798
13 VOLK(sal/lie) 1VWBP7A34DC071158
80 ME/B 11612012026440
13 KIA KNDJT2A63D7527151
07 ISUZ (lien) 4KLB4B1U47J803876
18 BMW (lien) WBA8A3C55JA498861
10 ME/B WDDGF8BB5AR124620
Diane Pollard, City Marshal #60
(212) 925-2005, CASH ONLY

The New York Times
Games
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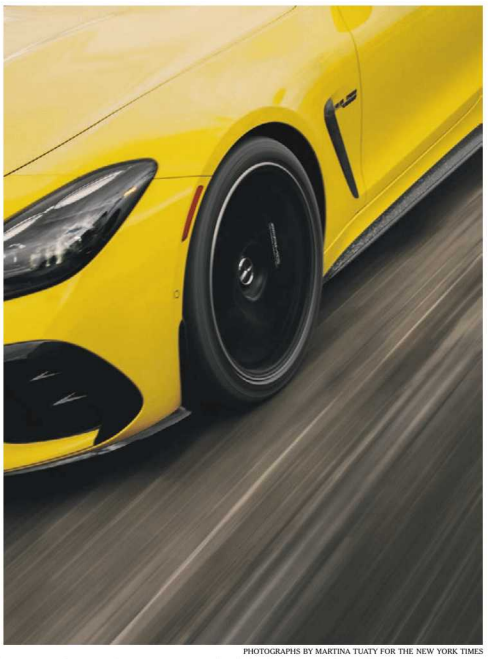
AUTOMOTIVE | TRADE

Racetrack Country Clubs: 'Golf on Steroids'

A motorsports club being built north of Miami will let members satisfy their need for speed.

Wheels

By LAWRENCE ULRICH



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARTINA TUATY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Speeding around the P1 Motor Club's Treasure Coast track in St. Lucie County, Fla., in a Mercedes-AMG GT in May. The Treasure Coast circuit has been paved since this run.

A paradox played out in Miami during a recent Formula 1 weekend: On fashionable city streets, a tangled toy box of candy-colored Lamborghinis, Porsches and other performance cars were all dressed up with no place to go — certainly not at the hurricane-force speeds for which they're designed.

One speed-demon destination for them will soon be found two hours north — in St. Lucie County, on 663 acres of former orange groves. There, Ari Straus and his family are plotting the P1 Motor Club, the latest country-club-style racetrack that lets members indulge their inner Ayrton Senna or Lewis Hamilton.

Mr. Straus and partners are spending $270 million to build a pair of motorsports circuits where members and their families can satisfy a need for speed, and learn the art of driving from real professionals, not a high school gym teacher. Those include Mr. Straus's daughter Aurora Straus, who drives a ferocious Mercedes-AMG GT4 for Murillo Racing, teamed with her newlywed husband, Kenny Murillo.

Ms. Straus points to an explosion of interest in motorsports, led in part by the Netflix hit docuseries "Formula 1: Drive to Survive," on F1 drivers and their ruthless teams. Add a postpandemic urge for bucket-list experiences, and wealthy people willing to pay for them, and members' circuits are growing globally.

"We learned from Covid that life is short," Ms. Straus said. "Having a life-changing experience with family and friends you care about is something we value exponentially more today."

As the P1 Motor Club takes shape, I recently rode shotgun on a four-wheel-drive tour with Mr. Straus and Chris Duplessis, a four-time U.S. rally champion, snapping photos of alligators lazing in irrigation canals. Enormous earthmovers were carving out lakes and elevation changes, unheard-of on notoriously flat Florida circuits such as Sebring. The tracks integrate homages to fabled corners such as the plummeting Corkscrew at Laguna Seca in California and the serpentine uphill curves at Virginia International Raceway.

"They're Lego pieces of famous tracks around the world, turned into a monster circuit," Mr. Straus said.

The difference here is that drivers who make a mistake can slide onto hundreds of feet of grassy runoff instead of smacking a wall or guardrails, as at many old-school circuits, and jump back on the track and nail a tricky corner on the next lap.

An inaugural three-mile Treasure Coast circuit and a forthcoming 4.5-mile P1 Circuit are designed by top companies that have helped create nearly every modern F1 facility. The snaking courses will generate the G-forces and gut-checks that drivers favor, with lengthy straightaways that allow powerful models to top 180 miles an hour.

I got a spin around the Treasure Coast circuit in a Mercedes-AMG GT. The 603-horsepower, 197-m.p.h. brute should be right at home here. Mr. Duplessis, the club's aptly titled director of fun, took the wheel and began drifting on the still-gravel surface as if we were in a "Fast and Furious" movie. Since my drive, the 16-corner circuit has received a meticulous final paving, and drivers are weeks away from testing their mettle at full speed.

"The idea here is to let drivers explore the limits of their cars, with maximum perceived risk but low actual risk," Mr. Straus said.

That's also where expert coaching comes in. In 2014, John Strangfeld's family surprised him with a "Taste of the Track" day at Monticello Motor Club in New York, a track the Strauses helped found. Mr. Strangfeld, who worked for 40 years at Prudential Financial, rising to chairman and chief executive, had appreciated sports cars for their aesthetics but had never imagined driving on a track.

With his first laps in a Mazda Miata, the racing world's famously affordable overachiever, he was hooked. A self-described "washed-up equestrian," now 72, he realized it was time to pursue a less-risky hobby than horse eventing, which includes cross-country and show jumping.

Track construction at P1, where the idea "is to let drivers explore the limits of their cars, with maximum perceived risk but low actual risk."

"You're working with one brain instead of two, and you have a roll cage. It was a good time to declare victory and head to another sport," he said.

Mr. Strangfeld is among 263 charter members at P1. He said he was looking forward to driving his Porsche GT4 Clubsport, the racing version of the sweet-handling Cayman. He most enjoys racing against the clock, analyzing and improving his performance with his longtime driving coach.

Mr. Straus and other developers credit Mark Basso, who opened the Autobahn Club in Joliet, Ill., in 2005, as the godfather of motorsports clubs. Mr. Basso hit on the idea as a Trans Am-driving teenager, tearing around his parents' Illinois golf club and drawing the ire of management.

"I thought, why isn't there a country club for car guys?" Mr. Basso recalled.

By the late 1990s, when he was married with four children, he craved a new physical and social outlet. "How do I get that same passion, adrenaline and camaraderie?" asked Mr. Basso, a former football player. "Golf is OK, but racing is golf on steroids."

Ari Straus, left, and partners are spending $270 million to build a pair of motorsports circuits. Chris Duplessis, a four-time U.S. rally champion, right, is the club's director of fun.

Mr. Basso and his brother-in-law tried to sell investors on the idea. "The banks said, 'Good luck with that,'" he said.

Unbowed, they offered lifetime memberships, with no dues, to 50 founding members for $100,000 each — "a lot of money at the time," he said.

Several clubs have followed. At the Concours Club in Miami, members include the four-time Indianapolis 500 winner Helio Castroneves. The Thermal Club runs near Palm Springs, Calif., and then there are Spring Mountain Motor Resort and Country Club near Las Vegas and Atlanta Motorsports Park.

No luxury country club comes cheap, and sports cars cost more than a set of golf clubs or tennis rackets. P1 charged initial members $150,000 to join, and that has risen to $192,000, with a cap of 850 families. Annual dues are $12,000 for each driving family member. Mr. Straus believes the circuits' design will encourage members to drive more rare and collectible models than they might otherwise avoid risking damage to.

"But if someone comes out in a spec Miata, I'll be happy," Mr. Straus said.

Like many peers, P1 will follow another model pioneered by Autobahn: selling real estate to provide capital for development, including lavish clubhouses, lofts or homes with track views, and garages to store cars. Technicians can provide turnkey maintenance for members.

"People don't want to work on their cars; they just want to come out and play," Mr. Basso said.

At P1, an initial phase has presold 66 of 68 garage townhouses overlooking tracks. Over roughly five years, plans include 125 luxury residences, a clubhouse, a floating pirate barge restaurant, drifting and karting tracks, and pickleball and padel courts. A Commerce Park will support race teams, manufacturers or suppliers. Mercedes-Benz is already a partner, with plans to host its AMG Experience for owners.

Last fall, Mr. Basso was invited to Japan to speak at the Magarigawa Club, a track perched atop a mountain about two hours south of Tokyo. Circuits have opened or are being developed in Spain, Germany and Australia.

"The seeds keep sprouting from our little tree," he said.

These clubs are breeding grounds for young racers, but also teenagers taking the wheel for the first time. Ms. Straus and her mother, Molly Straus, plan to replicate a teen driving camp they created at Monticello.

"Dozens of parents have told me they're more comfortable having their 16-year-old driving, versus driving themselves, which is a testament to these programs," the daughter said.

The intense concentration demanded by the sport, and its unalloyed joy, reliably transforms teenagers fixated on phones or distracted by social media, Ms. Straus said.

"The same thing that makes racing so therapeutic for adults makes it therapeutic for children," she said. "I always view track driving as meditation for Type A personalities."

U.S. Trade Deficit Widens in May on Record High Import of Goods

By ANA SWANSON

The United States trade deficit in goods and services widened to $77.6 billion in May as America imported more goods than it sold abroad.

Imports rose, climbing 3.3 percent from the previous month, to $395.3 billion, as the United States imported more foreign pharmaceuticals, cellphones, cars and equipment to fill out new data centers.

U.S. exports of goods and services fell 3.2 percent in the month, to $317.7 billion, according to data the Commerce Department released on Tuesday. That included exports of gold, natural gas, computers and pharmaceuticals, which all fell from the previous month. The drop in goods exports was offset somewhat by an increase in service exports, including more revenue earned from foreigners traveling to the United States.

Exports and imports of services both hit a record in May, as did U.S. petroleum exports. Goods imports also hit a record high in the month.

The combination increased the monthly trade deficit, the gap between what the United States imports and what it exports. The U.S. trade deficit in goods and services bounced up more than 42 percent from the prior month.

The Trump administration has sought to reduce the trade deficit with a vast swath of tariffs on foreign goods. Those levies have caused imports, exports and the trade deficit to fluctuate wildly since President Trump came into office.

On average, the monthly trade deficit in goods has been $96 billion in the 16 months since Mr. Trump returned to the White House. That's down about 5 percent from the monthly average in the 16 months before his second term began.

Imports of some goods have fallen, but strong U.S. demand for artificial intelligence technology, foreign medicines and other goods not made in the United States have helped to prop up trade.

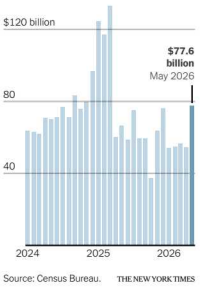
The war in Iran has also affected trade, as the closure of the Strait of Hormuz scrambled supply chains for oil fertilizer, product packaging and helium. In April, the U.S. trade deficit fell on a monthly basis, as the closure of the strait boosted U.S. exports of oil and petroleum to a new monthly record.

U.S. importers are bracing for another significant shift in trade policy. The administration has been working on a new round of levies after the Supreme Court in February struck down the double-digit tariffs that Mr. Trump imposed globally last year.

In February, the administration issued a flat 10 percent duty on every trading partner as a stopgap measure, but the authority for that tariff is expected to expire later this month.

To replace it, the Trump administration has been preparing two major trade investigations using a provision known as Section 301, which would most likely return tariff rates to the levels seen before the Supreme Court decision.

U.S. Trade Deficit In Goods and Services



Source: Census Bureau. THE NEW YORK TIMES

Sports
The New York Times

World Cup

ANALYSIS

From an American Dream to a Nightmare

By PAUL TENORIO
The Athletic

SEATTLE — Not for the first time, the World Cup journey for the U.S. men's national team ended with disappointment and an important reality check.

Despite playing with forward Folarin Balogun — who became the center of a controversy when he was given a reprieve by FIFA from his red-card suspension, with President Trump weighing in — the U.S. saw its dreamy run end in a 4-1 loss to Belgium at Lumen Field.

The Americans played sloppy and ugly soccer in the first half, and Belgium overwhelmed the home team. Charles De Ketelaere scored twice, first capitalizing on a mistake in the back in the ninth minute when the Americans allowed a ball to bounce in their box, then struck again less than two minutes after Malik Tillman's 31st-minute free-kick equalizer. This time, De Ketelaere outjumped and bullied the veteran center back Tim Ream to head in a cross from Leandro Trossard.

The outcome was sealed midway through the second half when the U.S. goalkeeper Matt Freese made a grave mistake, coming out to win the ball outside his box, but then giving it away horribly for an easy empty-net finish

MANU FERNANDEZ/ASSOCIATED PRESS

RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Frustration oozed Monday in Seattle from forward Christian Pulisic (10) and a U.S. fan.

from Hans Vanaken in the 57th minute. Romelu Lukaku, who scored in extra time against the United States in this round 12 years ago, capped it with a stoppage-time finish off the bench.

It was an embarrassing stamp on a hugely disappointing night for the U.S. team, which bows out in the round of 16 for the second consecutive World Cup. Belgium advances to Friday's quarterfinal versus Spain at SoFi Stadium.

The Americans had galvanized a nation with wins over Paraguay, Australia and Bosnia. Those were games they should have won. But on the biggest stage in program history, against a talented Belgium team, they simply looked out of place, and out of their depth.

Four years ago, the U.S. players walked off a field in Qatar after a loss to the Netherlands that exposed the gap between them and the world's best teams. The go-to word that night in Doha was "potential." It was a young team. Imagine what it could look like in four years.

"The potential is just huge going into this next cycle," Ream said then.

"Potential is just potential," Tyler Adams said that night. "But we could see that, if we maximize it in the right way, it can be something good."

But potential must be pushed, harnessed and developed in order to turn it into something more. And no one runs a race in which all the opponents stand still. Four years later, this time on a bigger stage, with home-field advantage and a team in its prime rather than its infancy, the disappointment of this round-of-16 exit stings worse.

Worse than it did in 2022. And 2014. And 2010.

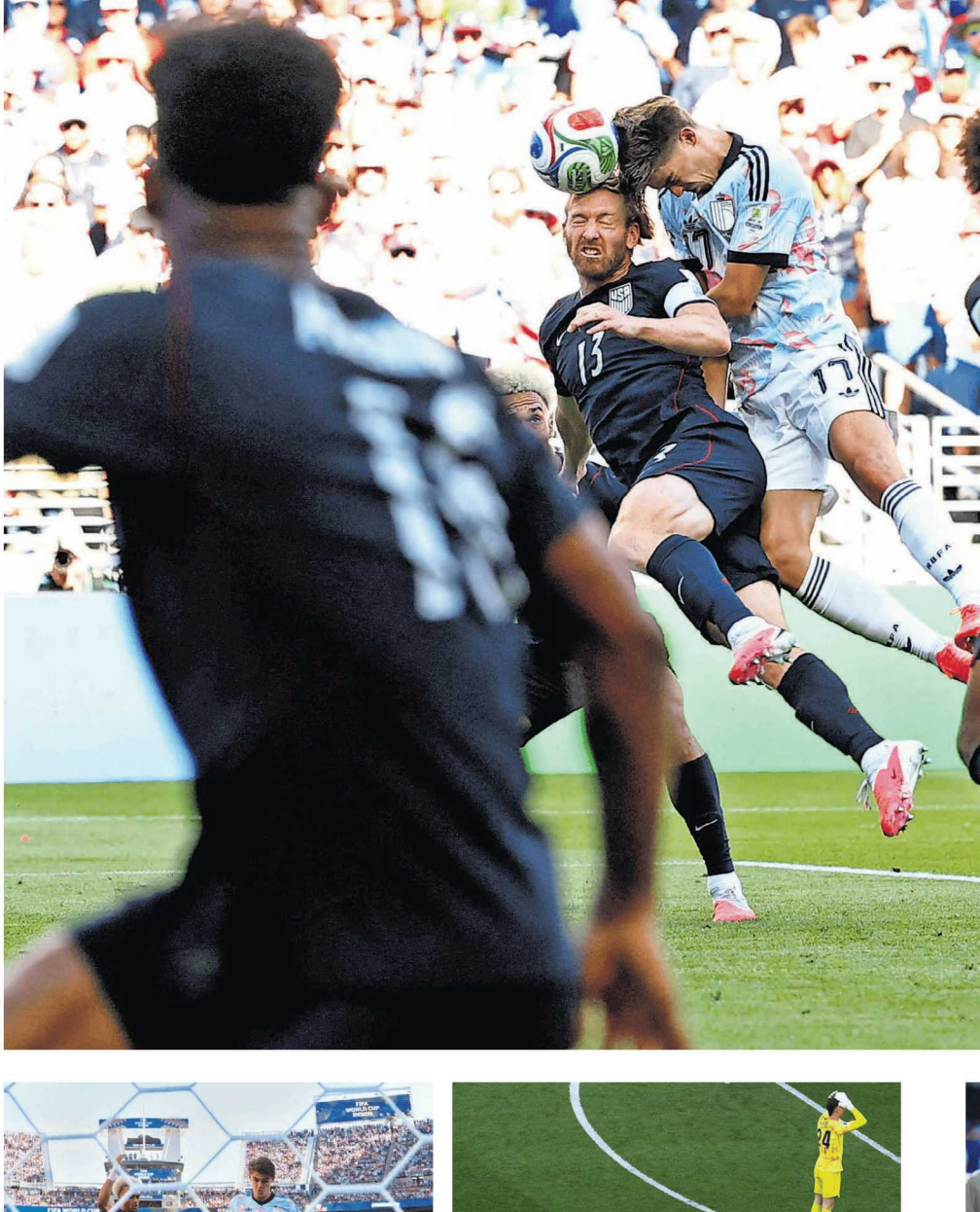
Because this one was supposed to be different. It was a "golden generation," and a home World Cup. It was the team that would change American soccer forever. The opportunity was there to convert nonfans into believers. To inspire the next generation and push the sport forward. We saw the potential in sold-out stadiums in Los Angeles, Seattle and Santa Clara, and in the record TV audiences.

Instead, the United States was knocked out again in the same round — and in worse fashion than in any of those previous World Cups.

Hopefully now, rather than talk about potential, we can reflect on production. This team did not take enough steps between the last World Cup and this one. It wasn't a team far better than the one we watched four years ago in Qatar. There were glimmers of something against lesser opponents. The Americans played some entertaining, attacking soccer with the energy of those packed stadiums behind them, but ultimately wilted against the first top opponent they faced.

"I think we put on some really good performances, for sure," Christian Pulisic said. "We made it through our group in quite a dominant fashion, and then we won the game against Bosnia. We can be proud of that. But I just think we want to have higher hopes than that. We want to be able to go and compete with some of the best in the world. And we just still have that next step to climb."

It is clear after Monday night that there is still an enormous talent gap the United States has to overcome. The weaknesses on the roster at center back and goalkeeper — issues that were not a secret going into the tournament — were exposed against a Belgium team that truly challenged them. Even the best U.S. players struggled mightily. Pulisic lost possession 11 times in 45 minutes, the most of any player on the field. He eventually left injured with a rolled ankle. Sergiño Dest was ineffective on the right and removed at



TROY WAYRYNEN/REUTERS, VIA IMAGN IMAGES

AGUSTIN MARCARIAN/REUTERS

From left, Charles De Ketelaere scoring the game's first goal; Belgians celebrating and the American goalkeeper Matt Freese lamenting Belgium's third goal.

Paul Tenorio is a senior soccer writer for The Athletic.

THE ROAD TO ELIMINATION

GROUP STAGE		GROUP STAGE		GROUP STAGE		ROUND OF 32		ROUND OF 16	
June 12		*June 19*		*June 25*		*July 1*		*July 6*	
United States	**4**	**United States**	**2**	**Turkey**	**3**	**United States**	**2**	**Belgium**	**4**
Paraguay	1	Australia	0	United States	2	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	United States	1

10 SECONDS TO 2030

Goalkeeper's Blunder Leaves Net Open And Plunges U.S. to a 2-Goal Deficit

ALBERT GEA/REUTERS

De Ketelaere (17) scoring the go-ahead goal, shortly after the U.S. had knotted the score at 1-1.

RUTH FREMSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Fans in Pioneer Square in downtown Seattle on Monday before the match.

halftime. Adams won just two of seven ground duels and was dribbled past three times.

Nothing went right. Belgium asserted itself from the start. It played faster. It had the U.S. team flustered and making mistakes. The Red Devils never looked even a tiny bit threatened.

"We just showed that we were better," Dodi Lukébakio said, bluntly.

U.S. Coach Mauricio Pochettino was left looking for reasons. In the end, he reached the same conclusion as Lukébakio did.

"We were not good enough today," he said. "We don't need to find another excuse. Belgium were better than us. That's it. It's very clear. It was really tough from the beginning. We didn't show what normally the team will show — and that is the reality.

"I think we need to learn. It's a process to learn. We need to assess that game, and we need to see why we didn't approach the game in the same way as the rest of the World Cup."

Belgium's win highlights the gap between potential and production.

Pochettino was supposed to be one of the things that put this team over the top. He was the biggest change — alongside the addition of Balogun — from the 2022 cycle to the 2026 cycle. U.S. Soccer spent millions to bring in a world-class manager in order to ensure it got the best out of a group it believed was different from any that came before.

Pochettino challenged the status quo and may have squeezed more juice out of the fruit, but in the end, there were answers that he could not conjure for this pool and other decisions he got wrong. In the biggest game of his national team tenure, his team was run off its home field.

The United States lost to Belgium 12 years ago in the same stage by a score of 2-1 after extra time. The Americans lost to Ghana, 2-1 in extra time, in 2010. It was a 3-1 loss to the Netherlands in Qatar.

The 4-1 loss on Monday, despite all the perceived progress that came before it, felt like a step backward.

This U.S. performance stood apart because of its naïveté. The Americans lacked the fight that has been such a hallmark of the program. They looked less committed to winning the areas a U.S. team must win if it is going to have a fighting chance in these types of games.

"In terms of lessons, it's just to keep being who we are, regardless of the opponent — keep being the high-pressing, dynamic, American way," Sebastian Berhalter said. "The team that doesn't give up, the team that's aggressive. And maybe we lost sight of that a little bit tonight."

The question is what, if anything, will change after this World Cup. Genuinely f good memories were created in the past few weeks. The hope has to be that the positives of the fan engagement will linger. That the people who tuned in for the first time will stick around for more. That the letdown of the Belgium loss will not completely undo the movement the team was creating before that.

"I know it hasn't ended the way we wanted it to," Balogun said. But he added: "We've definitely united the nation, and we've introduced a lot of people to the beautiful game. So that's a huge positive to not be overlooked."

Added Ream: "I don't think that the conversation should die down. I think it should be how incredible this journey has been with this group. How can we keep the conversation going? How can we continue to inspire now that the tournament is over?"

The next part will be harder. American soccer has a tendency to act as if it can simply speak something into existence. That if it talks long enough about potential, it will simply turn into progress. Or that if you say you want to be one of the world's best, and if you repeat it enough times, you will simply get there over time.

It doesn't work that way.

This loss to Belgium showed how much more there is to be done. Changing the mentality around the program is important, but the loss Monday also showed that the United States still has to stay rooted in the reality of where it is in the journey.

Pochettino said this tournament that the team had to follow a mantra: "Work. Believe. Compete." This tournament is a reminder of how much the first leg of that cycle matters. The teardown that started after the qualifying debacle in Trinidad nine years ago has not been built up enough yet. The United States is still a long way from where it needs to be to truly compete.

Monday's loss to Belgium was a critical reminder that while it is nice to aim high and try to touch the moon, as Pochettino likes to say, sometimes it's just as important to look down and see that your feet are still on earth — and that there's a lot left to do down here.

Otherwise, four years from now will not be any different.

A LOOPING PASS Belgium's Brandon Mechele kicked the ball away.

LEAVING THE NET Matt Freese managed to stop the bouncing ball.

A FATEFUL HESITATION Freese failed to immediately clear the pass.

THE STEAL Belgium's Charles De Ketelaere tipped the ball away.

VIA THE ATHLETIC

A LAST CHANCE Hans Vanaken's curling shot eluded Tim Ream.

Despite a struggle during the first half, the United States was still in the game midway through the second half. Trailing 2-1, they came out with renewed energy after the break.

But then came the sucker punch. The slapstick goal that will, unfortunately for Matt Freese, Tim Ream and the U.S. team, go down as the emblematic moment of an evening when the home World Cup unraveled before American eyes.

It all began with what looked to be an aimless pass. Belgium's Brandon Mechele punted a lofted ball over the top of a backtracking U.S. defense, chased down by Charles de Ketelaere. The striker's pace, leaving Chris Richards behind, meant that Freese had to venture from his penalty area to sweep up, originally doing well to get to the bouncing ball first and bringing it down with his chest.

That wrong-footed De Ketelaere, and gave Freese time to clear his lines. But he seemed to hesitate, dragging his foot along the ground as he went to strike the ball. That allowed De Ketelaere to nip back in, poking the ball out to is teammate Hans Vanaken, who was 30 yards from goal.

From there, the lob was on. Freese was stranded, far from his goal, with only Ream for cover in the penalty area.

Vanaken went for an unconventional finish, looking to curl the ball around the defender and into the far corner. It looked as if the midfielder scuffed his shot, as it curled close to Ream in the penalty area. But it still managed to wrong-foot the veteran defender, who stabbed a left boot at the ball to no avail.

In the end, the disastrous sequence of events took the game away from the Americans.

THOM HARRIS, THE ATHLETIC

TENNIS | WIMBLEDON

ROBERT PRANGE/GETTY IMAGES

Sandra Zaniewska, who coaches Marta Kostyuk, writes about the intimacy of the player-coach relationship in a newsletter.

Coaching Greatness With Novelist's Mind

By MATTHEW FUTTERMAN
The Athletic

LONDON — Want to get one of the rising coaches in women's tennis into a deep discussion about purpose and passion?

If you get to talk to Sandra Zaniewska, who coaches the Ukrainian star Marta Kostyuk, don't ask about how she helped Kostyuk evolve from a promising talent unable to grasp her potential into a blooming threat in the second week of Grand Slams.

Don't ask her about her playing career, when she became one of the top few hundred players in the world.

And don't ask her about becoming a role model for female coaches, of which there remain precious few at the highest level of tennis.

All those subjects are important to Zaniewska, especially Kostyuk, the 24-year-old No. 12 seed and French Open semifinalist, who defeated the American qualifier Ashlyn Krueger, 6-4, 6-4, in the Wimbledon fourth round Monday to reach the quarterfinals for the first time. She will face the No. 13-seeded Jasmine Paolini on Wednesday.

Kostyuk is about as hot a player as there is in the sport right now, the winner of 20 of her past 21 matches. She will say none of this would have happened if she had not met Zaniewska for coffee in London three years ago, to discuss what a partnership might be.

What really makes Zaniewska, a 34-year-old from Poland, light up? A discussion about her ultimate dream — to be a writer.

Zaniewska remembers the moment that dream came alive. She was in school, and her teacher asked the class to write a short essay.

She does not remember what she wrote about. But she remembers that she wrote two or three pages. To her 8-year-old self, that felt like writing an entire book. The teacher returned it on a Friday. There was an "A+" written on it.

Her mother was thrilled for her and asked to read the essay immediately.

"She was so engaged and then she was discussing it with me," Zaniewska said during an interview on the eve of this year's Wimbledon. "It was such a big moment for me. That was like, 'Wow, I want to write a book one day.' It was that day that I was like, 'This is a bucket list thing, that I want to be an author.'"

So she became one. In her newsletter, "The Unseen Court," she lets the world in on the triumphs and travails of her coaching relationship with Kostyuk. It has joined the likes of "Finite Jest," from the former WTA player Andrea Petkovic, and "Finding Claire-ity," from the current player Claire Liu, as a revealing look into the inner workings of a mind and a sport that prize the importance of interiority but rarely map its contours so publicly.

Her latest entry, just ahead of Wimbledon, was about the importance of "doing nothing" as a coach.

"A coach can be right and still be unhelpful," Zaniewska wrote.

"You can be completely right about what is happening — you can understand the tactical problem, the emotional pattern, the moment where the player is losing connection. And still, if you say it at the wrong time, in the wrong way, or from the wrong place, it might not land. It might make the player more confused, more dependent, more irritated, or more aware of something they were already trying to manage.

"I think a lot of good coaching lives in that uncomfortable space. Not in the dramatic intervention, but in the restraint before it."

Zaniewska does not write in her native Polish. She writes in English, her second language.

She started learning it in elementary school. Then she left home for Turkey to train when she was 17, and she has been speaking English to everyone who is not Polish ever since. Unless she is at home or speaking with her family, she thinks in English.

"If I try to write in Polish, it's terrible," she said.

For years, Zaniewska said, she tapped out thoughts and ideas about tennis and life on her laptop. It was more a stream of consciousness than anything. Last year, she decided to try to put them into essay form, but not with any intention of sharing them with the world, especially since they were as much about Kostyuk as they were about her.

Eventually, she showed Kostyuk and asked what she thought. She told her she was thinking about publishing them as a newsletter at some point, but did not know if that was a good idea. Kostyuk encouraged her to move forward.

Kostyuk was a tennis prodigy who was coached through her childhood by her mother (a former player herself), then went out on her own. In Zaniewska, she has found a kind of elder sporting sister. Kostyuk is outspoken. She speaks about her home in Kyiv, where her family still lives under Russian invasion, and her work in therapy in recent years to separate her tennis results from her identity.

She also loves seeing their relationship and Zaniewska's experience coaching her come to life on the page.

"It's always mesmerizing for me how she can put her thoughts into words and just make a story out of it, and I love to read it," she said ahead of Wimbledon.

Earlier this spring, when Kostyuk won consecutive tournaments at the Rouen Open in France and then the Madrid Open, Zaniewska said she was getting a lot of questions about what she and Kostyuk had done to make things click into gear. She wrote an essay, "The Illusion of Suddenly," which addressed what she believed was the central flaw in the question's premise.

"In tennis, you can have the level and still not always have access to it," she wrote.

"You can know exactly what you want to do and still lose it when the match gets tight. You can play well for 30 minutes and then, almost without noticing, something shifts. The pressure changes the quality of the decisions, and the margin on the aggressive shot gets a little smaller. The things that were working start to feel slightly less certain. Not dramatically, but just enough. Just enough that the match starts to slip.

"There's a difference between a level that appears and a level that stays. And for a long time, that was the space we were navigating. Not trying to find something new, not searching for a missing piece. Trying to build the conditions where what was already there could be more reliable. More available. Not only on the right days, against the right opponents, when everything was in her favor."

Zaniewska's own process is similarly gradual.

She will have some thoughts. She will type them into her computer. She will ruminate. She will think about the bigger idea behind what she and Kostyuk are dealing with at any given moment, and about how it coheres with the parts of the coach-player relationship that might otherwise be hidden. At first, she thought every piece needed to provide an answer, or many answers. Over time, she realized it was fine to write an essay that left readers with a question.

She and Kostyuk are coming up on their three-year anniversary together this month. She has been thinking about what the world should understand about where they started, where they have been, and where they are now. All relationships have their difficult moments. People might relate to that.

"I want to write about tennis, so they start on the court a little bit," she said of the pieces. "I try to tie it into the court all the time, and then see how it can expand."

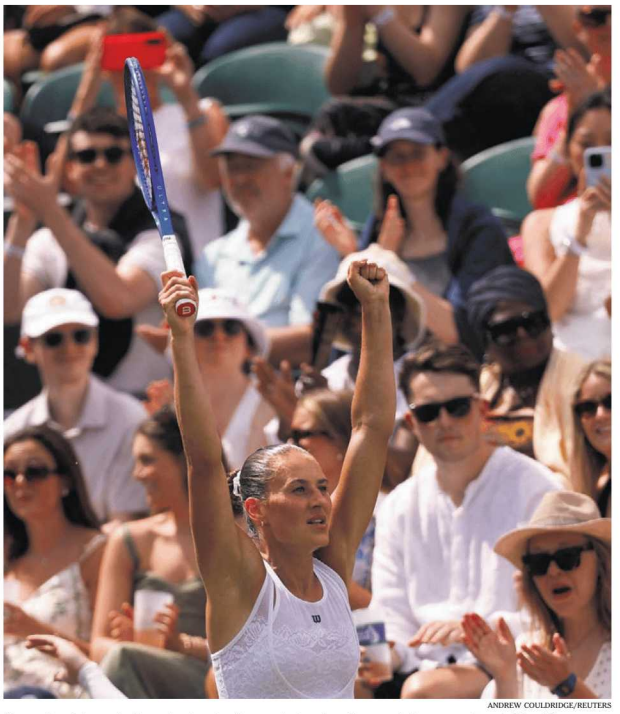
Kostyuk keeps giving her plenty of material and proving the value of her words with every win. Just days ago, Kostyuk said she thought that getting to the second week of Wimbledon would be impossible, at least for this year anyway.

She had never felt comfortable on grass. All she could remember were subpar results. She was losing every practice set.

"I turned to Sandra, and I go, 'Can you please tell me, honestly, right now, if you think that grass suits my game,'" Kostyuk said in a news conference after she beat the American No. 23 seed Emma Navarro, to achieve what she thought was not attainable. Now she has achieved even more.

"She said, 100 percent."

Sounds like a good jumping off point for an essay.



ANDREW COULDRIDGE/REUTERS

Kostyuk celebrated after winning the first set in her fourth-round victory against Ashlyn Krueger.

Dramatic tension in knowing when to talk and when to stop.

Matthew Futterman is a senior tennis writer for The Athletic.

AUTO RACING

ANALYSIS

At Long Last, a Win and a Way Forward for Ferrari's 'Chosen One'

By LUKE SMITH
The Athletic

SILVERSTONE, England — George Russell hesitated as he walked into the news conference after the British Grand Prix.

"Am I on the left or the right?" he asked, pointing at the sofa that has designated positions for the top three finishers.

In the middle was a satisfied Charles Leclerc, legs outstretched and shoulders leaning back. He had just won the British Grand Prix.

"I don't have to think about it!" Leclerc, a Ferrari driver, said with a grin, the fake smugness in his voice eliciting a laugh from the room. The center spot is reserved for the race winner.

"It's been a long time, mate, longer than you," Leclerc, chuckling, said to the Mercedes driver Russell, who sat to his right. Not since October 2024 had Leclerc won a grand prix.

That was 624 days ago, as many journalists in the television pen in the paddock had reminded him.

But, at last, he was back on top, winning in style at Silverstone to tear up the script of a season that had recently delivered some unpleasant plot twists.

"When things get tough, and that's the situation I've been in the last few races, there's a lot of negativity around me in general," Leclerc said.

"With narratives being created, it's never a nice environment to work in."

Negative narratives? Around someone upon whom Ferrari, the sport's most famous, successful team, has invested so much of its hope on future championship glory and to whom it recently handed a new contract? The man whose nickname in Italy, "Il Predestinato," translates as "the chosen one"?

Yes. Because as Lewis Hamilton recovered from his miserable first year in red in 2025 to finally grab a breakthrough win at Barcelona and thrust himself into the title conversation, Leclerc had struggled.

He had not stood on the podium since the Japanese Grand Prix at the end of March, and failed to finish two of the previous three races.

There had been struggles with his brakes, most notably in Monaco, that prompted him to change brake materials starting with Barcelona, where he then crashed in qualifying before having a hydraulic problem in the race.

In Austria last month he had faded from starting second on the grid to finishing a distant eighth.

It all cut a stark contrast to Leclerc's story last year, when his impressive form regularly provided bright spots in an otherwise winless, difficult season for the team.

These themes were ever-present as the Silverstone weekend started. Hamilton looked the more likely Ferrari driver to trouble the world championship leader Kimi Antonelli, taking the sprint pole on Friday night and then finishing second in the 17-lap race on Saturday, three places ahead of Leclerc.

On Friday night after sprint qualifying, Leclerc pored over the data from the session with his engineers. He noticed several elements that did not seem to fit with his driving style. Translating telemetry traces and lines on a screen into physical changes within the cockpit and setup tweaks on the car is no easy task.

"You just don't look at data and say this is what we need to change," Leclerc said. "It's intuition mixed with feeling. We went for it, and it was actually a very successful direction for me."

This change sparked Leclerc into grabbing second on the grid for Sunday's race behind Antonelli, before he nailed the start to instantly take the lead. With Hamilton, who was penalized five seconds for a false start that did not even register on Ferrari's sensors, as his rear gunner, Leclerc was able to create a buffer to Antonelli through the opening stint.

Leclerc's hopes of victory were rising, but Mercedes was nevertheless the quicker car, especially once Antonelli had passed Hamilton.

Both leaders were executing one-stop strategies, but Antonelli stayed out 10 laps longer than Leclerc, giving him a bigger tire performance offset for the final stint that then allowed him to quickly bear down on the Ferrari driver as the laps ticked down.

But then Antonelli's charge was stopped with a problem with his wheel shield. Without that, Ferrari calculated that Leclerc would have been overtaken a few laps from the finish.

"We've been a little bit lucky on that," Leclerc said. "But we also need that sometimes."

Leclerc deserved the win. His performance was dominant, as he ran more than 20 seconds ahead of Hamilton before a safety car bunched the field after Max Verstappen's late crash. It was the perfect response to the recent criticism he said had been impossible to avoid.

"Whenever there's so much negativity around, it's not something nice to see," Leclerc said. "I try to not look at my phone and focus on what is relevant, and also to have the right picture of the situation.

"Because things are said, and you go from hero to zero, to zero to hero in like two days in this sport. It can influence the way you see a situation."

But among Leclerc's many qualities that make him stand out as one of the best drivers of his generation, his response to adversity has long been admired within the paddock.

"I remember being in front of him for a few races, beating him for three or four weekends in a row, he would always recover and fight back," said Carlos Sainz, Leclerc's former teammate at Ferrari.

Leclerc's team principal, Fred Vasseur, said after the race that he was never too concerned about his driver's form, saying the data showed he was "always there" with his performance, even if that did not show in terms of points.

But Vasseur acknowledged that the victory could do a lot for the rest of Leclerc's season. "Today's result is the best boost of confidence that he can have," Vasseur said.

There had been the technical adjustments required, syncing Leclerc's driving habits and preferences with the performance upgrades Ferrari had brought to its car, as well as the change in brake materials. It all added up, Vasseur said.

"It was not a matter of performance, performance was there," Vasseur said. "I think it was more a matter of confidence."

Silverstone was a big win not just for Leclerc, but also for Ferrari.

It was a second defeat of Mercedes this year, and on a track where engine performance, thought to be Ferrari's main deficit, is key. It was also the team's 250th F1 victory.

And it surely rekindles thoughts of a title tilt that, after the bleak showing in Austria the previous weekend, had seemed fanciful.

Leclerc did not want to get carried away, stressing that the result was simply a "first step." He now needs to prove he can put in this kind of drive on other track layouts with the new style of car.

"It's still at the beginning," he said. "It's only one race, and I must not get carried away thinking that the war is over. The battle with this car has been quite a lot recently. I cannot take it for granted that now it's behind me."

Leclerc may want to wait until the next race at Spa in Belgium on July 19 to know if he has cracked the code of this year's car. But as he celebrated the win, there was also a sense of relief.

Be it on the top step of the podium with a trophy in his grasp or sitting in the middle spot on the news conference sofa, Leclerc has gotten back to where he wanted.

"Il Predestinato" still has it.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREJ ISAKOVIC/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Charles Leclerc after the British Grand Prix, his first win since October 2024. Above, leading his teammate Lewis Hamilton.

Luke Smith is a senior writer covering Formula 1 for The Athletic.

PRO BASKETBALL

One Thing Seems to Unite W.N.B.A.: Discord Over the Officiating

By ANNIE COSTABILE
The Athletic

The 2025 W.N.B.A. season ended with a lot of criticism of the officiating in the league and the leaders in charge of its improvement.

As the W.N.B.A. nears the halfway point of the 2026 season, that topic has again taken center stage. Perhaps the best example arrived last week when a no-call on a loose-ball play between Indiana Fever guard Caitlin Clark and Phoenix Mercury forward Alyssa Thomas ignited days of debate and a retroactive one-game suspension for Thomas, who received death threats in the decision's aftermath.

"It's kind of been a discussion for three years now, and I think we really need to do a better job protecting the people in this league," Clark said on Friday. "I've been involved in a few of those plays, but there's been plenty of others across the league that haven't been called. You go back postgame or whatever it is, teams submit clips and nothing changes. I think overall the league has to do better."

After two years of what players, coaches and executives felt was an uptick in physicality, pleas for enhanced officiating appeared to be heard when Cathy Engelbert, the league commissioner, announced concrete measures to fix the issues at the end of the 2025 season.

A task force consisting of eight general managers and coaches met in the off-season and homed in on a list of priorities, starting with calling illegal contact more regularly to allow for freedom of movement. Other incidental concerns included enforcing the defensive three-second rule, regularly calling illegal closeouts and establishing a clear understanding of the line between legal and illegal contact.

Despite the actions taken this off-season, which included hiring a longtime W.N.B.A. official, Eric Brewton, to a newly created referee performance and development adviser position, the league is still facing complaints. The concerns from general managers and coaches center on a lack of consistency and accountability, and the need for additional resources that will bring the W.N.B.A.'s officiating standards closer to those of the N.B.A.

Coaches and general managers from eight teams, who spoke on condition of anonymity to avoid being fined, agreed that the quality of W.N.B.A. officiating remained subpar. They argued that the need for added investment into a last two-minute report, a replay center and a pipeline that keeps high-quality officials in the league is paramount.

Annie Costabile is a senior women's basketball writer for The Athletic.

JEROME MIRON/IMAGN IMAGES

MICHAEL HICKEY/GETTY IMAGES

SAMMY KOGAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

CHRIS CODUTO/GETTY IMAGES

Clockwise from top left: Minnesota's Kayla McBride; Phoenix's Alyssa Thomas with Indiana's Caitlin Clark; Dallas's Paige Bueckers; and Atlanta's Angel Reese. Coaches and general managers said officiating remained subpar despite the league's improvement efforts.

"Dangle a bigger carrot," one W.N.B.A. coach said. "Pay them more money. Go get better talent to come to the W."

Physicality has been an issue in the W.N.B.A. for years, but it reached a heightened level in 2024 — so much so that some questioned if there was a directive that came from league leadership for officials to allow for more physical play.

The emphasis on freedom of movement by the task force — made up of Mercury Coach Nate Tibbetts; Fever Coach Stephanie White; Toronto Tempo Coach Sandy Brondello; Connecticut Sun General Manager Morgan Tuck; Dallas Wings General Manager Curt Miller; New York Liberty General Manager Jonathan Kolb; Minnesota Lynx Coach Cheryl Reeve, who is also the team's president of basketball operations;and Las Vegas Aces Coach Becky Hammon — led to an uptick in foul calls year over year.

The W.N.B.A. averaged 44 fouls per game through the first 10 days of the 2026 season compared with 38.7 through the first 10 days of the 2025 season.

The league averaged roughly 39.6 fouls per game through about 20 games compared with 36.2 fouls per game through roughly 20 games last season. But there are also two new teams to account for. The W.N.B.A. totaled 9,990 personal fouls in 2025, amounting to roughly 34.9 fouls called per game throughout the entire season.

But nearly three months into this season, there is concern that the status quo is returning.

"Early on, there was an overcorrection trying to get the freedom of movement where we want it," a W.N.B.A. general manager said. "It's level set. We have to be careful. There was a universal directive to minimize physicality. As its level sets, we can't fall back into the overphysical game."

Blatant errors and missed calls have been other key concerns throughout the first half of the season. Multiple coaches said the emphasis on enforcing the defensive three-second rule is largely being ignored.

One prime example of the more egregious officiating errors came during the Chicago Sky's game against the Dallas Wings on June 20. The Sky's 17-point lead cut had been cut to 1 with under a minute to play.

On three consecutive possessions, officials appeared to miss calls that affected the game's outcome. Sky center Kamilla Cardoso was whistled for a backcourt violation. Then she was whistled for a foul on Li Yueru, who sank two free throws to give the Wings a 1-point lead. The last was a no-call as Azurá Stevens drew contact on a shot attempt under the basket as time expired.

The league does not typically acknowledge officiating errors publicly, but after reviewing the plays, it was determined and shared with the Sky that all three were blown calls, multiple team sources told The Athletic.

In the game between the Fever and the Mercury on June 24, Kelsey Mitchell was whistled for an offensive foul with 22 seconds to play. It was her sixth foul, and she should have been subbed out. Officials were unaware of that, and the Mercury inbounded the ball before White, the Fever coach, could make a substitution.

"I hate to say it, but that's gross unawareness," Meghan McPeak, the USA Network play-by-play analyst, said on the broadcast, "in a one-possession game."

"This should never happen," Tamika Catchings, the USA Network color commentator, responded.

The Fever were never assessed a technical foul for the failure to substitute for Mitchell.

Some coaches and general managers said the officiating pipeline is flawed, with a poor pay scale that dissuades the best candidates from pursuing the W.N.B.A. over the N.B.A. or N.C.A.A. Others said they thought the system for turning in plays to the league was broken, with lagging response times and little improvement game to game.

There are multiple avenues coaches and executives have for evaluating officials. They can clip plays and submit them through an online system. This avenue has been met with delays and lacks public accountability, multiple sources said.

There is also a text program that prompts head coaches to answer questions about officiating crews. The W.N.B.A. currently has a staff of 34 officials, but a third of them have four or fewer years of experience, according to one source.

"Young coaches and players have a very short window of opportunity," one W.N.B.A. general manager said. "But when it comes to officials, we have to be patient and allow this young core to gain experience? It's contrary to all the other major positions in our league. When will this group that intentionally got younger see their growth?"

N.B.A. and W.N.B.A. officials "get the same training" and must officiate in the G-League as part of their development before being promoted to either league, according to Monty McCutchen, the head of referee training and development across all three leagues. N.B.A. officials cannot work in the W.N.B.A. because both officiating units are unionized, according to McCutchen. Determining which officials go to which league is a combination of preference for each official and qualifications.

Successfully addressing concerns over the league's officiating, coaches and general managers said, starts with improved communication measures and accountability as well as enhanced resources.

Unlike the N.B.A., the W.N.B.A. does not have an offsite replay center that allows for objective decisions by a third party. The last two-minute report, which is a play-by-play report of all calls and noncalls in the last two minutes of the fourth quarter or overtime period for all games that "meet designated criteria," has been available for N.B.A. games since the 2017-18 season.

McCutchen and Sue Blauch, the W.N.B.A.'s head of referee performance and development, have said they would welcome a L2M report, but a lack of resources has prevented its implementation. McCutchen said, "We're moving toward those resources."

The W.N.B.A.'s current replay system is provided by Hawk-Eye. It uses camera shots provided by the league's broadcast partners in addition to tracking cameras provided by Genius Sports/Second Spectrum. Part of improving the league's replay system would require standardizing camera angles in every arena. Arenas that are shared between N.B.A. and W.N.B.A. teams have all available angles while non-N.B.A. arenas are not equipped the same.

Coaches and general managers have brought up investment in standardized camera angles and a replay center every year during competition meetings, but have been informed it is a resource issue.

Bethany Donaphin, the head of league operations, said the W.N.B.A. was evaluating how it could use technology to advance the game and improve officiating but had "nothing to report" pertaining to a replay center.

As the league awaits resources to fund what coaches and general managers believe are required tools to officiate games successfully, some said teams should have at least two challenge calls. Others want the league to start publicly acknowledging blown calls and egregious errors, and almost all mentioned improvements to the pay model to attract better officials.

"Money is at the forefront at all times," one general manager said. "You get what you pay for."

HOCKEY

COMMENTARY

3 Players, 2 Decades, 1 Team, 0 Peers

By JOSH YOHE
The Athletic

PITTSBURGH — This N.H.L. off-season has been dominated by players wanting a change of address.

Brady Tkachuk wanted to play in Florida and got his wish. Dylan Larkin wants to depart Detroit. Zach Werenski seemed to flirt with leaving Columbus before deciding to stay. For now, anyway.

The Jason Robertson-in-Dallas story continues. The Leo Carlsson situation in Anaheim is capturing the attention of hockey fans and general managers everywhere.

I don't blame players for chasing as much money as they can. We all have families, loved ones or ourselves to support. They should not be villainized for maximizing their earning potential.

But those who display true loyalty and those who, in the name of winning and affection for a region, refuse to play elsewhere deserve special recognition.

The further the Pittsburgh Penguins get from their winning days — next spring will be the 10th anniversary of their most recent Stanley Cup title — the more angst, in some circles of the fan base, grows.

This is understandable. The Penguins have not won a playoff series since 2018, and the franchise is attempting to execute a rebuild of sorts that is not really a rebuild because of Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and Kris Letang.

With these three, the numbers sometimes tell the story.

By the conclusion of this off-season, the big three will be a combined 118 years old. When next season begins, they will have spent 64 seasons combined as members of the Penguins. That's more than half of their lifetimes.

Crosby's loyalty to the Penguins is almost as legendary as his career. We can conservatively estimate that during his time with Pittsburgh, Crosby has turned away $50 million to give the Penguins more salary-cap flexibility.

Many will point to his $8.7 million salary as a reflection of his well-known superstition about his birthday, and though I have no doubt this plays a role, I also have no doubt he would not play for $3.28 million annually if his birthday were March 28. Nor would he play for $12.31 million if he were a New Year's Eve baby. He knows his worth and chooses to make a respectable amount of money while still shorting himself of riches so the Penguins have a better opportunity to thrive.

> Crosby, Malkin and Letang are the first of their kind, and will probably be the last.

Agents and the players' union do not love that Crosby does this, but Pittsburgh does. And it's not as though Crosby is acting alone.

When Malkin was about to become an unrestricted free agent in 2022, he was furious that the team's general manager at the time, Ron Hextall, had chosen not to offer him a contract. An era appeared to be ending. Malkin, past his prime but still a magnificent player, could have found a lucrative contract elsewhere. He lives in Florida and probably could have made his way to Sunrise. That was before the Panthers became the Panthers as we know them. Someone would have offered him quite a deal.

Instead, Malkin patiently waited. He never thought about playing for another team. It was made clear to Hextall that Crosby preferred that Malkin stay.

Malkin, much to his delight, got his contract. Though he does not always articulate his thoughts to perfection in English, he speaks a lot about how much he loves Pittsburgh and the Penguins. When he does, his point is loud and clear. He's a Penguin. At this point, he's a Pittsburgher.

This was more than evident during the 2025-26 season. It was well known within the organization that Kyle Dubas did not plan to bring back Malkin after last season. Otherwise, he would have signed him many months earlier. The only way Malkin was staying for another season was if he played well and if the Penguins overcame the odds by making the playoffs. Malkin made it his mission to make both things happen. He didn't want his time in Pittsburgh to end, just like most Penguins fans didn't want to imagine the franchise without him.

Letang's loyalty to the Penguins should never be questioned, either. His family lives in California now and has for years. To the best of my knowledge, he has requested a trade to one of the California teams precisely zero times. He does not want to go home to Montreal to play. He does not want a retirement job in California. Just black and gold.

Crosby, Malkin and Letang are loyal to the only franchise they have known. In the second half of their careers, after they had won their championships, all three could have chased banners elsewhere. Make no mistake, all three of them are competitors. Getting their names on the Cup again in Pittsburgh, at this point, is unlikely. They surely know this on some level. Yet they went down with the ship when the Penguins saw their playoff streak end in 2024. Two more seasons without reaching the postseason came and went.

They never asked to be let out, preferring to still be around when a new wave of Penguins came along.

This isn't typical. Look at the landscape now. Players are flexing their muscles like never before, and they are receiving amounts of money like never before. There is money to be made, much of it in a warm climate. Yet the big three keep ticking under those gray Pittsburgh skies.

Maybe it's an organizational thing, and the big three have learned from those who came before them.

Mario Lemieux was owed nearly $30 million by the broke Penguins when he retired in 1997. Two years later, he took quite the financial chance by purchasing the team out of bankruptcy. Yes, he got his money back. And yes, he turned it into an even bigger fortune. Do not forget, however, how easy it would have been for Lemieux to play for another team when he came out of retirement, legally getting his money from Pittsburgh one way or the other.

I have been told many times the New York Rangers, Montreal Canadiens and Toronto Maple Leafs were prepared to offer him north of $20 million annually to switch teams. Here's a little-known fact: He never really wanted to be the owner of the Penguins, or of any team. He was never interested in being a businessman. It was the only way he could have gotten his money and the Penguins could have remained in Pittsburgh. He did what he had to do for himself and for the franchise.

Jaromir Jagr was a Penguins icon who did play elsewhere. But let's not forget the events of May 2, 1999, when Jagr, playing with a severe groin injury, won a series on his own. When asked about it years later, he said he played because the Penguins were leaving Pittsburgh if they did not win that series against New Jersey. They needed the revenue of another playoff series, and Jagr knew it. So he played for Pittsburgh. And when he was traded, it was not by choice but by financial reality.

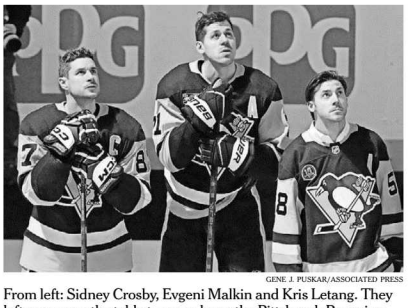
Believe it or not, the days of Crosby, Malkin and Letang are coming to an end. All good things do.

There will never be anything like this again. Three players, on the same team, for more than two decades. They are the first to accomplish that in the history of North American professional team sports. They'll be the last.

For every Connor McDavid who stays in Edmonton or Alex Ovechkin who stays in Washington, there are countless great players who move on, who want more money, fewer taxes, more power.

Crosby, Malkin and Letang just want to play in Pittsburgh.

Josh Yohe is a senior writer covering the Penguins for The Athletic.


GENE J. PUSKAR/ASSOCIATED PRESS

From left: Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and Kris Letang. They left money on the table to never leave the Pittsburgh Penguins.

More Sports news appears on Page B12.

Herbert Lust, Serendipitous Collector of Art and Friendships, Dies at 99

By TRIP GABRIEL

Herbert Lust's career as an art collector began, as he put it, with a "cock and bull story."

In 1949, Mr. Lust, a 22-year-old American in Paris, found himself at a luncheon filled with artists and intellectuals. Feeling out of his depth, he made up a story about being a Romanian Jew who had crossed the Carpathian Mountains — barefoot! — to escape the Nazis.

One of the other guests, the renowned sculptor and painter Alberto Giacometti, was intrigued and invited Mr. Lust to drop by his studio. When Mr. Lust confessed that the barefoot-refugee story was a fabrication, Giacometti was more amused than offended by the brazen young American.

It was the start of a close friendship, one of several that Mr. Lust made with artists while amassing an unusual and important collection defined by what he called lucky accidents, such as meeting Giacometti.

Mr. Lust was a notable character in the New York and Paris art worlds in the decades following World War II. He was a rich banker who acted like a bohemian; a onetime novelist who wrote exhibition catalogs; and a mischievous, witty conversationalist who might drop an F-word into a promotional video for Sotheby's.

He died, at 99, on May 12 at his home in Greenwich, Conn. Michael Feldschuh, the executor of his estate, confirmed the death.

Raised on a farm in Indiana, Mr. Lust confessed to Sotheby's in 2019 that he was a bit of a rube when he first went to Paris.

"I had no respect for art at all," he said. "I thought it was decoration."

Giacometti's attenuated human figures struck him as "awful." Then he did some reading.

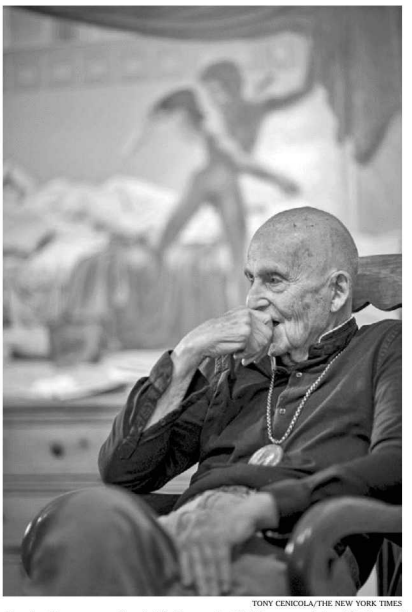
"I realized," he said, "if Sartre and people like that said he was the greatest living artist, there was something wrong with me."

Mr. Lust, who remained friends with the artist until Giacometti's death in 1966, had graduated from the University of Chicago with a master's in mathematics and philosophy. He was in Paris for two years as a Fulbright scholar to study comparative literature at the Sorbonne. He also brought the manuscript of an unpublished novel.

He became a weekly dinner guest at the home of Alice B. Toklas, the partner of Gertrude Stein, who had died in 1946. It was Stein's example, Mr. Lust would later say, that inspired him to collect art.

Using part of his Fulbright funds, he bought Giacometti prints, as well as drawings by another Surrealist, Hans Bellmer. (Mr. Lust eventually ended up with one of the world's largest Bellmer collections.)

VIA LUST FAMILY



TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

VIA LUST FAMILY

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI, VIA LUST FAMILY

Herbert Lust in 1973 with an Alberto Giacometti sculpture — work that he first saw as "awful." Above, in 2020, around the 1940s and in a 1961 portrait by Giacometti.

An exhibition of a selection from his large Giacometti collection in 2000 at the Portland Museum of Art in Maine included two portraits of Mr. Lust, one in pencil and the other in ballpoint pen, and he wrote an essay about their friendship for the catalog.

"It is a very affecting exhibition, and made all the more so by Mr. Lust's beautiful memoir," the critic Hilton Kramer wrote in The New York Observer.

After starting out teaching literature, Mr. Lust became a banker in New York in 1957, enabling him to collect much more seriously. But he continued to gravitate toward the work of artists he could also call friends.

Giacometti introduced him to Alexander Calder, whom Mr. Lust got to know on a 1961 trans-Atlantic voyage to the United States along with Mark Rothko. Neither Calder nor Rothko liked to dance, but their wives did, and Mr. Lust, who described himself in the 2019 interview as "a very powerful swing dancer," partnered with both artists' wives on the dance floor during the six-day voyage.

He went on to buy major pieces by Calder, but thought Rothko's watery blocks of color were uninteresting. "Big mistake," he told The New York Times in 2020, by which time Rothko paintings were often selling for tens of millions of dollars.

> ***Cultivating close ties with Giacometti, Indiana and Calder.***

That year, Mr. Lust donated to the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington a collection of black-and-white photographs by Berenice Abbott, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Eugène Atget and dozens of others.

He formed another decades-long friendship with the pioneering Pop artist Robert Indiana, whom he met at a Manhattan dinner party when the hostess introduced them as fellow Hoosiers.

At first, Mr. Lust did not see much in the works of Indiana, which were paintings of single words, like LOVE and HUG. "I said, 'This is absurd,'" Mr. Lust recalled in the Sotheby's interview. "And little by little it grew on me."

He acquired dozens of Indiana's pieces and bucked the artist up emotionally after Indiana's gallery went out of business in 1975 and he struggled to find a new dealer.

"I love Indiana, but he's the most difficult human being in history," Mr. Lust recalled in the Sotheby's interview, which took place at his home in Connecticut. "I remember he was on this couch. I said, 'Well, what has destroyed your career?' And he said, 'My mouth.'"

When Sotheby's exhibited Mr. Lust's Indiana holdings in 2017, he wrote the catalog essay. He also produced reference works on others he collected, including the Italian artist Enrico Baj. In 1970 he compiled "Giacometti: The Complete Graphics."

"I personally don't know any other collectors who have written catalogues raisonnés on artists, which illustrates Herbert's intellect and passion for art," Alejandra Rossetti, a senior vice president at Sotheby's, told The Times in 2020.

Herbert Confield Lust was born on Oct. 31, 1926, in Chicago, the oldest of three children. His mother, Jennie (Friedman) Lust, worked as a secretary for his father, also named Herbert Confield Lust, a lawyer at a publishing house.

The family soon moved to Fowler, Ind., to a farm where his parents preferred to raise their children. When Herbert was 9, his father was killed in an automobile accident. His mother supported the family by working as a stenographer.

Mr. Lust served in the Navy during World War II. During officer training, in 1944, a required literature course exposed him to the poetry of John Keats. He later called it life-changing, awakening him to aesthetic beauty.

His marriages to Frances Hutchins and Jean Marianne McDonald ended in divorce. In 1963, he married for a third time, to Virginia Wertheimer, and together they ran the Virginia Lust Gallery on Sullivan Street in Lower Manhattan in the 1980s and '90s, exhibiting Frank Stella, Joel-Peter Witkin and others. The Lusts held salons in an apartment above the gallery. Virginia Lust died in 2014.

Mr. Lust is survived by a son from his first marriage, Herbert Lust III, and 10 grandchildren. Another son, Conrad, from his second marriage, died in 2024.

In later years, Mr. Lust liked to wear collarless shirts and, around his neck, a clunky gold medallion that Giacometti had made for the fashion designer Elsa Schiaparelli.

He was wearing it in 2017 when he was interviewed by Tablet magazine over lunch and retold the story of first meeting the artist. This time, though, he presented himself as far from a rube.

"It always amuses me when everyone says I was lucky that I met Giacometti," he said. "Thousands of people met Giacometti and none of them pursued him. I pursued him."

Deaths

Adler, Stephen
Clark, J. Thomas
Dolan, John
Rafer, Suzanne
Zadek, Robert

ADLER—Stephen Barry, a quintessential New York character, passed away peacefully in Manhattan on June 3, 2026. He grew up in Borough Park, Brooklyn, the son of second-generation immigrants from the Pale. He attended Brooklyn Technical High School and graduated from Brooklyn College in 1963 with a B.A. in English. A denizen of the Upper West Side, he loved The New York Times, creamed herring from Zabar's and a good cigar. He was a voracious reader of history books and loved to expound on the historical roots of the name Adlivankin, which was changed to "Adler" at Ellis Island. He spent many summers on Fire Island with a close-knit group of friends who will miss him terribly as will his nephews, niece and multiple cousins.

CLARK—J. Thomas. Weill Cornell Medicine is saddened by the death of our friend J. Thomas Clark, who served as a member of our Board of Fellows from 2005 to 2008, and on its Clinical Affairs / Physician Organization Committee from 2005 to 2026. A 1963 graduate of the Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, he served as a University Trustee from 1993 to 2005, and was elected Emeritus Trustee and Presidential Councilor in 2005. We are deeply grateful for Tom's service to Weill Cornell Medicine, will miss his kindness and passion for his alma mater, and extend our condolences to his wife, Nancy, and their family.
Robert A. Harrington, M.D.
Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean
Jessica M. Bibliowicz
Chair, Board of Fellows
Sanford I. Weill
Chair Emeritus
Board of Fellows

DOLAN—John "Jack", age 84, of East Haddam, CT, passed away on July 1, 2026. He was the beloved husband of Karen Sherry Dolan. A celebration mass will be held at St. Mary's Church, 5 Hillhouse Avenue, New Haven, CT on July 9, 2026 at 11:00am and a public visiting will take place at the North Haven Funeral Home, 36 Washington Ave., North Haven, CT.

RAFER—Suzanne, loving wife, mother, grandmother, and beloved book editor passed away on July 6, 2026 in Southampton, NY. She was born in Queens, NY, to Harold J. and Beatrice Schultz and attended Forest Hills High School. From there she went to American University in Washington D.C., receiving a B.A. in English, and later moved to London where her daughter Zoe was born. After returning to the US, she took a position as an editor at the recently established Workman Publishing Co., which she helped develop into a major publishing success by editing many bestselling books. She was very proud of editing Sandra Boynton's numerous illustrated books, such as "Barnyard Dance!" and "Chocolate: The Consuming Passion"; the "What to Expect When You're Expecting" series of baby and childcare books; countless cookbooks, including the Silver Palate's "New Basics", Steven Raichlen's "How to Grill", "Barbecue! Bible," and "BBQ USA", and Anne Byrn's "Cake Doctor" books; as well as Yogi Berra's bestselling "The Yogi Book: "I Really Didn't Say Everything I Said!". She was dearly loved for her clever ideas and vision, humor, kindness, and delicious cooking. Suzanne is survived by her husband of 46 years, Danny Peary, her daughter Zoe Weaver Ohler, son-in-law Norman (Gene) Ohler, and granddaughter Julianna Ohler. We will miss her forever.

ZADEK—Dr. Robert Engle, of Baltimore, MD, passed away on Thursday, July 2, 2026, at the age of 97, at Beebe Hospital in Lewes, Delaware, surrounded by his family. He and his family had been at their home in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, Bob's happy place, where he loved spending time with his family, fishing, pulling crab traps, and cruising the Rehoboth-Lewes Canal. Born in Mount Vernon, NY, on November 10, 1928, he was the son of Kate (Engle) and Isadore Zadek. His stepmother, Janet Selig Zadek, helped raise him after his mother died. He grew up with his brother, David, and his stepbrothers, Bob and Jimmy Wolf, in Mount Vernon, and then moved to Baltimore to attend Johns Hopkins University and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. After two years in the U.S. Navy, in Norfolk, VA, he moved back to Baltimore to train in orthopaedics at Johns Hopkins Hospital, where his father, Isadore Zadek, had also trained in orthopaedics. They became the first father-son orthopaedic surgeon pair in the hospital's history. In 2014, his family established the Zadek Family Professorship in Orthopaedic Surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Bob joined a private practice in Baltimore. He was Chief of Orthopaedics at Sinai Hospital (1968-1990), where he started and ran a resident education program, and served as Chief of the Scoliosis Service at Kernan Hospital. He wore a bow tie every day of his practice and inspired a generation of bowtie-wearing orthopaedic surgeons. When Bob retired from medical practice, he became a volunteer tutor with Baltimore Reads, which he continued until its closing 15 years later. Throughout his life, he had many hobbies: he was a boatbuilder, fisherman, ceramist, puzzler, reader, bread baker, gardener, and dog lover. He and his wife, Miriam, were involved with nonprofits in Baltimore and Rehoboth Beach. Bob was the original girl dad to his four daughters. He raised strong women, whom he taught to fish, to use tools, to love the beach. Most important, he taught his girls to be honest and true to themselves and to take care of others, values he lived and modeled for his daughters, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Every year, on the Fourth of July, he read the Declaration of Independence. Bob is survived by his beloved wife of 74 years, Miriam Zadek (nee Scharfman), devoted children, Sarah (Jim) Umberger, Susan (Steve) Mandel, Beth Zadek (Joph Steckel), and Barbara Zadek (Tom Moses); adored grandchildren, Sam Heron (Amy Kiet), Charlie Umberger (Audrey Kim), Katie (Chris) Bruce, Ben (Hailey) Mandel, Tom (Johna) Mandel, Henry (Elke) Steckel, Isabel, George, and Lily Steckel, Molly Moses (Jen Wenz), and Matthew (Rachel) Moses; 15 great-grandchildren; and his labradoodle, Oliver. Contributions in Bob's memory may be sent to the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine Class of 1954 Scholarship Fund.

In Memoriam

MASON—Peter Richard. It was three years ago today. You closed your eyes and went away into that long goodnight. Your light will always shine in me.
-Eleanor

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DEATHS MAY BE TELEPHONED FROM WITHIN NYC TO 212-556-3900, OR OUTSIDE NYC TOLL FREE 1-800-458-5522; OR SENT BY EMAIL TO NYTIMES@CLASSIFIEDSPLUS.COM FOR THE FOLLOWING EDITIONS Until 2:00 P.M. the day before for Monday through Saturday editions, until 4:00 P.M. on Friday for Sunday's National Edition, until 12:45 P.M. Saturday for Sunday's New York and late National editions. Photos must be submitted by noon the day prior to publication Tuesday through Friday. Photos for Saturday, Sunday and Monday must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday.

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Stanley Gartler, 102, Pioneering Researcher of Cancer's Origins, Dies

By JERÉ LONGMAN

Stanley M. Gartler, a molecular biologist and geneticist who helped provide the first convincing evidence that cancerous tumors develop from a single mutated cell, and uncovered shocking research errors involving the first collection of human cells to permanently thrive in a laboratory, died on May 25 at his home in Seattle. He was 102.

His death, which was not widely reported at the time, was confirmed by Dr. Richard Weiner, his nephew.

In the early 1960s, Dr. Gartler began exploring the genetic origins of cancer at the University of Washington, where he joined the genetics department faculty in 1957 and maintained an active lab until 2007.

At the turn of the 20th century, Theodor Boveri, a German zoologist, had proposed a hypothesis that a tumor begins as a single cell that divides uncontrollably. But he lacked proof.

Working with the pathologist David Linder, Dr. Gartler began studying benign uterine tumors — commonly known as fibroid tumors — that had been removed during hysterectomies in Black women.

Females typically have two X chromosomes in each cell, while males have an X and a Y. Because of a random process called X inactivation, most genes in one of the two X chromosomes in women are silenced early in embryonic development. Dr. Gartler realized that the silencing of one gene found on the X chromosome, called G6PD, gave crucial information about that cell's fate.

In a study published in 1965 in the journal Science, Dr. Gartler and Dr. Linder reported that normal uterine tissue showed a mosaic of two gene variants — A and B — present in roughly equal amounts. In tissue from tumors, however, only one variant was present — either A or B — which implied that a tumor originates from a single cell.

"We really had to understand the biology of cancer to have any possibility of treating it," Dr. Gail Jarvik, who leads the division of medical genetics at the University of Washington, said in an interview. "All of these chemotherapies and now very targeted therapies are based on clearly understanding that the biology is this mutation."

Also in 1965, while studying genetic markers that vary in human cells, Dr. Gartler collected permanent human cell lines — cultures used in laboratory research that are easily cloned and are valuable in studying diseases and developing drugs and vaccines.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HUMAN GENETICS

Stanley M. Gartler, above in 2016 with Dr. Gail Jarvik, discovered that tumors originate from a single cell. Dr. Gartler, right circa 1960, also raised flags about flawed research linked to genetic information taken from Henrietta Lacks, below, without her consent, leading to reforms in labs.

JONATHAN NEWTON/THE WASHINGTON POST, VIA GETTY IMAGES

He found something highly improbable. In 18 supposedly independent cultures, the genetic markers were identical, containing the rare A variant of the G6PD gene, which was found almost exclusively in Black people.

It became clear to him that these purportedly unique cell cultures had been contaminated and overgrown by the first permanent human cell line, established in 1951 at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, called the HeLa (pronounced hee-lah) line.

HeLa is an abbreviation of the first and last names of Henrietta Lacks, a Black woman who died of cervical cancer in 1951. Her genetic information, harvested from a tissue biopsy at that hospital shortly before her death, had been shipped and studied in laboratories around the world without her consent or her family's knowledge.

The HeLa line would help with vital advancements in the polio vaccine, cancer research, cell biology, in vitro fertilization, cloning and chemotherapy. But Dr. Gartler observed an alarming problem involving the line's cells, which, as it turned out, could easily contaminate other cultures by traveling on dust particles, lab coats or unwashed hands.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

He exposed 'sloppy techniques' in the use of cell lines taken from Henrietta Lacks.

Researchers who thought they were studying cancer cells of, say, the kidney, liver or breast were, he proposed, likely studying cervical cancer cells of the HeLa line that had overtaken the original cultures. He would later blame "sloppy techniques" in laboratories for the contamination.

At a 1966 conference in Pennsylvania on cell tissue and organ culture, Dr. Gartler presented his findings. He told a stunned and skeptical audience of 700 scientists that their work on what they believed to be original cell lines was now "open to serious question" and he suggested that work "best be discarded."

Rebecca Skloot included an account of the conference in her 2010 best seller, "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks." Michael Gold, whose 1985 book, "A Conspiracy of Cells: One Woman's Immortal Legacy and the Medical Scandal It Caused," said in an interview that the scientific impact of Dr. Gartler's findings was enormous.

He "really raised the red flag," Mr. Gold said, on a large-scale problem that "wasted countless hours and untold millions of dollars" on invalid science.

Many researchers, Mr. Gold added, "didn't particularly want to hear that news," but "a critical mass" reluctantly accepted Dr. Gartler's findings.

Dr. Gartler's discovery has been credited as a catalyst for improved quality control in labs and enhanced authentication of cell lines. The story of the HeLa line became one of the defining lessons of 20th-century medicine and raised important ethical questions about informed consent of patients, privacy and the rights of families to receive compensation for research on a relative's cells.

In a 2012 lecture, Dr. Gartler spoke about the need for anonymity and privacy in research, a sense of dignity that had not been given to Henrietta Lacks.

"I personally wouldn't want to be remembered for a cancer cell," he said.

Stanley Michael Gartler was born on June 9, 1923, in Los Angeles to parents who emigrated from Romania. His father, George Gartler, owned a dry cleaning plant. His mother, Delvira (Kupferberg) Gartler, ran the household.

He entered the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1941 with an early interest in agriculture, but left the next year to enlist in the military. He served in the Army Air Forces during World War II as a radio operator and machine-gunner aboard a B-26 bomber on missions in Europe.

He returned to U.C.L.A. to complete his bachelor's degree, then received his Ph.D. in genetics in 1952 from the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied plant breeding and developed an interest in human genetics, which he fostered during a postdoctoral fellowship at Columbia University. He joined the University of Washington as the first faculty member in the newly formed division of medical genetics.

His wife, Marion Mitchelson Gartler, a writer and editor who also developed a vest to thwart pickpockets, died in 2016. He has no immediate survivors.

In 1962, Dr. Gartler and two colleagues published an influential paper about a girl with two different-colored eyes and atypical genitalia. It was, Dr. Jarvik of the University of Washington said, the first demonstration of mixed XX and XY cells in a human, likely from an early fusion of twin fetuses.

"It really does say sex determination is much more complex than XX and XY," Dr. Jarvik said, "and that the human body tolerates a significant amount of variability."

Bertrand Grébaut, 44, French Chef Who Broke Free of Stiff Formal Fare

By ELAINE SCIOLINO

Bertrand Grébaut, the influential French chef whose acclaimed restaurant Septime bridged the gap between formal haute cuisine and traditional bistro fare, died on Thursday in Paris. He was 44.

Théophile Pourriat, his business partner, announced the death on the restaurant's Instagram page. Mr. Grébaut learned last fall that he had cancer and had scaled back his activities.

The two men opened Septime in 2011, naming it after the tyrannical restaurateur character Monsieur Septime, who was played by Louis de Funès in the 1966 film comedy "Le Grand Restaurant."

The restaurant arrived at a time when some leading American chefs were experimenting with farm-to-table offerings in casual settings, but French restaurants were largely stuck in their old ways.

Mr. Grébaut belonged to a generation of young chefs in France who decided to shake things up. He chose a neighborhood in the 11th Arrondissement on the Right Bank that was a bit off the beaten path for tourists and many Parisians used to the well-known restaurants, brasseries and cafes of the Left Bank.

"Moving there was a no-brainer," Mr. Grébaut said in an interview, adding that he had trained at upscale Left Bank restaurants "serving people who didn't look like me." He loved his new neighborhood, where he said he found "energy," "creative freedom" and "a more open-minded and activist population."

Septime featured a minimalist look of polished concrete floors and rough wooden tables, with a vibe more Scandinavian than French.

It immediately catapulted to fame, garnering praise for the way it had created dynamic French cuisine with a limited menu outside the confines of expensive white-tableclothed dining rooms.

Never an easy restaurant to get into, Septime became more difficult to book after it was awarded a Michelin star in 2014. (Beyoncé got a table.)

A mentor noted his 'passion for nature, for the seasons.'

"In France, change is often met with resistance, but Bertrand was a pioneer," said David Lebovitz, the Paris-based American cookbook author who lives on the same street as Septime. "I remember eating at Septime when it first opened, and I knew right away that he had the talent and gravitas to do the right thing at the right time. He combined proteins and vegetables and herbs in ways that changed the trajectory of French cooking."

Mr. Grébaut was born in Paris on Dec. 5, 1981, to Christian Grébaut, a corporate executive, and Catherine Arteau-Grébaut, an art historian.

Initially, Mr. Grébaut did not plan to become a chef. But he had always loved good food. "My mother cooked a different dinner every night, and part of my family are winemakers in the Bordeaux region," he once said.

In high school, he became passionate about graffiti — which he said he engaged in illegally in Paris — and enrolled at Penninghen, a Paris art school, to become a freelance graphic designer. He found that world boring, he said.

He and Mr. Pourriat, a teenage friend, were sharing an apartment and would explore Paris restaurants together. "We thought about nothing but food," they wrote in a book published on the 10th anniversary of Septime. "We talked about it day and night."

Mr. Pourriat began working as a waiter, while Mr. Grébaut enrolled in the Ferrandi Paris culinary school. Though he was at first terrified, he soon excelled.

His internships were challenging. His first one, at the Hotel Scribe, "was in an old-school kitchen brigade where I was spoken to rudely and assigned the most menial tasks," he recalled in an interview. "I came very close to quitting, but I gritted my teeth and pushed through."

Mr. Grébaut was transformed by a stint with the chef Alain Passard at L'Arpège, the three-star Michelin restaurant devoted to vegetable-oriented cooking.

"It's where I learned the most and where I realized that I had more affinities with a fruit and vegetable-oriented cuisine than the technical cuisine that you often find in luxury hotels," he once told an interviewer. He added, "My vision of my profession is one of pleasure and not of brash spectacle."

EMMANUEL DUNAND/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES

Bertrand Grébaut at a festival in Brooklyn in 2012, the year after he helped open Septime in Paris.

In an interview, Mr. Passard said, "He was so curious, always, always, always, with both fantasies and poetry in his creations. He had a passion for nature, for the seasons. I would dare to call him a visionary."

From L'Arpège, Mr. Grébaut became the chef at L'Agapé, which earned a Michelin star in 2009 while he was working there. Then, seeking inspiration, he and his partner, the chef Tatiana Levha, traveled in Asia for several months.

Septime came after that as "the kind of restaurant where we would want to eat as customers," he said.

After its success, he and Mr. Pourriat created La Cave Septime, which specialized in high-quality natural wines; the walk-in seafood bar Clamato; and the pastry shop Tapisserie, famous for its chocolate-caramel and fleur de sel tartlets, maple syrup tarts and apple cakes, all in the same neighborhood.

In 2018, they opened the inn and guesthouse D'une île, in a converted 17th-century farmhouse they restored in the Perche region.

Mr. Grébaut resisted the star status of so many chefs and avoided social media and brand licensing. In an interview, he once gave the following advice: "I encourage the public and clients to restart taking pleasure in the moment shared around a table and stop consuming photos."

Mr. Grébaut is survived by Ms. Levha; their two children, Anna and Roman; and his mother. Ms. Levha and her sister Katia run Le Servan, a bistro, and Double Dragon, which highlights Asian cuisine.

In announcing Mr. Grébaut's death, Mr. Pourriat said that the establishments would remain open, except for a three-day pause for a funeral.

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SOCCER

Gotham F.C. Will Leave New Jersey for Queens

The N.W.S.L. champs will share a home with New York City F.C.

By DAVID WALDSTEIN

Every soccer team that is still in the World Cup wants to get to New Jersey for the final on July 19. But one professional soccer team is going in the opposite direction.

Gotham F.C., the defending champion of the National Women's Soccer League, announced on Tuesday that it would be leaving its current home in Harrison, N.J., and would play its home games at Etihad Park, the future home of New York City F.C., near Flushing in Queens, starting in 2028. The stadium will open in 2027.

Since 2019, Gotham has been playing home games at Sports Illustrated Stadium in Harrison, home of the Red Bulls, N.Y.C.F.C.'s rival in Major League Soccer. But Gotham's owners said the team could attract more fans in New York.

Carolyn Tisch Blodgett, the governing owner of the club, said the move was part of a grand ambition to make Gotham, winner of two of the last three women's soccer league titles, as popular as any sports team in the country.

"Announcing this new stadium is the next chapter in the story," she said.

Gotham has agreed to a five-year lease to play at Etihad Park with the possibility that the club could extend its lease "for a very, very long time," according to Brad Sims, the president and chief executive of N.Y.C.F.C., the park's builder and main tenant. The stadium is still under construction, but set to open next spring.

According to Tisch Blodgett, whose family owns part of the N.F.L.'s New York Giants, Gotham conducted research that showed the move to Queens would put an additional three million fans within commuting distance of home games.

"We think it will tremendously open up our fan base," she said in a telephone interview.

The team averaged over 8,500 fans per game the last two seasons at the Red Bulls ground, below the league average of just under 11,000. It has also played home games at Rutgers and Montclair State, among others, over the years.

"We have been nomads in a sense," said Yael Averbuch West, the president of soccer operations for the club, which was founded as Jersey Sky Blue in 2006. "We have some of the best players in the world, and they deserve to be playing in an absolutely world-class arena, and be seen by millions of people."

The club will retain a practical connection to New Jersey. Averbuch West grew up in Montclair, N.J., and played at the University of North Carolina before turning professional in 2009. She said most or all of the Gotham players would continue to live in New Jersey because that is where they will spend about 80 percent of their time. The team has agreed to move into and customize the Red Bulls' old practice facility in Whippany, N.J., and train there.

The New York City club has promised that when Gotham plays at Etihad, the digital signage and colors will reflect Gotham's uniform and logo. That includes the main entrance cube, which, Sims said, was partly inspired by the Sphere in Las Vegas. He said it is nearly eight stories high with 12,000 square feet of LEDs.

He said the venue also hoped to host the U.S. national teams, and would bid to host lacrosse games and the Rugby World Cup, for both men and women, in 2031 and 2033. But after N.Y.C.F.C., the main alternate tenant will be Gotham F.C.

"When it's a Gotham match, we want fans to feel that they are at a stadium that was designed, built and executed for a Gotham game," Sims said. "And if it's a U.S. Soccer men's or women's team, it will feel like a U.S. Soccer home venue."

New York's governor, Kathy Hochul, and Mayor Zohran Mamdani of New York City each expressed delight that the city was able to poach the club from New Jersey.

"Bringing Gotham F.C. to Queens means that the young girl kicking a ball around Jackson Heights, Jamaica or the South Bronx will be able to take the train and watch some of the best players in the world in her own city," Mamdani said in a statement.

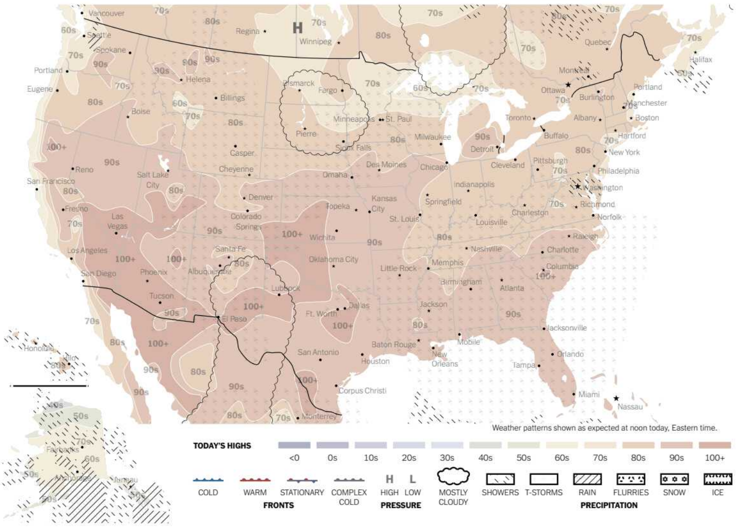
Gotham will test out its future neighborhood July 15, when it will play the Washington Spirit at Citi Field. Tisch Blodgett, who bought into the team in 2023, said the match would build on the momentum from the World Cup. It will be the first N.W.S.L. game in the city. She said ticket sales for the game had passed 30,000, meaning it will break the attendance record for a women's sports event in the five boroughs.

JASON MOWRY/GETTY IMAGES

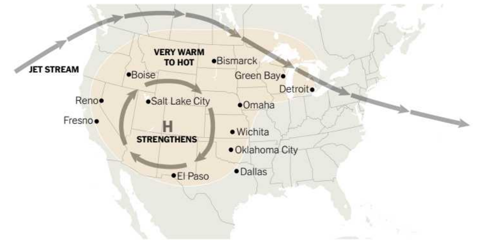
Gotham F.C., which captured the N.W.S.L. Challenge Cup last month, plans to move to Etihad Park, near Flushing, in 2028.

Weather Report

Meteorology by **AccuWeather**



Highlight: Heat Wave From Friday Into Next Week



A strengthening dome of high pressure over the Rockies will gradually expand into the northern Plains this weekend into early next week. Under this dome, it will become increasingly hot with near-record highs. Air quality will be reduced because of smoke.

National Forecast

Thunderstorms will rumble across the Southeast and into the southern Mississippi Valley today. Coverage may remain spotty, but thunderstorms are forecast to be heavy and capable of bringing damaging wind gusts and flooding downpours.

Another corridor of thunderstorms will occur across the Rockies and into the northern and western parts of the Great Lakes. Any thunderstorm will be capable of producing damaging winds, hail, flooding and an isolated tornado. The rest of the Southwest and the West Coast will have dry weather.

As heat continues to build, temperatures will rise 10 degrees above average over the interior. In parts of the Southwest, dry weather combined with gusty winds will lead to an elevated fire danger. Ongoing wildfires will spread smoke across the area.

Metropolitan Forecast

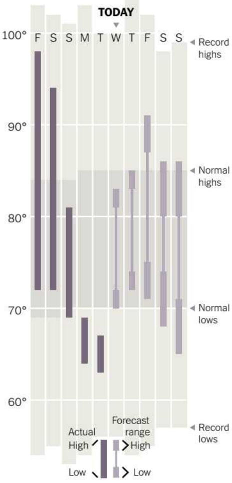
TODAY ....Warmer, some sunshine
High 82. The day will turn out partly sunny and less humid. It will also be dry. Temperatures will be a little below average, but not as cool as recent days have been.

TONIGHT ....Partly cloudy, humid
Low 71. The humidity will ease a little overnight, but the sky will remain partly cloudy. Temperatures will be around normal for the first half of July, with very little wind.

TOMORROW ....Humid, a thunderstorm
High 84. There will be a mix of clouds and sunshine as temperatures continue to rise after the recent cool spell. There will also be a thunderstorm during the afternoon.

FRIDAY ....Afternoon thunderstorms
High 89. The day will be warm and humid with more clouds than sunshine. There will also be a couple of showers and thunderstorms during the afternoon. The high temperature will be several degrees above average.

SATURDAY
SUNDAY ....A thunderstorm Saturday
Saturday will bring clouds and sunshine. There will also be an afternoon thunderstorm. High 83. Full sunshine will return to the area on Sunday. High 83.



Metropolitan Almanac

In Central Park, for the 13 hours ended at 1 p.m. yesterday.

Temperature

Avg. daily departure from normal this month .... +1.7°

Avg. daily departure from normal this year .... +0.0°

Reservoir levels (New York City water supply)

Yesterday 90%
Est. normal 94%

Precipitation (in inches)

Yesterday 0.02
Record 3.13

For the last 30 days
Actual 4.58
Normal 4.28

For the last 365 days
Actual 37.40
Normal 49.52

LAST 30 DAYS

Air pressure
High .... 30.08 10 a.m.
Low .... 30.05 4 a.m.

Humidity
High .... 100% 5 a.m.
Low .... 89% noon

Cooling Degree Days

An index of fuel consumption that tracks how far the day's mean temperature rose above 65

Yesterday 0
So far this month 95
So far this season (since January 1) 495
Normal to date for the season 391

Trends

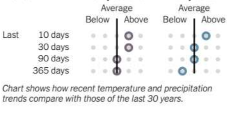


Chart shows how recent temperature and precipitation trends compare with those of the last 30 years.

Recreational Forecast

Sun, Moon and Planets

New	First Quarter	Full	Last Quarter
July 14 5:43 a.m.	July 21	July 29 10:35 a.m.	Aug. 5

Sun	RISE	5:32 a.m.	**Moon**	R	12:21 a.m.
	SET	8:30 p.m.		S	2:22 p.m.
	NEXT R	5:33 a.m.		R	12:48 a.m.
Jupiter	R	6:49 a.m.	**Mars**	R	2:48 a.m.
	S	9:23 p.m.		S	5:32 p.m.
Saturn	R	12:32 a.m.	**Venus**	R	9:06 a.m.
	S	1:02 p.m.		S	10:46 p.m.

Boating

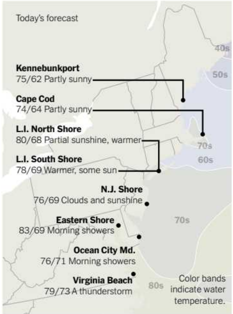
From Montauk Point to Sandy Hook, N.J., out to 20 nautical miles, including Long Island Sound and New York Harbor.

Winds will be out of the northeast at 5-10 knots. Waves will be 1 foot or less on New York Harbor and Long Island Sound. Waves on the ocean will be mainly 2-4 feet. Visibility will be clear to the horizon.

High Tides

Atlantic City	1:36 a.m.	2:21 p.m.
Barnegat Inlet	1:54 a.m.	2:38 p.m.
The Battery	2:25 a.m.	3:01 p.m.
Beach Haven	3:23 a.m.	3:59 p.m.
Bridgeport	5:49 a.m.	6:13 p.m.
City Island	5:32 a.m.	5:56 p.m.
Fire Island Lt.	2:51 a.m.	3:27 p.m.
Montauk Point	3:29 a.m.	4:15 p.m.
Northport	6:00 a.m.	6:26 p.m.
Port Washington	5:47 a.m.	6:14 p.m.
Sandy Hook	2:05 a.m.	2:41 p.m.
Shinnecock Inlet	2:02 a.m.	2:44 p.m.
Stamford	5:50 a.m.	6:16 p.m.
Tarrytown	4:14 a.m.	4:50 p.m.
Willets Point	5:34 a.m.	5:57 p.m.

Beach and Ocean Temperatures



Conditions will be mostly dry across the Northeast, but a few showers may start the day at the Delmarva beaches. Much of the time will be partly sunny from Maine through Virginia. Temperatures will be near normal for this time of year, with highs mostly in the 70s. The highest humidity will be from New Jersey on south.

Cities

High/low temperatures for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday, Eastern time, and precipitation (in inches) for the 16 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday. Expected conditions for today and tomorrow.

C	Clouds	**S**	Sun
F	Fog	**Sn**	Snow
H	Haze	**SS**	Snow showers
I	Ice	**T**	Thunderstorms
PC	Partly cloudy	**Tr**	Trace
R	Rain	**W**	Windy
Sh	Showers	**–**	Not available

N.Y.C. region	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
New York City	67/ 63 0.02	82/ 71 PC	84/ 73 T
Bridgeport	70/ 62 0.08	79/ 67 PC	82/ 72 T
Caldwell	68/ 63 0.02	84/ 67 PC	84/ 73 T
Danbury	67/ 60 0.30	81/ 64 PC	82/ 68 T
Islip	69/ 63 Tr	80/ 68 PC	82/ 72 PC
Newark	69/ 64 Tr	84/ 69 PC	83/ 75 T
Trenton	68/ 64 0.03	81/ 66 PC	81/ 69 T
White Plains	67/ 61 0.02	78/ 66 PC	80/ 70 T

United States	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Albany	70/ 58 0.12	84/ 66 PC	87/ 70 T
Albuquerque	94/ 68 0.05	95/ 69 T	98/ 69 PC
Anchorage	70/ 56 0.01	62/ 52 C	62/ 52 PC
Atlanta	94/ 76 0	94/ 76 T	91/ 74 T
Atlantic City	74/ 70 0.04	76/ 69 PC	81/ 76 T
Austin	97/ 74 0	98/ 76 S	98/ 76 T
Baltimore	82/ 69 0.02	82/ 72 PC	85/ 72 T
Baton Rouge	89/ 74 0.06	92/ 76 T	91/ 76 T
Birmingham	93/ 73 0.04	92/ 74 T	92/ 75 T
Boise	97/ 68 0.04	99/ 61 S	92/ 63 S
Boston	68/ 63 0.62	75/ 67 PC	87/ 72 PC
Buffalo	81/ 65 0	85/ 69 PC	84/ 69 T
Burlington	85/ 60 0	89/ 68 PC	89/ 70 T
Casper	92/ 54 0	87/ 55 PC	86/ 52 S
Charlotte	94/ 73 0.15	96/ 75 T	95/ 74 T
Chattanooga	91/ 72 0.04	90/ 72 T	90/ 72 T
Chicago	86/ 67 0	89/ 72 S	84/ 68 T
Cincinnati	86/ 69 0.04	87/ 68 T	86/ 71 T
Cleveland	81/ 67 0	84/ 68 PC	87/ 71 T
Colorado Springs	89/ 61 0.07	89/ 59 T	87/ 59 T
Columbus	87/ 69 0.10	88/ 71 S	89/ 71 T
Concord, N.H.	73/ 56 0.27	86/ 60 PC	90/ 69 T
Dallas-Ft. Worth	97/ 79 0.04	99/ 81 T	101/ 80 S
Denver	97/ 65 0.06	92/ 62 T	85/ 59 T
Des Moines	89/ 69 0	90/ 70 T	84/ 67 T
Detroit	86/ 67 0	89/ 68 PC	87/ 68 T
El Paso	99/ 75 0	100/ 75 T	104/ 77 T
Fargo	80/ 60 0.06	81/ 57 PC	83/ 63 S
Hartford	69/ 60 0.40	83/ 65 PC	87/ 70 PC
Honolulu	86/ 75 0.13	88/ 76 Sh	90/ 76 Sh
Houston	94/ 79 0.08	96/ 78 PC	94/ 79 S
Indianapolis	86/ 67 0	88/ 70 PC	89/ 70 T
Jackson	91/ 72 0.10	90/ 74 T	93/ 75 T
Jacksonville	96/ 76 0.04	97/ 76 T	96/ 75 T
Kansas City	89/ 69 0	91/ 72 S	88/ 71 T
Key West	92/ 84 0.10	92/ 85 PC	92/ 84 T
Las Vegas	110/ 84 0	111/ 83 PC	112/ 84 S
Lexington	85/ 68 0.16	84/ 66 T	86/ 71 T
Little Rock	91/ 73 0.05	91/ 75 T	96/ 78 T
Los Angeles	85/ 63 0	86/ 65 S	85/ 64 S
Louisville	87/ 73 0.09	86/ 73 T	89/ 74 T
Memphis	85/ 72 0.42	89/ 75 T	94/ 78 T
Miami	91/ 81 0.06	95/ 82 T	94/ 82 PC
Milwaukee	83/ 67 0	88/ 71 PC	80/ 67 T
Mpls.-St. Paul	89/ 72 0	83/ 67 T	84/ 69 T
Nashville	88/ 71 0.34	88/ 71 T	92/ 75 T
New Orleans	89/ 76 0.05	91/ 77 T	93/ 79 T
Norfolk	86/ 75 0.39	81/ 73 T	87/ 76 T
Oklahoma City	93/ 71 0	98/ 74 PC	98/ 75 PC
Omaha	91/ 70 0	92/ 70 T	82/ 68 T
Orlando	93/ 77 0.19	94/ 77 T	95/ 78 S
Philadelphia	80/ 68 0.04	85/ 70 PC	83/ 73 T
Phoenix	114/ 90 0	114/ 92 S	113/ 88 S
Pittsburgh	83/ 68 0.05	86/ 69 T	84/ 70 T
Portland, Me.	72/ 59 0.14	77/ 62 S	89/ 68 T
Portland, Ore.	84/ 59 0	78/ 53 C	81/ 56 S
Providence	69/ 63 0.37	81/ 65 PC	87/ 71 PC
Raleigh	93/ 73 0.30	94/ 75 T	97/ 76 T
Reno	96/ 61 0	96/ 61 S	96/ 63 S
Richmond	86/ 73 0.23	82/ 72 T	90/ 72 T
Rochester	78/ 62 0	85/ 68 PC	87/ 69 T
Sacramento	85/ 53 0	91/ 56 S	97/ 59 S
Salt Lake City	96/ 70 0.04	97/ 70 PC	97/ 70 S
San Antonio	94/ 76 0	98/ 76 S	97/ 77 S
San Diego	75/ 65 0	75/ 65 S	74/ 66 S
San Francisco	66/ 55 0	67/ 55 PC	70/ 56 PC
San Jose	71/ 55 0	76/ 56 PC	81/ 58 S
San Juan	88/ 79 0.12	90/ 79 Sh	90/ 79 T
Seattle	77/ 58 0	72/ 53 C	75/ 55 PC
Sioux Falls	91/ 71 0	84/ 64 T	84/ 64 T
Spokane	92/ 64 0	87/ 56 PC	84/ 59 S
St. Louis	85/ 73 0.08	89/ 74 T	94/ 77 T
St. Thomas	91/ 82 0.10	91/ 82 T	92/ 81 PC
Syracuse	80/ 61 0	87/ 70 PC	90/ 70 T
Tampa	91/ 80 0.03	94/ 81 T	97/ 82 T
Toledo	85/ 65 0	90/ 66 S	89/ 69 T
Tucson	108/ 81 0	107/ 80 S	108/ 83 S
Tulsa	92/ 72 0	96/ 78 S	98/ 81 PC
Virginia Beach	85/ 75 0.46	79/ 73 T	85/ 77 T
Washington	84/ 72 0.08	83/ 73 PC	87/ 75 T
Wichita	92/ 70 0	95/ 73 PC	96/ 73 T
Wilmington, Del.	80/ 69 0.01	83/ 70 PC	82/ 71 T

Africa	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Algiers	91/ 63 0	97/ 66 S	97/ 70 PC
Cairo	96/ 76 0	94/ 73 PC	94/ 76 PC
Cape Town	66/ 49 0	67/ 51 PC	63/ 48 PC
Dakar	88/ 79 0	89/ 80 S	88/ 80 S
Johannesburg	66/ 36 0	68/ 37 PC	67/ 39 PC
Nairobi	77/ 52 0	75/ 58 Sh	77/ 60 C
Tunis	93/ 70 0	97/ 72 S	101/ 73 S

Asia/Pacific	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Baghdad	113/ 91 0	109/ 86 S	108/ 85 S
Bangkok	95/ 84 0	95/ 80 T	94/ 81 T
Beijing	90/ 71 0.23	93/ 72 PC	89/ 74 C
Damascus	95/ 67 0	95/ 64 S	96/ 64 S
Hong Kong	88/ 80 0.60	89/ 81 R	89/ 81 Sh
Jakarta	91/ 77 0	91/ 75 Sh	91/ 75 Sh
Jerusalem	83/ 70 0	82/ 66 S	83/ 64 S
Karachi	95/ 84 0	95/ 84 PC	94/ 84 W
Manila	91/ 79 0.12	95/ 83 R	94/ 82 T
Mumbai	86/ 79 0.69	85/ 82 T	89/ 83 R
New Delhi	97/ 78 0.21	88/ 79 T	88/ 80 Sh
Riyadh	110/ 83 0	109/ 85 PC	108/ 83 S
Seoul	90/ 73 0.28	81/ 73 T	80/ 74 T
Shanghai	98/ 81 0	95/ 81 PC	94/ 78 PC
Singapore	90/ 79 0	88/ 78 R	85/ 79 T
Sydney	66/ 48 0.28	64/ 53 Sh	61/ 51 Sh
Taipei City	91/ 79 0.04	98/ 76 T	96/ 79 S
Tehran	102/ 81 0	102/ 78 PC	104/ 81 PC
Tokyo	75/ 70 0.06	84/ 73 C	87/ 74 PC

Europe	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Amsterdam	73/ 64 0	74/ 60 PC	78/ 61 PC
Athens	95/ 72 0	91/ 72 S	88/ 70 T
Berlin	73/ 63 0.07	75/ 53 PC	77/ 56 PC
Brussels	82/ 66 0	80/ 60 PC	84/ 61 S
Budapest	86/ 64 0.04	83/ 54 W	82/ 53 S
Copenhagen	64/ 59 0.12	72/ 56 S	74/ 58 S
Dublin	77/ 57 0	75/ 56 PC	74/ 57 PC
Edinburgh	63/ 59 0.04	74/ 56 PC	75/ 56 PC
Frankfurt	88/ 61 0	80/ 59 C	87/ 63 S
Geneva	90/ 61 0	94/ 66 S	94/ 64 S
Helsinki	61/ 48 0.15	63/ 55 Sh	67/ 52 Sh
Istanbul	86/ 68 0	85/ 73 S	77/ 66 Sh
Kyiv	79/ 52 0.11	72/ 53 Sh	70/ 54 C
Lisbon	88/ 64 0	93/ 62 S	83/ 64 S
London	88/ 64 0	92/ 68 S	95/ 70 S
Madrid	104/ 71 0.12	104/ 66 S	103/ 70 S
Moscow	68/ 57 0.04	69/ 62 Sh	67/ 57 Sh
Nice	84/ 75 0	85/ 74 S	87/ 76 S
Oslo	63/ 46 0.04	79/ 51 PC	81/ 58 PC
Paris	95/ 68 0	95/ 69 S	95/ 68 S
Prague	81/ 63 0	75/ 53 S	74/ 54 PC
Rome	86/ 70 0	88/ 70 S	88/ 70 S
St. Petersburg	61/ 51 0.14	68/ 60 Sh	72/ 58 Sh
Stockholm	63/ 39 0	59/ 48 PC	68/ 51 W
Vienna	90/ 66 0.01	80/ 58 W	83/ 58 PC
Warsaw	68/ 61 0.29	67/ 53 Sh	69/ 55 Sh

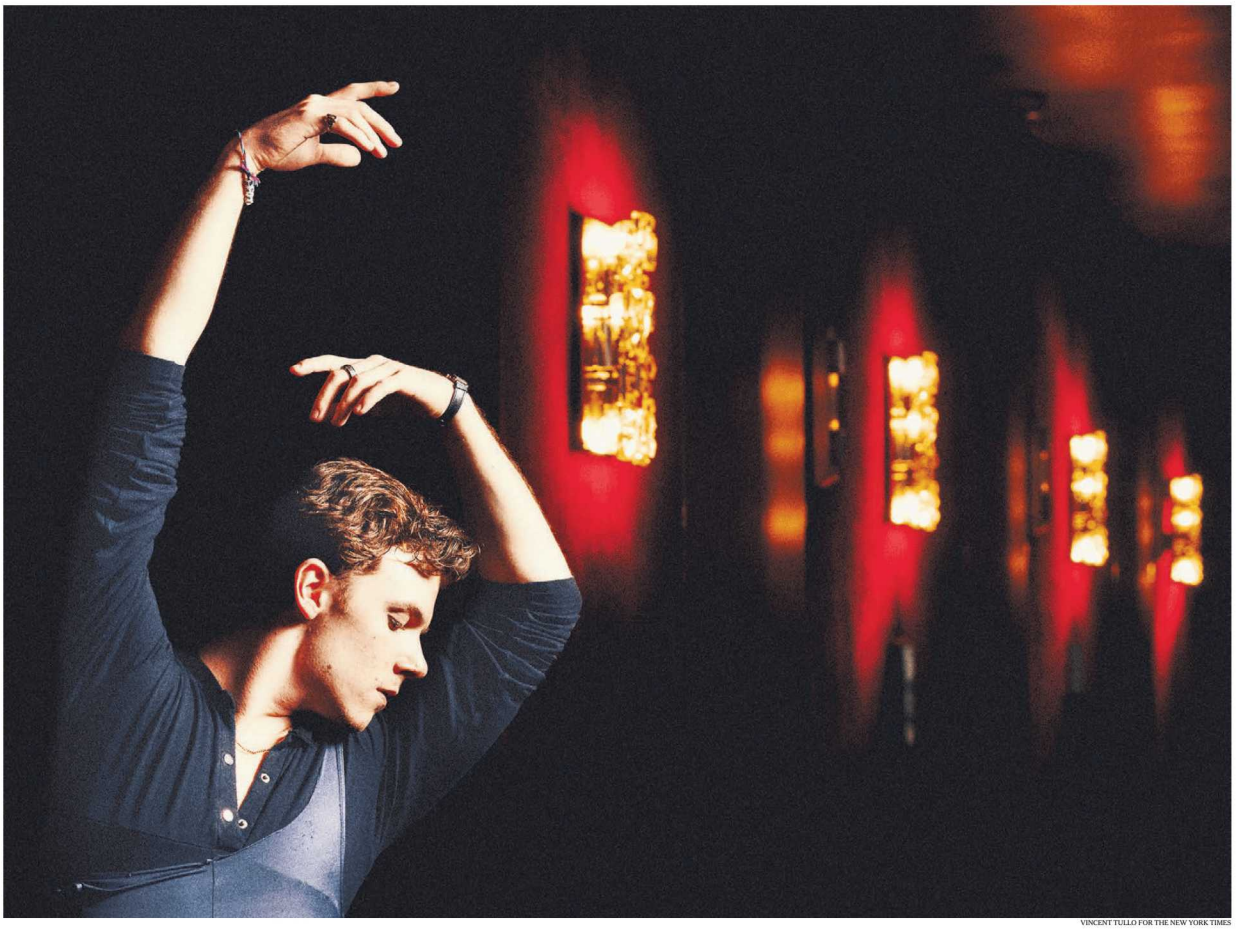
North America	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Acapulco	88/ 77 0	91/ 77 PC	93/ 78 PC
Bermuda	86/ 78 0.07	86/ 80 Sh	85/ 78 T
Edmonton	71/ 52 0	77/ 46 T	70/ 47 R
Guadalajara	74/ 65 0	77/ 62 T	75/ 60 T
Havana	90/ 73 0	94/ 76 R	94/ 73 R
Kingston	91/ 81 0	93/ 83 PC	92/ 83 R
Martinique	90/ 79 0	89/ 80 Sh	89/ 80 T
Mexico City	68/ 56 Tr	73/ 56 R	74/ 54 R
Monterrey	79/ 70 0	93/ 67 T	91/ 68 T
Montreal	82/ 70 0	87/ 70 PC	79/ 69 T
Nassau	90/ 79 0	92/ 82 PC	91/ 80 Sh
Panama City	91/ 76 0	94/ 77 R	90/ 77 T
Quebec City	82/ 59 0	84/ 66 C	77/ 62 T
Santo Domingo	91/ 76 0.04	88/ 75 R	91/ 75 Sh
Toronto	79/ 70 0	85/ 68 PC	88/ 68 T
Vancouver	63/ 56 0	70/ 54 PC	70/ 57 PC
Winnipeg	73/ 55 0	81/ 55 S	82/ 63 PC

South America	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Buenos Aires	61/ 39 0	60/ 49 PC	59/ 47 C
Caracas	89/ 76 0.01	89/ 76 R	90/ 76 R
Lima	72/ 68 0	75/ 67 S	74/ 67 PC
Quito	71/ 48 0	74/ 52 R	72/ 53 R
Recife	82/ 72 0	84/ 74 PC	85/ 74 Sh
Rio de Janeiro	79/ 66 0	71/ 66 PC	72/ 63 PC
Santiago	66/ 34 0	63/ 44 C	69/ 47 C

3 MUSEUMS
Explaining the White House's attack on the Smithsonian.

4 ALBUM REVIEW
Madonna returns to the dance club as a sanctuary.

6 THEATER
Dolly Parton won't be onstage, but a new Broadway musical will be all about her.



VINCENT TULLO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Jake Roxander, a newly minted principal dancer with American Ballet Theater, was described as having "remarkable artistry and incredible charisma, fearless virtuosity and really an unmistakable, unique presence."

Revealing His Might Through Dance

American Ballet Theater promoted Jake Roxander to principal dancer, a move that fuels his superhero drive.

By GIA KOURLAS

Jake Roxander was promoted to principal dancer with American Ballet Theater on Friday after his sparkling debut as Basilio in "Don Quixote." He spun with sharp brilliance, and he leaped into the air like a beam of light. The audience lost its mind.

But Roxander, 24, didn't start out this way. As a child, he spent hours at the barre of his parents' ballet studio in Medford, Ore. Many of his ballet lessons, though, took place during long car rides home.

His father would ask how class went that day, and if it didn't go well, Roxander would acknowledge what his parent already knew. "'Yeah, you were talking a lot in the back,'" Roxander said in a video interview, recounting his father's words. "'You weren't being very focused. You know who's very focused, Jake? Captain America.'"

Roxander was, and remains, an ardent comic book fan — a Batman figure sits on a bookshelf in his apartment today — but he was not a disciplined student. "We talked about courage and bravery," he said of con-

CONTINUED ON PAGE C6

When Music Venues Go Silent

As a London museum charts the forces destroying nightlife spots, some clubs struggle to survive.

By JILLIAN RAYFIELD

LONDON — At a February gig here called "Save the Moth Club," hordes of people jammed inside the venue to see a show by the Chicago band Whitney.

"It was just suitably rowdy," said Julien Ehrlich, the drummer, who said that Moth Club was one of the band's favorite stops in London: "It certainly felt like the energy was 1,000 percent."

The event was intended to raise awareness about what that East London club — which hosts gigs for up-and-coming bands, and sometimes bigger acts like Wet Leg (and once even Lady Gaga) — has described as an existential threat: a pair of building proposals for apartments next door.

Among other things, it would mean that people would be living right up against the nightclub's noisy smoking area, said Keith Miller, the head of events at Moth Club. He said that would be a potential disaster for a music venue with a late-night license: "We will unfortunately be creating noise seven days a week."

Miller said that it was a common tale for a club to "regenerate the area, and then people end up killing it" once they flood in to live there.

That tension is explored on the other side of town at the Victoria and Albert Museum,

CONTINUED ON PAGE C5

JEREMIE SOUTEYRAT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The band Floral Image in London at Moth Club, which says it is threatened by a neighboring building development.

Institution's Next Director Fosters 'Edgy'

Massimiliano Gioni wins top job at the New Museum.

By JASON FARAGO

The New Museum reopened earlier this year in an expanded facility in Lower Manhattan, with twice the gallery space and views all around downtown. Now the contemporary art center has a new leader: Massimiliano Gioni, the museum's longtime artistic director, will take over the top job on Aug. 1, the museum announced on Tuesday.

Gioni, 52, joined the New Museum as a curator in 2006 and has overseen its exhibitions program since 2014. He has also remained an active curator abroad, organizing an acclaimed edition of the Venice Biennale and shows in Mexico, Greece, Lebanon and China. Art world prognosticators considered Gioni the most likely successor of Lisa Phillips, who directed the New Museum from 1999 until this spring. But the board undertook a full-scale search, interviewing international applicants over eight months — with an acting director, Regan Grusy, in place — before concluding that its next leader was already in the building.

"When we thought about who's the best

CONTINUED ON PAGE C4

MAYA SALAM | THE GOOD-BAD

Clinging From Perilous Places

Renny Harlin's 'Cliffhanger' brought Sylvester Stallone back from the brink in this 1993 high-altitude thriller.

What's a "good-bad" movie? It's the kind that might have you cackling, hollering or groaning, one that is not necessarily great cinema but is great fun. It's highly watchable even though — or maybe because — it's memorably ridiculous. And it always has at least one element that pushes it into absurd territory.

SYLVESTER STALLONE'S superstar status was hanging by a thread when he agreed to "Cliffhanger," Renny Harlin's vertigo-inducing thriller that required the man who played Rocky and Rambo to hang by a literal thread — OK, a fraying rope.

Coming off a series of duds, including "Stop! Or My Mom Will Shoot" and "Lock Up," it was a make-or-break project for Stallone, whose reputation had floundered since earning two Oscar nominations for his 1976 triumph, "Rocky."

"Every mistake I could have made, I made," he told The New York Times while warming himself in a gas-heated tent near a mountaintop in the Dolomites, where "Cliffhanger" was primarily filmed, a year before its 1993 release. So, he gave this movie his absolute all.

"I want to cross that finish line done, played, completely out of gas," he said.

This dedication to extremity paid off, propelling "Cliffhanger" to global box-office success and heralding a return to form as a herculean hero with a complicated soul. His character, Gabe Walker, is a traumatized rescue ranger forced to outwit the psychopathic villain Eric Qualen (John Lithgow), who is attempting a midair heist of a U.S. Treasury plane carrying $100 million over the Colorado Rockies.

Whether the movie is fundamentally good or bad had Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert famously exchanging barbs in a heated debate.

"The movie is filled with howlingly bad scenes," Siskel said. An incredulous Ebert, who called the mountain-climbing set pieces "truly sensational," said, "I got a feeling of involvement and fear, and the movie did work for me."

It's exactly that overlap — where howlworthy meets heart-pounding — that elevates "Cliffhanger" to good-bad immortality.

TRISTAR/EVERETT COLLECTION

TRISTAR PICTURES

Sylvester Stallone, left, as a traumatized rescue ranger in "Cliffhanger." John Lithgow, below, played a psychopathic villain. During one daring aerial stunt, bottom left, a cable was strung between two aircraft flying at 15,000 feet.

WHAT MAKES IT GOOD?

An Opening for the Ages And Scenery Galore

At the time, Harlin described this movie as a throwback to big-action thrillers, "the kind that cost a lot because they have to be shot outdoors and can't be faked with computer imagery or on studio lots."

It's this commitment to a real death-defying backdrop that makes the cinematography more eye-popping than ever in our current era of ubiquitous C.G.I. and creeping A.I.

Harlin was so dedicated to practical effects, he actually managed to make one in particular highly impractical: sending a stunt person to cross on a cable strung between two aircraft flying at 15,000 feet. Simon Crane was paid a million dollars to do it, a feat that still holds the Guinness World Record for most expensive aerial stunt.

And it wasn't Harlin's only bold decision: In the opening sequence, a contender for the best in action-movie history, Gabe tries his best to rescue a woman whose harness broke, but she slips from his hand. And, like Gabe, we look into her eyes as she falls to her death.

The movie "wastes no time in establishing its first priority, that of sending its audience into a cold sweat," Janet Maslin wrote in her Times review. "This effect is achieved spectacularly well."

WHAT MAKES IT BAD?

A So-So Script

Corny '90s puns can often be good-bad gold, but the many generic one-liners here — like "keep your arms and legs in the vehicle at all times!" — mostly land with a shrug.

The *meh*-ness is particularly glaring with Qualen's crew of thugs, who seem to have been assembled solely on the basis of who could make the smarmiest quips.

Fortunately, the dialogue given to Jessie (Janine Turner), a search-and-rescue pilot and Gabe's girlfriend, and Hal (Michael Rooker), a ranger and Gabe's former best buddy, lend the movie humanity and depth, just not enough to offset the middling wisecracks.

TRISTAR/EVERETT COLLECTION

WHAT MAKES IT GOOD-BAD?

A Peak Eurotrash Accent

Logic-flouting action — say, Gabe riding a bad guy like a sled or impaling another on a stalactite — gives "Cliffhanger" its wacky edge. But ultimately it's Lithgow, with his operatic performance and wildly fluctuating accent, who steals the show.

While Harlin envisioned David Bowie as Qualen, Christopher Walken was initially cast. But early in production, Walken walked, leaving Lithgow with no time to prepare.

"I remember sitting around with Renny Harlin trying to decide what nationality Eric Qualen was," Lithgow told GQ in 2022. "Was he an American Secret Service man, maybe a South African? Or how about an Englishman?" In the end, they decided to "just go the Alan Rickman route," referring to Rickman's geographically muddled accent as the evildoer Hans Gruber in "Die Hard."

All said and done, Lithgow added, "It was fabulous."

VIDEO GAME REVIEWS

Plenty of New Titles to Try: One About Cats, One About Crime

A cryptographic puzzle drama is also among the recent games that have stood out.

THIS YEAR critics for The New York Times have reviewed video games including Resident Evil Requiem, the latest installment in that horror franchise; 007 First Light, a James Bond adventure; and Zero Parades, a spy role-playing game by the creators of Disco Elysium.

Here are a few other games that have stood out:

Mewgenics

Reviewed on the PC.

After the death of Laszlo, my family's lovable, moody, biting cat, I began playing feline-inspired games. None embody his somewhat feral spirit more than Mewgenics, by a creator of Super Meat Boy and The Binding of Isaac.

This sardonically humorous, sometimes violent strategy game is played on grids of squares. You breed cats (they're horniest at night), amass power-ups and travel through levels like caves and the moon to battle foes. In the sewers, you can convince a plump shark to fight on your side.

What makes Mewgenics the cat's meow is that it's mischievous and odd. Characters like the mad scientist Thomas A. Beanies, with his wild Einstein-like hair, may have lost his marbles, exemplified by his narcissism and a deadly goal. Many characters, with their thick Sharpie outlines, are thoroughly creepy. They're useful, too. Frank, an itchy, addled architect, lives under your house and builds rooms in exchange for retired cats.

The varied soundtrack, influenced by the Ramones at their punkiest, a growling Tom Waits and the Theremin-loving Danny Elfman, enhances every battle. There is no spoken dialogue, but reading and fighting to this smart music makes the game more imaginative and magical. The impressive depth of Mewgenics includes 281 available achievements, one of which is called Throbbing Gristle, a nod to the industrial music pioneers. Its spell turns foes into meat.

Despite the occasional grammar flubs (It's "Science made you and me," not "Science made you and I."), the narrative is appealing. By the end, you discover a secret reason that Dr. Beanies engaged you to breed cats in the first place.

Although moving from square to square on the grid is time-consuming, Mewgenics rewards those familiar with the feelings of millions of cat owners: frustration, cuteness, beauty and impulsiveness.

HAROLD GOLDBERG

Better Than Dead

Reviewed on the PC.

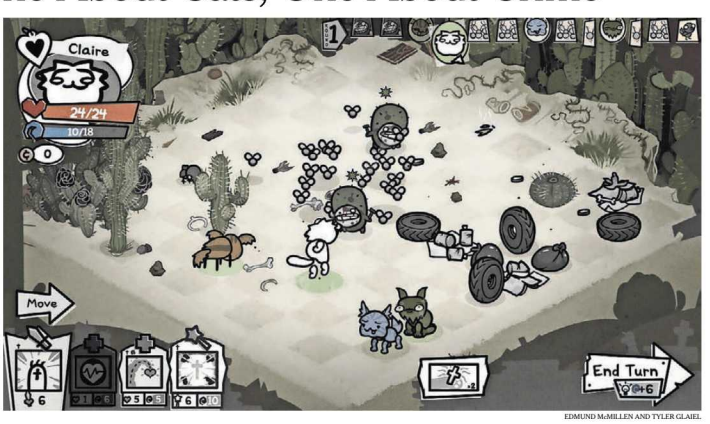
Better Than Dead, which is in dialogue with the unsettling aesthetic of "bodycam"-style shooters like Unrecorded and Ready or Not, sources its pastiche from low-budget '80s Hong Kong crime action thrillers, the grungier and grimier and the better.

While its contemporaries set their firefights in empty warehouses and drug dens, Better Than Dead winds players through an intimate underworld with carpeted dim sum joints, kitschy neon-lit strip clubs and bamboo-scaffolded high-rises.

Your character is a sex-trafficking victim who wakes up in a dungeon, staring absently at a filthy wall panel laminated with old photos of a cloudy blue sky. You find a gun, and with it, the means toward freedom and revenge. It's a simple plot with just enough flavor to cast meaning and depth into the gunfights, which are chaotic and brutal. Your character, no professional, blunders into rooms full of black suited gangsters, squeezing out panicked shots that shatter the eardrums and splatter the walls with blood.

Guns in games are often treated perfunctorily, as tools to click on baddies for points. The gun in Better Than Dead is the unmistakable center of its hazy nightmare, both as your redemption and your curse.

YUSSEF COLE



EDMUND McMILLEN AND TYLER GLAIEL

An image from Mewgenics, a humorous and sometimes violent strategy game.

TR-49

Reviewed on the PC. Also available on the Switch.

Call it vacuum-tube futurism.

TR-49 is both puzzle game and audio drama that gestures toward a dystopian reality where the rich can live forever at the expense of everyone else. It also caters to nostalgia for a time when computers were oddly-shaped tools that harnessed rather than scattered attention.

This visually spare but engrossing game places players before a monochromatic circular screen attached to a rectangular four-panel input device that accepts alphanumeric codes. The machine, as this story goes, was designed to help the cryptographers at Bletchley Park crack German war codes. In the wake of World War II, its creators, two married engineers, repurposed it as a "thinking machine" by feeding it books and periodicals that ultimately endowed it with quantum capabilities.

Players are entrusted with figuring out how the machine works and locating a specific document to help end the tyranny of the undying. To do so they must uncover codes that are mentioned, hinted at or alluded to within the machine's archives. Enter a code and you will see documents whir past in a pleasing way that recalls a microfiche reader.

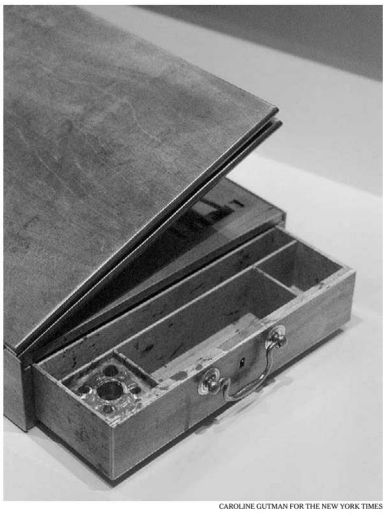
What one uncovers is a sort of intranet that shows off its creators' inspirations, interests and concerns. Untangling the interlocking history of an array of people — scientists, novelists, academics, journalists — whose lives or work affected one another is intriguing enough that it makes up for some of TR-49's more obvious plot twists.

CHRISTOPHER BYRD

Approach to History That White House Finds Unpatriotic

The administration's report criticizing the Smithsonian echoes several themes of President Trump's push to reshape the American story.

By JENNIFER SCHUESSLER



CAROLINE GUTMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

LAWREN SIMMONS

A White House report said a current National Museum of American History exhibition downplays artifacts like the portable desk that Thomas Jefferson used to draft the Declaration of Independence, near right. It also suggested that a Statue of Liberty model, far right, is intended to help "convince visitors that illegal aliens are entitled to citizenship, voting rights and 'belonging' in America."

While the nation's 250th birthday may have passed, the pitched partisan battles over how to tell the country's history — in particular the founding story of 1776 — are hardly over.

On the Fourth of July, hours before President Trump gave an address on the National Mall in Washington, the White House posted a lengthy report on its website accusing the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History of engaging in "extreme political activism."

The 162-page report, credited to the White House Domestic Policy Council, was the latest salvo in the Trump administration's long-running campaign to gain influence over the broader Smithsonian, which includes 21 museums and the National Zoo. It quickly drew strong criticism from historians.

"In another example of executive branch overreach, the White House is seeking to coerce Smithsonian leadership to shape its presentation of U.S. history so that it serves the administration's political agenda," the Organization of American Historians said in a statement on Monday.

Here are some of the report's main charges, and how they relate to the administration's broader push to promote what President Trump has called "patriotic" history.

Marking the 250th Anniversary

The report has harsh words for the museum's approach to the recent anniversary, which it says neglects the centrality of the founding. The museum, it said, failed to create "any exhibit dedicated to presenting a general narrative of American history or telling the story of any of our founding fathers, the Second Continental Congress, the Declaration of Independence, the American Revolutionary War, or the achievement of independence and the establishment of the constitutional rule of law."

It states that the museum's main offering for the 250th, "In Pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness," a scavenger-hunt style display of 250 objects from across American history, is a hodgepodge that "fails to actually celebrate America's founders or founding."

The report also faults leadership for not moving "remarkable items" like the portable desk where Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration to a special place within the American history museum. It states that the desk remains in its usual case in the museum, with the only change being a new bilingual sticker.

But in fact, the desk has been moved across the Mall to the Smithsonian Castle, where it is the centerpiece of the exhibition "American Aspirations," curated by Lonnie G. Bunch III, the Smithsonian's secretary.

In a recent article in The Atlantic, Bunch called Jefferson's desk the exhibition's one "nonnegotiable" and its "gravitational force."

"The desk was where this nation was born, where *life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness* became our promised land," he wrote.

Founding the Nation

The report accuses the museum of avoiding "a unified, national narrative," while encouraging debate about questions the authors believe are settled.

In particular, the report faults a wall text titled "Revolution and the National Story," which asks how Americans should remember the founding.

"Was it a complete, perfect, sacred event led by a great patriot who, as American children would learn, never told a lie?" the text asks. "Or was it part of a wider, unfinished movement for liberty — deeply imperfect but with sacred aspirations?"

Debate over the meaning and legacy of the Revolution began almost the moment it ended, historians have shown, and has continued through the 250th anniversary. But the report chides the museum for not "providing an answer" or giving "definitive information."

The Founders and Slavery

The report criticizes what it sees as the museum's overemphasis on slavery, particularly when it comes to the founders. It faults an exhibition about Benjamin Franklin's electricity research, which closed in November, for including a section focused on enslaved people.

That section, according to text still on the museum's website, notes that Franklin owned roughly a half-dozen enslaved people during his life, and only publicly embraced abolitionism in his later years. The text also speculated on whether enslaved people in his household may have played a role in his experiments, while noting there is no evidence either way.

The complaint about the exhibition reflects the administration's broader approach to slavery, which has not been to suppress information about the founders and slavery entirely but to focus on aspects that paint them in a more favorable light.

Earlier this year, the administration removed signs from the President's House Site in Philadelphia relating to George Washington's ownership of slaves. The proposed replacements emphasize Washington's private distaste for slavery, and the fact that his will ultimately emancipated the more than 120 people he enslaved. But the proposed new signs omit previously offered information about the ways Washington aggressively pursued and sometimes harshly punished enslaved people who tried to escape his household.

Christianity's Role

The report accuses the museum of quoting the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution selectively, "in ways that mute their claims about equality, ordered liberty, natural rights and the divine source of those inalienable rights." It also accuses the museum of depicting Christianity only as an instrument of oppression, while ignoring "the constructive role of Christian belief and Christian institutions in shaping the nation and its freedoms."

The claim that the founders intended the United States to be a Christian nation is sharply challenged by most mainstream historians, and it is not universally embraced across the political right. But it has been heavily emphasized by the Trump administration as part of its events for the 250th anniversary.

In May, it organized Rededicate 250, a large prayer event on the National Mall, featuring mainly Christian evangelical speakers and iconography. The idea of a Christian founding is also emphasized in the Freedom Trucks, a fleet of Trump-backed federally funded mobile history museums currently touring the country.

Immigration and Activism

The report criticizes the museum's depiction of immigration, particularly in the exhibition "Many Voices, One Nation." The exhibit explores the ideal of "E Pluribus Unum" and how waves of arrivals of different groups joined the Native Americans who were already here to create the American people.

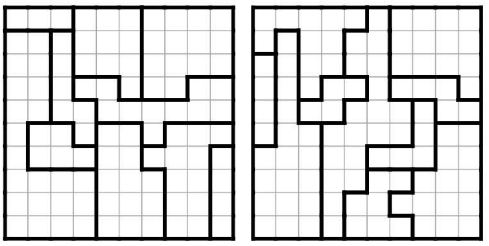
The report accuses that exhibition, which incorporates artifacts relating to a wide variety of ethnic groups, of diverting proper focus away from Christopher Columbus, the pilgrims and the founders and toward "political activism and modern-day grievances."

According to the report, the "ultimate goal" of the exhibition is "to convince visitors that illegal aliens are entitled to citizenship, voting rights and 'belonging' in America." Evidence for that claim includes the fact that among the exhibit's three renditions of the Statue of Liberty is a papier-mâché version, made for immigrant farmworkers, that shows her carrying a basket of tomatoes.

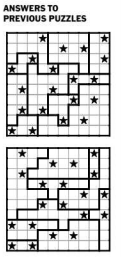
The White House report objects to the exhibition's statement that "early leaders envisioned a country that promised opportunity and freedom — but only for some." The report sees this as evidence of the museum's broader "anti-white animus." But the exhibition's claim is supported by historical evidence.

The Naturalization Act of 1790, signed by George Washington, said that only "free white persons" could become citizens. In the early years of the republic, many leaders, including Thomas Jefferson, suggested that people of African descent were a "separate nation" that could never live alongside whites and should be sent back to Africa after emancipation.

Two Not Touch



ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES



Put two stars in each row, column and region of the grid. No two stars may touch, not even diagonally.

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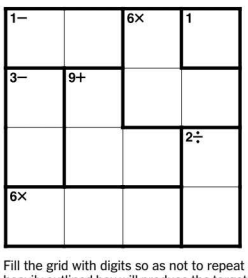
Brain Tickler

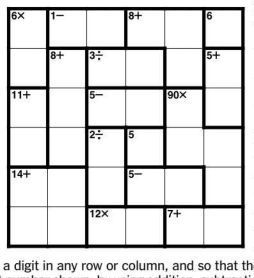
Rearrange the letters of PLEASANTLY + I to name a well-known foreign city and its country.

PUZZLE BY WILL SHORTZ

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER My dentist told me to open up. I told him that I wish my parents would support my choices.

KenKen





ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES

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

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

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 4x4 grid will use the digits 1-4. A 6x6 grid will use 1-6.

For more games: www.nytimes.com/games

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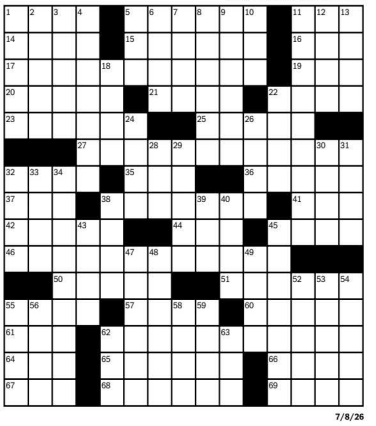
Crossword | Edited by Will Shortz

PUZZLE BY MASON HYUNJIN LEE



7/8/26

ACROSS

1 Cartographers' concerns
5 Go by
11 Helpful skill for guessers
14 Working obediently
15 Mickey with an Oscar nomination for "The Wrestler"
16 Champiñones ___ plancha (Spanish dish)
17 [C/P]ause
19 Droop
20 Food mentioned in the Lord's Prayer
21 What "Eat" stands for in the mnemonic "Never Eat Soggy Waffles"
22 Buzz before a release
23 Low-quality synthetic images, informally
25 Prepare to drive, in golf
27 [L/C]ure
32 Result of touching poison ivy
35 "The Deer Hunter" setting, in brief
36 Old, as a joke
37 Casual refusal
38 "Way to go, kid!"
41 Heir to the throne, maybe
42 Like a good explanation, say
44 Brain ___
45 Prominent features of tarsiers
46 [M/H]inds
50 Fitness fad popularized by Billy Blanks
51 "Animal Farm" or "The Simpsons"
55 Soccer great Mia
57 Apartment with a high ceiling
60 New beginning
61 Pub order
62 [Z/R]est
64 Magic setting, in brief
65 List of things to discuss
66 Mother of a stable family?
67 ___ pal
68 Individual
69 Hershey toffee bar

DOWN

1 Black ___, nickname for Kobe Bryant
2 Company that created Pong
3 Fish, roads or weapons that are long and thin
4 Sneakiness
5 Goof
6 Brain or ear part
7 Coolness, of a sort
8 Magician's cry
9 Many a Winter Olympian
10 "Holy moley!"
11 "No sweat!"
12 ___ on the wrist
13 Word with home or half
18 What cologne may mask
22 Injured
24 Pub order
26 Site for "unique and creative" items
28 "Sleep is like a ___: It only comes to you if you ignore it": Gillian Flynn
29 Big box store that merged with Sears in 2005
30 Sunburn remedy
31 X's, sometimes
32 Ruler division
33 Tall story
34 Weekly reward for a strict dieter, maybe
38 Keister, in Leicester
39 Feathered accessory that won't constrict you
40 Singer Redding
43 First in a race?
45 Regards highly
47 Do a favor
48 Worker overhead
49 Cooking fat
52 Chris with the 1991 hit "Wicked Game"
53 Cool again, maybe
54 Heavens
55 Rest like a bat
56 Jessica of "Fantastic Four"
58 Marshy areas
59 Task on a list
62 Greatly surpass, as competitors in a race
63 Raced

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

B	A	B	A	■	I	D	L	E	■	G	E	T	U	P
O	L	A	V	■	C	O	A	L	■	A	W	A	K	E
M	O	J	O	■	E	N	Y	A	■	M	A	X	E	D
B	E	A	C	H	B	U	N	N	I	E	S	■	■	■
■	■	■	A	B	A	T	E	■	D	O	T	G	O	V
H	O	T	D	O	G	S	■	L	I	V	E	O	N	E
O	R	E	O	■	■	■	P	I	N	E	■	P	A	R
R	A	E	■	S	U	N	B	E	A	R	■	O	U	T
N	C	O	■	P	T	A	S	■	■	■	R	O	T	E
E	L	F	H	A	T	S	■	F	I	R	E	F	O	X
D	E	F	A	M	E	■	N	A	M	E	S	■	■	■
■	■	■	W	A	R	M	A	N	D	F	U	Z	Z	Y
A	R	I	A	L	■	U	N	D	O	■	L	E	I	A
C	A	T	I	O	■	S	N	O	W	■	T	R	O	N
E	N	D	I	T	■	H	Y	M	N	■	S	O	N	G

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EVELYN McDONNELL | ALBUM REVIEW

Madonna Returns to the Dance Floor, With Focus

Her latest release energizes her origin story and shines light on the troubles she's shaken off.

XNY/STAR MAX AND GC IMAGES, VIA GETTY IMAGES

Madonna in Times Square last month. Her new album is a spiritual successor to "Confessions on a Dance Floor," from 2005.

BACK IN THE LATE 1970s and early '80s, there was a young woman on the club floor, having a good time. She had moved to the Lower East Side of Manhattan from Michigan to try to make it as a dancer. In the downtown venues where gay men and women, performance artists, Latin free-stylers, break dancers and punks all came together, she could be herself, free and in motion.

It's an origin story that Madonna has been trying to tell in film for years, with a planned studio movie shelved, she said, over penny pinching. A life as big as hers, she told Interview magazine last month, "needed a big budget." (The Hollywood dealing reportedly will be fodder for the upcoming season of Apple TV's "The Studio.")

Rebuffed, she looked to those early roots, and the wounds and successes since, on her new studio album, "Confessions II," a spiritual successor to 2005's exuberant "Confessions on a Dance Floor." Then as now, Madonna returns to the club as a sanctuary, but where the earlier album venerated the party in and of itself, "Confessions II" shines light on the troubles she's exorcised on the dance floor.

Beginning with the percolating techno of "I Feel So Free," Madonna creates a vocal echo chamber, whispering: "It's really hard for me to trust people / That's why I like to go dancing — safety in numbers." Rather than absolve her sins, the British producer Stuart Price steadily turns up the dials.

Working with Price, her primary collaborator on "Confessions on a Dance Floor," she builds momentum in familiar fashion. The continuous mix of the album — each song melts into the next — effects a D.J. set as Madonna explains club-land liberation theology through various dance subgenres. The trance of "Good for the Soul" gives way to the rousing E.D.M. of "One Step Away," whose lyrics ("Nobody's free until they're broken") seem tailor-made for recovery communities.

Madonna and Price are credited as the sole writers of nine of the LP's 16 tracks, a focused approach that was missing on the albums released in the two decades between their collaborations. In the interim, Madonna signed a deal with Live Nation and Interscope and made a string of LPs bloated with producers and ideas that sometimes skewed defensive (2015's "Rebel Heart"). "Confessions II" resists those digressions and keeps aiming straight at transcendence.

On "Good for the Soul," Madonna offers explanations of the cosmology of a rave; with her voice double-tracked over electronica, she intones: "Everything begins in consciousness." Over the swirling disco of "Love Sensation," she reassures us, "There's nothing that we cannot do!" The album could have been titled "Affirmations" for its sweaty uplift.

CRITIC'S PICK

Madonna
"Confessions II"
(Warner)

And it keeps ascending even as Madonna explores the past. The house music chord progression of "Bring Your Love," a duet with Sabrina Carpenter, calls to mind the lilt of "Vogue." They performed both songs as part of Carpenter's Coachella set in April. Rather than mining the younger artist's chart-topping sound, as Madonna might have attempted in the past, the track and the performance — donning the satin and lace corsets of the "Confessions on a Dance Floor" era — tactically invite a consideration of her influence on Carpenter's breathy provocations.

By the back half of the album, Madonna is ready to touch on the conflicts that kept bringing her back to the club over the years. The drum and bass of "Fragile," with its atmospheric synth strings, brings a poignant finality to Madonna's relationship with her younger brother Christopher, with whom she reunited before his death in 2024. "The Test," written and performed with her daughter Lola, fuses sprightly synth-pop and downtempo as the pair reckon with their conflicting relationships to celebrity.

Less interesting is "Betrayal," which loops an ominous trumpet and keys sample of Erik Satie's "Gnossienne No. 1" to build a taunt for her stepmother: "You'll never take my mother's place." The ballad "L.E.S. Girl" ends the album on a jarringly treacly note.

Before its release, Madonna teased "Confessions II" with an almost 14-minute film directed by David Toro and Solomon Chase, known together as Torso. It's a wannabe cyberpunk fantasy filled with cameos by celebrities — Julia Garner (who had been the lead slated for the biopic), Odessa A'zion, Honey Dijon — who cavort in clubs, bathrooms and living rooms while sometimes being chased by robots and shooting lasers from their vaginas. Madonna followed its premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival with a clunky Times Square performance sponsored by the gay dating app Grindr, her dancing stiffened by a lingering knee injury. These visualizations seem to be at once mired in a fetishized past and forecasting a sadistic future.

None of the visual promotion of "Confessions II" came close to the cinematic worldbuilding of "Danceteria," an album track that memorializes one of the clubs where Madonna got her start. She moves through the song name-checking friends who landmark the way to the dance floor: Debbie Harry, Debi Mazar, Mark Kamins, Fab 5 Freddy, Jean-Michel Basquiat. We know the young narrator will become Madonna, will become many pop culture-defining versions of her, actually. But in the lush disco where "everyone here is a work of art," she finds a cradle for all those big ideas.

The New Museum's Next Director Fosters an 'Edgy' Future

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

person to lead the organization, we wanted somebody who thinks globally," James-Keith Brown, the museum's president, said in an interview. The search committee also sought a director with experience producing temporary exhibitions and new commissions, rather than a leader at a collection-centered museum. "We don't have a collection," Brown explained. "It allows us to be more nimble, more experimental and a little more curious."

"After 27 years, we needed to do a full, proper search, and Mas was incredibly supportive of that — he encouraged it," Brown added. "We went through the whole process. But at the end of the day, our conclusion was that our best person was right in front of us."

The New Museum of Contemporary Art, as it was then known, was founded in 1977 and has had two leaders: Marcia Tucker, who staged its first exhibitions in rented spaces downtown, ran it as "a somewhat chaotic, idealistic place where the nature of art was always in question, exhibitions were a form of consciousness raising and mistakes were inevitable," as Roberta Smith wrote in The New York Times. Phillips, her successor, transformed the New Museum into an international institution, overseeing the museum's construction of a permanent home on the Bowery in 2007 as well as the just-completed expansion.

In an interview, Gioni said those women cast a long shadow on his new role. "It comes, obviously, with a big responsibility and illustrious legacy at this point, which seems crazy for a young institution that's had only two directors," he said. "But it also comes in the wake of a great reopening, where there's lots of momentum and good energy and good will. Which was not necessarily a given."

While the New Museum's expansion, designed by the firm OMA/Shohei Shigematsu and Rem Koolhaas, drew a mix of praise for its improved circulation and tutting about less-than-pristine finishes, critics have given strong notices to its first show, "New Humans: Memories of the Future," staged by Gioni and his curatorial team. "New Humans," covering more than a century of art history, examines how successive waves of technological and economic change redefined our notions of humanity.

With as much art by long-dead artists like Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia as by young painters, Gioni's reopening show came across as an ironic riposte to expectations that a contemporary art museum would point the way to tomorrow. "I always joke, even as I'm doing tours, that in 2007 there was no doubt that there would be such a thing as 'the future,'" the curator said. "In 2026: not so sure!"

Gioni was born near Milan and began his career as a critic and editor for the Italian magazine Flash Art. While there he became friendly with the Padua-born artist Maurizio Cattelan, who would later gain notoriety for crafting an 18-karat gold toilet and taping a banana to a wall. The day after they met, Cattelan was scheduled to give an interview on Italian radio. Ever the jokester, Cattelan sent the young Gioni in his stead — the first of hundreds of interviews, TV appearances and public lectures in which Gioni masqueraded as the artist.

A certain deadpan humor has percolated through Gioni's career ever since. From 2002 to 2005, the two Italians and the curator Ali Subotnick ran The Wrong Gallery, a Chelsea art space that was nothing more than a doorway. Leading artists showed a single work that could only be seen through the glass door. The trio called it "the back door to contemporary art, and it's always locked."

Many of Gioni's most acclaimed exhibitions have been large-scale biennials and group shows, often blending new art with historical documents or scientific materials, as well as outsider art and imagery of the occult. In addition to the 2013 Venice Biennale — he remains the youngest curator in 130 years to lead it — he also organized editions of the Berlin Biennale (with Cattelan and Subotnick) and of the Gwangju Biennale in South Korea.

His major exhibitions at the New Museum, which he has organized with a rotating team of co-curators, include "After Nature," an apocalyptic show of environmental alienation; "NYC 1993," a time capsule of art in New York in the last year before the Giuliani era; "Here and Elsewhere," a rambling survey of contemporary art from the Middle East after the Arab Spring; and "The Keeper," which brought together artists who collect, archive or just plain hoard. He also organized solo shows by the painters Albert Oehlen and Nicole Eisenman, the filmmakers Tacita Dean and Apichatpong Weerasethakul, and the installation artists Pipilotti Rist and Nari Ward.

In his new job, Gioni will retain ultimate oversight over programming, although he will be "less in the weeds of each show." He has no immediate plans to appoint a chief curator. "We now have the new building; in a way, we expanded the hardware. And now it's all the excitement of working on the software, which I always think is actually the engine of museums."

The museum's relocation to the Bowery helped boost attendance to more than 400,000 by 2019 — the last year it reported attendance. Though it has to rebuild its audience after two years' closure for renovation, Gioni said he would not measure success on attendance alone. "I think we remain an avant-garde museum, I hope, an edgy museum," he said. "So while we want to be open and welcoming to everybody, I don't think we have the pressure of crazy numbers that others have."

VIA NEW MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPH BY DARIO LASAGNI

VIA NEW MUSEUM; PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON KEEN

ADRIANNA GLAVIANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Top, the robot gallery at the New Museum exhibition "New Humans: Memories of the Future" contains more than a dozen androids, anatomical models and a mechanical snake. Above, from left: the New Museum includes a new wing, center right, with a light-filled staircase; "I think we remain an avant-garde museum, I hope, an edgy museum," said Massimiliano Gioni, the institution's next director.

He added: "The challenge for museums today is how you don't succumb to a certain idea of entertainment that is complicit with a kind of spectacle machine — that transforms the viewer into a zombie, frankly speaking. And instead, how do you imagine your audience as intelligent, as committed, as capable also of leaps of imagination and faith? I think that's one of the biggest pressures, even more than the second pressure, which is obviously: Where do you get the money to do all this?"

Money matters have troubled the New Museum in the past. In 2019, employees formed a union — one that sparked a wave of labor organization at other American museums — and nearly went on strike amid tense negotiations. "I think we have witnessed a change between when the union was created and now," Gioni said. "Maybe the most immediate response was a bit rigid." (The museum has 118 core staff members; a contract later established minimum salaries ranging from $46,000 to $68,500 alongside increased paid time off and reduced employee contributions to health care costs.)

Gioni added: "The museum kept everybody during the closure, and made a strong commitment to the staff in that sense."

The question remains as to the role of a museum of contemporary art when contemporary art is losing its market luster, and viewers' phones are flooded with artificially "intelligent" slop. Gioni credited the German artist Hito Steyerl, who has a major work in "New Humans," for helping him think through how a museum must change as A.I. dissolves notions of truth in representation.

"She says, 'From now on, we will look at images as illustrations,'" Gioni said. "You look at the image fully knowing that it's fake. But you also know that the image is ideologically constructed. And I think that, paradoxically, makes the museum more valuable. Because it is a space where you deconstruct the image, or you learn how images are fabricated.

"And secondly — this is maybe political — the museum is a place where you come to terms with complexity and difference. I often steal this from Umberto Eco," Gioni went on, referring to the Italian philosopher and semiotician. "The museum is a kind of gym for coming to terms with what you don't understand. And God knows," he said with a laugh, "we need a lot of that."

Film at Lincoln Center
ROMERIA
DAILY: 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30PM
ROSE OF NEVADA
DAILY: 1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 8:45PM
IT'S ALL A BIG CONSPIRACY
(ALL FILMS ON 70MM)
THE MASTER: 3:00PM
NORTH BY NORTHWEST: 6:00PM
TENET: 9:00PM
144 & 165 W. 65th St. filmlinc.org

JEOPARDY!
CLUE OF THE DAY
CLASSIC TV
"BURNING FUSE" WAS THE WORKING TITLE FOR THE ICONIC THEME SONG TO THIS TV SERIES THAT WAS LATER ON THE BIG SCREEN
FOR THE CORRECT RESPONSE, WATCH JEOPARDY! TONIGHT OR LOOK IN THIS SPACE TOMORROW IN THE TIMES.
Yesterday's Response:
WHAT IS CALVIN & HOBBES?
Watch JEOPARDY!
7 p.m. on Channel 7

DAVID PARRY FOR THE V&A

Museum Looks At Music Spots That Go Silent

Challenged by neighbors angry about noise and by shifting social habits.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

in an exhibition that examines some of those fallen sites and the forces that did them in. The show, "Lost Music Venues," which runs through October 2027, looks back at 50 clubs that shuttered across Britain between the mid-1980s and 2010s, some of which had helped jump-start bands like Oasis and Daft Punk.

Harriet Reed, the exhibition's curator, said that it was a chance to "celebrate the creative contribution" of music venues but also "to explore the issues that they face as a sector, particularly the last 15 years or so."

The Victoria and Albert Museum collected memorabilia from the public for the show, acquiring objects like an old device from the Haçienda nightclub in Manchester that measured noise levels. Other submissions included a trove of items from Mark Webber of Pulp from that band's early touring days.

Reed said that the reasons places close were "almost cyclical," with issues coming up again and again, like new housing developments that drive up rent and then lead to a burst of noise complaints from new residents. "The politicians may change, the audiences may change, the way music is played might change — but you see the same difficulties," she said.

Changing social habits and the rising cost of living also mean people go out less and, crucially, buy less alcohol when they do. This all comes as the industry is still recovering from pandemic-era shutdowns. And although venues in other cities around the world have faced similar struggles, nightlife in Britain seems to have been hit particularly hard.

"There isn't a single one of these buildings that wouldn't be making more money if it was a pizza restaurant," said Mark Davyd, founder of the Music Venue Trust, a nonprofit that supports independent music clubs, known as grass-roots venues, that typically host lesser-known acts.

JEREMIE SOUTEYRAT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

MADELINE GIFFIN

From top, an exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London remembers some of the clubs and stages that didn't make it; the future is cloudy for Moth Club, known for showcasing up-and-coming bands; the band Whitney performing at a "Save the Moth Club" event in February; a 2005 photo of Madame Jojo's in London in the museum show.

Lost Music Venues
Through Oct. 30, 2027, at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London; vam.ac.uk.

GREGORY NOLAN

"If you were simply in the business of making as much money as you possibly could, then tickets would just go up exponentially," he added — but that's at odds with "the kind of work that these venues do."

Davyd said that more than 50 percent of those smaller venues in Britain didn't make a profit last year. According to research from his organization, an average of one venue closed every two weeks in 2024. The pace slowed last year, he said, but the situation for clubs is "inherently fragile."

Moth Club began an aggressive campaign for support, and its Change.org petition acquired 35,000 signatures, including from well-known musicians like Lewis Capaldi and Tame Impala. Tens of thousands of people wrote to local officials in support of the club.

Whitney's guitarist, Max Kakacek, said the decision to perform at the "Save the Moth Club" event didn't take "a long conversation" — "it was just: of course."

The public pressure seems to have paid off, at least for now. In March, the local council rejected one of the neighboring building applications, though the developers are appealing, and the second is still under consideration. But Miller, the club's events head, said he was "far more optimistic" than a few months ago.

Other venues haven't been so lucky. In September, Corsica Studios, a beloved club in the Elephant and Castle district of London, announced that it would be shutting down after 24 years. The raucous venue, where acts from Bicep to Björk had played sets, cited a tidal wave of redevelopment that had transformed the neighborhood. "It's no secret that operating a late-night venue such as ours has become increasingly difficult," the club said in a statement announcing the closing.

Corsica Studios emphasized that it had not been squeezed out by developers or officials, and said it might reopen in some form in the future. But for now, its closure in March has left a void in London's club scene.

Jay Donaldson, an English D.J. who performs as Palms Trax, played at Corsica Studios in January for a closing event. He said he had attended gigs there before becoming a D.J., and later found it to be a valuable "testing ground" for his music. "There's always an ebb and flow in nightlife" he said, but "it's impossible to see what kind of small venue would be able to rise from the ashes and fight off all of the existential threats that the city poses to it."

London's mayor convened a nightlife task force last year to assess those headwinds. The city is trying to act on some of its recommendations, said Justine Simons, a deputy mayor for culture and the creative industries, though its powers were limited. The efforts include a bid to allow the mayor to grant late-night licenses — now given by local boroughs according to their own complex rules — as well as a push to create a higher bar for noise complaints.

The British government is also pushing a ticket levy, intended to funnel money from big stadium shows to more intimate spaces. Yet for the moment, it is voluntary and has had a lower-than-expected uptake by larger venues.

Changes might not come soon enough for Rafael Pesce, the founder of Spiritual Bar, a small folk and blues club in the Camden district of North London. Pesce said he had been inundated with noise complaints from a local resident for about two years. He said he had added a second door, bought equipment to measure sound levels and stopped booking very loud bands — but the complaints have continued.

"If it keeps going like that, I think I'm going to go bust," Pesce said, adding: "If one person can destroy a 15-year-old business, there's something wrong with the system."

VINCENT TULLO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Revealing His Might Through Dance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE C1

versations with his father. "We talked about Bruce Lee and how focused and quiet and accurate he could be. And we talked about always telling the truth."

He and his older brother, Ashton (a principal with Philadelphia Ballet), grew up with the belief that if you're not happy with where you are or how you're dancing, you can change.

"So many of my heroes are fictitious," Roxander said. "Superhero culture is modern mythology. Those myths and those legends are to remind us of who we can be and who you are at your heart."

His promotion, effective Sept. 1, was announced onstage at the Metropolitan Opera by Susan Jaffe, Ballet Theater's artistic director. "He has distinguished himself with remarkable artistry and incredible charisma, fearless virtuosity and really an unmistakable, unique presence," she said in an interview. "Everything that has been given to him, he aces it."

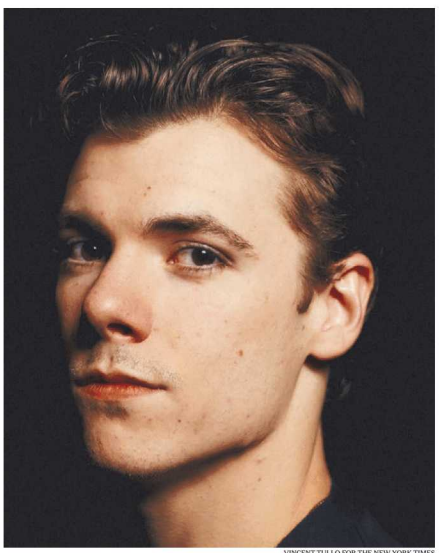
That includes the role of Basilio, Roxander's first lead in a three-act, full-length ballet. Effervescent, with powerful and refined dancing as well acting full of deft and subtle comedic timing, he was riveting.

His rise has been meteoric. After dancing with what was then Pennsylvania Ballet II in 2019, he joined Ballet Theater's Studio Company. Sascha Radetsky, the artistic director of the Studio Company, spotted Roxander at a Ballet Theater summer program, which Roxander was able to attend because he was hosted in New York by the principal Thomas Forster and his wife, the former company member Leann Underwood. Then, in 2022, Roxander joined Ballet Theater's main company. Two years later, he was named soloist.

"Without Tom and Leann," Roxander said, "I don't think any of this would have happened."

So far, Roxander hasn't really been able to process his promotion.

"I'm in an ocean of hope, and I've been dragged to the bottom and scraped up my head pretty good a few times," he said. "Then sometimes you end up on an island somewhere, and you're like, how did I get here? What is life *doing* right now? But it's like Dory says: 'Just keep swimming.'"



VINCENT TULLO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

NATALIA SÁNCHEZ

Jake Roxander, above, said of his promotion to principal dancer at American Ballet Theater, "I did not see it from a mile away." Top, the dancer taking flight. Right, a surprised Roxander reacting to his promotion after performing in "Don Quixote" on Friday night.

In the interview, Roxander spoke more about his current state of disbelief and what brought him to this point.

Here are edited excerpts from the conversation.

How surprised were you about your promotion?

I did not see it from a mile away. Then, yeah, lo and behold, I'm just trying to suck in the moment of taking a bow for my first full-length, three-act ballet, and Susan comes out, and I go, Oh my God. I'm trying to push her forward, and she's holding me and dragging me with her. And then I see the microphone, and then my face just goes full, like, panic.

It really did. Susan Jaffe told me that before the show you thanked her for giving you this chance to dance Basilio. Why?

I'm a dancer not a lot of people would see wearing white tights and doing a classical ballet or playing a prince. I'm *maybe* 5 foot 9 inches. They could say, "You're going to be Mercutio or Benno for the rest of your life."

Having Susan give me these opportunities to grow and learn and become more is all I've ever wanted. It's such a short career, and it's so amazing to be given the repertoire to really grow. There is such a friendly competitive energy, but it is just that — so friendly.

What's an example?

The other day I told Takumi Miyake, "You and I could have so easily butted heads and been against each other." I was not going to let that happen. We have just pushed each other further and further into our careers, and it's nothing but fun and support. There's nothing about it that feels negative. Niki Lauda needs his James Hunt. I'm a Formula 1 fan.

Why is that so important?

We really help each other, and that just makes a debut like this so much easier. I dance my best when I'm joyous. I can dance well when I am angry and when I have something to prove, but there is *no* comparison to when I'm dancing out of just joy for the game.

Did you grow up in an artistic environment?

It was celebrated to be creative. I'm an artist, my brother's an artist, my dad's an artist. My brother and I are publishing a graphic novel. That's kind of what we want to move on to after this ballet career of ours. But I did taekwondo. I did swimming. I did gymnastics. I did all of those things. I was an extremely undisciplined, emotional little kid.

How so?

I would throw tantrums when something didn't work. As I've gotten older and worked on that, I feel a little bit more like the dancer where you could hit me in the head with the baseball bat, and I would say: "Hi, good morning. How are you?"

When did you fall in love with ballet?

I realized how magical it could be. I remember being in third or fourth grade, and on "What is your dream?" I wrote, "I want to be a principal dancer with American Ballet Theater just like Baryshnikov."

How did you end up in New York?

One week in Pennsylvania Ballet II, everything changed for me as a person and as a dancer. My girlfriend broke up with me. That was a first. That was a little confusing. And then my best friend at the time, Lochlan Brooks, who was in [the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School at Ballet Theater] killed himself. And then there were some talks with artistic in Pennsylvania that made my job feel a little in jeopardy. My world flipped upside down.

How did you get through it?

I interpreted that as life, God, the universe — whatever you want to call it — challenging me and testing me. And I was going to pass the test. Because of those car rides home, it was instilled in me that it's not the event that matters. It's what you interpret the event to mean that matters.

How did it change you?

That dramatic kind of tantrum-throwing, emotional little boy that I once was left me. By the time that Sascha got me into Studio Company, I had a no nonsense, no complaining, "don't stop when you're tired, stop when you're done" mind-set. It was a life-altering experience, but I had the tools instilled in me to fight through it. And that's something I just try to keep and stay true to.

Musical About Dolly Parton Will Celebrate Singer's Life

The show is to open on her 81st birthday in January.

By MICHAEL PAULSON

Some people celebrate their birthdays with a festive cake or dinner with friends. Dolly Parton is planning to mark hers with a Broadway opening.

"Dolly: A True Original Musical," a show long in the works about that country queen's life and career, will begin previews on Dec. 7 at the St. James Theater and then open on Jan. 19, which is Parton's 81st birthday.

The musical had a production in Nashville last year, at the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts. Ticket sales were strong, and though the show was well received by audiences, Parton and the members of the creative team felt it still needed work before coming to Broadway. They have been revising it during the past year.

The musical is being directed by Bartlett Sher, a Broadway veteran who is a nine-time nominee for the Tony Award for best director; he won in 2008 for a revival of "South Pacific." Some of the songs are from Parton's catalog of hits (including "I Will Always Love You," "Jolene," "Coat of Many Colors" and "9 to 5"), while others are new songs she has written for the musical. She collaborated on the musical's book with Maria S. Schlatter. Parton previously wrote the music and lyrics for "9 to 5," a 2009 musical.

The new musical, previously called "Hello, I'm Dolly," is being produced by Parton, Danny Nozell (her manager), Adam Speers for ATG Productions, and Gavin Kalin Productions; the show is also crediting the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development as a presenter of the Broadway production.

Casting has not been announced, but Parton will not be appearing in the show.

CHARLIE RIEDEL/ASSOCIATED PRESS

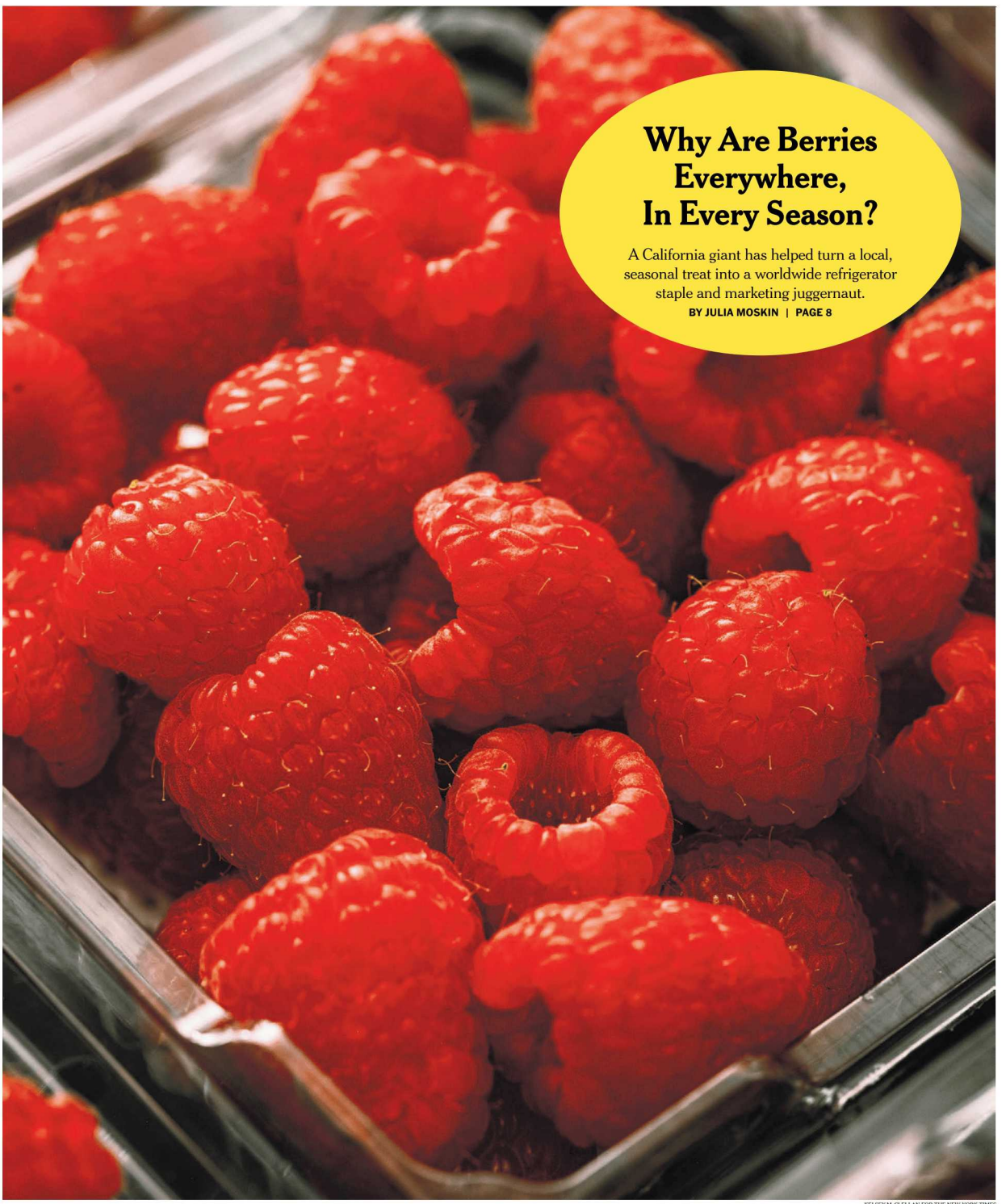
"Dolly: A True Original Musical" will run on Broadway, but Dolly Parton will not be appearing in the show.

2 TASTE SENSATION
Everything is turning up bananas. BY LUKE FORTNEY

4 DUMPLING ADJACENT
Swallows become soup's best friend. BY YEWANDE KOMOLAFE

6 NATION'S DISH
What's more American than potato salad? BY WESLEY MORRIS

5 THE POUR
Food and wine have a frayed connection. BY ERIC ASIMOV



Why Are Berries Everywhere, In Every Season?

A California giant has helped turn a local, seasonal treat into a worldwide refrigerator staple and marketing juggernaut.

BY JULIA MOSKIN | PAGE 8

KELSEY McCLELLAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Raspberries at Driscoll's research and development center in Watsonville, Calif.

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK | TEJAL RAO

For the Promise of 'All You Can Eat,' All Bets Are Off

The Las Vegas casino buffet, a once-grand American tradition, is vanishing from the Strip.

LAS VEGAS — The food sits and withers. The food runs out. The tongs are inexplicably sticky. So many things can go wrong at a buffet, but sometimes — admit it! — the problem is *you*. I realized this recently at the Buffet, inside the Wynn casino and hotel in Las Vegas, looking down at a plate of things I didn't want.

My plate: a tiny blini with a mush of caviar, a piece of slightly overcooked cod on celery purée; thick, bubbled chicharron; a single, now desiccating shrimp dumpling I'd pulled from a steam basket then taken on a 10-minute walk; Boursin mashed potatoes pooling with a little fat; a slice of very pink prime rib; a mini birria taco soaking in a bowl of dark broth; a piece of sauced and grilled pineapple; a seeded cracker.

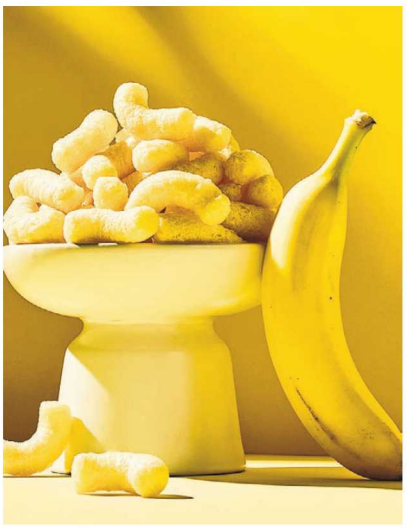
Who did this?

Distracted by the crowds, the warm lights of the carving station and a large mermaid made of fondant that looked a lot like Jennifer Aniston, I'd slipped into a kind of culinary fugue state. Back at the table, I was confused by my choices, but there was no denying that some part of me, revealed by

CONTINUED ON PAGE D7

ROGER KISBY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Crab legs at Bacchanal Buffet at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. In 2019 there were still around 70 buffets on the Strip; only about six remain.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JULIA GARTLAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. PROP STYLIST: MEGUMI EMOTO.

No Escaping This Fresh Fruit Flavor

Banana flavored offerings have gone (well) bananas.

By LUKE FORTNEY

Things were looking grim for Tae Kim. Last year, over the course of a few months, nearly a dozen competing coffee shops opened near his business in the trendy Kerns neighborhood of Portland, Ore. Mr. Kim's Korean cafe, Soro Soro Coffee & Dessert, an outlier when it opened in 2019, was suddenly surrounded.

Sales plummeted.

But there was a bright yellow spot: Banana flavored drinks, which he'd long offered, suddenly began outselling everything else. A newer menu item — banana cream topped matcha garnished with Banana Kick, a puffed snack from South Korea — buoyed business. It is now his most popular drink.

"Banana is familiar and approachable," Mr. Kim said, "but still unique enough to stand out."

Indeed, America's most-eaten fresh fruit is standing out with unusual and unexpected force, on cafe, bar and restaurant menus and on grocery store shelves across the country. In May, the popular protein bar brand Barebells introduced a banana nut bread flavored bar. Last month, Mars began selling banana nut flavored M&Ms.

Trending beverages have gone bananas. Banana is in matcha. Banana is in seltzer, soft and hard. Banana is in dairy-free creamer. Banana is in canned water.

And, despite its relatively low protein content, banana is now synonymous with liquid gains at Starbucks. Last fall, the company introduced banana protein cold foam. Not to be outflavored, Dunkin' released its own line of banana syrups and foams in March, calling banana "the flavor of the season" in a press release.

Leonid Yuffa, the owner of 20 locations of Dazbog Coffee in Colorado, would go as far as to call it the next pumpkin spice. When you sip one of his cafe's seasonal banana lattes, "it feels like you're on vacation," he said.

That familiarity makes bananas ripe for experimentation, experts say. "It's one of the last nonpolarizing foods in a polarizing world," said Rob Smithson, a founder of Banagua, a banana water company. "Every demographic, every age group, every culture all over the world loves bananas."

After stints in bottled water and beverage branding, Mr. Smithson set out to create a coconut water competitor. Using lab enzymes, he rapidly ages two varieties of Thai bananas — one for flavor and one for aroma — and extracts the juices to make a naturally pinkish drink with a pronounced banana flavor. Banagua, which he introduced last year, can be found at more than 3,500 stores across the country, often beside competing banana flavored products.

"I don't know if it's being in the bananas business, but they are everywhere I look," Mr. Smithson said. "Even in my dreams."

More than 139 million metric tons of them are grown worldwide each year, making bananas the most-produced, most-consumed fresh fruit globally. They are reliably predictable, tasting the same in schools, delis, airports and Walmart stores, where they are the most popular grocery item sold. And bananas are a foundational ingredient in vintage desserts like sundaes, puddings and flambéed Fosters.

"In the past, banana seemed like a retro play," said Sarah Sanneh, an owner of Pies 'n' Thighs in Brooklyn, where the banana cream pie is the top seller. "But banana water is from the year 3005."

Banana flavored snacks, on the other hand, can be polarizing. No doubt, someone is buying yellow Runts in bulk — why else would they sell that flavor, and that flavor only, in five-pound bags? But what most people know as banana flavor is based on a nearly extinct cultivar, the Gros Michel.

"There was a wild disconnect between anything that was banana flavored and the actual taste of bananas," said Kevin Beary, a bartender at the Bamboo Room in Chicago. "There's something about nailing that fresh banana taste. Everyone prefers it."

Top left: Olipop's banana cream soda, left, Cutwater's banana mudslide, center, and Banagua, a banana water. From top center, the new banana nut flavored M&Ms, introduced in June; and Banana Kick, a popular puffed snack from South Korea. Above, an array of banana flavored snacks.

"Everyone" includes Mr. Beary, a banana champion who sees his mixology work as correcting a historical injustice. He has created more than a dozen banana-based cocktails over his career, mostly by pulverizing fruit, passing it through a centrifuge and using the clear juice that remained to flavor syrups and spirits. How do they taste? "Exactly like biting into a banana," he said.

In a sense, America is catching up. This banana flavored wave began in South Korea, where the fruit has long appeared in popular snacks and drinks. Last year, diners there recorded themselves mixing coffee and banana milk from convenience stores, kicking off a global social media trend. Banana's profile received another lift after Jennie Kim, of the K-pop group Blackpink, preached the Banana Kick gospel on "The Jennifer Hudson Show." After the episode aired in March 2025, exports of the snack to the United States jumped by 69 percent.

But this isn't another blip of relevancy, said Miriam Aniel Oved of the research company Tastewise, which uses generative artificial intelligence to analyze online menus, recipes and social media impressions. "We're seeing a reinvention moment for banana," she said.

Banana, Ms. Oved noted, belongs to a shrinking category of "legacy fruits" — cherry, apple, peach and strawberry, for example — that have lost ground to "global flavors," like pandan and ube. Banana pulled ahead, she said, because of its milder flavor and starchy texture, which complements, well . . . everything.

When Eunji Lee, the owner of Lysée in Manhattan, moved to New York from South Korea, there weren't many modern presentations of banana in fine dining. In 2017, she changed that at Jungsik, which has three Michelin stars. Her Baby Banana, a trompe l'oeil dessert, went on to inspire a generation of fruit-shaped pastries in New York. Banana's appeal had always been obvious. "The challenge was making it feel special for everyone else," she said.

At Not as Bitter, a two-year-old cafe in the East Village of Manhattan, banana lattes certainly feel special, outselling those made with durian, ube and papaya, said Jeffrey Wang, an owner. The shop's most popular fruit and coffee combination, the Banana Split, is made with housemade coconut milk and banana pulp, a shot of espresso cascading through the cream.

"You have to keep trying new combinations," Mr. Wang said. "Sometimes, the flavor may surprise you." Sure, some customers are surprised to find a thick pool of baby foodlike banana pulp at the bottom of their coffee, but few protest. "To be honest," he said, "99 percent of people like bananas."

MELISSA CLARK | A GOOD APPETITE

For a Livelier Caesar, Cabbage Works Best

Its crunchiness is a perfect partner to the dressing.

THE ALLURE OF a Caesar salad lies in its dressing — the sting of raw garlic, the salty umami of Parmesan, that anchovy funk. What you toss it with is less important. As long as it's sturdy enough to bring that dressing to your mouth, any green will work just fine.

Mild and crisp romaine has been the classic since the 1920s, when the salad was first put on the menu at Caesar's restaurant in Tijuana, Mexico. Kale Caesars and brussels sprouts Caesars had their moments, those ruffled leaves adding an earthy, mineral tang. But I think cabbage works best of all.

Of all the greens, cabbage is the sweetest and crunchiest, with a pronounced contrast to the dressing that's both satisfyingly textural and a little unexpected. Cabbage makes the whole salad livelier to eat.

It also keeps well. Unlike romaine, which starts to wilt the moment it meets the dressing, cabbage stands its ground. I made this salad one evening for dinner, then stuck the leftovers in the fridge. The next day, it was just as good — the flavors more integrated, the cabbage, though softer, still gratifying in a coleslaw kind of way.

If you do make this salad ahead, though, don't add the croutons until serving. You want those to stay as crunchy as possible.

To further increase the crunch, I tear the bread rather than cut it. Torn bread has ragged, uneven edges that get extra crisp as they toast. Tossing the pieces with olive oil and a few tablespoons of grated Parmesan also helps the cause. As the croutons bake, the cheese melts into brittle, lacy patches along the edges. Use a spatula to scrape them up and fold them into the salad. Those fricolike bits are arguably the best part.

As for the anchovies, to me they are nonnegotiable in a Caesar salad. But sticklers will tell you that they're not actually traditional. The original recipe gained its saline bite from Worcestershire sauce (which contains anchovies). It's unclear when the salted fish made their way into the bowl, but now their presence has been firmly established. That said, if you want to skip them, use capers instead. Or olives, or even feta, all of which will add the necessary brininess.

You see, at its heart, Caesar salad is very adaptable. That's one reason it's been around for the past century — and it bodes well for the next.

ARMANDO RAFAEL. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: SIMON ANDREWS.

CABBAGE CAESAR SALAD

TIME: 30 MINUTES
YIELD: 6 TO 8 SERVINGS

- 1 small baguette or chunk of sourdough bread (about 8 ounces), preferably day-old, torn or cut into bite-size pieces (about 4 cups)
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- ½ cup grated Parmesan, divided, more for garnish
- Salt and pepper
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice, more to taste
- 4 anchovy fillets (or 1 teaspoon drained capers)
- 1 fat garlic clove, finely grated or minced
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 8 cups shredded cabbage or coleslaw mix (24 ounces)

1. Make the croutons: Heat oven to 400 degrees. On a rimmed sheet pan, toss bread pieces with 3 tablespoons olive oil and 3 tablespoons cheese to coat evenly. Spread in an even layer, sprinkle lightly with salt and bake until crunchy and evenly browned, 10 to 15 minutes, tossing halfway through. Taste a crouton and add more salt if needed. Use a spatula to scrape up any crunchy cheese stuck to the pan and stir into the warm croutons. Let croutons cool on the baking pan.

2. Meanwhile, make the dressing: In a blender or using an immersion blender, combine the lemon juice, anchovies, garlic, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and a pinch each salt and pepper, and pulse a few times to break up the anchovies.

3. Add the mayonnaise and the remaining 5 tablespoons olive oil, and blend until smooth. Taste and add more lemon juice, salt and pepper as needed.

4. In a large bowl, combine the cabbage, croutons, remaining 5 tablespoons cheese and enough of the dressing to coat the cabbage. Toss well, adding more dressing as needed. Top with more cheese and pepper, and serve.

The Feed
NEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

WHERE TO EAT | LUKE FORTNEY

It May Be the Sandwich That Rules the Summer

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HEATHER WILLENSKY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The piadina, an Italian specialty, seems to be popping up most everywhere lately.

Top, the tonno piadina at Lella Alimentari e Cucina. Above left, the la bomba at Casa Piada. Above right, the piadina with prosciutto at Testo.

IN HIS GRIPPING TEXT "The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations," the American sociologist Robert K. Merton introduced the idea of multiple discovery. Technological inventions, he argued, often arise at the same time in different places, completely independent of one another. It happened with punk rock, gunpowder and Charles Darwin's (and Alfred Russel Wallace's) theories of natural selection.

Restaurants have their own version of multiple discovery. So often, cooks separated by bridges, boroughs and borders arrive at similar ideas, be it salt bread or Mexico City tacos. Another example is the piadina, a flatbread from a mountainous region of northern Italy, which until recently, required a pack of bloodhounds to hunt down. Then, this summer, I blinked and the piadina could be found, in various styles, at several restaurants around town.

Coincidence? Let's find out.

Don't Tell Nonna

I started my search earlier last month at **Testo**, an Italian restaurant in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, open since 2012. (I had a hunch piadina might be on the menu, since the place is named after the clay pan used to bake them.) When I arrived at the bar, I spotted one, pressed in the style that the owner Massimiliano Barbizzi learned from his mother in Savignano sul Rubicone, a riverside town in northern Italy. He substitutes olive oil for lard — forgive us, Nonna, we have sinned — and toasts his piadina over charcoal until it's as malty as a biergarten pretzel. Inside, arugula, mozzarella and pink folds of prosciutto are neatly stacked, like an Italian sub.

When I called Mr. Barbizzi to explain the premise of this column, he was incredulous. "You think this is the first time people heard of piadina?" he said. "I don't think so." In fact, after moving to Manhattan in 2001, Mr. Barbizzi's first job was pulling espresso shots at a West Village cafe named Piadina. It closed years ago, but I was in luck: "The owners have a new place," he said, and it was less than a mile away in Williamsburg.

Meet Mr. Piadina

And this is how I met Massimiliano Nanni, the grandfather of New York piadina, who pretty much everyone calls Chicco Piadina. (It's even his email address.) Beginning in 1995, with his Manhattan cafe Piadina, Mr. Nanni opened restaurants around town, including Saraghina in Bed-Stuy and Malatesta Trattoria in the West Village, all serving foods from Rimini in Emilia-Romagna, the birthplace of the piadina.

You can find Mr. Nanni at the new **Lella Alimentari e Cucina**, where piadina are furnished with conventional ingredients (prosciutto, stracchino) and local specialties (tuna salad, capers). On Mondays, he makes nearly 900 piadina, a week's supply, shaping them into irregular disks that are considerably thinner than those at Testo. "It's a very hard job," Mr. Nanni said. "If I get sick, who's going to make the piadina?"

Who indeed? Is this why piadina aren't as abundant as they should be? "There is one new place," Mr. Nanni told me, "but the owners are not from Emilia-Romagna." Still, there was no denying: "It is very, very good."

Et Tu, Piadina?

I arrived at **Casa Piada** in the West Village around 5 p.m., the best or worst time to arrive at Casa Piada, depending on who you ask. On the one hand, it was happy hour, a three-hour block on weekdays when Aperol spritzes cost five bucks. On the other hand, cheap cocktails attract a crowd. Right as I began to wonder if Mr. Nanni had misled me, an employee flew from the kitchen, holding a crisp-looking lavash with cold cuts and hot peppers. Piadina!

Or was it? Despite everything I had seen on the Casa Piada website, social media page and menu, Luca Lewis, an owner, told me these are really crostolo, another variety of Italian flatbread made by adding egg. Each week, they are baked in Pesaro, Italy (his ancestral home), and shipped to the restaurant in vacuum-sealed pouches. "The bread, the water, the flour," he said, "everything is from Italy." Even the lard, which transforms his flatbreads into supremely flaky vessels for burrata, pesto and other latter-day fillings.

Mr. Lewis pointed out that Casa Piada was supposed to open last year, but the opening was delayed until this April. Just in time, if you ask me, for a piadina-packed summer.

Testo 141 Leonard Street (Scholes Street)

Lella Alimentari e Cucina 141 Havemeyer Street (South First Street), and 325 Manhattan Avenue (Conselyea Street)

Casa Piada 55 Greenwich Street (Perry Street)

Sign up to get New York City restaurant recommendations every Tuesday and Thursday: nytimes.com/where-to-eat

OFF THE MENU | FLORENCE FABRICANT

ALEXANDER STEIN

A dish at MUJE, opened by the Michelin-starred chef Jungsik Yim.

OPENING

● MUJE

Jungsik Yim, whose TriBeCa restaurant, Jungsik, has three Michelin stars, has opened a pan-Asian showcase in the growing restaurant hub around Penn Station, again with a tasting menu format. But it's something of a tutorial, since the part of Asia that influenced each course is explained by the servers. A creamy soybean noodle dish suggests Korea with a touch of Japan. Charcoal-grilled salmon with red curry and razor clams recalls Thailand and China. A pineapple dessert looks across Southeast Asia. The eight-course tasting menu is $150 (compared with $335 for 10 courses at Jungsik). The décor is opulent, centered on a gilded green willow mural.

151 West 30th Street, no phone, mujenyc.com.

● CIPRIANI DOLCI

Cipriani's all-day restaurant, serving more than just sweets despite the name, is reopening after six months of renovation. The look is nautical, with a blue and white palette and a striped blue carpet. Cipriani's carpaccio, baked tagliolini with ham, veal Milanese and more inhabit the savory side of the menu. Desserts are given prominence in a central vitrine showing ricotta cheesecake, vanilla meringue cake, cannoli and other temptations.

West Balcony, Grand Central Terminal, 89 East 42nd Street, 212-973-0999, cipriani.com.

● MAISON MADISON

Not that Battery Park City is wanting for French food, with all that Le District has to offer, but there's this new option in the Lower Manhattan commercial and residential complex. The restaurateurs Abraham Merchant and James Belakh have their eyes on Parisian glamour with marble, brass, candlelight and crystal chandeliers. The chef Antelmo Ambrosio offers escargots, French onion sliders, mushroom vol-au-vent, steak frites au poivre and multilayered potato pavé with caviar. (Opens Friday).

301 South End Avenue (Albany Street), Battery Park City, 212-945-0562, maisonmadisonny.com.

● BADSHAH SOCIAL

You won't find chicken in a bao in most Indian restaurants. That and artichoke dumplings stand out on the otherwise quite typical menu at this new Brooklyn spot. Expect saag paneer, butter chicken, garlic naan, seekh kebab, dum biryani and braised lamb shank. Indian prints line the walls above navy blue banquettes and rust velvet chairs. Abishek Sharma, the owner and chef, had a restaurant of the same name in Hell's Kitchen and still owns Swagat on the Upper West Side.

212 Flatbush Avenue (Dean Street), Park Slope, Brooklyn, 347-987-3010, badshahny.com.

● MASSARA

A year after it was hit by a fire, Stefano Secchi's showcase for the food of Campania is set to reopen, wood-burning oven and all. The signature pizzettes will be back, and over the next several months Mr. Secchi will welcome guest pizzaiolos, including Francesco Martucci. (Thursday)

913 Broadway (21st Street), 646-212-0913, massara.nyc.

ON THE MENU

● TAMARIND TRIBECA FEAST

Elaborate Asian feasts have become special events in a number of New York restaurants. An Indian one awaits at Tamarind in TriBeCa, to celebrate the restaurant's 25th anniversary through July 25. It features dishes like Kalimirch lamb chops and dal makhni, which have always been on the menu, along with new items like Malabar lobster and tikki tofu with tandoori spices. In all, the commemorative menu has 18 dishes; the entire feast must be ordered for the table, $125 plus tax and gratuity.

99 Hudson Street (Franklin Street), 212-775-9000, tamarindtribeca.com.

● BUTTER CHICKEN SANDWICH

Rowdy Rooster, the fast-casual component of Unapologetic Foods (Semma, Adda and more), has taken its fried chicken and parked it in a grilled potato bun with spiced onions and a generous slather of butter chicken sauce ($14). Extra napkins? Yes, please.

140 West 32nd Street, 646-649-3001, rowdyrooster.com.

LOOKING AHEAD

● CAFE DES ARTISTES

The historic rooms that housed the Cafe des Artistes, which was called the Leopard des Artistes for nearly 15 years and has been closed since February, will reopen in the winter. Max Katzenberg and Ariel Arce of Roscioli in Greenwich Village have leased the space. They have not determined the restaurant's concept or its name, but Mr. Katzenberg said it will not be another Roscioli. Whatever it is, the landmark murals by Howard Chandler Christy must be retained.

1 West 67th Street.

● CHIPPY'S

Patricia Howard and Ed Szymanski are again adding to the English point of view in the New York restaurant scene. They already have Lord's and Dame, and in September they plan to open this counter service fish and chips spot, capitalizing on one of the highlights at Dame, with a small wine bar called Friars sharing the space.

21 East Seventh Street (Third Avenue).

● BAR COSME

Having closed Atla after 10 years, Enrique Olvera is turning the space into this moody bar to complement Cosme and take advantage of the neighborhood's later-night scene. There will be a full drinks menu and shareable plates highlighting seafood, some of it raw, with tortillas and salsas alongside. A fall opening is planned.

372 Lafayette Street (Great Jones Street).

SHOPPING

● MACARONS WITH A MESSAGE

At its SoHo boutique and restaurant, Ladurée, the venerable French macaron specialist, will now monogram your macarons or decorate them with a message while you wait. Any of the company's regular macarons are suitable, but they're small so the message must be brief. The cost is $5 per piece (the macarons are $3.90 each without the inscription).

Ladurée, 398 West Broadway (Spring Street), 646-392-7868, laduree.com.

YEWANDE KOMOLAFE

Brilliant Sidekicks to Soups and Stews

Scoop up a mouthful with these dumpling-like swallows.

ACROSS AFRICA AND its diaspora, swallows evoke not an avian image but a vessel and an act.

A dumpling-like dough made from a cooked starch and meant to accompany soups and stews, swallows are a full category of foods in our recipe index.

Known generally to the Yoruba-speaking people of South West Nigeria as okele, to the Igbo-speaking people in the South East as utara and to the Fulani and Hausa people of the Sahel and savanna regions of the North as tuwo or nyiir, swallows get their English name for their ability to be eaten without the need to chew. If you've ever molded a starch with your fingers and then used it to scoop a flavored broth or sauce directly to your mouth, you understand the modest role of a swallow.

I love considering the powerful interplay between dishes. Light broth, thickened stew, hearty porridge, sinewy draw soup or pepper sauce — all are opportunities to hover my whole face over, to intimately understand the dish's qualities with all my senses. These are the comforting kinds of meals I make most often at home. Whether I'm trying to master a novel soup that I've experienced on a recent outing or conjure a stew straight out of dreams from my Nigerian childhood, I'm always thinking about which kind of swallow will be its brilliant sidekick.

Ingredients to make swallows, from top to bottom: ugali, fresh yam and garri.

Learning to make swallows will invite you into a world of starches and redefine your relationships to your favorite dishes. It's a topic I've covered before, but I've found myself wanting to say more. There's always something to be said about swallows.

The list here is by no means comprehensive. I would have loved to have gone deeper into others, like the East African Highland banana swallow, made from matoke, a green fruit similar to plantain. There's also Ghana's firm kenkey, made from fermented maize, and the dainty omo tuo (tuwo), from cooked rice. And don't forget about bespoke banku, a mix of cassava and maize. Some styles cross many parts of Africa, such as amala, made from a dried, fermented plantain or yam flour, and semolina, made from durum wheat.

Ingredient availability defines the styles, and, in essence, any available starch is an opportunity. Swallows contain myriad possibilities, and that's what should keep you coming back. With an understanding of a few key techniques, you can broaden your relationship to the starches that sustain you.

Traditionally, making swallows is a multistep process of simmering a starch in a pot until it softens. A large mortar and pestle is then used to crush and pound the tender pieces into a dough. While still hot, the dough is kneaded against the side of the mortar until it's rich, smooth and elastic.

My preparation has you instead make a slurry and then cook it while stirring to avoid any lumpy pockets. It thickens into a soft dough, which is repeatedly folded and kneaded against the side of the pot over heat. In both cases, after a bit of an arm workout, the starches relax and take on a glutenlike stretchy texture in a process that is quite magical to behold.

I'm learning to cook, eat and exist with significant changes in my abilities, including the loss of digits on both hands. The classic technique of pinching and rolling a small bit of swallow in between my index, middle finger and thumb is a distant desire. But my prosthetic hands are a point of pride, an enabler of sorts. Meals have become a time for discovery, when I find myself wielding a fork or spoon to eat my swallow. We should each bring the swallow to our lips however we're able. It will nourish us all the same.

Dense and Comforting

A staple crop across the Caribbean, West and Central Africa and South America, the West African yam, not to be confused with a sweet potato, grows underground as a magnificently large tuber. It goes by many regional names: iyan in the Yoruba-speaking part of Nigeria, igname pilee in Benin, yam fufu in Ghana and foutou in Ivory Coast, to name a few.

The process of making it can be exhilarating and exhausting. It never fails to surprise me how the crumbly looking starch is transformed into something glossy and stretchy after minutes of repeated folding. As a yam swallow, iyan shares the name of its main ingredient. As dense as it is, it provides nourishment and sustenance throughout the day.

This recipe is for anyone who truly enjoys the subtle and mild taste that only fresh yam can provide. It skips a few steps for convenience: The peeled yam is puréed in a blender and then cooked into a stiff pliable dough.

PAIR IT WITH Vegetable-rich stews like efo riro, egusi or a saucy braised meat for a deeply satisfying meal — comfort in a bowl.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KELLY MARSHALL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: ROSCOE BETSILL. PROP STYLIST: PAIGE HICKS.

IYAN (YAM SWALLOW)

TIME: 45 MINUTES
YIELD: 2 SERVINGS (2 CUPS)

- **4½ cups water, divided, plus more as needed**
- **1 medium yam (see Tips)**

1. Add 4 cups of water to a medium bowl. Using a sharp knife, slice the yam into 2-inch-thick rounds. (Vegetable peelers don't get through the thick brown skin here. A knife is more efficient.) Trim off the brown skin: Make a slit through the skin, just deep enough for the knife to touch the white flesh. Peel off the skin and discard. Cut yam into ½-inch cubes, transferring them to the water to keep them from turning brown. Swish and drain the cubes until no longer slippery and the water runs clear, about 5 minutes.

2. Transfer yams to a blender, and working in batches if necessary, pulse on low just enough to break up. Add 2 tablespoons of water if you have trouble getting the pieces moving. Purée on high until completely smooth, about 1½ minutes.

3. Pour the purée into a medium pot, and stir in ½ cup of water until smooth. Place the pot over medium heat. Cover, with the lid cracked, and cook until steam begins to rise from the sides of the pot, 6 to 8 minutes. Don't leave the pot unattended; the liquid may quickly bubble up over the sides.

4. Remove the lid, cook and stir, using a wooden spoon to scrape the bottom. You should have a thick, chalky-looking dough. It will be loose at the center, thickened at the sides and stiff at the bottom. Fold the dough over and onto itself until it's a smooth, thickened paste, about 4 minutes. (A thin film of starch will form on the bottom, and that's OK.)

5. Cover and continue cooking until bubbles slowly rise to the top and the dough pulls away from the pot, about 5 minutes.

6. Uncover and increase the heat to medium-high. Repeat the folding until a smooth, glossy, sticky dough forms, 3 to 4 minutes. It should be soft and pliable, supple and loose enough to fall off a wet spoon with a soft plop. Remove from heat, cover and let thicken as it cools, at least 5 to 15 minutes.

7. Form the mixture into balls to serve: Fill a bowl with water and dip a large serving spoon to wet it, then scoop the dough. Press the scooped dough against the side of the pot to shape the dough into a ball, then transfer to individual shallow bowls. Repeat with the remaining dough to form 2 to 3 more balls, dipping the spoon into the water before each scoop. Serve alongside efo riro or egusi soup, or with obe oniru or any braised meat.

Tips: Different from sweet potatoes, yam, a large brown, thick-skinned tuber with a stiff white or yellow crisp flesh, is available fresh at African, Caribbean and some international grocery stores. Once purchased, store yams at room temperature in a cool dry place.

If your yams have been precut in store, look for fresh ones with a bright hue under the peel. Tap the surface of the skin lightly with your finger. You should be able to hold the tuber in your hand without making an indentation. Soft spots mean they haven't been properly stored. Depending on the type you use (white or yellow), the purée might change color while it cooks from white to pink or dark brown. This does not affect the taste. Yellow yams are more likely to turn a different color as they oxidize faster.

Hearty Accompaniment

Flours milled from grains or any starch can be the basis for swallows, with each imparting a particular flavor and texture. Grains such as maize, millet and sorghum and tubers such as yam, cassava and potatoes all star in different swallows across Africa. In East Africa, a swallow, like this one made from milled white maize flour (called mahindi flour), goes by different names: ugali, posho, nsima and sadza.

Although you may be tempted to use a yellow cornmeal, you may not get the same results. The white cornmeal is starchy and lends itself well to vigorous folding.

PAIR IT WITH Any vegetable soup such as light soup, the spinach-rich cagaar, the coconut-laden kuku paka or any grilled beef kebabs.

UGALI (WHITE CORN SWALLOW)

TIME: 25 MINUTES
YIELD: 4 SERVINGS

- **4¼ cups water, divided**
- **1½ cups (224 grams) white maize meal (mahindi flour), such as Jogoo brand, or white masarepa (see Tip)**

1. In a medium pot, stir together 3 cups of water and the maize meal. As you stir, the slurry will become a thick dough. Lift the dough and add the remaining 1 cup water along the bottom of the pot.

2. Set the pot over medium heat, partly cover and cook until steam rises from the sides, 6 to 8 minutes. Don't leave the pot unattended as the liquid can bubble out quickly.

3. Uncover and remove the pot from the heat. With a wooden spoon, break up the thickened dough and stir, working in any liquid, until the dough is smooth, about 2 minutes.

4. Return to heat, and use the wooden spoon to fold the dough over itself and against the side of the pot until it's elastic, 8 to 10 minutes. Steam should rise from the surface, and the dough should stiffen and pull away from the pot. (A thin film of starch will form on the bottom and sides of the pot, and that's OK.)

5. Move the dough to one side of the pot and hold the pot by its handle on its side over the heat. Fold the dough over itself several times to knead until smooth, 4 to 5 minutes. The dough should be soft and pliable.

6. Increase heat to medium-high and return the pot to its original position. Spread the dough along the bottom of the pan. Cover and heat through, about 2 minutes. Uncover and repeat the folding until a smooth, sticky dough forms, 5 to 6 minutes. It should be soft, not runny, and drop off a wet spoon with a gentle plop. If the dough feels too firm, add 1 tablespoon and up to ¼ cup more water. Remove from heat, cover and let cool for at least 5 minutes. The dough will continue to stiffen, becoming solid over time. It can be served immediately, hot or warm, or stored, once completely cold, in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

7. To serve, dip a spoon into a bowl filled with warm water and scoop the ugali by pressing it against the side of the pot while shaping the dough into a smooth ball. Transfer the ball while still warm to an individual shallow serving bowl. Repeat with the rest of the dough. Serve ugali with a light soup with mushrooms, cagaar (spinach stew), collards (Liberian stewed greens) or grilled beef kebab.

Tip: White masarepa from Goya is an adequate substitute for maize meal. Cornmeal or cornflour are not. Milled white maize flour (called mahindi flour) can be found as a packaged product sold under different brand names, including Jogoo (a popular brand from Kenya), Nasfam or White Star. Often stored at room temperature, maize meal is available at African, Caribbean and some international grocery stores.

THE POUR | ERIC ASIMOV

Don't Forget Wine's Place at the Table

It has long been considered an essential part of eating well.

GASTRONOMY IS CLASSICALLY defined as the art of eating well. For me, an essential part of eating well is drinking well.

Few things improve the pleasure of a meal so much as good wine. A glass by itself can be enjoyable, but a bite and a sip together create beauty in a way that either alone can never achieve.

People who love food and wine have long understood this joyous combination. But in some important ways, the connection between food and wine is fading.

This is impressionistic, but often I see people of all ages taking a glass of wine or a cocktail with them from the bar to a table, finishing it and then drinking nothing with their meal.

Gabriela Davogustto, the wine director at Clay in Harlem, which has been celebrated for its list, agrees. "It's really shocking to me that people order a steak and eat it with water," she said. "They're not thinking about what they will drink that will enhance the experience."

It's not that they are doing anything wrong. I think it simply doesn't occur to people to want to have something more with their meal. Maybe that is the influence of cocktail culture. Many restaurant reviews nowadays dwell on cocktails, but don't even mention wine.

Not that the beverage of choice with a meal must be wine. Books have been written about the pleasures of beer with food, and some argue that it's even better than wine.

I've had great meals with beer, like German lager with sausages and sauerkraut. At Dean's, the new neo-British pub on the border of SoHo and the South Village, it's great fun to drink a pint of Guinness with a plate of oysters. It's a tried-and-true pairing in Ireland and Britain.

But for me, no beverage is as limber and versatile with food as wine. Every good restaurant has a wine list, and even many cuisines without a historical connection to wine have found brilliant ways of integrating wine into their meals. Consider Lei, Pinch Chinese and Junoon in New York, Anajak Thai in Los Angeles and Indienne in Chicago, just to name a handful. Dean's has a terrific wine list as well, and when I finished with the oyster course, I moved on to wine.

Wine consumption is falling, but Matthew Conway, a longtime sommelier in New York who now owns the Tippling House, a wine bar in Charleston, S.C., does not think that's the issue. Instead, he points to both the decline of the sommelier in American restaurants after the Covid pandemic and the rising price of wine in restaurants.

Wine has "lost its place at the table," he said. "A lot of chefs and operators are to blame for that. They could have helped them embrace beverages at the dinner table."

Mr. Conway believes sommeliers played a key role not just in pouring the wine but in selling it.

Without sommeliers to inspire guests with the stories behind the bottles and by linking wine or other beverages culturally to the food being consumed, Mr. Conway said, diners are often adrift. Some may feel comfortable to make the leap to picking a bottle. Others are afraid to make choices without someone to shepherd them.

Mr. Conway also believes wine helps to create memorable social experiences.

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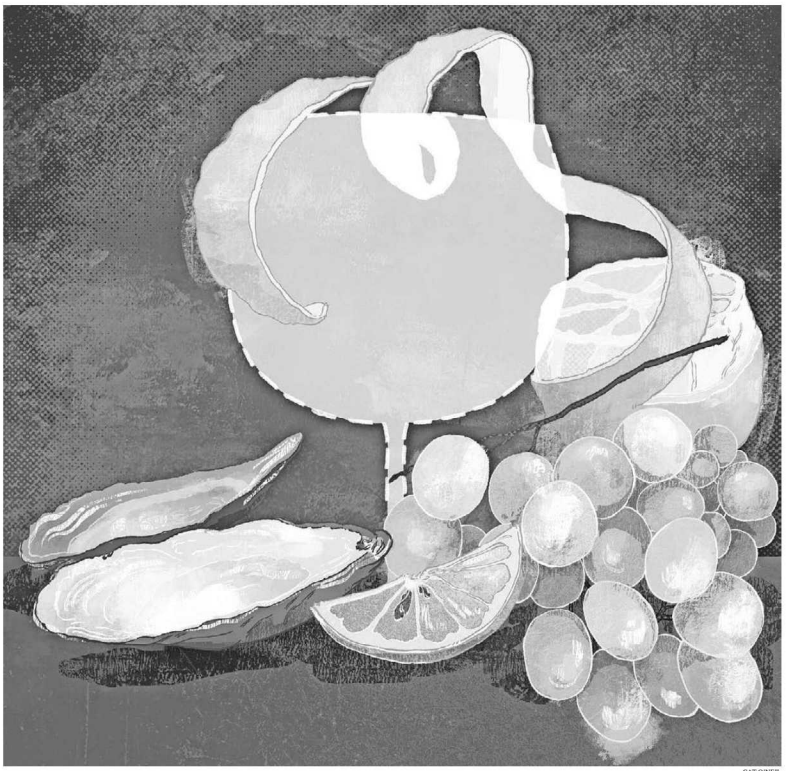


CAT O'NEIL

No other beverage, beer included, is as limber and versatile with food.

"Chefs, restaurant operators and owners put less emphasis on wine, and all beverages, as part of the dining experience," he said. "A chef can make a perfect dish and the only thing that can make it better is the right wine. Not just to enhance the flavors and presentation, it enhances the experience of those at your table. A lot of great things have happened at tables where wine is being poured."

I'm not a stickler for the sorts of precise pairings that sommeliers care about, especially for people eating at home, without an expert on hand.

With rare exceptions, like a fragile, complex older bottle, which needs simple dishes that won't overwhelm the delicate wine, it's hard to make a mistake. I've had red wines with oysters and white wines with steak. It's not the end of the world. It can in fact be quite enjoyable, though I'd always prefer, say, a Chablis with oyster or a Chianti Classico with steak.

Even the least flattering pairing can be better than no pairing at all. I was always told that wine was really difficult to match with eggs, except maybe Champagne. But I used to have a ritual, when landing in France, of finding an omelet and a glass of Beaujolais. I loved it, regardless of the science of the match. The wine made the meal an occasion to remember.

Paradoxically, as restaurants seem to put less emphasis on wine service, they are counting more than ever on wine to contribute to their bottom lines. Many restaurants are charging much more, proportionately, for glasses of wine as well as for bottles.

For many years, the standard price of a glass of wine in restaurants was the wholesale price of the bottle. That is, if a restaurant paid $12 wholesale for a bottle, it would charge $12 for a glass.

But wine prices have gone up. It takes expertise, which too many restaurants no longer invest in, to find good, moderately priced bottles. Instead, many restaurants are taking the easy way out, charging $20 or more for mediocre glasses of wine.

Similarly, the standard price for a bottle in restaurants used to be three times the wholesale price. Now, too many restaurants are charging four and even five times the wholesale price, trying to achieve the profits they can't make otherwise through wine sales.

The need for such steps testifies to the dysfunction of the current restaurant business model, perhaps, but it doesn't make sense on any level to gouge customers. Certainly, it doesn't encourage people to drink wine.

The wine trade argues that younger people are drinking less than their elders. That's not entirely true. I see plenty of young people everywhere I go drinking wine, often in natural wine bars where the food choices are rudimentary at best.

I rarely see young people drinking wine in restaurants, though. Is it because of the price? The lack of sommeliers? Popular culture, which treats wine as if it's a cocktail? I'm not sure, but whatever the reason, I fear they are missing out.

To be clear, there's never only one way to drink wine. Even as wine has been considered a mealtime staple for centuries, it's been many other things, too. It's required for certain religious rituals and always available in bars and taverns, where the food might be limited.

But wine's real beauty is on the table, not as the star attraction but in support of the food. It's a charmed combination that ought to be modest but too often comes across as pretentious.

Not everybody will be persuaded simply by experiencing this combination. But anybody who's curious can try various combinations in their home and see for themselves whether they feel the magic.

As for restaurants, it's in their interest to make more of an effort with wine. Good wine with good food makes for happy customers, which means returning customers.

Brilliant Sidekicks to Soups and Stews

Woodsy Depth

Cassava shows up in various dishes and in many forms — grated, crushed, fermented and dried — across Africa. It's also found as a flour, known as garri or gari across West and Central Africa, and farofa in Brazil. Cassava swallows have a woodsy depth and can range from mild to sour, depending on how lengthy the fermentation process has been.

When garri is made into a swallow, it is known as eba or generally as fufu in the diaspora. The garri swallow recipe here is lightly seasoned with a bit of red palm oil to give it a notable bright color and a floral taste.

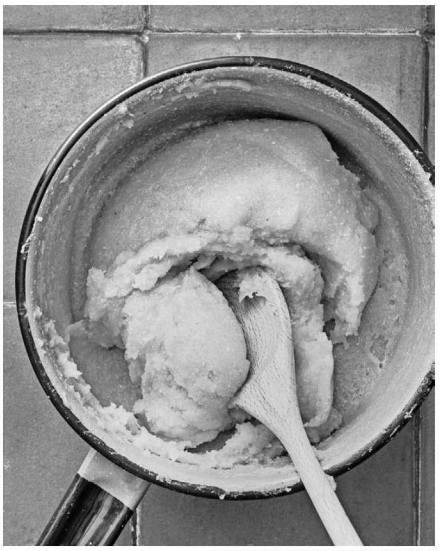
PAIR IT WITH Eru, okra soup with shrimp and greens or egusi soup, and top with obe oniru or any braised meat.

GARRI (FERMENTED DRIED CASSAVA) SWALLOW

TIME: 50 MINUTES
YIELD: 2 TO 4 SERVINGS (4 CUPS)

- **2 cups water, divided, plus more for shaping dough**
- **1 tablespoon red palm oil (see Tips)**
- **1½ cups white garri (dried fermented cassava granules), see Tips**

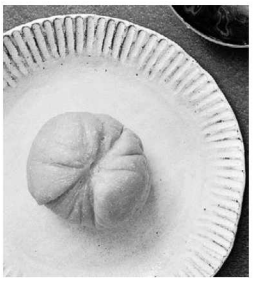
1. To a medium pot over medium heat, add 1 cup of water and palm oil. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low. Add garri all at once, whisking quickly to distribute, 1 minute. Switch to a wooden spoon, and starting from the center, stir up and over toward the edge of the pot until the mixture stiffens, about 5 minutes. Mix in another ¼ cup of water. The mixture should look clumpy, with pockets of dried garri.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KELLY MARSHALL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: ROSCOE BETSILL. PROP STYLIST: PAIGE HICKS.

2. Cover the pot, leaving the lid cracked, and cook until steam begins to rise, 6 to 8 minutes. The batter should begin to thicken and separate slightly from the side of the pot.

3. Uncover and fold the dough over itself as before, working in any lumps. Add ½ cup of water to release any stuck bits and prevent scorching. Continue to cook, folding several times, until the dough is thick and slightly chalky-looking, 2 minutes. Keep folding over heat until the dough begins to stiffen and pull away from the pot, 3 to 4 minutes more. (A thin film of starch will form on the bottom and sides, and that's OK.)



4. Spread the dough across the bottom of the pot. With the wooden spoon, poke a few deep indents into the surface. Add remaining ¼ cup of water along the edges and top of the dough.

5. Cover and cook, without stirring, until dough is heated through and translucent, and the liquid is absorbed, about 2 minutes. Uncover and move the dough to one side of the pot. Hold the pot on its side over the heat and repeat folding the dough against the side of the pot until a cohesive dough forms, 6 to 8 minutes.

6. Increase the heat to medium-high. Keep folding until a smooth, glossy, sticky dough forms, 6 to 8 minutes. It should be soft and pliable, but not runny, and drop off a wet spoon with a soft plop. Remove from heat, cover and let cool for at least 5 minutes.

7. To shape, place a sheet of plastic wrap on a work surface and add water to a small bowl. Dip a large spoon in the water and use it to scoop a portion of dough and transfer it to the center of the plastic wrap, smoothing it with the wet spoon. Fold both long edges over the dough to encase, pull together both short sides by the ends and twist to seal completely. You should have a round ball, sealed in the plastic wrap. Repeat to form the remaining wrapped balls of dough.

8. Unwrap and transfer the swallow while still warm, crease side up, to individual bowls. Serve immediately alongside eru, egusi soup or okra soup, topped with obe oniru or any braised meat.

Tips: Grated, fermented and dehydrated cassava is labeled as garri and available in white or yellow varieties, in fine or coarsely ground granules at African, Caribbean and some international grocery stores. Ijebu garri, also available and often labeled by the same name, can be used in this recipe and may require additional liquid. The garri has a distinctly white, fine-textured grain and sour taste from a lengthier fermentation process.

The palm tree is an Indigenous species that grows in tropical regions of West and Central Africa. It produces large pods with spiky bunches, which become heavy with fleshy red-orange fruit kernels. When the pods are harvested, the fruit is picked and pressed for oil, which is used in cooking and lends a notable depth and distinct color to West African cuisine. Red palm oil can be found stored at room temperature in glass or plastic jars at African, Caribbean and some international grocery stores. It is a soft solid at room temperature and melts easily once heated.

Nothing Says America Like Potato Salad

A staple of summer gatherings tells a story about who we are.

By WESLEY MORRIS

Not long ago, I found myself drowning in recipes for potato salad. I wish I knew why this happened. An idea had possessed me, and I was trying, if not to exorcise it, then at least to apply the pressure of research.

So I turned to Bonnie Slotnick, who runs a shop in the East Village of Manhattan that specializes in rare and antique cookbooks, and started riffling through every book she could find me with a recipe for potato salad.

What we found took us from the late 19th century to the four potato salad recipes in "The Settlement Cook Book," from 1943, and the joyous wanderlust of Clementine Paddleford's 1960 compendium "How America Eats." I pored over Mimi Sheraton's 1965 "The German Cookbook," with its instructions for one hot and one cold potato salad. I beheld the tossed-off nerve that suffuses "Princess Pamela's Soul Food Cookbook," from 1969, and marveled at the more elegantly earthen approach of "Spoonbread and Strawberry Wine," a 1978 book by the sisters Norma Jean Darden and Carole Darden-Lloyd. Classics all.

Really, I was looking for confirmation. Could what I sensed be true? Because what I sensed sounded a touch absurd, and it was this: Potato salad is the Great American Dream Dish.

In any year, potato salad is what you put out or bring to gatherings between Memorial Day and Labor Day. But now, as this country turns 250 years old, I think a hearty vat of mayonnaised (or oiled) Yukon golds carries an even heftier significance, as the most characteristically American food we have, that we've *ever* had.

I can already hear you: What about the hot dog? A hot dog does say "America." I just read a love letter to Costco's hot dog that gave me momentary pause about the singular glory of potato salad. But when's the last time you made a hot dog from scratch and brought it to a cookout?

I believe that potato salad is the greatest thing you can bestow upon an American spread. Not because it's the most delicious or the prettiest, although never rule either out. I believe this, in part, because anybody can make some and bring it. It's simply potatoes and a bunch of other stuff.

When people new to this country arrive, they learn — somehow! — that this is the dish you bring to a gathering. It's the dish that indicates a desire to understand this place, and they appear to have heard that this bowl of lubricated tubers is the way to go. Depending on whom you heard that from and whence you hail, you might feel free to add some cured pork, a scoop of gochujang or a jar of capers.

That's your contribution to the complexity of this dish, your contribution of your culture to ours, of yourself to the promise of this place. This is an offering that can say both "welcome" and "we are."

Every culture in America already seems to have some expression of potato salad. Jewish deli. Japanese. German. Calabrian. Nepali. Bodega. A dear friend of mine is Peruvian and knows from a potato. She told me that in Peru it's ensalada rusa, and in Spain, ensaladilla rusa: potatoes, carrots, peas and sometimes cubed beets with mayonnaise. *Somebody has brought a beety rusa to this Texas barbecue!*

Potato salad isn't a meal. It's an accompaniment, support for whatever else surrounds it. It unites a plate and soothes the palate. It complements the fried and cools the hot. It's reliable. It's expected.

It can also go a little wild. Take a chance. Innovate. No matter what, we the eaters hold the truths of your dish to be self-evident.

It's true, too, that potato salad can polarize. The choice of mayonnaise alone could start a war. *Please, whip your miracle somewhere else.* If no one brings a potato salad, an existential breach has occurred: How could nobody care enough to bring one?

But also: Who has what it takes to dare, to meet the moment? Potato salad is the Thanksgiving turkey of summer summits.

"CANNONBALL WITH WESLEY MORRIS"

Wesley Morris, who proclaims potato salad as the "Great American Dream Dish," stopped by The New York Times's studio kitchen to make a batch while recording an episode of his podcast, "Cannonball."

No one will forget that time you messed it up. (Conversely, we'll all rejoice anytime you put your foot in it.) I love potato salad for this. If getting our founding documents in order was a trial, imagine a constitutional convention to define potato salad. It's the most divisive dish we have that we also agree we'd feel incomplete without. A true soul food.

WHO KNOWS WHEN I became a potato salad person? Probably the minute somebody in my family — my mother, born Judith Lavern Smith — figured out that I could handle a knife and survive an onion. I'm going to say I was 11.

My mother's potato salad was onion-y enough that it bit you back. For a sous-chef, this meant getting a softball as close to slurry as your sinuses would permit. I would quarter the onion, chop it up, present it for inspection, fail, then resume and chop until I passed. This could take half an hour. My mother needed less than five minutes. But if she was making potato salad, it often meant she was making something else, too, *and* something else and then one more thing. So even a slow helper was a help.

By the time I was 14, I had graduated to taking on more tasks: mincing the celery, pulverizing sometimes a dozen eggs, peeling potatoes and carving them into dice, drizzling the mustard, strangling the relish to drain every drop of its syrup, scooping out the Hellmann's then slapping it onto everything else.

When it was time for paprika, salt, pepper and the all-but-accidental pinch of sugar my mother used, she took over. It's perfectly fine to trust a child with a paring knife. Bad parenting is entrusting one with seasoning.

Everybody adored my mother's potato salad. They could taste the love (and, if I may say, the labor). It was essentially the recipe her grandmother used, and now the potato salad I make. Every bite contains every ingredient. So what you're savoring is cream and crunch, sweetness and — because I'm a seasoned seasoner now — the paprika's heat. This is a vivid, lively dish, sparked by a convergence of texture and flavor and color. Not once had I considered that harmony as being anything more than what my mother learned from her grandmother, a family thing.

It wasn't until I started poking around Bonnie Slotnick Cookbooks and sitting with the recipes Bonnie indefatigably kept serving me that I could see a story taking shape. In book after book by Black authors, or books that could claim a Black author (because, say, a white woman published what she swore were her cook's recipes), it became evident that my people's potato salad was more or less My People's: the mustard and variations on mayonnaise, the egg and onion, sometimes celery and a cucumber.

There had never been a recorded recipe in my family. Like music and storytelling, food was lore, a byproduct of a slavery, an institution that denied literacy to enslaved people for fear of what a literate slave could achieve. We made do. We made potato salad. What I found at Bonnie's was a history. What I found was an inheritance.

But! Something else to appreciate about this dish is that unlike, say, macaroni and cheese, potato salad is not a product of enslavement. Black Americans have a claim on it, but it belongs to no one.

The covenant this country has made to individual liberty and pursued happiness, to justice and equal protection, can feel false, impossible, elusive. Not when it comes to potato salad. Potato salad is the covenant and the country — this wet mess of harmonic convergence, achieved only through imagination and patience and a kind of violence (So. Much. Chopping.), but also some fealty to our core, earthen values.

This dish is a present Americans have been giving one another for much of the past 250 years. It's a dish that keeps insisting that we belong.

CREAMY GOLD POTATO SALAD

TIME: 50 MIN
YIELD: 8 TO 12 SERVINGS

- Salt and black pepper
- 3 pounds large Yukon Gold potatoes, scrubbed well
- 1 yellow onion
- 4 meaty celery stalks with leaves
- 5 hard-boiled eggs
- 1 (16-ounce) jar sweet relish (see Tips)
- 1 cup mayonnaise, plus more if needed
- ¼ to ½ cup yellow mustard, such as French's (see Tips)
- Sugar, to taste
- Hot paprika, to taste (see Tips)

1. Bring a big pot of water to a boil and add a lot of salt (about ½ cup should do it). Add the potatoes and cook until tender all the way through, about 30 minutes. Remove them from the pot and let them drain until they're cool enough to touch but still warm. Gently peel the potatoes, using a paring knife as needed, then cube them into pieces that are about an inch or an inch and a half. Do the size you want, but be consistent.

2. While the potatoes boil, mince the onion, celery and eggs by hand, keeping them separate. The pieces should be small enough that you don't end up seeing distinct pieces of onion, celery and egg in that potato salad. Be sure to mince those celery leaves too.

3. Drain the jar of relish in a strainer and run it under cold water to rinse all the sauce off. You don't want the sugar from the relish brine, just the sweet pickles. Use paper towels or a clean tea towel to press all the liquid out through the strainer and get the pickles as dry as you possibly can.

4. Put the potatoes in a big mixing bowl and add the strained relish, celery and eggs, along with half the onion. Add the mayonnaise and a nice big healthy squeeze of mustard (about ¼ cup to start). Sprinkle on a pinch of sugar and a lot of salt, pepper and hot paprika. Get the mix going, taste it and see how onion-y it seems. Add more onion if you want and taste again.

5. Now, see if it needs more mayonnaise. It should be very creamy, but in no way wet. If you put the salad in a glass container to bring to a picnic, it shouldn't move around in there. If it's drier than it should be, add more mayonnaise by the tablespoon. Taste and add more mustard, salt, pepper and paprika if it needs it. The potato salad is delicious at room temperature, but as refreshing as a beer when chilled until cold. It's even better after a full 24 hours in the fridge.

Tips: Avoid dill pickle relish for this recipe — you want a sweet relish that's got a little bit of red bits of pimento.

You want to use enough mustard to turn the salad yellow. The turmeric in French's yellow mustard is an essential element here. When buying mustard, check the date on the bottle: You want the freshest one, with the latest expiration date you can get.

If you don't have hot paprika, use sweet paprika with shy pinches of cayenne. You don't want it to be hot on the tongue, but it's great when it's hot at the back of your throat.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARMANDO RAFAEL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: SIMON ANDREWS.

An Ambitious Effort Yields a Sweet Payoff

With this treat, the home baker can expect kudos.

By KAYLA HOANG

As a recipe creator, digging into recipes, ingredient by ingredient, is my favorite part of the job. Often, it's easy to predict how they'll act and adjust accordingly. Sometimes, though, a recipe can feel impossible to crack. Enter butter rice cakes.

Also known as Shanghai butter mochi and butter tteok, butter rice cakes are a style of mochi that are subtly sweet and deeply buttery. They have taken the internet by storm, especially in Korea. As with many viral recipes, this one's history is vague. The cakes are often attributed to bakeries around Shanghai. One theory credits a baker in Nantong, China, just north of Shanghai, who combined the traditional Chinese rice cake nian gao with custardy French canelés. Other influences may be Hawaiian butter mochi and Filipino bibingka; though their ingredients and cooking methods differ, their batters are similar.

Coming up with a version for home cooks that was browned and crisp on the outside while still bouncy and buttery in the center when baked in a muffin tin was ambitious.

Early on, I used a fluid batter made, in part, with tapioca flour and a good amount of milk. But those cakes separated from the pan and browned unevenly. I knew I needed a denser batter, so I lessened the milk. The tapioca was eventually replaced with more mochiko, as suggested by Genevieve Ko, my editor, who had found results could vary from brand to brand of tapioca flour.

To ensure that crisp brown crust, the batter is baked in a well-buttered tin. But exactly how much butter to use was hard to gauge. At first, thinking the water from the butter was steaming the bottoms, I cut back. Instead, too little butter made the crust hard, while still unevenly browned. A generous, almost excessive, amount of butter was needed.

The most important piece to the puzzle, though, was the baking pan. After testing exclusively in a nonstick muffin tin, the most even browning came from an uncoated pan: In a nonstick muffin pan, the butter proved more likely to spread unevenly.

It took over a dozen tests for the recipe to take its final shape, but it felt incredible when it did. The resulting mochi have deeply caramelized crusts that produce that addictive A.S.M.R. crunch and give way to their bouncy, chewy center. For the best texture, enjoy them while still warm. A drizzle of condensed milk makes them all the better.

BUTTER RICE CAKES

TIME: 1 HOUR 15 MINUTES
YIELD: MAKES 1 DOZEN

- 10 tablespoons/140 grams unsalted butter
- ½ cup/105 grams granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ¼ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 large egg, at room temperature
- 1 cup/224 grams whole milk
- 2¼ cups/270 grams mochiko (sweet rice flour)

1. Heat oven to 400 degrees with a rack in the middle.

2. Heat the butter in a small saucepan over medium until just melted, stirring occasionally, 3 to 4 minutes. Pour 6 tablespoons/84 grams into a large bowl and add the sugar, vanilla, honey and salt. Whisk until well blended, then set aside to cool.

3. Meanwhile, brush the remaining 4 tablespoons/56 grams melted butter into the cups of a standard muffin tin to generously and evenly coat.

4. Whisk the egg into the sugar mixture until just blended, then whisk in the milk. While whisking, gradually add the rice flour and whisk until smooth. Divide the batter evenly among the buttered muffin cups (about ¼ cup/60 grams per cup) and smooth the tops, if necessary. Set the muffin tin on a sheet pan.

LINDA XIAO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES. FOOD STYLIST: BARRETT WASHBURNE.

5. Bake on the middle rack for 10 minutes, then lower the temperature to 375 degrees and bake until dark golden brown, 35 to 40 minutes more.

6. Let cool in the pan for a few minutes, then lift each cake out with a small offset spatula or very thin paring knife and transfer to a rack to cool slightly. Serve warm. (Because their crust softens overnight, these cakes are best eaten the day they are made.)

Tip: For the most even browning, use an uncoated standard muffin tin.

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

For 'All You Can Eat,' All Bets Are Off

CONTINUED FROM PAGE D1

the emotional mechanisms of this extravagant buffet, had made them. The buffet always shows you who you are.

When the server asked how I was doing, I told her I'd panicked and made a mistake (I think it started with the seeded cracker). That mistake had led to me making another and another, and everything I'd brought back to my seat now seemed peaky and pallid. On top of the embarrassment of not being able to make a decently proportioned, cohesive plate, of not *strategizing* as I'd been advised to do by several buffet aficionados, of thinking it would be chill to walk through the room and *wing it* — a totally amateur move! — I was full of regret.

The server told me not to worry (though she also said that she personally stuck to the crab and saw everything else as a distraction). "Try what you want, leave the rest, go back," she said. "You always get a fresh plate, that's the fun of the buffet!"

She gestured to the bussers all over the room, and if there was music playing, I couldn't hear it anymore. This was the real soundtrack of the buffet — the constant and resounding clatter of plates cleared into plastic tubs. It was the sweet racket of endless do-overs.

Drinks arrived and I felt the real promise of Las Vegas and its casino buffets: not just one more chance at abundance, but one more chance at being the kind of person who knows what to do with it.

The Las Vegas Sun described the city's buffets as its "regional cuisine" in 2019, when there were still around 70 on the Strip, but since the MGM Grand closed its last one in May, only about a half dozen remain. Walk through any casino to see why.

On my way to Bacchanal, the particularly deluxe buffet at Caesars Palace where a weeknight dinner starts at $86.99 a person, I passed by several posters advertising its other flashier restaurants, the kind of celebrity-run places that slowly shifted diners away from buffets after Wolfgang Puck opened Spago here in 1992. Within Caesars alone, there are restaurants from Bobby Flay, Gordon Ramsay, Nobu Matsuhisa, Guy Savoy and Lisa Vanderpump, along with a food court called Celebrity Food Hall.

Early versions of the buffet predate restaurants, and a luxurious banquet format has been part of court culture and elite dining rooms for centuries — a soft way to show off the particulars of your taste, wealth and power. But the modern American restaurant buffet, the all-you-can-eat buffet as we know it, is usually traced back to El Rancho Vegas, the first resort built on the Strip in 1941.

The Buckaroo Buffet was a marketing strategy, a clever way to keep late-night gamblers playing longer with a spread of sandwiches and other unfussy fare (most likely inspired by the Swedish smorgasbord display that had recently made a splash at the 1939 World's Fair).

As the Strip expanded, so did its buffets. Some scaled up to feed thousands of people in a single day. A single night might archive decades of trends with hundreds of dishes — prime rib and mashed potatoes; beet and goat cheese salads; waffles drizzled with hot honey; wands of mochi doughnuts; trays of ube puddings.

If GLP-1s really are reshaping the national appetite — shrinking it, quieting it — the excesses of the ultimate all-you-can-eat Vegas buffet might seem like an anachronism. But it doesn't look like the twilight of the buffet when you're sitting in Bacchanal, feeling the gravity of the 25,000-square-foot dining room shift as a cook refills the crab station with hot Norwegian snow crab legs.

The line gets long, then longer, multigenerational and multilingual, joyful and even a bit anxious. If the buffet shows us who we are, maybe this is part of it, too: an awareness that this idea of American abundance is a kind of illusion, that it's temporary. That someone will get the last crab leg, the rest of us will wait and, eventually, our time will run out. (Casino buffets tend to impose a limit of about an hour and a half, which starts after you put in your first drink order and can create a fizzy sense of urgency.)

At brunch at Wicked Spoon in the Cosmopolitan, the walls were filled with a series of screens that ran definitions and pronunciations of a random collection of foods (osso buco, turducken, harissa, orecchiette), none of which seemed to be on offer.

When I finally gave up and asked for just a small slice of the steak, the cook carved me a piece, then made as if he were going to give me the entire joint left on the cutting board. "At this price!" he said with a practiced wink. I'm sure he performed that bit all day, but it did make me laugh. Everybody was trying to make the most of the all-you-can-eat meal, but every body has its limits.

By now, I was seeing patterns. The more impressive the display, the less structurally sound, which meant shrimp were always tumbling from the tops of shrimp mountains. And it was impossible for the staff to keep displays, counters and shared utensils pristine against the constant flow of people. I found little dishes untouched and abandoned along the lines in ways that suggested someone had recently stopped right there and made a difficult decision.

Some tables operated beautifully as units, with each diner in charge of bringing back something different to share. An entire plate of lemons, another four of crab legs, ramekins of melted butter. So many tables were focused entirely on seafood, then moved on together to the carved meat and a couple of sides.

A tween at the table next to me one night delighted in bringing back things she'd never had before and rating them for her family, which was entertaining them — octopus, whelks, shrimp with the heads on, a cut of meat she could no longer identify but thought might be lamb.

This reminded me how much I loved hotel buffets as a child — the magic of wandering with my plate and making important decisions away from my parents, the thrill of seeing something new and being able to try it, or not, then watching everyone come back. Examining their plates, I felt as if I could see right into their souls.

Go for the most expensive foods first. Avoid bread and pasta entirely. Put in a drink order before you get up from the table, every time. Everyone has a strategy so particular to their concerns that following someone else's might not always work for you. In the end, the challenge and the reward of the buffet are exactly the same: In a limited time, with endless distractions, you must figure out what you really want.

A torched-to-order s'more? At the Buffet, the s'more was built as an open-faced tartine with a small marshmallow, and as a result, both the ratio and temperatures were off. The crème brûlée was set in a metallic fluted cup that recalled an empty espresso pod, but it was smooth, not overly sweet, not overcooked, with the sugar caramelized in a very thin layer. Still, I wasn't interested in having another — by now I was dangerously close to full — and I was unmoved by the ice cream display or the waves of tiny layered cakes and cookies.

I wandered past a cute off-brand cartoon mouse made of fondant, dressed in stars and stripes, waving the American flag. This was the crepe station. Immediately, I wanted one with lemon juice and sugar inside, my favorite special breakfast when I was growing up. (If the buffet shows you who you are, then I guess I'm still 9 years old.)

It wasn't an option on the menu board, full of much more elaborate items, but when I asked, the cook nodded as if it was no big deal and didn't miss a beat, already spreading batter onto the hot pan. "Honey," she asked, "is that all?"

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Left, from top: waiting for ice cream at the Buffet in the Wynn casino and hotel in Las Vegas; gathered for entry at Bacchanal Buffet in Caesars Palace; a made-to-order crepe there; crab legs at the Wynn. Below, the history of the modern American buffet is often traced back to El Rancho Vegas, seen here in the 1940s.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROGER KISBY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

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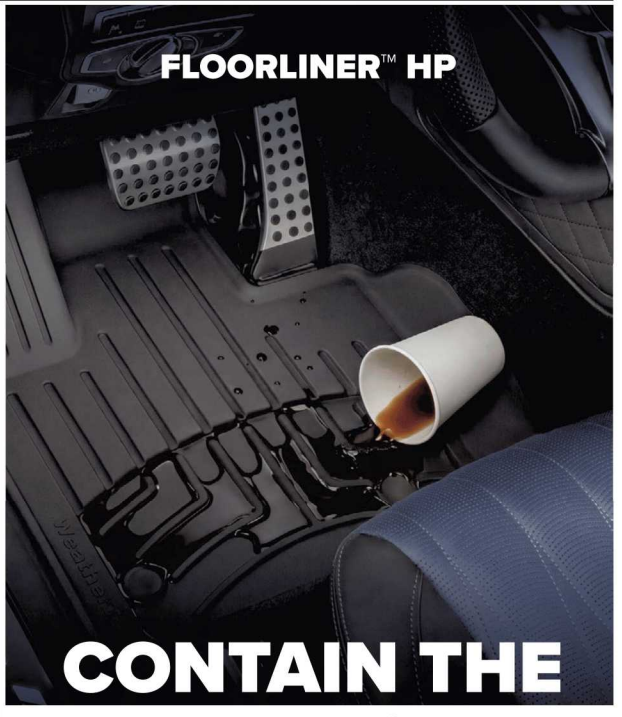

No Off-Season For Berries Around Here

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KELSEY McCLELLAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Driscoll's has created a worldwide refrigerator staple.

By JULIA MOSKIN

WATSONVILLE, CALIF. — Once upon a time, there was only one way to get your hands on a ripe strawberry in winter: be a member of the French royal court.

In 1712, Louis XIV dispatched a spy to Spanish-controlled Chile to smuggle out native white-berried plants. Royal gardeners bred them with European red berries, coddled them in manure hotbeds and warmed them with underground fires, all so that the king could have strawberries in March instead of waiting until June.

Today, Costco shoppers in South Korea, pastry chefs in Dubai and parents of small children nearly everywhere can buy strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and blackberries any time of year — if they can afford them. (Strawberry prices fluctuate throughout the year, from about $3 per pound in San Francisco to $35 in Dubai.) And the biotech that drives modern agriculture ensures that each berry is better than anything the Sun King ever tasted.

In just the past decade, berries have completed the journey from fragile, local, seasonal treat to worldwide refrigerator staple and marketing juggernaut. Global production has tripled since 2000, according to research from the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization, and still cannot keep up with demand. In sales and volume, berries are the fastest-growing category in American produce, according to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Most of that growth has been driven by Driscoll's, a $7 billion California company that began as a multifamily farm in 1904, patented its first strain of strawberries in 1958 and is still controlled by family members. In 1989, its board made what the company calls the Meadowood Declaration, a resolution that seemed preposterous at the time: to make all four berries available, in every season, in every part of the world.

Today the company is the undisputed global market leader, shipping four billion containers of highly perishable fruit across 60 countries each year. (The company developed its signature hinged, ventilated plastic clamshell in the 1990s.) According to Circana, a market research firm, Driscoll's is now the second-highest-earning brand in American supermarkets, behind only Coca-Cola.

Kristin Kiesel, who teaches agricultural economics at the University of California, Davis, said Driscoll's has changed the paradigm of modern agriculture and produce marketing.

"A strawberry was a strawberry," she said. "Now a strawberry is a brand." And only a huge operation like Driscoll's, she said, can supply market giants like Costco and Walmart with the premium produce that many consumers are willing to pay for, even as their grocery bills rise.

To that end, Driscoll's today is less a farming business than a research and marketing enterprise, harvesting berry-related data instead of berries. Instead of owning land, the company owns the genetic material of its berries and the knowledge of how best to plant, pick and transport them. It subcontracts with farmers around the world to grow those breeds according to its specifications, then handles sales and distribution after harvest.

But global access to berries has a cost, measured in metrics like water consumption, pollution, pesticides and labor practices. Driscoll's has come under fire on all four fronts.

In the 2010s, the company faced boycotts and strikes over wages and working conditions. Academics and activists have pointed out the large carbon footprint of flying berries around the world, and criticized the berry industry's prolific use of plastic sheeting and containers. In June, a former senior compliance manager sued the company, alleging that Driscoll's penalized him for flagging excess use of pesticides, and that the company had knowingly shipped berries to Canada that exceeded that country's more stringent limits.

In a statement, Driscoll's denied the lawsuit's allegations and defended its practices: "As a family-owned company, food safety, quality, and integrity are fundamental to who we are. We maintain robust food safety and compliance programs and rigorous standards designed to support compliance with applicable regulatory requirements."

Top, harvesters picking berries in Watsonville, Calif. Above, Driscoll's raises and tests hundreds of berry breeds each year. Left, soil samples are analyzed. Right, a still life of strawberries by the Dutch painter Adriaen Coorte in 1704. Below left, berries are freeze-dried in liquid nitrogen to capture their flavors and aromas in a sensory lab. Bottom, the plastic clamshell that the company developed.

The costs and risks of becoming a Driscoll's grower are formidable.

Driscoll's has fended off criticism and blown past competitors, most recently with sweeter, juicier versions of the two berries that long resisted commercialization: blueberries and blackberries.

In the Tasting Room

The quest for the perfect berry plays out night and day at the company's headquarters, a patchwork of fields, farmhouses, spectrometer labs, tasting rooms and worm beds dotting the Pajaro Valley, just south of Santa Cruz, Calif.

On a typically sunny morning in early June — peak raspberry season at the complex — pickers in long sleeves and wide-brimmed hats had been expertly pulling fruit from head-high canes since sunrise. Labor is by far the biggest expense for berry growers: most berries must still be picked by hand, one by one, and competition for skilled pickers is stiff. (The company said the workers earn $20 to $30 per hour, but declined to make them available to be interviewed or photographed, citing concern for their privacy.)

Inside a nearby laboratory, where two full-time sensory scientists make their assessments, 210 raspberry varieties were laid out in a grid of plastic pints. Some had been bred for visual appeal, with more shapely shoulders, uniform drupelets and less "hair" (the thin red styles that sprout where the berry is pollinated). Others were developed to maximize yield, with fewer thorns and better "plant architecture" — tall, fluffy stalks that make the berries easy to pick. Each cultivar is tested for qualities like P.S.I., the interior pressure that determines whether a berry will yield to the teeth with an explosive, juicy pop.

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Out of those 210 strains, said Kyle Rak, the company's chief raspberry scientist, perhaps two will make it to market.

"It can be heartbreaking," he said, gazing fondly on the berries, which varied from golden to blush to crimson, and differed wildly in shininess, symmetry and size.

And all of that was independent of how the berries actually taste. After sweetness and acid — the basic components of a balanced berry — the tasters evaluate each strain for underlying notes of rose, cotton candy, banana and dozens more.

Driscoll's global raspberry business was built on a cultivar it patented in 2004: the Maravilla, a berry that was red enough, sweet enough and shelf-stable enough to be grown and shipped globally. Compared with previous strains on the market, it was far less likely to mold or collapse in transit, and soon became the industry benchmark.

The drawback of the Maravilla, Mr. Rak said carefully, is that it doesn't taste all that good. As anyone who has splurged on a container sadly knows, raspberries can look great but taste tart, dry and stiff. The mission across Driscoll's 35 test plots around the world is to eliminate that disappointment.

Next, the tasters lined up four varieties that are already in production. Tasted blind, the dark red, sweet and juicy Reyna stood out. A 2023 cultivar, it has quickly become the company's new global standard, sold in the United States under Driscoll's premium-priced "Sweetest Batch" label.

But this army of soil analysts, phenotype researchers and data engineers is already chasing the next standard.

Farming Out the Work

Many Driscoll's berries are no longer planted in soil, but grown in pots filled with carefully balanced mixtures of organic materials like coconut fiber and moss. This system of substrate farming was developed over centuries in the Netherlands to produce maximum yields from minimal land.

It requires a substantial start-up investment by Driscoll's growers, who also absorb the costs of ever-shifting factors like labor, weather, equipment and rent. The company provides seed plants and "inputs" like soil treatments, along with technical support and marketing dollars. After harvest, the company retrieves the filled clamshells, then compensates the grower according to the price those berries command. According to Driscoll's, growers receive 75 to 80 percent of the revenue.

The costs and risks of becoming a Driscoll's grower are formidable. Still, "because demand just keeps going up, my growers are in a good position to negotiate," said Liz Machoff, head of the New York State Berry Growers Association.

Dr. Kiesel, who has done studies of Driscoll's operations in California, said most growers felt that joining the company was their best option in an increasingly complex marketplace, allowing them to focus on the plants and outsource marketing, price negotiations and other tasks.

The Driscoll's model reflects another shift in 21st-century agriculture, away from open-source knowledge developed by public institutions like universities, to fiercely protected intellectual property owned by private companies.

The earliest branded fruits — the Dole pineapple (1933) and Chiquita banana (1944) — were the precursors to today's Fruitist jumbo blueberries, aggressively priced and marketed as "premium snacks." When Erewhon, the Los Angeles chain of upscale markets, introduced its wildly popular Strawberry Glaze Skin Smoothie in 2024, then made exclusively with Driscoll's organic berries, the produce world hailed it as a branding breakthrough.

Demand for berries has exploded in the United States because of overlapping recent trends: more snacking and the rise of "functional" foods that promise specific health benefits, said Jonna Parker, who analyzes the produce market for Circana. Premium berries are expensive, but they are also the kind of small luxuries — so-called "revenge shopping" — that Americans have treated themselves to since the Covid lockdowns ended.

People ate more fruits and vegetables during the pandemic, she said; since then, sales of most produce are down, but berry sales have kept growing. "Only the most convenient foods survive," she said.

New Countries, New Berries

Berries are shifting entire economies.

In 2023, they became Mexico's most lucrative agricultural export, surpassing avocados, beer and tequila. On Moldovan plantations and in Andean highlands, growers of low-margin crops like sugar cane and corn have switched to berries, which command premium prices.

In 2025, China overtook the United States as the world's largest blueberry producer. Driscoll's, the first foreign berry company allowed to operate there, now has about 8,000 acres under cultivation.

Land is not privately owned in China, but some farmers receive allocations to operate as they wish. Jae Chun, the company's general manager for the Asia-Pacific region, began by persuading about 40 families who were growing corn and potatoes to switch to berries.

Chinese growers have succeeded because of access to advanced technologies like robots that spray pesticides and automated lighting that prevents mold, he said. "In the U.S., that would cost seven or eight times more." he said.

Blueberries have been the breakthrough product for the world's berry growers in the past decade, with sales rising 8 percent every year. Growers appreciate their long shelf life, up to 60 days after harvest, making them a lower-risk investment. (Raspberries last only about 10 days.)

Some farmers are determined to ride the berry boom without being pulled into Driscoll's ever more powerful orbit. Taylor Doyle, a third-generation fruit farmer in Western New York, just pulled out 95 acres of mature apple trees to make way for blueberry bushes.

He said he preferred making decisions based on experience, rather than rules set by an outside agent like Driscoll's. He grows to his own taste — and that of his two young children, a low-tech focus group.

"And my wife," he said. "The one who decides what to feed the kids and how to spend money at the supermarket, that's my target consumer for berries."

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